

Consumers dictate their own 'rules of engagement' with retailers online

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Consumers are taking back control of their personal data as more businesses are proactively seeking detailed information (buying habits, demographic data, etc.). While retailers may use new technology as a way to gain a competitive edge, new research shows that if customers don't see the personal benefits to these data mining practices, they are likely to respond with limited or false data, or even worse, feel the desire to "get back" at the company.

This in turn creates a costly quality assurance issue for retailers and leads to poor business decisions.

Research published in an upcoming issue of the *Journal of Consumer Affairs* shows that consumers are not the helpless pawns that consumer protection advocates often portray them to be. Consumers have developed special "rules of engagement" by which they will "play" online about which businesses should be concerned.

The researchers, Amit Poddar, Jill Mosteller, and Pam Scholder Ellen conclude, "Understanding how customers decide when and what information to share is crucial to improving the delivered products, services and experiences with online marketers."

[More information:](#) This study is published in the Special Fall issue of the *Journal of Consumer Affairs* on the topic of Privacy Literacy — How [Consumers](#) Understand and Protect Their Privacy.

Source: Wiley ([news](#) : [web](#))

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