

Selling in the Digital Age: Tailoring information communication to B2B buyers' situational needs

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Abstract:

Buyers increasingly gather information across multiple channels and often make or prepare purchases without salesperson involvement. This study examines how perceived risk, psychological closeness, purchase complexity, and product class knowledge influence B2B buyers' need for general market, product-specific, and relationship information and how these needs affect preference for six channels. Focusing on incremental component innovations, an experiment in a hypothetical laptop purchasing scenario reveals evidence for the expert paradox: higher product class knowledge increases the amount of required information. Psychological closeness heightens demand for product-specific and relationship information, while perceived risk drives general market and relationship information needs. Our research also indicates that information needs, media richness, and channel experiences predict channel preference. This study offers firms strategies for information delivery based on buyers' situations.

Keywords: *B2B Buyer Behavior, Information Need, Channel Preference*

Track: *Business-To-Business Marketing & Supply Chain Management*