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ORIGINAL EMPIRICAL RESEARCH

Group influences of selling teams on industrial salespeople's cross-selling behavior

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Abstract Cross-selling offers tremendous benefits for both vendors and customers. However, up to 75% of all cross-selling initiatives fail, usually for sales force–related reasons. Yet prior research has largely ignored the role of salespeople in the field of cross-selling. Using a motivation–opportunity–ability (MOA) framework, this research addresses factors that determine a salesperson's cross-selling performance, including the predominant role of the selling team as a social environment in which individual behavior occurs. A dataset of 231 industrial salespeople working in 55 teams reveals that 37% of overall variation in behavior is caused by differences across teams. The team-specific hypotheses, based on social norms and reputation theory, are tested with a hierarchical linear modeling approach with matched data from three sources. Individual cross-selling motivation has a stronger effect when a selling team has strong cross-selling norms, and in the specific context of cross-selling, selling team reputation can constrain individual behavior that might damage that reputation. Salespeople also develop beliefs about the reasons for their team reputation, including its cross-selling ability, which can reduce an individual salesperson's reputational concerns and hence reinforce individual cross-selling behavior. These results have significant theoretical and managerial implications.

Keywords Cross-selling · Work group · Selling team · Salesperson · Motivation · Ability · Social norms · Reputation theory · Share of wallet · Business-to-business marketing · MOA framework

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Introduction

Many companies deploy cross-selling as a valuable customer management process that can increase sales volume per customer and transform single-product into multi-product buyers (Kamakura 2008). In a wide-ranging study, McKinsey & Co. found that improving customers' share of wallet can add as much as ten times greater value to a company than does focusing on retention alone (Coyles and Gokey 2002). Leveraging existing customer relationships by cross-selling can create growth opportunities with low initial investments or risk levels (Hartline et al. 2000). Moreover, by broadening the relationship scope, companies can establish higher customer switching costs, reduce customer churn, and leverage existing distribution systems (Kamakura et al. 2003). Thus, cross-selling can also raise profits; Kamakura et al. (2003) found that increasing the number of products a customer uses from three to four product lines doubles the firm's profitability.

In this sense cross-selling is beneficial for the vendor, but it also benefits a customer who buys a broader range of products from the vendor. Buying additional products and services from the same vendor (also referred to as "cross-buying"; see Ngobo 2004) helps customers in several ways: they can reduce the number of suppliers from which they buy (Tuli et al. 2007), reduce the total cost of buying, and gain buying convenience (Kumar et al. 2008). For example, purchasing managers can deal with fewer sales representatives, which should improve buying process efficiency. For customers, cross-buying also increases purchasing volumes from each vendor (Kumar et al. 2008), which can ensure

higher rebates and bonuses. Because of the higher intensity of relational processes, sales representatives should gain deeper customer knowledge, which may be advantageous also for the customer (Kamakura et al. 2003; Tuli et al. 2007). Thus, cross-selling and its counterpart cross-buying have simultaneous and important benefits for both the vendor and the customer.

However, cross-selling also comes with a downside; realizing its potential is not easy, and it often fails to show expected results. Professionals in the CRM industry report that failure rates of cross-selling initiatives are 70% or higher across industries (DeGabrielle 2007). Homburg and Schäfer (2001) estimate that German financial service providers exploit only one-third of their customers' cross-buying potential, and a survey of German banks has indicated that 75% of managers are unsatisfied with their cross-selling success (Wiedmann et al. 2003).

Most extant research in the field of cross-selling has emphasized the identification and evaluation of cross-selling opportunities with an existing customer base and prospects (Kamakura et al. 1991, 2003; Li et al. 2005; Netessine et al. 2006). However, a key bottleneck in cross-selling may lie with the sales force, because "information gleaned from CRM systems can aid the sales force, but the lion's share of cross-selling takes place eyeball to eyeball" (Kane 2005, p. 64). In their boundary-spanning role, salespeople must know the product portfolio well, understand various product-related advantages, and communicate them effectively to customers. Yet salespeople often refrain from gathering such knowledge and prefer instead to focus on proven sellers in their product portfolio (Wieseke et al. 2008), largely ignoring other products that could address new customer needs and exploit customer potential. The sales force's motivation to support cross-selling also is critical; as Duclos et al. (2007, p. 2) point out, "many salespeople resist cross-selling, so management must address their misgivings head on and convince them of its benefits."

Any investigation of salespeople's motivation and behavior must recognize that it does not occur in a vacuum but rather takes place in a social environment (Homburg et al. 2010; Wieseke et al. 2008). Sales teams often play prominent roles, especially in business-to-business settings with technologically complex products and services (Ahearne et al. 2010; Moon and Armstrong 1994; Moorman and Albrecht 2008). Yet relatively few sales management studies address social influences, such as team norms (Ahearne et al. 2010) or supervisor's and coworkers' subjective norms (Fu et al. 2010; Homburg et al. 2010).

In response, this study addresses the question of whether and how selling teams and their characteristics, as a social environment, influence a salesperson's cross-selling behavior. In particular, we focus on two team aspects: (1) group norms and (2) team reputation (and related reputational concerns). We develop a motivation–opportunity–ability (MOA) framework that incorporates the team environment as both an opportunity and a constraint to individual motivation and behavior. Thus, for the individual salesperson, we posit and find that cross-selling motivation has a positive influence on a salesperson's adoption of a company's product portfolio, which in turn increases his or her cross-selling performance. We also propose three team-specific hypotheses, relying on both social norm and reputation theories. Our analysis shows that 37% of the variation in a salesperson's behavior stems from differences across teams. Specifically, the effect of cross-selling motivation on a salesperson's product adoption is stronger when sales teams have strong group norms about cross-selling. Further, as one would expect, a high team reputation generally is beneficial for a salesperson's performance; however, in the specific context of cross-selling, a high team reputation can create reputational concerns which constrain individual cross-selling motivation and behavior. In particular, salespeople avoid cross-selling if it might damage the reputation of their team. Finally, we find that salespeople develop beliefs about reasons for their team's reputation; if team members have high cross-selling ability, then cross-selling appears to provide a likely reason. Therefore, high cross-selling ability by a team reduces the salesperson's reputational concerns and reinforces individual cross-selling behavior.

To obtain these results, we use three matched data sources: salesperson surveys, sales manager surveys, and company records from an industrial glass manufacturer. To validate our new scales, we also collected data from 271 salespeople in a different industry. We address the natural nesting of salespeople in sales teams by applying a multilevel design using HLM 7.0. We proceed as follows: We first develop our conceptual framework and hypotheses before describing the data and elaborating on our methodology. Then, we present our findings and discuss their managerial, theoretical, and methodological implications, as well as the limitations of our research.

Conceptual framework

Role of selling teams

The complexity of the selling task has evolved beyond the capabilities of a single person, especially in business-to-business markets, where sellers must match the various needs of specific members of the customer organization (Moon and Armstrong 1994). Many companies thus have shifted their sales models from traditional single salesperson to team-based approaches (Ahearne et al. 2010), which help

sellers deal with technological complexity in products and services, supplier rationalization, coordinated buying, and greater customer expectations (Smith and Barclay 1993). Team-based selling also encourages internal coordination, cross-selling, and customer solutions (Moorman and Albrecht 2008). Research has revealed various team constellations, including selling centers, core selling teams, and national account management teams (e.g., Moon and Gupta 1997; Smith and Barclay 1993). Many companies structure their sales forces in groups or teams according to set criteria, such as geographic districts, products, customer segments, selected major accounts, or some combination. Generally, each sales group is supervised by a sales manager.

A selling team assigned to a certain customer comprises all members of the selling organization who are directly or indirectly involved in the selling process for that customer (Moon and Armstrong 1994). There may be a core selling team for every buying organization. A salesperson also can belong to multiple core teams, serve one customer on his or her own, and service other customers in collaboration with salespeople in his or her sales group. This situation marks many business-to-business industries, such as machinery, tools, pharmaceuticals, chemicals, devices, and commodities.

Sales team members are more than just a collection of individuals; they view themselves and are viewed by others (e.g., supervisors, customers) as a social entity (Guzzo and Dickson 1996). Salespeople in the same sales group interact in many formal (e.g., sales meetings) and informal (e.g., phone calls) ways.[1] They likely exhibit some task interdependence and shared goals, because salespeople embedded in a sales group share the same organizational settings and work for the same sales manager. Group members may offer important second opinions and share experiences, values, and mental models (Mohammed and Dumville 2001). Thus, the sales team provides an important, context-specific factor that establishes norms and expectations to be shared by group members and tells individual salespeople what they should and should not do in various situations (Hackman 1992). To the best of our knowledge, this study is the first to examine the group influence of the sales team on individual cross-selling behavior.

