

A Process of Forming a Single Competitive Factor in the Digital Camera Industry

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Abstract : This paper considers a forming process of a single competitive factor in the digital camera industry from the viewpoint of product platform. To make product development easier for companies and to increase product introduction ratios, development efforts concentrate on improving and strengthening certain product attributes, and it is born in the process that the product platform is formed continuously. It is pointed out that the formation of this product platform raises product development efficiency of individual companies, but on the other hand, it has a trade-off relationship of causing unification of competitive factors in the whole industry. This research tries to analyze product specification data which were collected from the web page of digital camera companies. Specifically, this research collected all product specification data released in Japan from 1995 to 2003 and analyzed the composition of image sensor and optical lens; and it identified product platforms shared by multiple products and discussed their application. As a result, this research found that the product platformation was born in the development of the standard product for major market segmentation. Every major company has made product platforms of image sensors and optical lenses, and as a result, this research found that the competitive factors were unified in the entire industry throughout product platformation. In other words, this product platformation brought product development efficiency of individual firms; however, it also caused industrial competition factors to be unified in the industry.

Keywords : digital camera industry, product evolution trajectory, product platform, unification of competitive factors

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