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SUSTAINABILITY IN RELATIONSHIP MARKETING: AN EXPLORATORY MODEL FOR THE INDUSTRIAL FIELD

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Abstract

The present paper proposes a new perspective on relationship marketing in international businesses, advancing a multidimensional model, further referred to as CRMS model (the Cs of Relationship Marketing Sustainability), developed on five key dimensions of Relationship Marketing Sustainability: Convergence, Commonality, Compatibility, Credibility, Connectivity. Surpassing unidimensional approaches, the study makes a step forward to proposing and testing the CRMS integrative model which explores sustainability in international relationship marketing. The frame of reference simultaneously considers the five groups of factors. These factors were analyzed mostly separately in previous studies that were focused either on trust and commitment, or on the intercultural learning and the influence of physical and cultural distance between partners. The research uses a survey-based analysis to test the CRMS model within internationalized businesses from steel pipe industry with 107 participating companies from 13 European countries. The empirical results point out that the CRMS model has a significant predictive power on the international partnerships and business profitability.

Key words: industrial marketing, relationship marketing, sustainable partnerships, sustainability

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