Cross-selling

Cross-selling and the related concept of up-selling have been cited as alternative sales techniques in customer relationship management literature (Bolton et al. 2008; Reinartz et al. 2004). According to Kamakura (2008, p. 42), cross-selling is "sales of additional items related (or sometimes unrelated) to a previously purchased item, while up-selling involves the increase of order volume either by the sales of more units of the same purchased item, or the upgrading into a more expensive version of the purchased item." Broad agreement notes the importance of the cross-selling concept and its distinction from up-selling (Kamakura 2008; Li et al. 2005; Netessine et al. 2006), though authors differ in their understanding of several aspects.

First, the "item" sold might be a product or service or a bundle thereof (Li et al. 2005; Netessine et al. 2006). Second, "additional" implies that cross-sold items neither replace items purchased previously (which is likely upgrading; Netessine et al. 2006) nor are the same as previously purchased items (up-selling). Third, though many authors require that a customer has previously purchased, some suggest that this condition is sufficiently met even if a customer only has indicated a previous intent or desire to buy (Netessine et al. 2006). Fourth, the additional items might be related (e.g., accessories) or unrelated to the originally purchased item, and they might originate from a third party or the company itself (Homburg and Schäfer 2001), whether from the same or a different product division of the focal company (Malms and Schmitz 2011). Fifth, items can be cross-sold simultaneously or successively (Li et al. 2005; Netessine et al. 2006).

Some authors regard cross-selling as one of the many techniques or tools available in the customer relationship management toolkit (e.g., Bolton et al. 2008; Kamakura 2008; Reinartz et al. 2004). This view ignores the role that cross-selling plays in business practice and cannot reflect the organizational changes many companies undergo when they decide to cross-sell (e.g., restructured sales organizations, team selling, incentive schemes, sales training, pricing processes; see Duclos et al. 2007). Kamakura (2008, p. 41) recognizes that cross-selling "has evolved into a strategy for customer relationship management" designed to increase the firm's share of the customer wallet, broaden the relationship scope, and increase customer retention. In this sense, looking at cross-selling as solely a tool neglects the relevance and organizational dimension of it in real-world business practices. In addition, defining cross-selling as a tool may mistakenly imply an instrumental character, such that its use

[1] We thank an anonymous reviewer for pointing out that research has distinguished groups and teams conceptually, such as according to the level of task interdependence (e.g., Chan 1998). From this perspective, members of groups are highly independent in their tasks, whereas members of teams are interdependent as they share collective effort and performance (Robbins et al. 2010). In other research, the term *work group* takes on a broader meaning (e.g., Hackman 1992; Kelly and Barsade 2001; Knippenberg et al. 2004), also embracing groups with high task interdependence among the members. The latter is consistent with a view broadly shared in team research, which defines a team as a task-specific or temporary group (e.g., Cohen and Bailey 1997; Moon and Armstrong 1994; Tyran and Gibson 2008). Following this view, we examine sales teams as a specific type of work group, in which there is at least moderate task interdependence among members. Thus, we use the terms *work team* and *work group* interchangeably when referring to sales teams, consistent with prior literature (e.g., Andersen and West 1998; Barrick et al. 1998; Chan 1998; Fiorelli 1988; Sundstrom et al. 1990).

would lead directly to the desired results. This direct link is not always accurate for cross-selling, which instead is a complex process that—as highlighted in our study—must overcome obstacles to the achievement of desired outcomes.

We therefore investigate cross-selling as a customer management process that employs various actors and resources to obtain desired objectives. The prominent role of salespeople and their social environment, as human resources in the cross-selling process, leads us to adopt a behavioral perspective. That is, various inputs and mechanisms related to human actors (e.g., motivation, ability, social environment) influence the achievement of desired process outcomes. For this research, we define cross-selling as a customer management process that involves the sale of additional products or services that are not the same and that can be related or unrelated to those that a customer has purchased or declared a desire to buy previously.

Cross-selling motivation, adoption behavior, and performance

Many personal selling studies indicate that motivation is fundamental for organizational success, because it directly affects behavior and performance. For example, Weitz et al. (1986) have shown that motivation drives salespeople's adaptive selling behavior and performance. In turn, we apply the motivation–opportunity–ability (MOA) framework to cross-selling, as a well-established theoretical basis for explaining human behavior (Siemsen et al. 2008). The framework captures the link of motivation and its interaction with ability on behavior and performance, even as it considers opportunity as a likely environmental boundary that influences how motivation forms behavior. The explicit consideration of boundary conditions, which may enable or hinder individual behavior, as a key element of the MOA framework adds value.

In particular, opportunity reflects the extent to which a situation or context is conducive to enable action (Rothschild 1999; Siemsen et al. 2008). We investigate several situational factors describing the social environment of a salesperson, such as team norms and team reputation, which might enhance or impede desired outcomes. Accordingly, opportunity might be approached from a positive perspective as it can facilitate a context that is conducive to individual action, or it might be viewed from a negative perspective, such that situational elements (e.g., environmental constraints) actually complicate and impede the action (MacInnis et al. 1991; Siemsen et al. 2008). Consistent with our research objectives, we thus provide a novel perspective on the MOA framework by focusing on team characteristics—as manifestations of the social environment—and their interaction effects with cross-selling ability and a salesperson's motivation on individual behavior and resulting performance, as we reveal in Fig. 1.

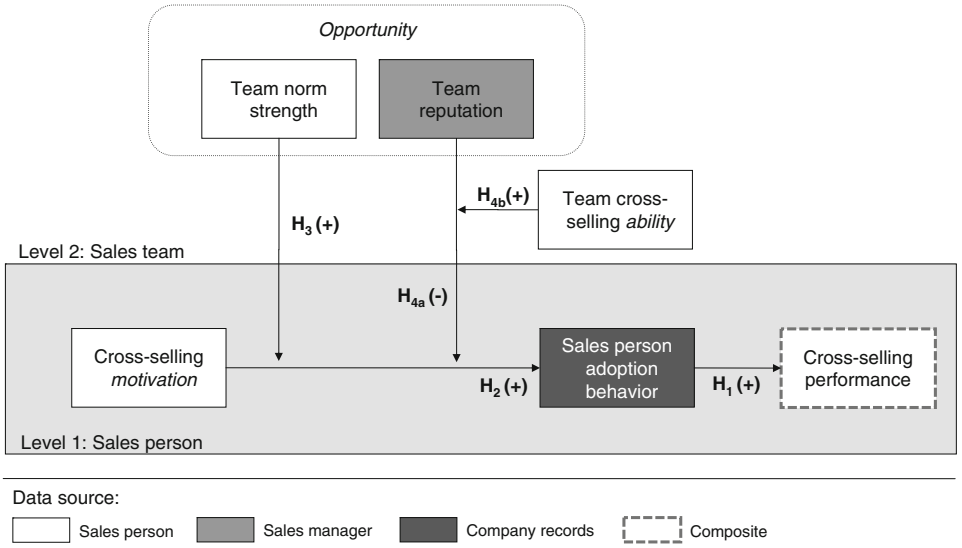
Cross-selling performance refers to the degree to which a salesperson taps the cross-buying potential of existing customers, which should result in increased sales volume (Keiningham et al. 2007). To address a broader scope of customer needs that have not previously been covered, salespeople must include a broader selection of products and services when making offers. Specifically, they must adopt a greater share of their company's product portfolio and have knowledge about a broader scope of products. When we refer to a salesperson's adoption of the company's product portfolio, we refer to the degree to which that salesperson chooses to sell from the entire range of products available in his or her company's product portfolio. This choice is manifest in actual selling behavior. That is, a strong indicator of a salesperson's adoption of the company's product portfolio is the dispersion of sales across products and services of different product divisions (Anderson and Robertson 1995). The more a salesperson's sales concentrate on a few products, the lower portfolio adoption is. If sales are spread more equally across all the products in a portfolio, portfolio adoption is higher.

Research suggests that adoption behavior relates to (but is not synonymous with) a salesperson's attitudinal adoption (Homburg et al. 2010) as well as his or her experience with and knowledge about the object of that adoption (i.e., the company's product portfolio; Atuahene-Gima 1997). That is, salespeople who sell a broader range of a company's product portfolio likely are knowledgeable and experienced with a broader range of products and should be able to use their product-related knowledge flexibly in sales presentations to customers. Moreover, salespeople need to understand which products fulfill which needs of which customer. Adopting a greater range of the company's product portfolio also should enhance the ability to address customer needs and create superior value for the customer. Thus, the adoption of a company's product portfolio should determine how well a salesperson exploits cross-buying potential and gains more sales volume with a given set of customers.

