

Interactive Systems in B2B Marketing: Perceptions of Sales Configurator Use

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Abstract : Digitalization is changing our lives in many ways. As consumers, we are accustomed using different online interactive sales systems. However, while many online selling sites offer systems that have evolved from simple selling functions, the change has not been as rapid in business-to-business (B2B) markets. This is because many B2B companies rely on personal sales and personal communication. The main objective of this research is to clarify perceptions towards digital interactive sales systems and, more specifically, sales configurators. It also aims to identify trends towards the use of sales configurators. To reach these objectives, an online questionnaire was created that targets Finnish B2B distributors who are, by definition, part of B2B markets. The questionnaire was sent to 340 distributors, and it was returned by 150 respondents. The results showed that 82% of respondents had heard about sales configurators, and 64% had used them. The results also showed that 48% of respondents felt that the use of sales configurators would increase in the future, while only 2% felt they would be used less. The future use of sales configurators was not seen as affecting the level of personal sales. In light of the results, we recommend that B2B companies create marketing strategies that integrate and complement traditional sales processes with digital interactive systems.

Keywords : digitalization, interactive systems, marketing, sales process

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