

Summary (English)

Previous academic research supports that Customer Intelligence can improve business to business sales results. At the same time, other academic research fails to support causality between customer intelligence implementation and improvement in business to business sales results. This absence of a relationship has been attributed to a plethora of causes that can be found in the selling organization's internal environment, its external environment and in specific buyer-seller relationship traits. The study at hand examines how these causes affect the successful implementation of customer intelligence in business to business sales and subsequently how business to business relationship outcomes can be improved. The findings complement conclusions of significant studies, proposing a new approach of customer intelligence implementation in business to business sales.

In Chapter one, business to business sales context is described taking into account information technology development. It is explained how customer information gathered from a variety of sources, along with the appropriate sales strategy, is vital for sales representatives' support. In Chapter two, the contemporary sales landscape is described focusing on parameters that affect sales representatives' everyday routines in today's digital era. These parameters include customer expectations, selling organization complexity, information infrastructure and buyer-seller communication possibilities.

In Chapter three, the conceptual model creation process is analyzed along with the literature-based hypotheses development. In the same chapter, the significance of the sales incentives is explained along with the need for sales approach and customer needs alignment, the role that customer gratitude has in the formation of a functional buyer-seller relationship, and the gravity the critical incident resolution has on the business to business relationship outcome. The research methodology as well as the validity of the study's constructs is

analyzed in Chapter four where the qualitative research needed for the questionnaire construction is presented too.

In Chapter five the hypotheses testing results through structural equation modeling are presented. In Chapter six the research implications are discussed supporting the significance of customer intelligence perceived usefulness and customer intelligence organizational support on its deployment by the sales representatives. Moreover, it is supported that customer gratitude affects buyer-seller relationship only when it is mutually beneficial. On the contrary, critical incident resolution improves buyer-seller relationship no matter the buyer-seller relationship status.

These results are significant for sales managers since it is supported that customer segmentation has to be based on customer current relationship status with the vendor company. This segmentation is the foundation for the successful deployment of customer intelligence. Furthermore, considering the contemporary data explosion, customer intelligence usage from sales representatives is necessary for improving their sales results based on customer information, market information and critical incident resolution information. Finally, it is vital for the sales representatives to further invest in mutually beneficial relationships aiming at customer gratitude and effective critical incident resolution, safeguarding sustainable positive business to business relationship outcomes.