H1: The greater a salesperson's adoption of a company's product portfolio, the higher is his or her cross-selling performance.

Motivation is an internal psychological state that stimulates a person to engage in a particular behavior (Brown and Peterson 1994) and that plays a critical role in explaining how and why behavior happens (Weitz et al. 1986). For this study, we focus on cross-selling motivation, which we define as the motivation to sell additional products or services that differ from those a customer purchased previously. Salespeople with higher cross-selling motivation should be willing to find solutions for their customers beyond the scope already offered. In turn, they must actively search for products and services that fit best and are likely to be

Fig. 1 Hypothesized model



appreciated by customers. We thus argue that salespeople with a strong cross-selling motivation work to obtain more information about the available product portfolio (Shamir 1991). Motivation in cross-selling also should relate positively to effort. In their front-line role, motivated salespeople attempt to span the boundary between their customers' needs and their company's ability to meet these needs with available products and services. Thus, salespeople with higher cross-selling motivation should adopt a broader scope of their company's product portfolio.

H2: The higher a salesperson's cross-selling motivation, the greater is his or her adoption of a company's product portfolio.

Strength of cross-selling norms in selling teams

From social norm theory, we know that individual motivation, intention, and behavior depend on a team environment. Group norms offer acceptable standards of behavior, agreed on by the group members (Ehrhart and Naumann 2004). Norms tell members what they ought and ought not to do in certain circumstances; social norms indicate what is expected with respect to behaviors. When accepted by a group, norms influence individual behaviors of group members (Hackman 1992).

Specific characteristics determine the strength of group norms, namely, crystallization and intensity. Crystallization is the "degree of consensus among group members about the amount of approval or disapproval" associated with a desired or undesired behavior (Hackman 1992, p. 239); it refers to variation in approval among team members. If crystallization about the cross-selling motivation in a team is high, there is high consensus (low variability) in approval levels among all team members. In other words, all team members share very similar attitudes toward a motivation to cross-sell. Ahearne et al. (2010, p. 462) argue that when perceptions are similar among virtually all members, group norms are strong and "should produce uniform behavior." Intensity instead reflects the overall strength of approval and disapproval associated with a norm or the agreement with a norm by a team. In sales teams with high average cross-selling motivation across team members, the cross-selling norm has high intensity; a low average level of agreement indicates low intensity.

Furthermore, "norms that are both well crystallized and highly intense engender greater compliance than those that are not" (Hackman 1992, p. 239). A group norm is strong if it is both well-crystallized and intense (Jackson 1975), which results in the correction of any norm violations (Hackman 1992). Various mechanisms allow a group to influence individual behavior, such as reinforcing desired behavior by granting social rewards or punishment (Ehrhart and Naumann 2004). For example, if a salesperson's individual cross-selling motivation is below the team's expectations, its normative influence should encourage individual behavior to reach higher levels. Group norms also give individuals behavioral routines that imply certain behavior–outcome relationships shared in the group and thus influence individual expectancies (Hackman 1992). If a team has a strong cross-selling norm, salespeople likely expect that cross-selling behavior will enable them to achieve sales targets and thus adapt their individual behavior. Therefore, we propose a positive reinforcing effect of norm strength:

H3: A stronger cross-selling norm in a sales team reinforces the relationship between an individual salesperson's cross-selling motivation and his or her adoption of a company's product portfolio.

Team reputation and reputational concerns

Reputation is "an impression of public esteem or high regard judged by other people" (Merriam-Webster 1996, p. 1001). In a sales context, reputation is judged by customers, who are a specific group of "other people" that is of primary interest. Customers might evaluate the reputation of at least three entities: the firm, the salesperson, and the sales team (collective salespersons). We focus on the reputation of the sales team, as evaluated by the customer. This reputation is critical in situations in which the actions of other sales team members are relevant for a salesperson and the reputation of the team is important for the customer, such as when (1) personal relationships with sales representatives are essential, (2) the customer deals with more than one person from the vendor, (3) customer networks exist to share experience with a vendor's sales team members, (4) relationships between customers and vendors are long-term oriented, or (5) the buying decision is uncertain and includes evaluation criteria other than product specifications and price. These criteria are common in industrial business-to-business settings, where the complexity of the selling task has evolved beyond any individual salesperson's capabilities.

We also note that reputation is conceptually distinct from image, which "reflects what a firm stands for," whereas reputation refers to "how well it has done in the eyes of the marketplace" (Weiss et al. 1999, p. 75). Thus a sales team's reputation does not indicate what the team stands for (e.g., fairness, innovativeness, quality, flexibility) but rather offers a positive global evaluation and key indicator of the team's effectiveness, as perceived by the customer. Team reputation also captures future expectations about performance, social interactions, and other behaviors (Tyran and Gibson 2008). A high reputation likely is related to outcomes that are important to the sales team as well as the individual sales team members. For example, favorable reputation perceptions induce positive customer attitudes toward the company's products and salespeople, enhanced buying intentions, and choice behavior (Weiss et al. 1999). Moreover, customers' risk perceptions decline, while trust increases, when they deal with salespeople from well-reputed teams (Helm and Salminen 2010). Individual salespeople also benefit personally from the spillover of their team's reputation (Helm and Salminen 2010). Thus team reputation should support the salesperson's selling process in the course of establishing new and maintaining existing relationships with customers.

Reputation theory proposes that a social entity (e.g., a sales team) and its members engage in actions to sustain or enhance its reputation and avoid behaviors that damage it (Weiss et al. 1999). As cross-selling by definition implies offering new products that a customer has not bought before, it is associated inherently with a risk of harming reputational perceptions. For example, salespeople may fear that a product does not perfectly fit customers' needs, that missing product-related experience of the customer will cause usage problems, or that new or unexpected problems may arise which the salesperson cannot necessarily troubleshoot. Overall, they may fear that they are not satisfying or are even dissatisfying customers and jeopardizing existing relationships if they sell products they have never sold to the customer before (Anderson and Robertson 1995). Thus salespeople's adoption of further products (i.e., offering a broader product portfolio) may be associated with risk, both of jeopardizing their relationship with the customer and of harming the reputation of the sales team. Failure due to cross-selling could induce a potential negative spillover on team reputation, which creates reputational concerns. In particular, salespeople are afraid of damaging their team reputation for three main reasons. First, the loss of team reputation reduces the beneficial effects for the team member. Second, other team members also lose the benefits of team reputation, which adds pressure to each member to avoid behavior that might hamper a team's reputation (Hackman 1992). Third, a higher team reputation likely increases customer expectations of the salesperson's performance, which raises failure likelihood and reinforces reputational concerns. Thus, we propose:

H4a: The relationship between a salesperson's cross-selling motivation and the adoption of a company's product portfolio is weaker for sales teams with a good reputation in the marketplace and stronger for sales teams with a poor reputation.

Reputation theory also predicts that another factor is necessary for understanding the specific actions of each salesperson: salespeople form reputation-related beliefs about the reasons for a team's reputation (Weiss et al. 1999). Such beliefs may be causal, if they reflect the extent to which a specific action appears instrumental in affecting the reputation (Fishbein and Ajzen 1975). In the formation of beliefs about the reputation of a team, the perception of a team's abilities may be important. If the specific abilities of team members are high, they may imply causality with the team's good reputation. For example, a sales team may have a high reputation because it is good at cross-selling, which means it has a deep understanding of customer needs, can select appropriate products, and makes appealing offers to the customer. Then, salespeople may believe that cross-selling is a reason for the team's reputation.

We define cross-selling ability as the salesperson's skills or knowledge, related to the action of cross-selling additional products to existing customers (Rothschild 1999). Such knowledge and skills might refer to the company's products or to selling additional products to customers. The team's cross-selling ability then represents the extent to which a

team comprised of members possesses the skills or knowledge needed to engage in cross-selling. If the cross-selling ability of the team is poor, it is unlikely that cross-selling explains the team's strong reputation; however, if its cross-selling ability is good, cross-selling offers a potential source of reputation. A salesperson's belief that cross-selling causes the team's reputation then should mitigate reputational concerns, such that reputational concerns decrease when the salesperson perceives greater cross-selling ability in the sales team.

H4b: The negative moderating effect of team reputation on the individual motivation–adoption relationship is weaker for teams with good cross-selling ability but stronger for teams with poor cross-selling ability.

