



# Proceedings of the Global Sales Science Institute Annual Conference

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## **CUSTOMER SUCCESS DEPLOYMENT: AN INTEGRATIVE APPROACH**

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### **Abstract**

As organizations increasingly strive for ways to sustain competitive advantage, they are increasingly relying on offering subscription-based services and investing in roles like customer success management. The extant knowledge on customer success provides limited benefits to the organization planning to implement the customer success organization, Studies have provided limited information on the types of roles customer success function offers, the skill and background of the customer success team, different contingency factors that impact the team's performance, and the different types of outcomes achieved.

Against this background, the purpose of this research is twofold. First, the study aims to understand how customer success functions can be deployed and the potential financial and relational outcomes of customer success function deployment, as well as the contextual factors affecting the performance relationship. To do this, we employ an empirical, qualitative research design involving 21 CS executives from 21 firms using Theory-in-Use approach.

Keywords: Customer Success, Theory-in-Use, Subscription Services, Customer Retention

## **BENEFITS OF PARTICIPATING IN A SALES COMPETITION**

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### **ABSTRACT**

Sales competitions have become an integral part of many marketing and sales curricula. These competitions are structured around case-based scenarios where student participants are given a time limit to conduct sales interactions with a buyer. They represent an ideal experiential learning format, offering concrete experiences along with feedback from instructors. This exploratory study investigates how such competitions impact sales competencies and the types of benefits participants derive from them. Our preliminary findings suggest that the benefits of sales competitions can be categorized into six themes.

Keywords: sales competition, sales competencies, experiential learning

## **IMPEDIMENTS TO MARKETING AGILITY WITHIN SMALL AND MEDIUM ENTERPRISES: A FRONTLINE PERSPECTIVE**

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### **ABSTRACT**

Today's rapidly evolving and uncertain business environment compels companies to reconsider their approaches to planning and responding to emerging market opportunities and threats. In this regard, Kalaignanam et al. (2021) have recently introduced the concept of marketing agility, defining it as "the extent to which an entity rapidly iterates between making sense of the market and executing marketing decisions to adapt to the market." Marketing agility is a newly introduced concept and while it may be beneficial to all firms, a review of marketing literature suggests that the current conceptualization and investigation of this concept have been conducted within large and mid-sized firms. As this idea gains traction in both marketing academia and practice (e.g., Ozsomer et al., 2023), it is important to comprehend how firms of varying sizes can adopt, nurture, and apply this concept.

Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) are a case in point. While it makes intuitive sense for the SMEs to develop and implement marketing agility since it may help them deal with market uncertainty and continuous change in their markets, developing and implementing this novel capability anew may be a balancing act. Many of the inherent characteristics (e.g., less formal structure and processes, entrepreneurial mindset etc.) may position SMEs well to develop and practice marketing agility; however, resource and capacity constraints SMEs face on a day-to-day basis may limit their ability to implement this concept. Since research on marketing agility is still at a nascent stage, exploring its implementation within the SME context will help develop new knowledge and make meaningful contributions to both theory and practice.

To this effect, we report findings from a qualitative study that utilized in-depth interview data from 18 SME frontline personnel (sales and marketing professionals) to answer the following research question: What challenges do SMEs face on organizational frontlines as they implement marketing agility?

## **DECODING DUAL ADVOCACY: EXPLORING THE INTERNALIZATION PROCESS IN SALESPEOPLE FOR ORGANIZATIONAL AND CUSTOMER SUCCESS**

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### **ABSTRACT**

This study examines the internalization process driving dual advocacy behavior in salespeople, who balance organizational and customer interests. Using cognitive appraisal, equity, and social exchange theories, and insights from 31 in-depth interviews, it identifies two advocacy styles: authentic advocacy, championing mutual interests, and transactional advocacy, focusing on selective efforts. These styles stem from a three-phase process involving organizational interactions, customer relationships, and psychological synthesis. Introducing a dual advocacy framework, the study highlights the role of supportive relationships in fostering effective B2B interactions and offers actionable insights to enhance customer relationship management and organizational strategies.

Keywords: B2B, Dual Advocacy, Internalization, Authentic and Transactional Advocacy

## **CAUGHT IN THE DIGITAL CROSSFIRE: THE HIDDEN COST OF DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION**

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### **ABSTRACT**

This study examines the increasing digitization and its impact on the sales task for the B2B salesforce. It draws from the JDR framework the necessary theoretical inputs and proposes a relationship among the digitization, technostress, and sales job demands. Using a survey method, more than two hundred pharmaceutical salespersons were asked to respond to a structured questionnaire. The study identified that technostress has an impact on the sales job demands and alienates or makes salespeople feel isolated. There are significant managerial implications related to digital transformation and the well-being of salespeople. The study offers guidance to sales scholars on identifying relevant studies and further exploring the relationship. For sales managers seeking to design technology use policies, training, and support systems that mitigate isolation while preserving the performance benefits of digital tools.

