TEACHING NOTE FOR CASE: Managing Customer Relationship Gaps at SKF

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Synopsis: This teaching case was designed to stimulate creative and critical thinking among graduate students majoring in marketing or management through their engagement in a reality-based situation involving a strategic managerial challenge. The central challenge is how business-to-business firms such as SKF can handle situations where various kinds of third-party actors are entering between them and their end customers. Such “third party threats” may possibly enable them to reach some of their end-customers more effectively but, more importantly here, it may also negatively influence their relationships with the customers. In this teaching note, the challenge is linked to issues such as: commoditization, value, servitization, branding, and relationship management.