Methodology

Data collection and sample

We collected data from three separate sources: (1) salesperson surveys, (2) sales manager surveys, and (3) archival data from company records. To collect the quantitative empirical data, we received assistance from a large industrial glass products manufacturer. The company employs more than 15,000 people and sells products from 24 product divisions, specialized according to technology or product groups. In terms of market share, the company is among the top three in most of its niche markets. Sales from all divisions and selling teams follow the same quota–bonus compensation scheme. The firm considers sales from all product divisions in calculating sales quotas for individual salespeople.

The survey questionnaires were provided to 288 salespeople within the company. We received 231 responses, for an 80% response rate. Salespeople provided information indicating their cross-selling motivation, cross-selling ability, and share of customers' cross-buying potential. The average respondent was 36 years old and had worked for 8.6 years (SD=7.36 years) at the company; 94% were men, which is typical for this technical industry. To assess nonresponse bias, we compared the means of all relevant constructs between early (Quartile 1) and late (Quartile 4) respondents, in line with Armstrong and Overton's (1977) procedure. We found no differences at a .05 significance level.

Then we administered a second survey to 57 sales managers, the direct supervisors of the salespeople surveyed. Of these, 55 sales managers responded (54 men, 1 woman), for a response rate of 96%. They provided information about the sales team reputation and subordinates' sales quota achievement. Then we matched the responses of salespeople and sales managers to create a two-level dataset.

Each sales manager exclusively supervised one sales team. All sales teams were organized geographically and by customer segment specialties (e.g., defense, aviation, lighting, automotive). On average, the sales teams consisted of 4.44 team members, with at least 3 team members in a team. Of the 55 total teams, 40 (72.7%) contained only men, 1 (1.8%) included only women, and 14 teams (25.5%) featured members of both genders. Although sales team members called on their customers independently, they coordinated their sales calls, shared customer and competitor information, shared sales strategies, cross-sold product lines, and followed up on visits by other members of the team. Cross-selling and its resulting higher sales volume led to better individual quota achievement and higher individual bonuses. When working for the same customer with colleagues from the sales team, any sale counted for both the focal salesperson and the colleague (i.e., double commission).

The final dataset contained 55 usable level-2 and 222 usable level-1 data records, for an effective response rate of 77%. The sample size thus is sufficient for multilevel hierarchical linear modeling, which requires a sample size at the macro level (in this case, sales teams) to be 50 or more (Wieseke et al. 2008).

Measures at the salesperson level

We used well-established scales and adapted existing scales when available. However, because our study is one of the first to explore empirically the role of the sales force in cross-selling, scales for several latent constructs were not available. On the salesperson level, we developed new scales, following Churchill's (1979) and Anderson and Gerbing's (1982) recommendations. First, we specified the concept of the constructs with a review of relevant literature. Second, we developed an initial pool of items from established scales, which we adapted to the specific context of cross-selling. For example, for cross-selling motivation, we used a four-item scale adapted from Sujan et al.'s (1994) original nine-item measure of learning orientation. We based the cross-selling ability scale on Hartline and Ferrell's (1996) six-item measure of adaptability and Mulki et al.'s (2008) three-item measure of self-efficacy. Each adapted scale was judged on its content validity and redundancy by seven salespeople who participated in a focus group discussion on the topic of cross-selling. In line with their feedback, we refined the wording of three items. Third, we pretested the remaining items with a small sample of 19 salespeople from the glass manufacturing company. None of the participants had any difficulties understanding or answering the survey questions, which led to the scale items in Table 1. Fourth, as we detail subsequently, we tested the psychometric quality (e.g., convergent and discriminant validity) of the

scale with the quantitative survey data (n=231 salespeople), then confirmed the retest validity with a second sample of 271 salespeople from a biotech company.

To measure the degree of a salesperson's product portfolio adoption, we used objective data from company records and constructed a Herfindahl-Hirschman index of the concentration of sales across 24 different product divisions.[2] This index is the sum of squares of the salesperson's sales shares; for each salesperson we calculated the index as follows:

$$\text{Product portfolio adoption } PPA_j = \sum_{i=1}^{n} \left(\frac{s_{ij}}{S_j}\right)^2,$$

where s_{ij} is the annual sales volume of person j with product division i, and S_j is the annual sales volume of salesperson j. If a salesperson achieves all annual sales with products from a single product division (=100%), the index indicates the maximum concentration of 10,000. More equitable distributions of sales across different product divisions leads to a lower Herfindahl index (minimum for 24 product divisions=416.7). For this study, we recoded $PPA_{new}=-1\times(PPA_{orig}-10{,}000)$, so a lower PPA value indicated less sales dispersion (higher concentration), and higher PPA values indicated more sales dispersion. Thus, high values of PPA_{new} indicated great product portfolio adoption, whereas low values indicated poor salesperson adoption.

We conceptualized a salesperson's cross-selling performance as a reflective second-order construct. Our first-order subscales reflect two facets of cross-selling performance: (1) sales quota achievement by the salesperson and (2) the share of customers' cross-buying potential tapped by the salesperson (similar to share of wallet from consumer research; Kamakura et al. 2003). To measure sales quota achievement, we employed a supervisor rating. The share of customer cross-buying potential was measured by a four-item, seven-point rating scale, originally developed by Schafer (2002), that captures the extent to which a salesperson's customers purchase the relevant product portfolio from the focal vendor. We averaged the scores on this scale for each salesperson. To address the different scale formats (see Table 1), we z-standardized sales quota achievement and cross-buying scales, then computed a composite variable by averaging the scores of the two facets of cross-selling performance.

We include two control variables in the model as well. Cross-divisional orientation (CDO) and resource availability (RES) are two potent predictors of a salesperson's product adoption behavior. The former captures the degree to which departments and divisions of a company support selling processes across internal firm boundaries; the three-item scale comes from Malms and Schmitz (2011). The latter captures the extent to which technical, marketing, financial, and other resources are available in the organization to support the salesperson's efforts to sell effectively (Plouffe and Barclay 2007).

Measures at the sales team level

At the sales team level, we measured team reputation with a four-item scale, using the sales managers' evaluations (Weiss et al. 1999). This referent-shift perspective (Chan 1998) captures a team's belief about how others (i.e., customers) likely evaluate a team's reputation, which is what finally shapes sales team members' behavior. For team cross-selling ability and team norm strength, we employed composition models of the level-1 constructs (Chan 1998). That is, we measured team cross-selling ability by asking team members about their own ability with respect to cross-selling, using a six-item scale. Consistent with previous research (Chan 1998), we constructed an additive composition variable for each team by averaging all team members' composite scores. To exclude self-perceptions of salespeople, which might use the ability of other team members as references, we corrected the measure as follows:

$$\text{Team cross-selling ability } TABIL_j = \frac{1}{n}\sum_{i=1}^{n}\left[\left(\frac{\sum_{i=1}^{n}(ABIL_{ji})}{n} - \frac{ABIL_{ji}}{n}\right)\times\frac{n}{n-1}\right],$$

where i=1−n salespeople who are members of team j. The higher the score, the higher a team's cross-selling ability.

As we noted previously, a team norm is strong if it is both crystallized and intense (Rentsch and Steel 2003; see also Chatman 1989; Hackman 1992; Jackson 1975). Therefore, we created a composition variable of individual responses about cross-selling motivation in three steps, consistent with covert measurement methods suggested by Ehrhart and Naumann (2004). First, we developed a dispersion model (Chan 1998) to measure crystallization of the cross-selling norm. To capture variability in team members' approval of the cross-selling norm, we averaged the cross-selling motivation measure for each team member and produced a composite score for the construct; then we calculated the

[2] The Herfindahl index is a common measure of concentration in economic literature (Tirole 1989). It also has proved useful in marketing for measuring competitive intensity (e.g., Luo et al. 2010; McAlister et al. 2007; Putsis and Bayus 2001), the structure of retailers' brand portfolios (e.g., Ailawadi et al. 2006), consumers' spending across stores (e.g., Goldman 1978), consumers' product alternative choices (e.g., Nowlis et al. 2010), and firm revenue as either concentrated or spread over the customer portfolio (e.g., Yli-Renko and Janakiraman 2008). To the best of our knowledge, this study is the first to use the Herfindahl index to measure sales concentration across products in the context of personal selling.

