



Customer Value's Influence on International Market Entry Strategies in a B2B Context

Business and Market Opportunities in the Data Centre
Segment in Northern Europe

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Abstract

International market entry strategies gained increasing importance due to globalisation. Companies became multinationals. Therefore, new challenges arose due to different market and customer requirements. One topic, which gained importance in B2B context, is customer value. Customer value can be defined as the perceived benefits a company delivers its customers in comparison to the perceived expenses. Nevertheless, no uniform definition exist. In addition to that, if there is a direct connection between B2B customer value and international market entry strategies have not been investigated yet. Therefore, this thesis project deals with the influence of B2B customer value on international market entry strategies. To determine the link, following research question guides this thesis:

How does B2B customer value influence international market entry strategies in Northern Europe?

The research is not only focused on Northern Europe but also on the data centre segment. The investigated countries are Norway, Ireland, UK and Finland. These countries are highly interesting for the commission partner due to market developments and mega trends. Furthermore, the commission partner is represented by local subsidiaries in the four countries of interest.

In order to answer the research question, deep insights are generated via semi-structured interviews. Three customer groups are investigated: Data centre operator as well as owner, constructors including panel builder and system integrators as well as design consultants. The interviews are conducted either face-to-face or if necessary via telephone in the four countries of interest. The interviews include questions about B2B relationships, brand and marketing. If culture influences B2B customer value is investigated indirectly by the questions on B2B relationship. Market intelligence questions are added in order to create a deeper understanding of the market. Furthermore, these insights also help to interpret the answers of customers.

Due to the interviews, a picture of the B2B customer value in Northern Europe is created. Northern European customers value reliable suppliers who can offer quality products as well as solutions. In addition to that, the importance of global brands and marketing of competences is determined. Due to combining the findings with the cultural dimensions of Hofstede, it is concluded that customer value differs between other countries. Hence, customer value influences international market strategies, as different customer value require distinct international market entry strategies.

Key words: International market entry strategies, Ansoff, B2B customer value, marketing standardisation, mass customisation, branding, culture, Hofstede



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