

A. Online Appendix

We include in this online appendix details on the SA survey and Propensity Score analysis.

A.1. Survey Details.

As mentioned in the body of the paper, we reached out to SAs who trained using OTMs and received a total of 8,263 responses from anonymous SAs across different categories, ages, experience, etc. The SAs who participated in the survey include Dillard's SAs, but the vast majority work for other retailers. To maximize the number of respondents and to motivate participation in the survey, we announced that we would raffle three \$200 gift cards among the SAs who completed the survey. Figure OA1, summarizes the main characteristics of the survey respondents.

Figure OA1 Survey Respondents' Descriptive Information

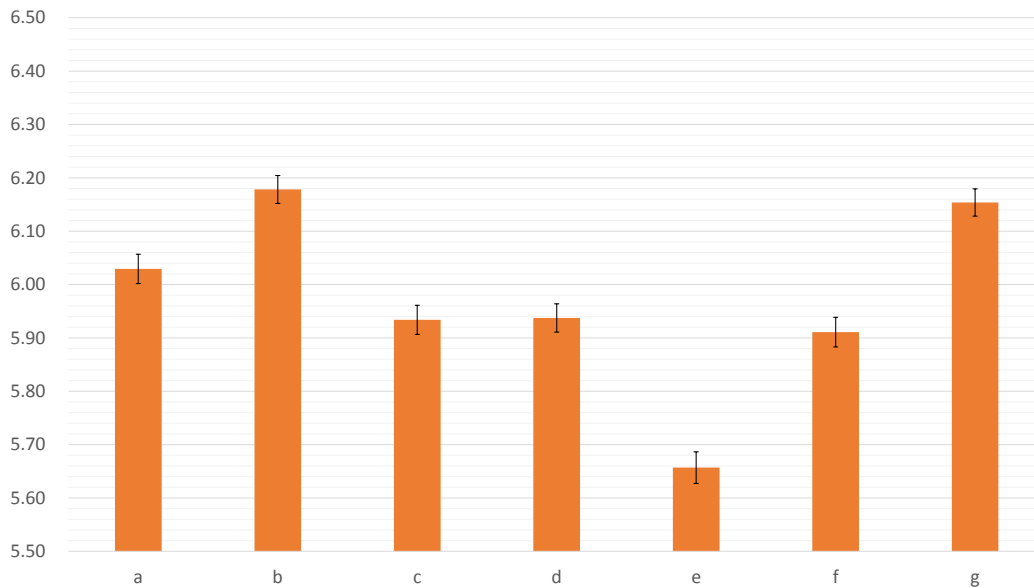


The respondents represent different (a) levels of sales tenure, (b) engagement with their customers, (c) number of hours worked per week, (d) and experience with the Expertvoice modules. In addition, the respondents cover a broad range of (e) ages and (f) income levels.

For all the questions in the survey, we use a seven-level Likert scale (1, 7), where level 1 corresponds to “strongly disagree” and level 7 to “strongly agree.” To understand exactly what the SAs learn in training, the first question on the survey focuses on the OTM content: *Please indicate the extent to which you agree that these are things you learned after engaging with a brand’s content.*

Figure OA2 presents the results of the 8,263 responses; the vertical lines intersecting the bars indicate a 95 percent confidence interval.

Figure OA2 Extent to Which You Agree That These Are Things You Learned after Engaging with a Brand’s Content



Note. (a) Relevant terminology to talk about the products. (b) Features and characteristics of specific products. (c) The role that different materials and production techniques play for these products. (d) The role that different products’ features play in this product’s category. (e) How the products featured in the content differ from other competing products. (f) Key phrases or content to engage customers in conversations. (g) Key product uses.