Table 1 Measurement scales

Constructs and items	Main study (sample 1) IR	CR	AVE	Retest (sample 2) CR	AVE
Cross-selling motivation (based on Sujan et al. 1994)		.87	.71	.88	.72
Offering customers additional products from other divisions can be important.	.62				
Salespersons should take responsibility for optimal solutions for their customers.	.61				
I feel good about providing customers additional products.	.90				
Offering customers additional products fascinates me.	.74				
Cross-selling ability (based on Hartline and Ferrell 1996; Mulki et al. 2008)		.86	.63	.88	.66
I know the products we offer for different applications within my own division.	.24				
I know the products we offer for different applications within other divisions.	.63				
I feel confident about offering products not being sold within my division.	.71				
I can easily modify my sales presentation if customers ask for additional products.	.79				
I am very flexible in offering a wide range of different products and services depending on my customer's needs.	.80				
I feel very insecure in offering a wide range of different products and services, if they are not from my division. (R)	.59				
Share of customers' cross-buying potential (based on Schafer 2002)		.88	.72	.89	.75
We cover our customers' needs for additional products already on a broad basis.	.66				
Our customers obtain additional products they require in most cases from us.	.86				
Most additional products we offer, our customers purchase from us.	.67				
We exploit the customers' potential with regard to additional products extensively.	.60				
Cross-divisional orientation (Malms and Schmitz 2011)		.72	.59		
The degree of integration between technical support and sales is very good.	.65				
Our company is very keen on supporting a team-selling culture.	.60				
The divisions in our organization enable easy cross selling processes.	.54				
Resource availability		.61	.50		
Often there are time and resource constraints in our organization. (R)	*.69*				
Because we do not have enough employees, I have to execute many tasks. (R)	*.34*				
Missing resources in product divisions make response times for requests (technical/offers) too long. (R)	*.48*				
Sales quota achievement (observer rated)		–	–		
Please evaluate the overall sales quota achievement of each salesperson for the fiscal year. (1=Sales missed quota by a lot, 2=Sales missed quota by some, 3=Sales met quota level, 4=Sales exceeded quota level by some, 5=Sales exceeded quota level by a lot.)					
Team reputation (based on Weiss et al. 1999)		.72	.54		
Our sales team has a strong reputation for providing quality products and services.	.76				
Our customers value our products more than that of our competitors.	.35				
Our sales team is highly regarded for providing good service support to our customers.	.59				
Our customers consider our sales team's sales and service personnel to be knowledgeable and professional.	.46				

Main study (sample 1)[1] : χ^2 =146.9, df=74, p=.00, RMSEA=.06, CFI=.92, SRMR=.05

Retest (sample 2)[1] : χ^2 =138.8, df=74, p=.00, RMSEA=.06, CFI=.95, SRMR=.05

IR indicator reliability; *CR* composite reliability; *AVE* average variance extracted; *df* degrees of freedom, *p* level of probability; *RMSEA* root mean square error of approximation; *CFI* comparative fit index; *SRMR* standardized root mean residual

The scales range from "strongly disagree" (1) to "strongly agree" (7). (R) = a reverse-scored item

[1] All three level-1 multi-item scales were included in the confirmatory factor analysis

range of scores to indicate dispersion among team members. Range provides an appropriate measure of dispersion, because group members tend to refer to extremes in group deviants as reference points when forming their own opinions (Hackman 1992). We then multiplied the range for each team by −1 and adjusted it according to the maximum range across all teams, to obtain a positive measure of crystallization of the cross-selling norm for the sales team: A

high score indicates strong crystallization (low range). Second, we created an additive composition model (Chan 1998) of the intensity of the cross-selling norm by averaging the individual team members' composite scores on the cross-selling motivation for each team. A high norm intensity score indicates a high level of cross-selling motivation in the team. Third, we constructed the measure of norm strength as follows:

$$\text{Team norm strength } \text{TNORM}_j = \text{norm crystallization} \times \text{norm intensity}$$

$$= \left[-1 \times \left(MOT_{jRange}\right) + \left(MOT_{.Range}\right)_{.\max}\right] \times \overline{MOT},$$

where j is the sales team. Thus a high score indicates a strong norm, as is the case when the consensus among team members (crystallization) and intensity of approval are both high.

Measure assessment

Table 1 provides a complete list of the measurement items we used. All scales indicated strong psychometric properties, in support of the reliability and validity of the measurements. A confirmatory factor analysis shows that all multi-item scales have composite reliabilities above the .60 threshold and average variance extracted (AVE) greater than .50. In addition, most item reliabilities are above the recommended value of .40 (see Table 1). Although they indicate item reliabilities below the desired levels, we retained the items, "I know the products we offer for different applications within my own division" and "Our customers value our products more than those of our competitors," in their respective scales to maintain a high content validity of the scales. We assessed discriminant validity using Fornell and Larcker's (1981) criterion, which requires the AVE to exceed the squared correlations between all pairs of constructs. All constructs for which an AVE was available fulfilled this requirement. In addition, we tested discriminant validity among all variables on their respective measurement level by conducting a series of nested chi-square analyses. Constraining the correlation of any pair of variables to 1 resulted in a significant increase in the chi-square statistics. At the salesperson level (level 1), $\Delta\chi^2$ (d.f.=1)=7.5 ($p<.01$) was the smallest chi-square increase when we constrained the correlation between cross-selling performance and product portfolio adoption. At the sales team level (level 2), $\Delta\chi^2$ (d.f.=1)=12.4 ($p<.01$) when we constrained the correlation between team reputation and team norm strength, and all other changes were higher. Thus, the results supported discriminant validity.

To identify possible multicollinearity among the four predictor variables, we calculated the variance inflation factors (VIFs) for level-1 and disaggregated level-2 predictors. The VIF values of 1.24 (cross-selling motivation), 1.09 (team norm strength), 1.02 (team reputation), and 1.17 (team cross-selling ability) indicated no multicollinearity problems (Kleinbaum et al. 1998). Table 2 contains the descriptive statistics and intercorrelations of all the variables.

Overall, a confirmatory factor analysis of the measurement model, conducted using MPlus 4.1 and a maximum-likelihood (ML) estimation procedure, indicated good fit of the model with the data (χ^2=146.9, df=74, p=.00; root mean square error of approximation [RMSEA]=.06; comparative fit index [CFI]=.92; standardized root mean residual [SRMR]=.05), and each indicator loaded significantly ($p<.01$) on the appropriate factor. These results supported the posited relationships among constructs and indicators and confirmed the convergent validity of the constructs.

To evaluate the retest and external validity of the adapted scales, we collected additional data for the same set of variables among 271 salespeople working for a biotech manufacturer. Again, all scales indicated strong psychometric properties, with composite reliabilities above the .60 threshold, and AVE greater than .50. This confirmatory factor analysis showed a good fit of the measurement model to the retest data (χ^2=138.8, df=74, p=.00; RMSEA=.06;

Table 2 Means, standard deviations, and inter-correlation matrix

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6
Level 2: Sales team[a]						
1. Team reputation	1.00					
2. Team norm strength[b]	.09	1.00				
3. Team cross-selling ability	−.01	−.03	1.00			
Level 1: Salesperson						
4. Cross-selling motivation	−.06	.21**	.37**	1.00		
5. Product portfolio adoption[b]	−.19**	−.01	.43**	.29**	1.00	
6. Cross-selling performance[c]	.29**	.25**	.20**	.16*	.20**	1.00
Mean	5.67	13.14	4.38	5.80	3,561.85	0.02[c]
SD	.69	6.79	1.21	.94	3,355.16	.77

*$p<.05$

**$p<.01$

[a]Correlations are based on scores disaggregated per salesperson

[b]Manifest construct

[c]Composite of z-standardized scores

CFI=.95; SRMR=.05), and each indicator loaded significantly ($p<.01$) on the appropriate factor. Table 1 contains the retest results, which support the high external validity of the measurement instrument.

Results

Model comparison and test of hypotheses

We applied hierarchical linear modeling procedures to analyze within- and cross-level effects. For the multilevel modeling, we used HLM 7.0 and applied the full-maximum likelihood estimation (see Raudenbush and Bryk 2002). The full ML procedure is preferable, because we compare nested models that differ in their fixed parts, not just their random parts (Raudenbush and Bryk 2002); we used the log-likelihood difference test ($-2\times$difference in log-likelihood$\sim\chi^2$, d.f.=number of freed paths). All predictor variables on levels 1 and 2 were grand mean-centered on their respective level to create the interaction terms, consistent with Aiken and West (1991). The details of the analytical procedures are in Table 3 and the Appendix.

