Would the students respond as before (16 for the Internet only and 84 for the combination)?

Certainly they would react the same way, wouldn't they? After all, the option I took out was one that no one selected, so it should make no difference. Right?

Au contraire! This time, 68 of the students chose the Internet-only option for $59, up from 16 before. And only 32 chose the combination subscription for $125, down from 84 before.*

What could have possibly changed their minds? Nothing rational, I assure you. It was the mere presence of the decoy that sent 84 of them to the print-and-Internet option (and 16 to the Internet-only option). And the absence of the decoy had them choosing differently, with 32 for print-and-Internet and 68 for Internet-only.

This is not only irrational but predictably irrational as well. Why? I'm glad you asked.

*As a convention in this book, every time I mention that conditions are different from each other, it is always a statistically significant difference. I refer the interested reader to the end of this book for a list of the original academic papers and additional readings.