Chapter 8
Retail Management and Electronic Retailing

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ABSTRACT

This chapter presents the overview of retail management; retail management and technology; the aspects of Electronic Retailing (e-tailing); e-tailing and Electronic Commerce (e-commerce); the perspectives on online consumer behavior; and the advanced issues of e-tailing in retail environments. Retail management focuses on the processes that go into ensuring consumers can obtain the products they want from their chosen retail store. Effective retail management helps company distributes the finished products created by the business to consumers in order to determine and satisfy what buyers want and require. E-tailing is a powerful marketing technique for the right product with the right message to the right person. The chapter argues that effective retail management and e-tailing applications generate business revenue, build brand awareness, and pave the way for broader distribution in retail environments.

INTRODUCTION

Regarding retail management, the ability to apply the retail marketing mix elements and retail brand strategy concerning specific target-market conditions and a wider global marketing strategy, is functionally important in retail settings (Kasemsap, 2015a). Effective retail marketing strategies and brand management help organizations develop a competitive retail marketing review, target consumer behaviors, integrate the marketing plan into retail design, and deploy the branding strategies in the global retail industry (Kasemsap, 2016a). In order to maintain competitive advantage, retailers are required to continuously come up with the innovative offerings and systems (Lewrick, Omar, Williams, Tjandra, & Lee, 2015).

Retailing is the commercial transaction in which a buyer intends to consume the product or service through individual, family, or household use (Kasemsap, 2017a). The strength of retail organization lies in its capability of aligning demand and supply (Brajesh, 2016). Retail business involves the process of selling consumer goods or services to customers through multiple channels of distribution to earn a profit (Gencer, 2017). Martínez-Ruiz et al. (2016) indicated that to create and maintain the retail image,

retailers must follow the ongoing process in which all components need to be considered, including target-market characteristics, retail positioning, marketing communications, merchandise assortment, customer services, price levels, store location, and physical facilities.

The Internet is a global communication medium (Jiang & Balasubramanian, 2014) and is used as an online channel of product distribution in retail environments (Madlberger, 2009) toward gaining e-service quality and e-satisfaction (Bressolles, Durrieu, & Senecal, 2014). In the digital age, various types of products can be delivered to customers via Electronic Retailing (e-tailing) (Rose & Samouel, 2009). Modern businesses perform many transactions in an electronic environment and offer many advantages for both retailers and consumers (Adapa, 2013). E-tailing becomes a well-accepted way to purchase a wide variety of products and services (Amin & Amin, 2013) toward improving customer satisfaction (Shobeiri, Mazaheri, & Laroche, 2015).

Both globalization and competitiveness in the retail industry enhance the retail companies to reach the advanced technology in store management, product information, and customer services (Rajagopal, 2009). Online and off-line retailers fulfill a wide range of the retail functions that are beneficial to manufacturers as well as to individual consumers (Madlberger, 2005). E-tailing helps retailers conduct business online with virtual storefronts, and helps reach both local and global customers who are disadvantaged by geographical barriers (Chugh & Grandhi, 2012). Acknowledging the content that consumers perceive a retailer's website service is necessary to improve the marketing development and to ensure that e-service delivery processes are effective in global marketing (O'Cass & Carlson, 2012).

This chapter is based on a literature review of retail management and e-tailing. The extensive literature of retail management and e-tailing provides a contribution to practitioners and researchers by explaining the important issues of retail management and e-tailing in retail environments.

BACKGROUND

Regarding the magnitude of employees, value creation, and physical appearance, the retail industry is one of the largest industries in global economy (Berman & Evans, 2010). Retailing is the final stage of the supply chain (Lowson, 2001) managed by brand owners together with the retail organizations (Sen, 2008) and the sourcing networks. Networks in retailing are comprised by the brand owner, the varieties of single- and multi-brand stores, chains and departments stores, technology and service providers, ownership structures and local level supply chain facilities (Tambo, 2014). Multichannel retailing can offer a wide range of synergies for retailers when their distribution channels accommodate the consumer's preferences and their buying behavior (Madlberger, 2009). Consumer buying behavior is the process by which individuals search for, select, purchase, use, and dispose of products and services, in satisfaction of their requirements (Kasemsap, 2016b).

González-Benito et al. (2014) stated that retailers establish the store-brand strategies, leading to greater success and higher congruence with the retailer's positioning. The changing logistics networks of grocery retail companies over the last few decades are a result of striving toward the higher operational efficiency (Sternbeck & Kuhn, 2014). The main objective in retailing is to increase the impulse temptation to enhance sales (Kacen, Hess, & Walker, 2012). The development of supply chain-related operational practices is an important part of ensuring the right product mix at store level (Rajaram, 2001) concerning the cost of service, stocking, transportation, and transshipment (Jüttner, Christopher, & Baker, 2007).

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