Keywords: Sales, Technostress, Workplace isolation

## **MANAGING THE USE OF ENTERPRISE SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS IN B2B ORGANIZATIONS**

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### **ABSTRACT**

Business-to-business (B2B) exchanges, which have traditionally been based on face-to-face communications, transformed at the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic into online interactions. Despite the increasing prevalence of enterprise social media platforms (ESMPs) to facilitate internal communications in organizations, there remains minimal guidance for business leaders on how to effectively deploy ESMPs to foster internal communications. In this article, we reveal challenges and practices that managers need to be aware of as transitioning toward the effective use of ESMPs to support internal communication. Further, we offer practical advice for business leaders to manage their internal communications through the use of ESMPs.

## **EMBRACING THE FUTURE: DETERMINANTS OF ADOPTION OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE BY SMALL AND MEDIUM BUSINESSES IN EMERGING MARKETS**

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### **ABSTARCT**

The advent of AI and its benefits have created opportunities and challenges for SMEs as they begin to grasp its potential for improving their operations. SMEs are aware of their limitations compared to large firms such as financial constraints, technical limitations, skill gaps, and cultural resistance to adoption. This study uses the Technology-Organization-Environment framework to understand the real and perceived challenges to SMEs' desire to adopt AI. A sample of Indian SMEs will be used to identify the organization and environmental variables influencing the adoption. This study responds to calls for research to consider context issues and cultural nuances of SMEs.

Keywords: Artificial Intelligence (AI), Small and Medium Enterprises (SME), Technology Acceptance Model

## **PARADOXES IN SALES: EXPLORATORY EVIDENCE & ILLUSTRATIVE CASES FROM BUSINESS MARKETS**

Margarethe Überwimmer (University of Applied Sciences Upper Austria), Harald Hammer (University of Applied Sciences Upper Austria), Jorge Filipe Da Silva Gomes (University of Lisbon), Stefan Wengler (Hof University of Applied Sciences)

### **ABSTRACT**

Salespeople in B2B markets increasingly face simultaneous, contradictory demands driven by globalization, relationship expectations, solution orientation, and digitalization. While sales research offers specialized approaches (e.g., relational, transactional, digital, value-based), practitioners must reconcile them in paradoxical situations where contradictory yet interrelated priorities persist over time. Building on a previously developed framework of paradox dimensions in sales, this study conducts in-depth interviews with Chief Sales Officers and senior sales managers from 30 firms (15 multinationals and 15 SMEs) across Austria, Germany, and Portugal in machinery, metal, automotive supply, and electronics industries. The analysis examines whether all conceptualized paradox dimensions are observable, identifies interdependencies among them, and compiles illustrative case examples. The study provides an integrative lens on sales complexity and informs how firms prepare sales teams to navigate paradoxes.

**Keywords:** B2B sales management, paradoxes in sales, sales complexity

## **FROM DATA TO DEALS: A DECADE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE REVOLUTIONIZING SALES (2014-2024)**

Rakesh Kumar Meet (School of Business, UPES, Dehradun, India)

### **ABSTRACT**

This study presents the current state of research based on a systematic literature review (SLR) of 63 articles on Artificial Intelligence (AI) in Sales Management chosen from Scopus-indexed journals. The primary objective of this review is to update scholars on progress in the field of AI in Sales Management over the last decade (2015-2025). The SLR highlights that the USA, India, and China are at the forefront of research in this field, making significant contributions to innovation and knowledge creation. Thematic analysis of the reviewed literature highlighted seven emerging themes, thirty-five sub-themes, and sixty use cases, indicating the increasing and transformative influence of AI in sales management. The significance of this review lies in its theme and sub-theme-based analysis of the literature, offering theoretical and practical implications, and providing an enormous scope for further research and development in this field to empirically study and investigate the impact of AI in sales and related domains serving a detailed roadmap to scholars and practitioners to create and advance knowledge, develop and validate new frameworks, and foster innovation in AI-enabled sales management.

**Keywords:** Artificial Intelligence, Sales, Selling, Digitalization, AI, Machine Learning, Sales technology

## **FROM MIKADO TO MASTERY: SALES TEAM ADAPTATION IN CAPITAL-INTENSIVE PRODUCT-SERVICE SALES**

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### **ABSTRACT**

We explore the impact of integrated product-service solution selling on B2B sales team roles and interactions. Drawing on heedful interrelation to complement existing theoretical perspectives, we use an explorative case study to show how industrial sales teams navigate complex, iterative processes through self-organizing teams that self-supply and interrelate heedfully. We show how sales teams enact flexible role allocation, real-time responsiveness, and internal coordination as sales processes unfold. We identify four mechanisms enabling teams to navigate process complexity and stakeholder involvement in integrated product-service sales. These practices reflect a dynamic teaming process involving loosely coupled actors across organizational boundaries, adjusted in response to changing expertise and stakeholder needs. This study provides a process-oriented understanding of sales team dynamics, highlighting the importance of heedful interrelating as both theoretical lens and practical necessity. By linking heedful interactions with team dynamics, the study contributes to B2B sales literature on multiple cross-functional teams.

