Chapter IX

A Reference Model for Retail Enterprises

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Abstract

In order to provide a structural framework for information systems that serves as a basis for understanding the organizational structure and the information systems of the retail sector, we present an architecture, the “retail-H,” that outlines the various facets of trade information systems. The framework encompasses two further criteria, the types of businesses and the differentiation of goods. This architecture and its graphical representation aim at enhancing the orientation within the heap of information models applied in the retail sector. These information models are crucial for the management of information systems and organizational processes.
Over the years, the percentage of service industries has continuously increased with respect to manufacturing industries and, therefore, the development of a reference model for retail enterprises has become more important in order to enhance the efficient use of information systems for this sector.

When looking for the significant trends in trading with consumer goods, the trend to size may well initially predominate. On the one hand, mergers and acquisitions of other companies mean that the retailing companies themselves become ever larger—the growth of the German Metro, for example, is primarily based on acquisitions, but also mergers and mutual purchases of large department stores show this. On the other hand, sales areas are also growing. Large self-service department stores are being built on greenfield sites; specialized shops, such as do-it-yourself centers (e.g., Home Depot), are being established successfully, and department stores are also striving to expand their size. Retailing chains are increasingly supplanting independent retailers. The trend toward shopping centers, which has long been established in the USA, is also coming to Europe. One of the largest centers in the USA is the Mall of America in Bloomington, Minnesota. The Mall of America, which was opened

![Figure 1. Characteristic forms of retailers](image_url)
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