

Dark Side Characteristics in B2B and B2G Buyer-Manufacturer Relationships – An Empirical Study of European Cases

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Abstract

Recent research challenges trends in business-to-business (B2B) marketing and confirms the value of business relationships. This paper addresses the task of investigating the influence of dark side characteristics on buyer-manufacturer relationships, complementing previous research on customer dissatisfaction. Prior relationship-related research tends to focus on bright side characteristics. However, the influence of dark side characteristics such as power imbalance or dependence is underrepresented in marketing research. Based on an empirical study of 190 European cases, this paper investigates and empirically confirms that dark side characteristics have a strong impact in B2B and business-to-government (B2G) relationships dealing with customized capital goods, and a significantly less impact on B2B relationships dealing with standardized products. The authors empirically show that dependence and power imbalance influence the majority of B2B and B2G relationships. We identify these features as significant drivers of customer dissatisfaction in a B2B and B2G customized capital goods context, and confirm their volatile nature during the duration of relationships. In the context of theory building, this paper aims to enhance knowledge on drivers of dissatisfaction in B2B and B2G relationships.

Keywords: *Dark-Side-Characteristics; Relationships; Dissatisfaction*

Track: Relationship Marketing