

Creating Value Through Remote Activities in Business-to-Business Relationships in the Short-Term and Long-Term

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Abstract

Remote activities play an increasingly important role in the interaction between customer and salesperson in business-to-business sales. Past relationship marketing research unequivocally suggests that the benefits of remote selling are likely contingent on the specific relationship context. But it remains questionable which short-term and long-term effects the usage of remote activities exhibit on the business relationship and thus on the profit due to the trade-off between efficiency and the value of personal connections. Building on relationship lifecycle theory, the authors propose that the effects of the use of remote activities are fundamentally contingent on relationship strength. Results of a latent growth model using data on 215 B2B customers matched with objective data over four years confirm these predictions. This study extends research on relationship management and remote selling and provides actionable guidance to practitioners.

Subject Areas: *Business-to-Business Marketing, Channels, Customer Relationship Management and Customer Satisfaction*

Track: Relationship Marketing