Keywords: Product-service integration; sales teams; B2B solution selling; heedful interrelations

## **PERSONAL SELLING IN RETAIL 4.0: RE-ENVISIONING THE ROLE OF THE SALESPERSON IN AN OMNICHANNEL ENVIRONMENT**

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### **Abstract**

The adoption of the omnichannel model by retailers has posed a new set of challenges for customers, such as information overload. This has raised a fundamental question with regards to the necessity and efficacy of the salesperson, whose role has traditionally been to disseminate information. This research aims to address this paradox by re-envisioning the role of the salesperson, especially in high-involvement categories. It distinguishes between two types of customer groups based on their Need for Cognition and approaches to decision-making and proposes specific salesperson influence tactics for each type. A qualitative exploratory approach based on in-depth interviews and naturalistic store observations, is used to uncover how salespeople adapt assistance across fragmented omnichannel journeys. The study introduces a triadic model of sales assistance, namely the Choice Enhancer, Choice Limiter and Choice Validator and proposes a novel Salesperson Influence Tactic that aligns with the customers' cognitive states and purchase stages.

Keywords: Bounded rationality theory, Heuristic-Systematic Model of information processing, retailing, Personal Selling, Salesperson Influence Tactics

## **BUSINESS TRANSFORMATION BY SALESPERSON**

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### **ABSTRACT**

The role of most salespeople is to sell their company's products and services. Therefore, it is common practice to measure sales performance in terms of sales revenue. However, in recent years, with the evolution of digital technology, especially AI, not only the analysis of customer data, but also the proposal activities to customers are becoming automated or semi-automated. As a result, salespeople who simply make sales pitches are losing their role. In this study, we conducted a case study based on the hypothesis that the salespeople required in the future will be those who co-create value with customers and transform the business of their companies. Specifically, we analyze the thinking and activities of a salesperson who created approximately 10 billion yen (approximately \$65 million) in new business deals in less than two years after moving to a regional department store. We hypothesized a model of sales that would bring about a business transformation for the company.

Keywords: Value Co-Creation; Effectuation; Case Study; New Business Creation; Business Transformation

## **THE ROLE OF GENERATIVE AI IN B2B SALES INFLUENCE: EMPIRICAL EVIDENCE FROM INTERVIEWS WITH SALESPEOPLE**

Bimesh Shrestha (LUT University), Anssi Tarkiainen (LUT University), Jarkko Niemi (LUT University), Rajan Kumar VK (LUT University)

### **ABSTRACT**

This study builds on Rodriguez and Peterson's (2024) conceptual framework, focusing on Artificial Intelligence's influence in Business-to-Business sales through two key dimensions: a) sales process effectiveness and b) performance with the customers. Using qualitative interviews with 24 Salespeople and Sales Managers in Finnish companies, the research explores how Generative Artificial Intelligence (GAI) technologies enhance the adaptive selling behavior of salespeople, helping them implement effective influence tactics and enabling personalized, data-driven interactions that improve efficiency and sales performance. While GAI tools boost efficiency and customer engagement, ethical concerns such as data privacy and manipulation risks are highlighted. The study emphasizes balancing

AI-driven insights with human oversight to maintain relational authenticity and ethical AI use in optimizing B2B sales performance.

### **Keywords**

Adaptive Selling, Generative Artificial Intelligence, Influence Tactics, B2B Sales, Ethical Influence

## **INTEGRATING SALES INTO ORGANIZATIONAL INNOVATION: HOW SALES MANAGERS DRIVE PARTICIPATION**

Katariina Ylönen, Doctoral Student (University of Eastern Finland), Saara Julkunen, Professor (University of Eastern Finland), Anu Puusa, Professor (University of Eastern Finland)

### **ABSTRACT**

We examine how sales managers facilitate the involvement of sales teams in innovation processes across the discovery, development, and commercialization phases. Integrating sales into innovation activities can enhance the market relevance of innovations and ensure that the customer voice is embedded throughout the development process. This research advances the understanding of managerial practices that enable this integration. The study employed thematic interviews with 28 sales managers from Nordic B2B ICT firms and analyzed the data using content analysis. The findings indicate that managerial support is essential for fostering an innovation-oriented culture within sales teams. Effective strategies include embracing transformational leadership, encouraging creativity, promoting knowledge sharing, and leveraging technological tools such as artificial intelligence. These practices enable sales teams to generate ideas, share market intelligence, and engage customers throughout the innovation process. The study contributes to theory development by clarifying the role of sales management in bridging sales and innovation.

Keywords: B2B sales, innovation process, organizational innovation, sales management, sales managers

# **LEVERAGING DIGITAL ARCHITECTURE ON B2B PLATFORMS TO DRIVE INTERNATIONAL SALES GROWTH: IMPLICATIONS FOR INTERNATIONAL SALES PROCESSES**

Pia Hautamäki (LUT University, Lahti, Finland), Minna Heikinheimo (University of Eastern Finland), Sylvie Chetty (Uppsala University)

## **ABSTRACT**

This paper explores the role of digital platforms in transforming international business-to-business (B2B) sales processes. As various B2B industries grapple with the implications of emerging digital platforms, adequate scholarly attention is required to study this phenomenon. Therefore, we focus on the digital architectures of B2B platforms and examine their opportunities for the international sales process through an abductive research based on interviews with managers from globally operating digital platform firms. This ongoing study contributes to the international B2B marketing literature by presenting a framework that illustrates an evolved sales process harnessing the digital infrastructure of international digital platform firms.

