

Expo Milano 2015, TUTTOFOOD 2015, and SHOP 2015.

Respecting the past and welcoming the future

Theodor Purcarea

Abstract

There is no doubt that the citizen's quality of life may be improved by properly understanding definite current challenges, and by continuously reflecting and applying the knowledge with wisdom. "Expo Milano 2015" represents a clear invitation for responsible and accountable way of doing business, confirming the opening for an intercultural journey offering ideas and shared solutions. In the generous perspective offered by "SHOP 2015", it is challenging to reflect at the retail space as a crucial factor influencing the customer's feelings, at retailers who should consequently develop a strategy that defines their ideal retail footprint, at businesses which need continuing putting increased focus on integrating their various channels, while considering the impact of the converged lifestyle which has empowered consumers. We are already in this converged lifestyle, a new phase of convergence, in which technology enables consumers to get what they want, when they want it, virtualization is disrupting power relationships between companies, customers, and employees, while convergence of technology will lead to convergence of competition. It is argued that, in the future, those retail stores that drive convenience, service, and relevant personalized experiences through the use of digital store technology will succeed. We dare to say that the Romanian retail market will also be an interesting "battlefield" in what concerns competing in offering customers consistent experiences whether they interact with a brand in-store, online or via mobile, by delivering them content fast and seamlessly across all these channels, while also not forgetting that the foundation of retailing is understanding what customers want and need, and consequently developing a deep understanding of the decision journey that the new shoppers undertake.

Keywords: Distribution; Retail market; Store of the future; Connectivity and convergence; Shopper experience; Channel integration

JEL Classification: L81; L86; M31; O14; Q55

Can we, all stakeholders in the continuum of research, shape together the future of our "Health, Nutrition, Fitness and Wellbeing" and proactively go after it?

Three years ago, (Purcarea, 2012) on the occasion of the SANABUNA International Congress 2012, we were starting from the fact that there is no doubt that the citizen's quality of life may be improved by properly understanding this definite current challenge of "Health, Nutrition, Fitness and Wellbeing" (SANABUNA), by continuously reflecting, staying optimistic, being realistic, applying the knowledge with wisdom, strengthening all this supply chain seen from the perspective of a trust-based "physician"- "patient" relation, managing the evidence accordingly, and sending a consistent SANABUNA message to society. We expressed our opinion that SANABUNA social movement must lead all stakeholders beyond the fragments of understanding, interacting, getting involved, communicating and learning how to realize the proper change of our behavior requiring a new thinking, a new policy, a proper education located in the heart of adaptation, and proving solidarity in building this trust-based "physician"- "patient" relation.



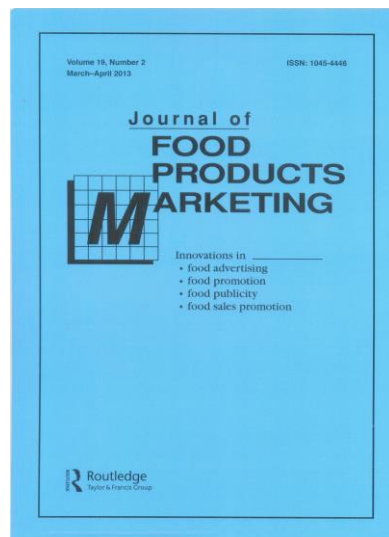
Theodor Purcarea at SANABUNA International Congress 2012

As we discussed within the above mentioned framework, there is no doubt that nutrition represents the bridge between agriculture and health, and food is one of the greatest contemporary actor on the political scene, as well as the fact that public health aspects are often marginalized amid the competing interests of producers, processors, wholesalers, retailers, caterers and consumers. We are all consumers and patients and we all know that we have a serious problem, and we all know that there are no simple solutions. That is why we underlined:

- the urgent need for more multidisciplinary, interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary research on food, nutrition and health, breaking down the “silos” between the sectors, considering relevant disciplines such as: agricultural research, economics, and policy; anthropology of food; physiology of food and fluid intake; nutrition and food habits and choices; sociology of diet, food and nutrition; psychology of food and nutrition; food marketing; consumer research; medicine and health; health education; public health; social services and public welfare; supply, demand and public policy;
- the substantial differences in concern about diet and health, and less substantial differences in the way food functions in the minds and lives of people;
- the differences in consumers’ experiences and perceptions of food security, self-sufficiency, and of the link between food, nutrition, and health.

