

Examining Distributor Characteristics for A Brand Manufacturer's Distribution Intensity Decision

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Abstract

The existing literature has focused on the consequences of distribution intensity and paid limited attention to its determinants. This paper attempts to examine how the characteristics of potential distributors in a market affect a manufacturer's choice of distribution intensity. Our analytical demonstration shows that a manufacturer tends to employ a more intensive distribution when potential distributors have (i) high *parity in sales capability*, (ii) low *substitutability in service expertise*, and (iii) high *distributor effort cost*. Moreover, these three distributor factors moderate each other on their respective effects on distribution intensity. These results are new to the literature and provide insights into distribution intensity management under different distributor contingencies.

Keywords: *Distribution intensity, Parity in sales capability, Substitutability in service expertise*

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