Keywords: B2B sales process; digital architecture; digital platforms; international; sales growth

## **EXTENDING CAREERS IN SALES: THE ROLE OF JOB SATISFACTION AND MOTIVATIONAL ORIENTATIONS AMONG SILVER SELLERS**

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### **ABSTRACT**

As global demographic shifts extend career longevity, understanding the motivations and performance dynamics of late-career professionals has become increasingly critical. In sales, a high-pressure, performance-driven field, silver sellers, defined as sales professionals aged 60 and above, represent an overlooked yet strategically valuable segment of the workforce. Drawing on life-span developmental theory, this research employs structural equation modeling (SEM) to examine how job satisfaction among silver sellers influences both sales performance and turnover intentions. Additionally, it explores the moderating roles of learning orientation (intrinsic motivation for skill development) and performance orientation (extrinsic focus on validation).

**Key Words:** Silver sellers, sales management, retention, sales performance

# **IMPACT OF SUPPLY CHAIN PERFORMANCE ON FIRM PROFITABILITY IN THE INDIAN FMCG SECTOR - ANALYSIS OF SC STRATEGIES ENABLING MARKETING COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE**

Siddhartha Shankar Roy and Saswati Tripathi (IIFT Kolkata)

## **ABSTRACT**

**Purpose**– The research study aims to assess the supply chain performance (SCP) characteristics of the Indian FMCG segments and evaluate the impact of the SCP on firm profitability across the segments

**Design/Methodology/Approach**- The study was based on financial data from Bloomberg and Prowess databases from the Financial Years 2012 to 2023. Statistical analyses of ANOVA and Post-hoc Tukey test were conducted to assess the FMCG segmental SCP behaviour and Fixed Effects panel data regression models were constructed to evaluate the impact of SCP on firm profitability for the pre-pandemic and post-pandemic periods. This study adopted the resource-based view (RBV) and resource orchestration frameworks to analyze how Indian FMCG firms managed resources for enhancing SCP and firm performance.

**Findings**- The findings reveal the importance of the metrics of SC efficiency, inventory turnover, cash management and total SC cost on the profitability of FMCG firms. SC metrics of efficiency, cash management and return on working capital significantly impacted profitability in the normal pre-pandemic period. The study reveals the importance of SC length, distribution cost efficiency and total SC cost metrics in enhancing firm profitability during the pandemic period. The resource orchestration aspects amongst the SC entities in the household and personal care (HPC) segment were observed.

**Originality/Value**- The novelty of the study is the evaluation of the impact of SCP on firm profitability and the comparison of pre-pandemic and post-pandemic SCP characteristics of the Indian FMCG sector.

**Keywords**:supply-chain-performance, supply-chain strategy, profitability, supply-chain efficiency, resource-orchestration

## **EVOLVING E-COMMERCE: BLOCKCHAIN TECHNOLOGY FOR SECURE AND TRANSPARENT SELLING**

Navpreet Kaur Sidhu and Devesh Bathla (Chitkara Business School, Chitkara University, Punjab, India)

### **ABSTRACT**

The advancement of e-commerce has presented novel difficulties concerning security, fraud mitigation, and transparency. Blockchain technology is progressively acknowledged as a revolutionary remedy to these issues. This systematic literature study investigates the function of blockchain in improving security and facilitating transparent transactions in e-commerce, evaluating significant advancements, applications, advantages, and obstacles. The study encompasses studies published from 2015 to 2025, emphasising how blockchain cultivates trust, reduces fraud, and guarantees openness in online markets.

## **REVEALING NEW BEHAVIORAL DRIVERS IN SALES NEGOTIATION TRAINING: A THEMATIC ANALYSIS OF VR AND AI INTEGRATION**

Stephanie Jordan (University of Bayreuth & University of Applied Sciences, Neu Ulm, Germany); Stephen Hoffmann (University of Applied Sciences, Neu Ulm, Germany); Barbara Dannenmann (University of Applied Sciences, Neu Ulm, Germany); Deva Rangarajan (IÉSEG School of Management, Lille, France); Jörg Westphal (University of Applied Sciences, Bonn, Germany) and Alexander H. Kracklauer (University of Applied Sciences, Neu Ulm, Germany).

### **ABSTRACT**

Virtual reality (VR) and artificial intelligence (AI) are revolutionizing sales negotiation training, particularly for complex products and services. This study examines factors influencing sales professionals' intention to use VR- and AI-supported training tools. Through a qualitative three study design, including interviews with sales professionals and managers, along with competitive analysis, this research identifies novel drivers such as “perceived humanness” and “trust” through thematic content analysis. Key findings highlight the importance of these drivers in technology acceptance theory within the sales domain. The study provides actionable insights for developing effective VR- and AI-based corporate training programs, emphasizing the need for adaptable and immersive solutions. This research addresses a gap in existing literature by exploring innovative alternatives to traditional, costly, and time-consuming training methods like role-playing as customer behaviour evolves and sales training programs must adapt to impart essential skills.