In the same time, we showed that beyond the reality that agriculture is the main source of food to meet consumers’ need for energy and essential nutrients and given that all along the agricultural value chain there are opportunities to improve nutrition and reduce health risks, we

need to look at food systems, considering all the stages from field to fork, starting by determining where value for nutrition can be integrated, by using risk analysis along the food value chain, and by proving renewing commitment to nutrition education which makes a difference in making healthy eating choices, integrating agriculture, nutrition, and health services, which involves focusing the academic research on reflecting both, the way the links between agriculture, nutrition and health work, and the adequate way of utilizing the sets of tools that could help leverage agriculture for better nutrition and health, while continuing to prove the correlation between nutrition and cognitive function and academic performance. We also need to understand and deal with the challenge of considering the integration of health and wellness dimensions, realizing that wellness is a product of a healthy lifestyle, taking into account the contribution of our physical activity to (physical, health-related physical, skill-related physical) fitness as the state in our health characteristics and behavior, as the state affecting physical, mental, and social health. These considerations raise two questions: Can we, all stakeholders in the continuum of research, shape together the future of our “Health, Nutrition, Fitness and Wellbeing” and proactively go after it? How is the reflection of our networking together in encouraging SANABUNA social movement?



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<http://www.tandfonline.com/toc/wfpm20/current#.UZJfr6dJMs>): Published by **Routledge, Taylor and Francis Group**, the Editorial being signed by Professors **John L. Stanton, Theodor Purcarea** and **Gheorghe Orzan**

The impressive number of important exhibitors, the significant size of the show, and the high product quality offered - a tryade that makes TUTTOFOOD 2015 unique

109 Years after opening in Milan the International Exposition dedicated to transportation, Milan is hosting an Universal Exhibition - from May 1 to October 31, 2015 – “*Expo Milano 2015*”, considered to be a true “platform for the exchange of ideas and shared solutions on the theme of food, stimulating each country’s creativity and promoting innovation for a sustainable future”. (Expo2015.org) The central theme chosen by Italy for this Universal Exhibition (more than 140 participating countries) is “*Feeding the Planet, Energy for Life*”, really a stimulant one to talking about the problems of nutrition and the resources of our planet by opening up a dialogue between international players, by exchanging views on the above mentioned major challenges which impact everyone. Expo Milano 2015 represents a clear invitation for

responsible and accountable way of doing business, while focusing on the respect for the environment, local communities and where they live, confirming the opening for an intercultural journey offering ideas and shared solutions, including from the point of view of the interconnected traditional cultural values and new technologies. It is also worth to mention that the participants at this year Universal Exposition have the opportunity to “taste” focused “customer experiences”, such as those offered by “Laboratorio Expo” (and emphasizing “the importance that the humanistic values provide in regards to nourishing both the body and the spirit” - Expo2015.org). We see here a very interesting connection with what marketing educator Larry J. Rosenberg argued (Rosenberg, 2009) about holistic marketing, which involves using the body, mind and spirit of both the marketer and customer to bring them into a lasting marketing relationship for greater marketing success. In his opinion, that means to harmonize „Energy Zones” (body, mind and spirit – B-M-S) with „Energy Systems” (Marketer/personal-impersonal spectrum of the marketer: Face-to-face, Phone, Email, Brochure, Website, Magazine, Radio, Television; Customer), so as marketing success follows when the Marketer-Customer energy systems become integrated/One. As we showed on another occasion, in other words, realizing holistic marketing, according to Rosenberg, means to improve the body’s capability, expand the mind’s creativity, engage the spirit’s power, ask the brain any question and combine them for marketing to acquire and keep customers. And this is the case especially of that customer always on, always connected and interconnected, who becomes more and more competent, wishing real-time solutions, and pressing the brand to develop a position guided by his insights.

