Proposed Special Session
2013 Global Sales Science Institute
Aalen, Germany

"Understanding Distribution Channel Differences between Country Groups Based on Freedom, Economic and Technology Differences"Participants:

Dr. Lenita Davis, University of Alabama
Dr. Andrea Dixon, Baylor University*
Dr. Ellen Pullins, University of Toledo

As the 2013 GSSI Call for Papers states, we have entered the digital age and new go-to-market strategies are emerging, but just how such changes are impacting sales and distribution approaches around the globe is unknown. The conference organizers for GSSI 2013 challenged us to consider how solution selling and consultative selling are "morphing into new sales forms."

To understand how the sales process is changing, we truly must be informed the dynamics impacting company and industry approaches to distribution. Based on data from both extensive literature reviews as well as 104 interviews with practitioners and academics subject matter experts across 14 countries, we identify the similarities and differences in how distribution channels are viewed both over time and across country sectors. Differences are explored as they arise based on economic freedom, economic strength, and technology adoption pervasiveness.

Session Format:

We will open the session by sharing results of an extensive qualitative study that allowed us to categorize 14 countries representing more than 50% of the world's GDP on the basis of freedom, economic and technology. We then explore the differences in distribution channel perspectives that emerge thematically based the sophistication level of country groupings on these dimensions (freedom, economic and technology). After presenting the results of our analysis, we will divide participants into stratified groups with each group containing free/unfree, strong/weak economies, and high/lo technology to discuss implications of the differences and bridging the gap when doing global business.

Agenda:

:00   Introduction of Panelists & Topic   Ellen Pullins

:05	Review of Distribution Channel Background	Lenita Davis
:10	Review of Methodology	Andrea Dixon
:15	Differences between different economies	Ellen Pullins
:20	Differences between different technology	Lenita Davis
:25	Differences between different freedom levels	Andrea Dixon
:30	Group Assignment, organization	Ellen Pullins

3 groups, each one facilitated by one panelist, explore three questions (about 5 minutes each):

– What are the implications of the differences we've found for academics and practitioners?
– How do these differences impact cross-cultural business practices?
– What is the role of the salesperson in facilitating business, given these differences in distribution channels?

:50	Groups report out
:60	Session ends

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