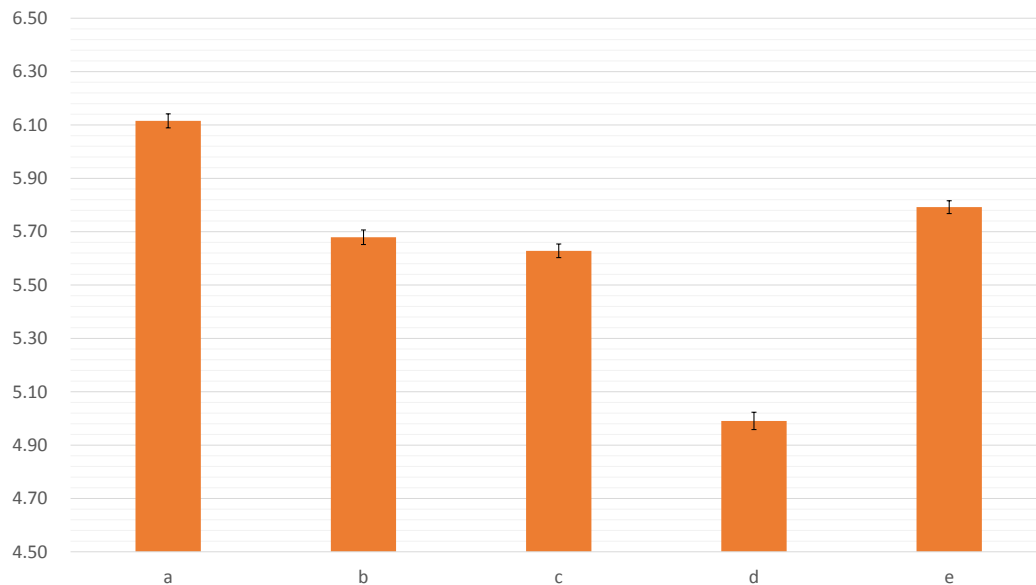
We can observe that, with the exception of the content related to option “e,” all responses are consistently close to or above the six points in the scale corresponding to the “agree” level. This shows that the SAs value the content of the OTMs across different attributes. It is interesting to note that “e” is the content that directly relates to products from the competition, and although the score is above 5.5, it is the lowest among the content measured. The two content features that are most relevant are those that relate to products themselves: option “b,” features and characteristics of specific products, and option “g,” key product uses. To summarize, the SAs learn primarily

about the specific product discussed in the module and at the same time learn about the product's category and competition.

The next question explores how the SAs perceive the influence of training on their sales performance, both for the focal product and for other products in the category: *Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statement regarding the impact of engaging with brand content.*

Figure OA3 presents the results of this question.

Figure OA3 Extent to Which You Agree with the Following Statements



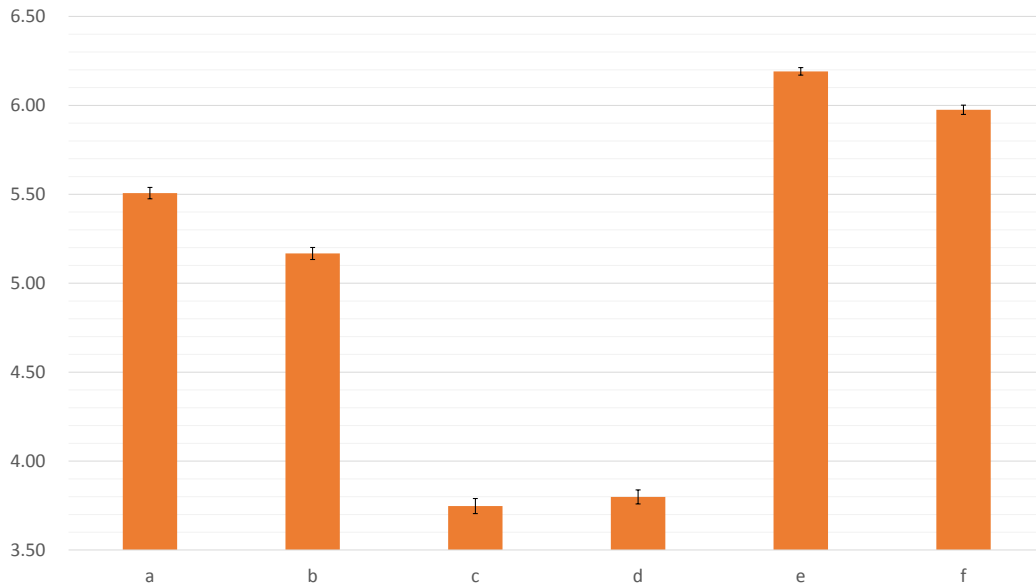
Note. (a) Engaging with the brand's content has given me greater confidence in my selling abilities. (b) Engaging with the brands content provided all the information I need to sell the brands products effectively. (c) Watching content for one product has given me greater confidence in my selling abilities for other products in the same category. (d) Watching content for one product provided all the information I need to sell other products in the category effectively. (e) I will be able to take what I learned from engaging with product content and apply that knowledge when selling other products in the same category.