Keywords: AI; Behavioural Intention; Negotiation; Sales Training; VR

## **BRIDGING THE BUYER-SELLER DIVIDE: A PROCESS ALIGNMENT THEORY OF B2B CUSTOMER-CENTRICITY**

Dr. Bert Paesbrugghe (IESEG School of Management Parvis de la Défense, Paris)

### **ABSTRACT**

Despite growing emphasis on customer-centricity in B2B markets, the integration of customer related processes—spanning sales, marketing, service, and procurement—remains a challenge. This study builds new theory on how buyers and sales professionals conceptualize and implement process alignment, uncovering structural tensions that shape firm-level customer strategy. Based on 66 interviews with professional buyers and 50 with sales managers, we identify a fundamental misalignment: while buyers view customer-related processes as a mechanism for risk mitigation, compliance, and long-term efficiency, sales professionals perceive these processes as enablers of agility, responsiveness, and revenue generation. This divergence creates process friction, influencing how firms prioritize, evaluate, and institutionalize customer-related initiatives. We introduce the concept of Process Relationality, theorizing that B2B firms succeed in customer centricity not by standardizing processes across functions, but by enabling dynamic, adaptive bridges between buyer-driven control mechanisms and sales-driven relational flexibility. The study advances marketing theory by explaining why efforts to integrate sales and customer processes often falter and offers an alternative model for achieving alignment without undermining functional autonomy. These findings provide new insight into organizational tensions within B2B marketing and contribute to a broader understanding of cross-functional process governance in customer engagement.

## **THE AI-AUGMENTED SALES: EXAMINING THE ROLE OF AI ON SALES COMPETENCIES**

Dr. Ratan Kumar (Bennett University), Dr. Shipra Pandey (IILM University), Dr. Vibhava Srivastava (Management Development Institute)

### **ABSTRACT**

Artificial intelligence is transforming sales roles by automating routine activities, improving data-driven decision-making, and reshaping the competencies required of sales professionals. This study explores how artificial intelligence influences sales abilities, the evolution of skill categories, and the emergence of hybrid human and machine selling roles. Using qualitative interviews with business-to-business sales professionals across multiple industries, the study identifies three groups of competencies: those enhanced by artificial intelligence, those resistant to automation, and those that evolve through continuous learning. The findings show that while artificial intelligence

supports efficiency and analytical tasks, human abilities such as emotional intelligence, trust-building, and complex negotiation remain essential. The study highlights the importance of structured training, artificial intelligence literacy, and redesigned performance systems that promote effective cooperation between humans and artificial intelligence in modern sales environments.

Keywords: AI adoption; B2B sales; Human–AI collaboration; Sales competencies; Technology acceptance

**INVESTIGATE THE LINKAGE BETWEEN SALES TERRITORY BUSINESS  
POTENTIAL INDICES AND TERRITORY SALES PERFORMANCE- A  
MANAGERIAL PERSPECTIVE ON FMCG.**

Mukesh Kumar Mishra (IBS Hyderabad)

**ABSTRACT**

Sales management problems, unlike other marketing problems, have not received significant attention from researchers and practitioners. Industry players mostly benchmark their sales in one territory against the best in some other territory or with the best-selling competitive product/ brand in the market. There is a need to develop a systematic approach for analyzing sales performance in a given territory to manage them aptly. This paper attempts to provide a systematic approach to finding measures of territory sales potential by using the benchmarking concept. The article uses regression analyses on illustrative datasets to establish the degree of importance of various determinants.

Keywords: Benchmarking, FMCG, Sales Potential,

## **WORKPLACE PHYSICAL ACTIVITY INTERVENTIONS FOR EMPLOYEES AND COMPANY BENEFITS IN INTERNATIONALLY: A LITERATURE REVIEW**

Saara Salokangas, Saara Julkunen and Esa Hiltunen ( University of Eastern Finland).

### **ABSTRACT**

This integrated literature review explored workplace physical activity interventions targeting employees in physically demanding occupations, such as manufacturing, logistics, shipping and grocery retail for company productivity. These fields of work have received a shard of research about work well-being and performance compared to knowledge workers, even though evidence from increased physical performance at individuals uplift the company's productivity. From 19 found articles, 13 were quantitative, 5 qualitative and one conceptual. Studies had a vast differences in study designs, populations and locations, as common and general settings or findings were sparse due major differences. None of the studies investigating physical activity found no harmful effects for well-being and strengthen the consensus of the individual level benefits of exercise. There's an urgent need for longitudinal research. Broader study populations and case-control groups are needed, as well as global context investigated to increase reliability and validity of methods and results. Qualitative research was shorthanded, and follow-up studies were missing.

Keywords: physical activity, well-being, workplace, employee, blue-collar, productivity

## **BRIDGE THE CHASM OF TECHNOLOGY IN AGRI-BUSINESS: THE INVISIBLE ROLE OF GENERATIVE AI**

Harikrishna Sarma, Sree Nilakanta Srini Reddy, Karthik Hanumanthaiah (Iowa State University- Big Data in a Box Inc)

### **ABSTRACT**

The contemporary landscape of agricultural production presents significant operational and financial challenges, particularly for small and mid-sized farms, which constitute a substantial portion (48% according to USDA 2024) of US agricultural output. These entities often face disadvantages in accessing crucial resources, financial capital, and established supply chain ecosystems compared to their larger, industrialized counterparts leveraging digital transformation. Navigating these complexities necessitates a robust understanding of farm-level data to facilitate informed decision-making, mitigate risks, optimize operations, and ultimately enhance sales and profitability.