Two days after the official opening of “Expo 2015”, TUTTOFOOD 2015 will start (from 3 to 6 May 2015), this way writing “the next chapter in the history of TUTTOFOOD and the Italian and international food industry”. (Mazzanti and Zavettieri, 2014) TUTTOFOOD, the International Food and Agriculture Show will bring about 2,000 buyers chosen via a careful selection process and put in contact with companies via the EMP Expo Matching Program. On the other hand, exhibitors who participate in the show will also have the opportunity to meet (directly in the exhibition centre; see also the so-called project “*Expo incontra le imprese*” - Expo Meets Business Enterprise) with the commercial delegations visiting “Expo 2015”. (Mazzanti and Zavettieri, 2014)

**“SHOP 2015”: The store of the future, between connectivity and convergence;
Technological innovation, applications and success stories in retail**

It is our honor and pleasure to highlight that on the occasion of the above mentioned events challenging conferences and workshops will take place within the generous framework offered by “*SHOP 2015*”. In this challenging and generous perspective, allow us to make some considerations on this topic, starting from:

- The fact that 24 years ago I wrote (after visiting the “Store of the future” model in Chicago, in 1991, within the framework offered by a Food Marketing Institute/NAWGA Program) two articles (published in the „Journal of Business”, No. 18-19/1991, National Institute „Virgil

Madgearu”, Romanian Ministry of Commerce) on the so-called „*Smart Store 2000*” (conceived in 1989 as a way of finding out what things inhibit stores and manufacturers and cut into their profits, and to train employees and test new technology), showing that beyond the already existing use of „islands of technology” in different shop formats, it is time that technology gives business the scale to address the future; at that time, „*Smart Store 2000*”, the supermarket of the future (as envisioned by Andersen Consulting in cooperation with IT services companies and food industry leaders, and targeting the practicing of an evolutive marketing based on new technologies applied in retail) was a first research-and-development center for concepts (such as: touch-screen computers for checkout clerks; hand-scanners consumers can use at home etc.) and technologies (putted together in this store) that will maximize the market potential and deliver the product to the customer at the lowest possible cost, making shopping more enjoyable and easier for consumers; in the same journal I also wrote, for instance, many articles on “Category Management” (following my participation at the Food Marketing Convention in Chicago, see picture below);



- The different approaches in the last years, as follows.

In 2011, *Deloitte LLP* (the United Kingdom member firm of *Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu Limited - DTTL*) looked at how physical retail space and the experience it provides will need to adapt to the multichannel environment and concluded by underlining the necessity of radically rethinking of the purpose of the store in the consumer shopping journey (while recognizing and responding to changing consumers behaviours), and recommending in this respect three key areas: defining the store propositions; resetting the store portfolio, and realigning the operating model. (Deloitte LLP, 2011) A year later, Deloitte looked at how retailers can optimise their store portfolio by identifying what the right size and shape of their store portfolio should be to

support their future operating model. (Deloitte Consumer Business Group, 2012) This report also sparked numerous comments, such as the followings:

- the retail space itself is a crucial factor influencing the customer's feelings (space saving, for instance, is critical in providing an enhanced shopping experience to the customer), retailers today (with the emergence of online and multichannel retailing) being focused more on resetting their store portfolios, either downsizing or right sizing (also considering the rental, and other operating costs), the proper information regarding the rightsizing strategy being provided by an in-depth analysis and comparison of the current store setting, and the ideal to-be portfolio; the appropriate right sizing strategies (defined by a multi-disciplinary approach) are enabling much space saving, and flexible rightsizing (reconfiguring and improving the efficiency of the retail store) can even be a cost-effective alternative to layoffs; (Fibre2fashion.com, 2012)
- the Deloitte report's authors argue that retailers today should develop a strategy that defines their ideal retail footprint: *"Given the rapidly changing retail environment and the speed with which new technologies are emerging and impacting on the use of physical space, **the biggest challenge facing retailers is to continually test and challenge the size, shape and purpose of their store portfolios.** This is likely to be a constant but critical process of evolution for retailers seeking not just to survive but to flourish"* (Hugo Clark, director in Deloitte's real estate team and author of the report); (cromwells.co.uk, 2012)
- According to the Deloitte report, shops will remain critical in the multichannel world, but as Internet sales already represent the equivalent of 60m sq ft in retail space, **"many retailers are struggling to define the relevance and future contribution of their physical space... "Shops now represent a potentially clumsy, fixed point in an increasingly mobile world"... and the flexibility of retail space and its "ability to adapt to changing retail models should be paramount"** (Hugo Clark); in the opinion of Adam Stewart (marketing director at online entertainment retailer Play.com, owned by the Rakuten group): *"Ideally, online and offline retailing should support each other, rather than competing between each other for the same sale"*; in what concerns a future high street, according to Chloe Rigby (Web Editor and Joint Supplement Editor, Internet Retailing), this *"could be a locally responsive one, featuring those brands, both online and offline, that know they have a local audience"* (taking behavioural marketing to the next level). (Rigby, 2012)

