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Surrendering Information Through the Looking Glass: Transparency, Trust, and Protection

Trust and transparency influence consumer information exchanges, yet the understanding of how they shape marketing and public policy relating to privacy and security issues is not current with the digital and informational age. People face increasing complexity in online exchanges of information and lack the time, attention, and wherewithal to understand how to protect themselves. Society's reliance on technology results in individuals engaging in continuous partial attention and behaving as cognitive misers. The author explains the concept of surrendering to technology and presents a sharing-surrendering information matrix to address this phenomenon. The matrix clarifies the difference between surrendering versus sharing information online, leading to the proposition that current efforts to protect privacy and security, such as enhancing trust and transparency, lack legitimacy and will not be effective in the digital age. Surrendering information is a long-term societal and ethical issue for marketers and policy makers, requiring improvement(s) in verification mechanisms and increased educational efforts aimed at enhancing consumers' attention.

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