In response to these challenges, a USDA-sponsored collaborative initiative involving industry and university researchers has developed SPIDER (Smart Portable Interactive Data Extraction and Reporting), a novel Generative AI (GenAI)-based application designed to empower farmers through enhanced data management. SPIDER facilitates the seamless recording of daily farm activities using natural language input, encompassing the entire farming season from cultivation to sales and distribution. The application leverages advanced language models (LLMs) and a comprehensive knowledge base encompassing critical agricultural domains such as crop ontology, farming and crop information, certification processes, compliance regulations, and transaction data derived from user interactions and historical farmland data. This integrated approach enables the contextual understanding of unstructured farmer input, transforming it into structured, actionable information visualized through intuitive graphical representations.

Furthermore, SPIDER extends beyond basic data capture by automatically extracting and storing key business data from receipts, invoices, and historical documents, thereby streamlining the generation of on-demand reports and required forms. This digital transformation equips farmers with enhanced operational awareness and capabilities. Critically, SPIDER incorporates a two-sided platform-based B2B capacity, enabling seamless connectivity with other agri-business ecosystem partners. Authorized entities, such as certifiers and distributors, can access relevant farm operation data, fostering efficient B2B certification compliance and product distribution processes.

This research contributes to the burgeoning field of GenAI applications in business by presenting a practical implementation that addresses a critical need within the agricultural sector. SPIDER offers a compelling case study for applying LLMs in extracting and structuring complex, domain-specific information from unstructured user input. The platform's architecture, integrating a rich knowledge base with advanced natural language processing, provides a novel framework for enhancing data-driven decision-making and facilitating inter-organizational collaboration within a traditionally fragmented industry. Future research directions include evaluating the impact of SPIDER on farm profitability and sales

performance, exploring the platform's scalability across diverse agricultural contexts, and investigating the potential for further integrating additional GenAI functionalities to optimize agrarian supply chains and market access.

Keywords: Agriculture, Food Consumers and Producers, Farmers, Seed to Sale, 2-Sided Platform, Generative AI, USDA. LLM

## **AI READINESS IN SALES, MARKETING AND EXPORTS: A CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK FOR SMALL AND MEDIUM-SIZED ENTERPRISES**

Überwimmer Margarethe (University of Applied Sciences Upper Austria), Elisabeth Frankus (Institute for Advanced Studies, IHS, Vienna), Ingrid Marin (Institute for Advanced Studies, IHS, Vienna), Valerija Muravjova University of Applied Sciences Upper Austria)

### **Abstract**

Artificial intelligence (AI) is transforming sales processes, offering opportunities for automation, predictive analytics, and improved decision-making. This research investigates how small and medium enterprises can prepare for and successfully implement AI-driven solutions in sales, marketing and exports. It uses a systematic literature review, synthesizing existing research on AI readiness, digital transformation, and sales automation. The study develops a conceptual framework focusing on three dimensions: managerial, technological,

and ethical and governance. More specifically, it presents an AI Readiness Radar to enable sales organizations to assess their AI implementation status and obtain actionable strategies to accelerate adoption and integration and to identify pathways for further development. The research provides insight for key factors influencing AI adoption such as strategic planning, leadership, workforce skills, IT infrastructure, data quality, governance structures, ethical principles, and legal compliance. Insights generated can also inform policymakers, enabling them to formulate region-specific strategies to support AI integration and advancement.

Keywords: Artificial intelligence, SMEs, implementation, sales, marketing

## **SALESFORCE TECHNOLOGY RESISTANCE: A QUALITATIVE INQUIRY**

Subhan Sundaray & Vibhava Srivastava (Management Development Institute, Gurgaon )

### **ABSTRACT**

Customer Relationship Management (CRM) has been critical for enhancing business profitability, yet its continuous usage by frontline salesforce faces significant challenges. Research indicates that CRM technology implementation traditionally occurs in two stages—organizational implementation and individual adoption—but many organizations struggle with effective implementation. Over 60% of CRM usage reportedly fail, with a lack of alignment between organizational and individual-level resistance being a primary barrier. Existing literature points to various organizational and individual factors that influence usage. Despite this, much research relies on quantitative methods, leaving gaps in understanding the behavioral aspects of resistance. This study employs a qualitative, interpretive approach to explore the reasons behind frontline salespeople's resistance to CRM, utilizing open-ended interviews with private bank employees in India. The findings reveal a disconnect between salespeople's perceptions of CRM as burdensome and sales leaders' views of its strategic advantage. Addressing this disconnect through improved usability and alignment of incentives with organizational goals is essential for enhancing CRM continuous usage and maximizing investments in technology.

Keywords: CRM usage, Employee Behaviour, Frontline Salesforce, Qualitative Research, Resistance

## **THE SIX FOUNDATIONAL PILLARS OF REVOPS.**

Ahmad, Tariq Hassan & Gaston-Breton, Charlotte (ESCP Business School)

### **ABSTRACT**

With predictions around its adoption amongst fast-growing companies as well as its demand as one of the fastest growing corporate job roles, the interest in the emerging phenomenon of Revenue Operations (RevOps) has taken the corporate world by storm. This professional interest however has not converted into an equivalent amount of academic research resulting in multiple interpretations of RevOps confusing professionals as well as hindering further academic research. To help managers and academicians with a common understanding of RevOps and its characteristics, this research builds on the limited academic research available, a multivocal systematic literature review and detailed interviews with senior practitioners, to build a comprehensive understanding of RevOps. Six foundational pillars such as structure, nature of work, drivers, audience, resources and outcomes emerge from our research that help build a standard understanding of RevOps. We also share findings around associated models for future research such as the RevOps Continuum, RevOps Deployment Models and RevOps Maturity Model.