Allow us to remember here – as a personal note in connection to Deloitte – that my book entitled „Business Management” (Expert Publishing House, June 1994) was distributed in Romania Privatization Public Awareness Campaign, according to *"The Final Report Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu within Eastern Europe Enterprise Restructuring and Privatization Project,"* U. S. Agency for International Development, April 1995, Tohmatsu, May 1, 1995 (pdf.usa.id.gov/pdf_docs/PDABL817.pdf p. 19). In that book I referred, for example, to different trends including the convergent evolutions of trade in Europe concerning the sector and its

concentration, the sales formats and their organization, the operators and their strategies, and also referring again to some evolutions starting with the “Smart Store 2000” .

Coming back in 2011, it is useful to mention within this framework that the world’s biggest trade fair for retailers’ investment needs, **EuroShop 2011** (the EuroShop brand consists of 4 sub-brands: EuroCIS, EuroConcept, EuroSales, and EuroExpo), took place in Dusseldorf, Germany between February 26 and March 2, 2011. In 2011, EuroShop was five times bigger than its first fair, and according to *Prof. Dr. Bernd Hallier* (at that time Chairman of the EuroShop Advisory Board and CEO of the EHI Retail Institute, Cologne) this great international interest demonstrated very clearly “*how dynamic global retail is and the exceptional position of EuroShop as its economic driver*”.



Source of photos: EHI Retail Institute, European Retail Academy, and

<http://medianet.messe-duesseldorf.de/press/euroshop/assets.html>

Beside the exhibition, the fair was driven by special conferences/events such as the Design ward, the IT Award , the Science Award, the International Design Conference, the POPAI Conference. Last but not least, in advance of the exhibition many foreign groups used the EHI offer for store-checks and discussions with retail-management or ECO-architects. The representatives of the European Retail Academy, for instance, visited additionally the GS1 Germany and its showroom for RFID in the total supply chain. The European Retail Academy (ERA) met for its Annual Meeting 2011 at the EHI Retail Institute, GS1 Germany and the world leading exhibition for retail technology EuroShop. Main special issue for ERA was lifelong learning and the proliferation to vocational training/blended learning by modern technologies (EuCVoT).



Source of photos: EHI Retail Institute, European Retail Academy, and
<http://medianet.messe-duesseldorf.de/press/euroshop/assets.html>

At the end of 2011 KPMG International (its first “*Consumers and Convergence*” study appeared in 2006, as a result of polling consumers in key markets around the world in order to find out what devices, technologies and services they are using and how they are using them) expressed the belief that ***we are in the “converged lifestyle”, a new phase of convergence, in which technology enables consumers to get what they want, when they want it***, (KPMG International, 2011) and many traditional businesses are facing significant challenges adapting to this new world in which consumer the virtue of ‘trust’, for example, may soon become one of the biggest competitive advantages for products and services. But as consumers are more likely to want to personally evaluate the quality or authenticity of some products more than others, retailers will need to continue to offer products (particularly for grocery and luxury goods) in stores as they strive to build consumers’ confidence and trust in their online offerings. It is interesting to note that according to the study mentioned above, 38% of respondents already used their mobile device at retail outlets to access coupons, while one in five had scanned a product barcode (in order to compare prices or for more information). According to KPMG survey (conducted online in the summer of 2011 and including 9600 consumers across 31 countries), there were significant key takeaways, such as: businesses will need to rethink the way they interact with their customers, to decide (as more technologies converge) who “owns” the customer and their data, and to focus more and more on identifying, capturing and analyzing customer data (so as to gain greater insight into their preferences and demands), in order to find the right price to both appeal to customers and achieve profitability; **and in order to create a**

consistent and compelling brand presence across multiple mediums (multi-channel convergence), businesses need continuing putting increased focus on integrating their various channels, while considering the impact of the converged lifestyle which has empowered consumers (who are increasingly vocal about their preferences and demands).

