

# Fishing for information: How business customers seek information without the intent to buy

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# **Fishing for information: How business customers seek information without the intent to buy**

## **Abstract**

B2B offerings have become increasingly complex and knowledge-intensive, making customers face major information asymmetries when seeking new purchases. While information exchange is a key part of business relationships, little is known about customers' opportunistic information gathering behaviors. This study explores how B2B customers seek to gather information from a potential supplier without a genuine intention to engage in a business relationship or make a purchase. We draw insights from information exchange literature and exploratory interviews with 11 managers in B2B firms who sell complex and knowledge-intensive offerings. Our findings reveal the key customer behaviors, situational drivers, and typical supplier counter-strategies related to customers' opportunistic information gathering efforts. This study offers novel contributions to the theory and practice of opportunistic and exploitative information exchange practices in buyer-seller relationships in B2B markets.

*Keywords: Information sharing, opportunism, information asymmetry*

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