

Examining the impact of destructive acts in marketing channel relationships

Authors: Jonathan D. Hibbard, Nirmalya Kumar, and Louis W. Stern

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Academic Article Abstract:

In virtually all marketing channel relationships, one of the parties eventually will engage in an action that another channel member considers potentially destructive for the relationship. How a particular channel member reacts to such an act has implications for the long term viability and success of the relationship. On the basis of a large data set collected from both a focal supplier and its independent dealers, the authors classify dealers' responses to a supplier's destructive acts by extending the response typology of exit, voice and loyalty, which is based on Hirschman's seminal writing on responses to decline in organizations and states. This study finds that dealer's reactions are influenced by several antecedent factors: perceived intensity of the supplier's destructive act, the attributions relative to the act, relationship quality before the act, and the level of interdependence between dealer and supplier. The results suggest that this more proximal dealer responses affect subsequent dealer performance and overall perceptions of relationship quality after an act. The authors draw several implications for both dealers and suppliers.

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