

Marketing platform knowledge, product variety, and platform financial performance: digital versus conventional product platforms

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Abstract

While for conventional product platforms adding product features is hard and costly, adding product features to a digital product platform is relatively easy and inexpensive. It may cause feature creep, which may turn off the average target customer. We explore the role of marketing's platform knowledge in leveraging the product variety of these two types of platforms. Based on knowledge theory, we hypothesize that marketing's platform knowledge is more critical for creating and exploiting the product variety of digital than conventional product platforms. We test our hypotheses using the data of 100 global electronics firm product platforms. The results confirm that marketing's platform knowledge moderates the product variety—financial performance relationship and is more critical for successfully exploiting digital than conventional product platforms. For conventional platforms, the direct effects of marketer experience on product variety and platform knowledge on platform financial performance are key.

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