On the occasion of the *IPA Forum 2014* (this event being a part of an EU-funded project called One BSR, an umbrella project for branding the Baltic Sea Region), Iain Jawad, *Director Strategic Partnerships at Frost & Sullivan*, approached the topic of “*World’s Top Global Mega Trends To 2025 and Implications to Business, Society and Cultures*”. (Jawad, 2014) According to Frost & Sullivan that tracks “Mega Trends”, these are transformative, global forces that define the future world with their far reaching impacts on businesses, societies, economies, cultures, and personal lives: Urbanization – City as a Customer; Smart is the New Green; Social Trends: Gen Y, Middle Bulge, Sheconomy, Geosocialization; **Connectivity and Convergence; Bricks and Clicks**; Innovating to Zero; Future of Energy; Economy: Beyond BRIC: The Next Game Changers; Future Infrastructure Development; Health, Wellness and Well Being; Future of Mobility; **New Business Models**: Value for Many. From the point of view of our research interest in the present article we refer only at some of them.

As shown by Iain Jawad, connectivity (which is pushing convergence) will accelerate convergence of industries, products, technologies and competition, while convergence is driving unconventional players to contest for new markets: Google - Nest , Titan Aerospace; Amazon - Dash, Fire TV; Facebook – Oculus, Connectivity Labs. Iain Jawad offered some examples of New Business Models, such as: B2C: Co-Creation (Eg. Quirky.com), On-Demand Services; Digital Media / Online Streaming Collapsing, Video Rentals: eg. Netflix; B2B: Online Platforms [E Rental (Workspaces), E Distribution (eg. Deliv), E Exchanges, **Hypermarkets**, E-Travel: Concur], Sharing: Corporate Car Sharing etc. What concerns the future of clicks in retail industry, Iain Jawad underlined that **global online retail sales is to reach \$4.3 trillion by 2025 accounting for 19% of total retail**. He presented the case study “Audi City London - First Digital Car Showroom” (as an example of future digital car showrooms that will be “unlimited”, personalised, socially connected and digitally integrated), and **Virtual Stores** (simulated brick and mortar stores that offer interactive shopping in public places by creating virtual products, which buyers can buy and order using their Smartphones), **as the New Generation of Grocery Shopping**, while taking the case of Tesco’s Subway Virtual Store.

Finally, Iain Jawad indicated some *key strategic challenges* (10), on the fourth position being “**The Retail Issue**” looking at internet retailing, at the format of retailing offer and how this fits into new trends for micro solutions driven by convenience, not forgetting to highlight the importance of visualising the roadmap of the above mentioned critical forces through scenario-building and macro-economic forecasts, of evaluating the impact on future product/technology/offer, and of analyzing the opportunities and unmet needs.

After the above mentioned IPA Forum event, in September 2014 John Bricklemeyer, Professor of the Practice Department of Engineering and Project Management School of Engineering, The University of Kansas, approached the topic “*Leadership 2030: Megatrends and Their Implications for Project Management*”, (Bricklemeyer, 2014) showing that a Megatrend is defined by a long-term, transformational process with global reach, broad scope, and a fundamental and dramatic impact, and referred to “*The Six Megatrends You Need to Understand to Lead Your Company into the Future*” according to Georg Vielmetter and Yvonne Sell, these mentioned six megatrends being: Globalization 2.0, The Environmental Crisis, Individualism and Value Pluralism, *The Digital Era*, Demographic Change, and *Technological Convergence*. As we explained before, from the point of view of our research interest in the present article we also refer only at some of them.