These responses indicate that the two main factors influencing SAs' performance are confidence and knowledge. This helps us understand the mechanism by which SAs benefit from training. It is interesting to see that the SAs report they can apply the learning to other products in the category. This suggests that although the OTMs do not provide content about other products in the category, the SAs are able to make a synthesis that impacts not only the focal product but other products in the category as well.

In the survey's last question, we explore the SAs' motivation to train. We ask, *Why did you first engage with product content on Expertvoice/3point5?*

Figure OA4 presents the results of this question.

Figure OA4 Reasons to Engage with OTM



Note. (a) To improve my sales. (b) I was influenced by other colleagues. (c) My manager requested that I do it. (d) To fill free time. (e) I was interested to learn more about the product. (f) For the discounts offered when I pass a module.

We can observe that, consistent with the sales analysis, SAs are self-motivated to train. The impact of a manager’s request to train is low. In addition, SAs don’t train “to fill free time.” The motivation comes from the fact that SAs want to learn about the products they sell, sell more, and in the process receive discounts offered by the brands once they pass the training. It is also interesting to see that the peer effect is a big driver for volunteering to train (option “b”).

To summarize, these results show that SAs perceive that they benefit from the training content, and this helps them improve their confidence and knowledge when selling not only the focal product of the training but also products in the same category as the focal product.

A.2. Propensity Score Details.

In this subsection we present additional details on the Propensity Score Analysis.

Table OA1 presents the results of the estimation of the SA’s propensity score.

Table OA2 presents the covariate balance when implementing two different balancing approaches: Matching with a Caliper of 0.3 and Matching with a Caliper of 0.5.

Table OA1 Propensity Score Estimation

	Logit Model (1)
<i>AverageHouseholdIncome</i>	-0.000006* (0.000003)
<i>MedianHouseholdIncome</i>	-0.000004 (0.000002)
<i>PerCapitaIncome</i>	0.000014** (0.000005)
<i>TotalPopulation</i>	0.000008 (0.000004)
<i>TotalNumberofHouseholds</i>	-0.000035** (0.000012)
<i>RetailMarketSize</i>	-0.005262*** (0.000650)
<i>MedianAge</i>	-0.011120*** (0.002092)
<i>MonthlySales</i>	0.000009** (0.000003)
<i>HoursWorked</i>	0.011780*** (0.000299)
<i>Tenure</i>	0.103012*** (0.002682)
Observations	49,860
Log Likelihood	-3.149e+04

* $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$ **Table OA2 Propensity Score Balance**

	Caliper 0.3		Caliper 0.5	
	t-test	p-value	t-test	p-value
<i>AverageHouseholdIncome</i>	0.00	1.000	0.00	1.000
<i>MedianHouseholdIncome</i>	0.00	1.000	0.00	1.000
<i>PerCapitaIncome</i>	0.00	1.000	0.00	1.000
<i>TotalPopulation</i>	0.00	1.000	0.00	1.000
<i>TotalNumberofHouseholds</i>	0.00	1.000	0.00	1.000
<i>RetailMarketSize</i>	0.00	1.000	0.00	1.000
<i>MedianAge</i>	0.00	1.000	0.00	1.000
<i>MonthlySales</i>	0.77	0.439	2.11	0.035
<i>HoursWorked</i>	0.20	0.844	1.47	0.142
<i>Tenure</i>	0.42	0.676	1.73	0.083