Keywords: market orientation, interfunctional coordination, integrative devices, sales marketing interface, revenue operation

## **SALESPERSON'S STRESS: A DOUBLE EDGE SWORD**

Abhimanyu Sahoo (Indian Institute of Technology, Madras, India), Vaibhav Chawla (Indian Institute of Technology, Madras, India)

### **ABSTRACT**

B2B salespeople are particularly vulnerable to mental health problems due to industry competition. The epidemic worsened the mental health problem among salespeople, which remains a serious issue. Understanding the drivers and consequences of job stress becomes essential for salespeople and companies to implement efficient management strategies. This study employs grounded theory to fill the gap in the existing literature on sales stressors and address the new stressors that are appearing in contemporary business environments. Findings suggest that the existing literature does not address client management stressors, teammates' underperformance and stock management stressors. This study also discovers issues that salespeople encounter due to sales stress during client interaction and pitching sales deals. Furthermore, the study concluded that stress helps salespeople enhance work efficiency and productivity, promotes innovation and problem-solving, allows them to focus, helps them to identify their flaws and make the right decisions, motivates them to achieve sales targets and encourages client and team relationships.

Keywords: B2B sales, Distress, Eustress, Grounded theory, Sales Stress

## **NAVIGATING THE ETHICAL AND PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS OF ALIGNING SALES STRATEGIES WITH PROSPECTS' SUSTAINABILITY BELIEFS**

Gregory Rich ( Bowling Green State University), Rhett T. Epler (Old Dominion University), Laurianne Schmit (IÉSEG School of Management), Deva Rangarajan (IÉSEG School of Management)

### **ABSTRACT**

This study examines how customer attitudes toward climate change influence receptiveness to B2B sales messaging. Drawing on social identity theory, we test whether alignment between a salesperson's message and a prospect's climate beliefs affects sales outcomes. Using a  $3 \times 3$  scenario-based experiment and two-way ANOVA ( $N = 151$ ), we show that believers respond most favorably to sustainability-focused messaging, skeptics prefer cost-focused messaging, and indifferents favour a balanced approach. The findings highlight the importance of tailoring sales messages to prospects' identities rather than relying on a single, universally effective pitch. However, such tailoring raises ethical concerns regarding transparency and the selective omission of sustainability information. In particular, adapting messages to avoid value misalignment may improve short-term effectiveness while simultaneously challenging norms of honesty, corporate responsibility, and long-term trust. The study offers implications for adaptive selling, sales training, and ethical decision-making in polarized market contexts.

Keywords: Social identity theory, Scenario based experiment, Adaptive selling, Sales messaging, Sales ethics, Environmental sustainability, Climate change attitudes

## **INFLUENCE OF DIGITAL MARKETING ON CONSUMER PURCHASING TRENDS FOR FOOD PRODUCTS IN PUNE CITY**

Amogh Deshpande, Dr. Ashok Todmal and Dr. Geeta Rao (MIT College of Management, MIT  
ADT University, Pune)

### **ABSTRACT**

Digital technologies have significantly transformed the way consumers make purchases, especially through social media, e-commerce platforms, and mobile commerce. These channels provides instant access to information, product reviews, and convenient buying options.

This study explores how key digital marketing strategies—social media advertising, influencer promotions, search engine visibility, and personalized offers—shape consumer awareness, preferences, and purchase intentions. Focusing on Pune City, the research uses primary data from about 350 respondents to examine digital marketing’s impact on purchasing patterns for food products.

Pune’s digitally active, urban consumer base offers an ideal setting to understand how convenience, accessibility, and price comparison influence buying behavior. By providing localized insights, the study addresses gaps in existing literature and highlights how digital marketing drives consumer choices in this segment.

The findings offer practical recommendations for food marketers, including mobile-optimized content, collaboration with regional influencers, and demographic-specific digital campaigns.

**Keywords:** Food Products, Consumer Buying, Customer Preferences, Digital Marketing

# **EMBRACING THE FUTURE: DETERMINANTS OF ADOPTION OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE BY SMALL AND MEDIUM BUSINESSES IN EMERGING MARKETS**

Dr. Jay Mulki (Northeastern University), Divakar Kamath (NMIMS University)

## **ABSTRACT**

The integration of artificial intelligence (AI) into operations presents both advantages and challenges for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), particularly in emerging markets. SMEs face unique limitations compared to larger corporations, that may hinder the adoption of AI technologies. The current research aims to identify organizational and environmental factors that impact the decision-making process regarding AI adoption among SMEs. Additionally, the study seeks to examine whether generational differences—play a role in shaping these adoption decisions. To systematically analyze these factors, the study will employ the Technology-Organization-Environment (TOE) framework. This will facilitate the formulation of targeted recommendations for SMEs looking to leverage AI. Data will be collected from a sample of SMEs in India, followed by the testing of structural equation models to validate hypotheses related to AI adoption. Through this investigation, the study aspires to contribute valuable insights aimed at the effective adoption of AI within the SME sector.

