

Customer Personality Prediction Tools in B2B Inside Sales – Boon or Bane?

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Abstract

Tools that predict customer personality and give indications on how to deal with the customer have the potential to improve salespeople's adaptiveness. While such tools promise salespeople higher knowledge of their customers, they likewise could undermine salespeople's intuitive judgments of their customers. Thus, the key question arises as to whether salespeople can effectively adopt these tools. We employ a data set of a B2B inside sales center using such a customer personality prediction (CPP) tool to examine this question, leveraging a data set of +15,000 sales calls. The results show that using a CPP tool can on average increase salespeople's customer conversion. However, this beneficial effect only emerges for salespeople who tend to have a low dispositional adaptability to different customers. The tool did not improve productivity for adaptive salespeople. Thus, by implementing CPP tools B2B firms can support salespeople who lack adaptiveness to different customers.

Subject Areas: *Business-to-Business Marketing, Sales Force, Segmentation*

Track: Sales Management and Personal Selling