We started with an unconditional (intercepts only) model to examine the proportion of between-team variance in the total variance for the dependent variable, product portfolio adoption (Model 1). The intraclass correlation coefficient for product portfolio adoption was .37, so 37% of the total variance is between teams. Then we established a baseline model that included only cross-selling motivation as a level-1 predictor (Model 2). We also controlled for the cross-divisional orientation of the company and resource availability, perceived by the salesperson, at level 1. The results indicated a strong positive direct effect of cross-selling motivation ($\beta_1=719$, $p<.01$) on a salesperson product portfolio adoption, in support of H2. The inclusion of level-1 predictors also led to a significant change in model fit (see Table 3). In the two-level main effects only model (Model 3), which represents the hypothesized model without interactions, the level-1 intercept was a function of level-2 variables, namely, team norm strength, team reputation, and team cross-selling ability. Including level-2 main effects

Table 3 Results of the hierarchical linear modeling

	Dependent variable: Product portfolio adoption							
	Model 1 (unconditional)		Model 2 (L1 predictor)		Model 3 (L2 main effects)		Model 4 (with interactions)	
Variable	**γ**	**SE**	**γ**	**SE**	**γ**	**SE**	**γ**	**SE**
Intercept	2,861***	380	2,965***	354	2,615***	318	1,867***	369
Main effects								
MOT			719***	226	475**	232	344	368
TNORM					16	46	−42	40
TABIL					770***	211	1,203***	278
TREP					−984**	439	−876*	450
Within-level interaction								
TABIL x TREP							−221	368
Cross-level interactions								
MOT x TNORM							68*	35
MOT x TABIL							481**	210
MOT x TREP							−1,493***	412
MOT x TABIL x TREP							801**	381
Controls								
CDO			466**	182	400**	181	356**	176
RES			48	193	30	190	158	185
−2 log-likelihood	3,852 (3)		3,781 (6)		3,765 (9)		3,745 (14)	
Change in fit index			71 (df=3) $p<.01$		16 (df=3) $p<.01$		20 (df=5) $p<.01$	

*$p<.10$

**$p<.05$

***$p<.01$

MOT cross-selling motivation; *TNORM* team norm strength; *TABIL* team cross-selling ability; *TREP* team market reputation; *CDO* cross-divisional orientation; *RES* resource availability; *PPA* product portfolio adoption

also induced a significant change in model fit. Finally, we estimated the hypothesized model (Model 4). The log-likelihood difference test confirmed that including the interaction terms provided the strongest fit to the data ($\Delta\chi^2$=20, Δd.f.=5; p<.01), compared with the nested models. The results from estimating the hypothesized fixed and random effects with their standard errors in the four hierarchical models appear in Table 3. Each model shows significant χ^2-test statistics for the mixed model (random intercept, fixed slope) at p<.01.

Direct effect on product portfolio adoption

In H2 we predicted that greater cross-selling motivation would increase a salesperson's product portfolio adoption. This direct within-level effect received support from Models 2 (β_1=719, p<.01) and 3 (β_1=475, p<.05). With the inclusion of the interaction terms in Model 4, the positive effect of cross-selling motivation on portfolio adoption lost significance, though without contradicting the findings from Models 2 and 3. Because Model 4 is not additive but rather interactive, the interpretation of its main effects differs, such that it must be interpreted as a conditional average effect across all observed scores of the moderator variable(s).

Cross-level interaction effect of norm strength

We posited in H3 that a strong cross-selling norm in a team would exert a positive moderating effect on the relationship between individual cross-selling motivation and product portfolio adoption. We find a significant positive cross-level interaction effect (γ_{11}=68, t=1.89, p<.10), with no significant direct effect between norm strength and product portfolio adoption (γ_{01}=−42, n.s.). This finding supported H3.

Cross- and within-level interactions of team reputation

In support of H4a, we found a negative moderating effect (γ_{13}=−1,493, p<.01) of team reputation with cross-selling motivation and a negative direct effect of team reputation (γ_{03}=−876, p<.10) on the salesperson's product portfolio adoption. Thus, a sales teams' reputation in the marketplace negatively affects salespeople's product portfolio adoption. Moreover, the positive effect of cross-selling motivation on adoption is weakened by the team's reputation, as proposed in H4a.

Also as we predicted in H4b, the three-way interaction among the salesperson's cross-selling motivation, team reputation, and team cross-selling ability was positive and significant (γ_{14}=801, p<.05). Thus the negative moderating effect of team reputation is weaker for high levels of team cross-selling ability and strongly negative if team cross-selling ability is low, in support of H4b.

With Fig. 2, we probe this three-way interaction further using the simple slope of cross-selling motivation at 1.0 standard deviations above and below the means of team reputation and a team's cross-selling ability. We find a positive relationship between a salesperson's cross-selling motivation and his or her portfolio adoption behavior when the team's reputation is low (Panel A); consistently with our hypothesis this reflects that cross-selling motivation is not harmed by any concerns damaging the reputation. Although not hypothesized, the analysis also reveals that behavioral adoption will be stronger with greater levels of ability—consistent with the findings of previous research that has used the MOA framework.

In contrast, when a team's reputation is high (Fig. 2, Panel B), there is a positive effect of cross-selling motivation on adoption behavior only, when the team's cross-selling ability is high. In such circumstances, the cross-selling ability of the team provides support for team members, such that cross-selling may be a reason (among others) for the strong reputation of their team. Also, the high abilities of other members may strengthen confidence in cross-selling success while also reducing fears of potential cross-selling failures, which would diminish concerns about violating the team's reputation. Thus, when working in well-reputed teams, salespeople's cross-selling motivation should induce higher portfolio adoption, when the team's strong cross-selling ability reduces their concerns. In contrast, when the cross-selling ability of the team is low (Panel B, dotted line), we find a negative effect of cross-selling motivation on the salesperson's adoption behavior (Panel B); in such situations, concerns will be strong, because salespeople know that cross-selling is not the reason for their team's reputation. The team's low cross-selling ability also could be associated with additional risk, leading salespeople to further reduce their adoption behavior. An overall comparison of Panels A and B shows that a salesperson's product portfolio adoption is lower when team reputation is high, which indicates the serious concerns that salespeople associate with cross-selling as it potentially could damage the reputation of their team.

Direct and indirect effects on cross-selling performance

We predicted in H1 that a salesperson's product portfolio adoption would lead to his or her better cross-selling performance. An ordinary least squares regression of product portfolio adoption on cross-selling performance supported this prediction (β=.21, p<.01, R^2=.20). When we controlled for resource availability and cross-divisional orientation, neither the strength, nor the significance of the effect changed. We also followed Preacher and Hayes's (2008) non-parametric bootstrapping procedure to test whether product portfolio adoption fully mediated the effect of

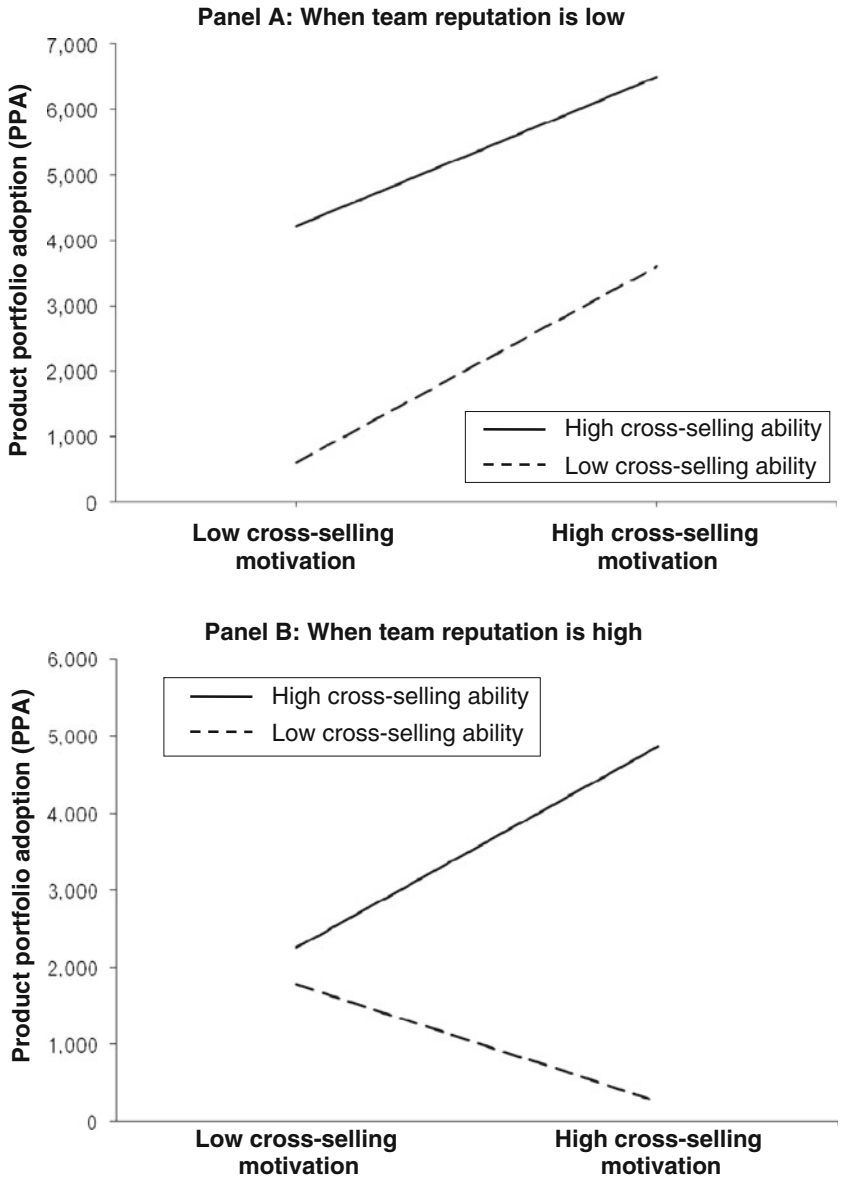


Fig. 2 The moderating effect of team reputation. Notes: Figure shows the simple slope of cross-selling motivation 1.0 standard deviations above and below the means of team reputation and a team's cross-selling ability

