An analysis of vendor innovation capability in the contract electronics manufacturing industry - DTU Orbit (04/11/2019)

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Limited academic research has been given to analysing the innovation capabilities of vendors in outsourcing contracts. This paper seeks to address this gap in the literature by enhancing our understanding of how the innovation capability of vendors is deployed to win, run and renew outsourcing contracts with their customers. Employing the resource-based view as a theoretical basis and undertaking in-depth case study analysis of three vendors in the electronic manufacturing services industry, the research shows that to achieve the outsourcing objectives of winning, running and renewing the contract, vendors can use different configurations of the competitive priorities of cost, quality, delivery and flexibility. The research aggregates the capabilities that influence the innovative capability of a vendor into the innovation-related capabilities (IRCs) of design, new product introduction and manufacturing. Three strategies are identified for vendors on how to deploy these IRCs, and a number of propositions are developed to indicate the suitability of the three deployment strategies for different operational contexts.

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