

Editorial



Currently China is working on a social credit system for all its citizens. Persons are rated for their behavior – paying bills in time, having children, recycling, etc. and the ratings are used to create one numerical social score. People with high scores are able to skip the security lines at airports and get approved for buying a house, for example, whereas those with low scores are not able to buy plane or train tickets during holiday peaks.

While such a system seems unthinkable (yet) in the western hemisphere, ratings have gained substantial power which will only grow. When we plan a vacation, we don't choose a hotel without looking at its rating on Tripadvisor. We choose which Airbnb house to stay in based on the ratings of the host, and select a restaurant based on its Yelp reviews. Online reputations, as determined by star ratings, verbal reviews, likes, shares, and hashtags are ubiquitous and have become a key marketing tool for almost all organizations.

In this issue you will find cutting edge research on the reputation economy as we explore online reputation in all its complexity. We discuss the importance of rating system design in ensuring trust and investigate how platforms can reduce bias, eliminate fake reviews, and prevent discrimination. Marketers need to understand the role and mechanisms of rating systems. How do consumers process and use these ratings? Which types of reputation indicators are the most influential on consumers?

We hope you find inspiration on how to design, manage and optimize your own online reputation to be a reliable barometer of trust.

Happy reading!

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