cross-selling motivation on a salesperson's cross-selling performance. The bootstrapping with 1,000 resampling repetitions showed that the direct effect of cross-selling motivation on cross-selling performance was not significant (β=.07, p>.10), though we found a significant total effect of cross-selling motivation on cross-selling performance (β=.12, p<.05). Thus, the relationship between cross-selling motivation and performance is fully mediated by a salesperson's product portfolio adoption.

Results robustness

Common method bias In order to overcome the potential for common method bias (ex-ante) and assess its potential impact (ex-post), we followed Podsakoff et al. (2003). First, we collected the predictor and criterion variables from different sources: salespeople, sales managers, and company records. Second, when designing the instruments, we constructed the items and formulated the overall questionnaire as concisely as possible. Third, the measures of the predictor (e.g., cross-selling motivation) and perceptual criterion (e.g., share of customer cross-buying) variables were separated in the questionnaire. Fourth, respondents' answers were anonymous. Fifth, with a pretest we reduced any potential comprehension problems. Sixth, our ex post statistical analyses enhanced the complexity of the relationships between the variables by including composition variables (see Chan 1998) and moderating effects, which diminishes the potential for bias by respondents' implicit theories (Podsakoff et al. 2003).

Harman's single-factor test controlled for common method variance in the level-1 model; no single factor emerged, nor did one general factor account for the majority of variance. In a latent method factor approach, with paths leading to each of the indicator variables, the paths from respective latent constructs continued to be significant. The relationships between the latent factors were altered slightly but not substantively, and they remained statistically significant, just as they were without the latent method factor. Adding the latent method factor did not induce any major changes in model fit, so we regard the influence of common method bias as negligible.

Social desirability bias Salesperson ratings of cross-selling motivation and ability may suffer from social desirability biases. To test for its existence, we took two approaches. First, we validated the self-rated constructs in the original data using the sales manager's ratings for 134 salespeople. Strong correlations between the self-rated and observer scales for cross-selling motivation (cor=.62, $p<.01$) and cross-selling ability (cor=.53, $p<.01$) indicated high conformity. Although we did not include a direct measure of social desirability, the results implied that social desirability was only a minor issue in this particular dataset.

Second, we collected retest data among 271 salespeople of a biotech firm to test if the newly developed scales generally were affected by social desirability, following the procedure proposed by Steenkamp et al. (2010). Specifically, we included the Balanced Inventory of Desirable Responding and thus captured two components of social desirability bias: egoistic (ERT) and moralistic (MRT) response tendencies. We checked for significant correlations between the marketing constructs and the two components and found none for MRT. Small, positive correlations emerged for ERT with cross-selling motivation (cor=.18, $p<.01$) and cross-selling ability (cor=.20, $p<.01$). To determine the extent of shared variance between the ERT scale and the two constructs, we calculated the standardized regression coefficients for each marketing construct, which revealed values for ERT that were below the .20 threshold in both cases ($r_{mot}=.16$, $p<.05$; $r_{abil}=.19$, $p<.01$)—that is, a negligible relationship for ERT too (Steenkamp et al. 2010). Thus the effect of social desirability bias was negligible for the scales we employed.

Discussion

In this study, we address for the first time the influence of a sales team and its characteristics on individual salespeople. Our objective was to determine how and to what extent different characteristics of a selling team amplify or mitigate salespeople's motivation and behavior with respect to cross-selling. We thus focused on two important aspects: (1) team norms and (2) team reputation. By addressing these issues, our findings contribute to marketing theory and practice.

Theoretical and methodological contributions

Our conceptual MOA framework, which contains hypotheses theoretically grounded in social norm theory (Hackman 1992) and reputation theory (Weiss et al. 1999), helps explain what drives individual adoptions of a company's product portfolio and cross-selling performance, as well as how the social boundary conditions of the selling team influence individual behavior. For individual salespeople, we hypothesized and found a key role of cross-selling motivation for the adoption of products and the cross-selling performance. This implies that firms must ensure that the sales force overall is motivated to engage in cross-selling, because in that case, salespeople adopt a broader range of the company's product portfolio, which is a prerequisite of cross-selling performance. Our research thus contributes to existing marketing research, which has neglected the role of the sales force in the field of cross-selling.

Moreover, we examine the role of selling teams, another topic that has not received considerable attention (Ahearne et al. 2010). A prominent role of teams is supported by our analysis, which showed that 37% of the variation in salesperson's product adoption behavior can be explained by differences between teams. We propose and support three team-specific hypotheses, which can serve as social boundaries for individual behavior.

First, we hypothesize and find that the effect of a salesperson's motivation on his or her adoption of the company's product portfolio is stronger when the team has a strong group norm for cross-selling. Although recent research has stressed the role of group norms at the sales team level (Ahearne et al. 2010) and the influence of subjective norms in multilevel research (Fu et al. 2010; Homburg et al. 2010), our study is the first to examine the effect of group norms on individual salespeople. From social norm theory, we know that a group norm is strong when it attracts high approval (intensity) among team members and high consensus (crystallization). We provide the first empirical marketing study to consider both dimensions of a norm's strength.

Second, working in a highly reputed sales team is beneficial for the individual salesperson's performance—a point that may seem obvious. However, we show that in the specific context of cross-selling, this setting also creates reputational concerns that can constrain individual cross-selling motivation and behavior. Salespeople avoid cross-selling behavior if they believe it will damage the strong reputation of their team.

Third, salespeople develop beliefs about the reasons for their team's reputation and use high cross-selling ability of referent team members as a rationale for reducing their own

reputational concerns, such that their individual behavior includes more cross-selling. Our results thus indicate a downside of team reputation, related to concerns about harming that reputation. This point has not been addressed previously in sales research. We also contribute to team research; few studies examine the team as the entity whose reputation gets evaluated by customers.

From a methodological standpoint, we overcome several major drawbacks of previous sales management studies and contribute to further investigations. First, our study employs data from three different sources to control for common method bias. Second, we analyze data on two levels to account for the natural hierarchical structure in our data. Third, this study is among the first in the marketing area to employ composition models to specify the "functional relationships among phenomena or constructs at different levels of analysis" (Chan 1998, p. 234). Fourth, we collect retest data and validate cross-selling–specific scales on the level of a salesperson within a sales force, in a different business-to-business context. We thus contribute to the development of cross-selling–specific scales.

Managerial contributions

Many promising benefits (e.g., sales growth, stronger customer ties, cost efficiency) epitomize the attractiveness of cross-selling for vendors. However, resistance by their sales forces causes many companies to struggle to realize their full cross-selling potential (Duclos et al. 2007). Our findings offer useful implications for managerial practice and ways to achieve higher cross-selling performance, at both the salesperson and the team levels.

Our theoretical framework and empirical results imply that a basic prerequisite for cross-selling performance is that the salesperson adopt the company's product portfolio broadly. Management must think of ways to motivate salespeople to cross-sell; motivation is the key in fostering adoption behavior. For example, they could use extrinsic motivators, such as compensation schemes that refer to the product mix, share of wallet, or share of the relevant installed base as components of the quota calculation. Intrinsic motivators, including intimacy with products or commitment to the idea of cross-selling, also may be essential. Overall, sales management must take the responsibility for creating cross-selling motivation.

Our study also implies that managers should care about and shape the social environment in which the salesperson's cross-selling activities take place. A strong cross-selling norm in a sales team reinforces the effect of individual cross-selling motivation. To create a strong team norm, managers should address both intensity and crystallization. To strengthen its intensity, they could rely on the same extrinsic and intrinsic motivators we just mentioned. However, crystallization requires a means to address deviations from the norm. Management needs alternative ways to adjust the cross-selling motivation of deviant members, though this goal is not always possible. Ultimately, management should carefully consider the pros and cons of changing the team composition and excluding deviants, who exert negative influences on other team members.

