

Complementors as network actors in electronic platforms: an exploratory study

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Acknowledgements:

We are gratefully acknowledge financial support from FCT- Fundação para a Ciencia e Tecnologia (Portugal), national funding through research grant UIDB/04521/2020. We also thank Marta Faustino for their assistance in collecting data.

Cite as:

Santos Jose Novais, Mota Joao (2024), Complementors as network actors in electronic platforms: an exploratory study. *Proceedings of the European Marketing Academy*, (122704)

Paper from EMAC Regional Conference, Lisbon, Portugal, September 25-27, 2024



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Abstract

Digital marketplaces are increasingly common intermediaries between customers and sellers to exchange products, services, and information. The literature in business ecosystems has discussed the role of orchestrating firms in managing those organizational arrangements. This study focuses mainly on the relationship between sellers and these platforms, considering their relevance in the context of the network in which they are embedded. We conducted a multiple case study focusing on seven small and micro firms providing different services. In general, developing those business relationships can generate value for both the SME and the platform firm. However, the benefits for companies may be contingent on the existence of direct relationships with customers and the availability of the platform, as an intermediary, to learn and adapt their processes.

Subject Areas: *Business-to-Business Marketing; Inter-organizational Collaboration*