Keywords: Artificial Intelligence (AI), Small and Medium Enterprises (SME), Technology Acceptance Model

## **BRIDGING SALES AND SUSTAINABILITY IN THE GREEN MOBILITY INDUSTRY USING SOCIAL POWER THEORY: PERSPECTIVES FROM INDIA**

Sudhanshu Shekhar, Prasanta Kr Chopdar (Indian Institute of Management Shillong)

### **ABSTRACT**

The rapid growth of green mobility, which encompasses electric vehicles, shared mobility, and hydrogen-powered transport, is driven by growing environmental concerns and forward-thinking policies, such as India's FAME initiative. However, one problem that consistently arises is how to integrate sales-driven plans with long-term sustainability goals. Using French and Raven's Social Power Theory, this study examines how social influence and power dynamics impact the incorporation of sustainability into sales strategies in India's green mobility industry. The research employs a mixed-methods approach to examine the collaboration between sales teams and sustainability departments, identify effective forms of social power for promoting green sales, and analyze the constraints and opportunities in integrating profit with sustainability imperatives. Initial results indicate that utilizing expert and reward power fosters sustainable sales innovations, whereas coercion from regulatory frameworks facilitates adoption. The study aims to establish a structured framework for integrating sustainability into sales operations, providing practical insights for organizations seeking to balance growth with environmental stewardship.

Keywords: Green mobility, Sustainability, Sales Strategy, Social power theory, Sales operations

## **AUTOMATED OR AUGMENTED? REDEFINING SALES EXCELLENCE IN THE AGE OF AI**

A N Singh, Dr. Teidorlang Lyngdoh (Indian Institute of Management Shillong)

### **ABSTRACT**

The sales profession is undergoing a radical transformation driven by artificial intelligence(AI), machine learning (ML) and the digitization of customer interactions. AI has changed what is possible in sales. But not everything that is possible should be pursued. While AI enables hyper-personalization, efficiency, and data-driven precision, its overuse threatens to erode the human elements essential to sales: trust, empathy, creativity, and contextual judgment. Contemporary literature also highlights various critical challenges in AI-enabled sales. These challenges are compounded by integrative themes that signifies the evolution of sales. In the broader context of technological and social transformation, using mix-method approach this research asks: What constitutes “sales excellence” when algorithms meet authenticity? And proposes a reframed understanding of sales excellence (wrt contexts) that emphasises human-AI collaboration rather than substitution. This study seeks to address that imperative by redefining roles, recalibrating values & proposing a hybrid framework that blends technological precision with human authenticity.

Keywords: Sales Excellence, Artificial Intelligence, Dehumanisation, Augmented Intelligence, Emotional Intelligence, Sales Automation, Algorithmic Ethics, Human-AI Synergy

# **FROM PHYSICAL STRAIN TO PERFORMANCE GAIN? A SYSTEMATIC LITERATURE REVIEW OVER RETAILING INDUSTRY IN PHYSICALLY DEMANDING OCCUPATIONS**

Saara Salokangas, Saara Julkunen, Esa Hiltunen (International Business School, University of Eastern Finland)

## **ABSTARCT**

Employee well-being is increasingly linked to organisational performance and customer satisfaction. While physical activity benefits health and work outcomes, consensus on implementing workplace wellness practices remains limited. This review synthesises research on physical activity (PA) interventions in retail, logistics, and manufacturing, assessing their impact on employee well-being and organisational performance. A systematic review of peer-reviewed studies was conducted using Web of Science, Scopus, and EBSCO, following PRISMA guidelines. Findings suggest interventions improve health and well-being, but evidence on organisational outcomes is scarce. Literature gaps include qualitative, longitudinal, and cross-cultural studies, as well as cost-effectiveness and performance metrics. Comparing occupational groups and intervention designs proved challenging. Practical implications highlight the need for robust evidence to justify organisational investment in workplace PA programmes. This study addresses underrepresented physically demanding occupations and links individual well-being with organisational performance indicators.

Keywords: company productivity, employee well-being, employee productivity, physical activity, physically demanding occupations

## **BEYOND NEGOTIATIONS: HOW TO ALIGN PRICE DELEGATION WITH SALES INCENTIVES**

Aritra Bhattacharya, Raghu Bommaraju, Gopalakrishna Machani Gangadhar, Prakash Bagri  
(Indian School of Business, Hyderabad)

### **ABSTRACT**

Delegation of pricing authority to salespeople is a critical decision in sales management that can impact sales force motivation and performance. Through theoretical models and limited empirical designs, extant literature has explored the advantages and disadvantages of price delegation, painting a mixed picture of its effectiveness. Critically, previous research identifies that price delegation may lead to moral hazard, adversely affecting firm performance. The authors align the interests of salespeople with those of the firm through an incentive-aligned price delegation (IAPD) scheme. They leverage data from 15,746 sales transactions and 68,692 service transactions across five years from a field experiment to examine the impact of IAPD in a context where price negotiations are already prevalent. The results suggest that despite salespeople extending slightly higher discounts, IAPD improves both short-term and long-term performance. Moreover, salespeople respond positively and increase their earnings, creating a win-win situation for the firm and its salespeople.

Keywords: long-term effects, moral hazard, price delegation, sales force compensation, sales-service interface