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Till death do us part… but not always: Six antecedents to a customer's relational preference in buyer–seller exchanges

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Abstract

Since its emergence in the early 1990s as marketing's newest paradigm or school of thought, research in the area of relationship marketing has been proliferating. From the customer's perspective, initial attempts to become lifelong partners with key sellers or suppliers were appealing. However, as these propositions multiply in number and carry with them increasing burdens in terms of time and commitment, customers are reticent to enter into long-lasting relationships with all sellers. In this paper, we consider relationship formation from the customers' perspective and examine the antecedents to a customer's preference for a relational exchange orientation versus a transactional exchange orientation. Our belief is that, depending upon a set of contextual factors surrounding the exchange, customers will opt for a relational orientation with suppliers in some cases and for a more transactional orientation in others.
Keywords
Relational exchange; Transactional exchange; Buyer–seller relationship

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