Reputational concerns also can deter salespeople's adoption of the product portfolio, even if they are highly motivated. In this case, the firm should consider reallocating resources, such as those they might spend on cross-selling compensation, to the alleviation of reputational concerns. In this context, we examined the role of reputation-related beliefs. The reduced reputational concerns that result from a high cross-selling ability of team members suggest several implications. In particular, salespeople's reputational concerns must be evaluated seriously. These frontline boundary spanners receive direct customer feedback, and they can serve as the first source of information about the risks to a selling team's reputation. With such feedback, management can develop implications for positioning, product portfolios, necessary training, or team compositions. The critical question must be: Do sales of particular additional products really fit the positioning of the sales team? For example, cross-selling might contradict the current competitive positioning of a team or vendor that specializes in a particular product area; then specialization of the team is the reason for reputation. In such a situation, a salesperson's avoidance of cross-selling behavior, due to reputational concerns, might benefit the company by preventing a potential loss of reputation. Yet in some cases, salespeople may overestimate potential risk and resist cross-selling, even if it would benefit customers and the firm. Thus sales management should aim to reduce risk perceptions associated with cross-selling and clarify the potential benefits, perhaps through the active sharing of success stories and best practices about cross-selling in the own firm, which can also support the development of positive reputation-related beliefs. Combining these arguments, we suggest that managers can overcome a major drawback of cross-selling by identifying and addressing risk perceptions and concerns. They should work to create a selling environment in which pursuing adjacent business opportunities represents not a risk but rather a means to capitalize on a key opportunity.

Another interesting finding arose when we included the cross-divisional orientation (CDO) control variable. Throughout the nested models (Table 3), we found a positive, significant effect of CDO (β_2=356, p<.05) on a salesperson's adoption behavior. This result implies that the organizational environment beyond the sales team also influences individual adoption decisions. To support the adoption of a broader range of the product portfolio, upper management must ensure that departments and divisions support cross-divisional processes in general and the cross-divisional activities of salespeople in

particular, especially if they must deal with various divisions to make cross-selling offers. A CDO may enhance the company's ability to make cross-divisional offers and accordingly serve as a supportive precondition for each salesperson's cross-selling performance.

Limitations and further research

This study breaks some new ground, but it also suffers from some clear limitations that offer avenues for further research. First, working closely with a single industrial organization enhanced our ability to collect rich data across individual and sales team levels, but it also brings about a potential limitation to the generalizability of the results. To address this limitation, we retested and confirmed the validity of the scales using a second company in a different business-to-business industry. However, we realize the generalizability our findings may be limited to settings similar to those found in the organizations under examination. That is, our research results are relevant predominantly to firms that sell a broad portfolio of products, using a direct sales force that is organized into teams, supervised by a sales manager, to customers that have a need for cross-buying additional products. Such a structure can be found in many business-to-business industries, such as machinery, tools, pharmaceuticals, chemicals, devices, and commodities. Further research should assess the proposed model and its relationships in other business settings and industries.

Second, we did not examine antecedents of a salesperson's cross-selling motivation. Our theoretical framework focused on the relationship of motivation, behavior, and performance, as well as the boundary conditions, but we did not attempt to explain any antecedents of motivation. For example, extrinsic motivators such as alternative compensation schemes could be interesting for further research that aims to explain their potential effect on cross-selling motivation.

Third, there is considerable potential for analyzing additional boundary conditions that likely influence individual cross-selling motivation and behavior. Organizational culture and structure and the sales managers' influence on salespeople and the selling team appear particularly interesting. For example, specific leadership styles (e.g., transformational vs. transactional) could differ in how they affect motivation, norm strength, and adoption.

Fourth, investigating cross-selling as a behavioral process entails various potential psychological and behavioral outcomes for actors (e.g., salespeople, customers), as well as economic outcomes. More generally, we might distinguish between desired and undesired cross-selling outcomes (e.g., risk perceptions, resistance, loss of customers). Kamakura et al. (2003) warn that cross-selling might weaken the firm's relationship with the customer, because frequent attempts to cross-sell can render the customer non-responsive or even motivated to switch to a competitor. Ngobo (2004) also has examined how image conflicts and level of convenience—likely outcomes of a vendor's cross-selling engagement—influence the customer's cross-buying intention. In contrast, we focus on salesperson adoption behavior and the resulting cross-selling performance, which represent important desired cross-selling outcomes or objectives at the salesperson level (Kamakura 2008; Li et al. 2005). Although the outcomes we consider reflect our primary research concern, further research might take the opportunity to investigate undesired or even dysfunctional outcomes of cross-selling that might occur at the salesperson or customer level.

Despite these limitations, we believe that beyond their theoretical interest, our framework and findings will prove useful for general managers and sales managers who seek to enable salespeople's cross-selling performance. We hope that the modest steps we have taken to address the role of the salesperson and the selling team for achieving cross-selling performance will prove to be provocative and spawn additional work in this important area.

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Appendix

Hierarchical models

Model 1

$$\mathrm{L1}: \mathrm{PPA_{ij}} = \beta_{0j} + \mathrm{r_{ij}}$$
$$\mathrm{L2}: \beta_{0j} = \gamma_{00} + \mathrm{u_{0j}}$$

Model 2

$$\mathrm{L1}: \mathrm{PPA_{ij}} = \beta_{0j} + \beta_{1j}(\mathrm{MOT_{ij}}) + \beta_{2j}(\mathrm{CDO_{ij}}) + \beta_{3j}(\mathrm{RES_{ij}}) + \mathrm{r_{ij}}$$
$$\mathrm{L2}: \beta_{0j} = \gamma_{00} + \mathrm{u_{0j}}$$
$$\mathrm{L2}: \beta_{1j} = \gamma_{10}$$
$$\mathrm{L2}: \beta_{2j} = \gamma_{20}$$
$$\mathrm{L2}: \beta_{3j} = \gamma_{30}$$

Model 3

$$\mathrm{L1}: \mathrm{PPA_{ij}} = \beta_{0j} + \beta_{1j}(\mathrm{MOT_{ij}}) + \beta_{2j}(\mathrm{CDO_{ij}}) + \beta_{3j}(\mathrm{RES_{ij}}) + \mathrm{r_{ij}}$$
$$\mathrm{L2}: \beta_{0j} = \gamma_{00} + \gamma_{01}(\mathrm{TNORM_j}) + \gamma_{02}(\mathrm{TABIL_j}) + \gamma_{03}(\mathrm{TREP_j}) + \mathrm{u_{0j}}$$
$$\mathrm{L2}: \beta_{1j} = \gamma_{10}$$
$$\mathrm{L2}: \beta_{2j} = \gamma_{20}$$
$$\mathrm{L2}: \beta_{3j} = \gamma_{30}$$

Model 4

$$\begin{aligned}
&\text{L1}: \mathrm{PPA_{ij}} = \beta_{0j} + \beta_{1j}(\mathrm{MOT_{ij}}) + \beta_{2j}(\mathrm{CDO_{ij}}) + \beta_{3j}(\mathrm{RES_{ij}}) + \mathrm{r_{ij}} \\
&\text{L2}: \beta_{0j} = \gamma_{00} + \gamma_{01}(\mathrm{TNORM_j}) + \gamma_{02}(\mathrm{TABIL_j}) + \gamma_{03}(\mathrm{TREP_j}) \\
&\qquad + \gamma_{04}(\mathrm{TABIL_j} \times \mathrm{TREP_j}) + \mathrm{u_{0j}} \\
&\text{L2}: \beta_{1j} = \gamma_{10} + \gamma_{11}(\mathrm{TNORM_j}) + \gamma_{12}(\mathrm{TABIL_j}) + \gamma_{13}(\mathrm{TREP_j}) \\
&\qquad + \gamma_{14}(\mathrm{TABIL_j} \times \mathrm{TREP_j}) \\
&\text{L2}: \beta_{2j} = \gamma_{20} \\
&\text{L2}: \beta_{3j} = \gamma_{30}
\end{aligned}$$

Regression model

$$\mathrm{PER_i} = \beta_0 + \beta_1(\mathrm{PPA_i}) + \beta_2(\mathrm{CDO_i}) + \beta_3(\mathrm{RES_i}) + \mathrm{r_i},$$

where salespeople i=1−n, PER = cross-selling performance, PPA = product portfolio adoption, CDO = cross-divisional orientation, and RES = resource availability.

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