So John Bricklemeyer highlighted (quoting the same source):

- on one hand that: *the digitization of our lifestyles is becoming the norm; digital natives have increasing influence; virtualization is disrupting power relationships between companies, customers, and employees; the workplace is fragmenting, and leadership will need to “go remote” and prioritize loyalty and reputation management;*

and

- on the other hand that: *technological progress is likely to transform many aspects of our lives; convergence will drive the greatest innovations; R&D will take center stage; convergence will necessitate new levels and forms of collaboration; societies will debate the ethical boundaries of technological advancement.*

John Bricklemeyer also explained (quoting J.O. Olawuyi and F. Mgbole) that technological convergence occurs when multiple products come together to form one product with the advantages of all of them, while technological innovation is more dynamic than both, the competition dynamic of the market and the adequacy and stability of public policy and the legal framework. (Olawuyi and Mgbole, 2012) He also showed that according to Gartner there are **four technologies** (Mobile technologies; Big data/analytics; Social media; Public cloud) which will be the most disruptive over the next 10 years: “*the disruptiveness of each of these technologies is real, but CIOs see **their greatest disruptive power coming in combination, rather than in isolation.***” (Gartner, Inc., 2013) In the same time, he attracted the attention on the fact that ***leveraging mobile, social media, cloud, and big data/analytics organizations will put customer/users even more effectively at the center of their approaches,*** (Hayes, 2014) underlining that ***convergence of technology will lead to convergence of competition,*** (Singh, 2014) not forgetting to remind us that ***sometimes theory leads practice, sometimes practice leads theory, and research explains practice and builds theory.*** (Morris 2010)

But let us remember how the year 2014 started from the point of view of our research interest in the “Shopper Experience”, namely that on the occasion of a Customer experience

Thought Leader Forum, Miguel Ramos (Mobile Practice Lead, Confrimit) and James Tenser (Founder, VSN Strategies) talked (Ramos and Tenser, 2014) about the topic of *“Digital Disruption and the Retail Experience. Earning Loyalty in the Age of Empowered Consumers”*, starting with the deconstruction of the shopper experience in today world of “Big Data”, underlining the elements that define the “The New Big”, clarifying why “Big Data” matters (volume, velocity, variety of information; digital, connected consumers), and building a fresh look of the so-called ***“The Five Pillars of Shopper Experience”***. James Tenser advanced within this context of “The New Big”, the ***“SCAMP” model reflecting the “Five Pillars of Shopper Experience”***: SERVICE (People, Practices, Training), CONVENIENCE (Time-Saving, Effort-Saving), AMBIANCE (Design, Lighting, Sensory, Patrons), MERCHANDISING (Assortment, Display, Messaging), PRICE (Base, Promotion, Markdown).

At the beginning of the next year, in January 2015, Matt Dion (Vice President of marketing for Elastic Path Software, a provider of digital commerce technology) argued that ***CIOs and CMOs – in order to make the store of the future a reality in 2015 - should evaluate digital experience platforms based on how well commerce and content technologies integrate with each other.*** (Dion, 2015) He referred to a new Forrester Research report (*Predictions 2015: The Digital Store Platform Will Support The Retail Store Of The Future*) arguing that ***in the future those retail stores that drive convenience, service, and relevant personalized experiences through the use of digital store technology will succeed*** (Forrester predicting that retailers will realize greater value by connecting enterprise and point systems together to enable the digital store to operate in real time). (Silverman, 2014) On the other hand, in the same month, Matt Rhodus (the retail vertical marketing expert for NetSuite, an integrated cloud business software suite) argued (Rhodus, 2015) that retailers need to be both flexible and resilient, by applying the lessons learned online to their brick-and-mortar stores (adding the personal touch), and by consequently providing shoppers with a personalized experience in-store. Acting this way, retailers will be able to target individual shoppers with offers based on their personal profile data and previous purchasing history on the basis of ***retail operations with tightly integrated e-commerce, CRM, and inventory and order management systems in the cloud.***

A month later, in February 2015, Paul Schottmiller (Senior Vice President, strategy, retail and consumer goods, at Merkle) reconfirmed (Schottmiller, 2015) that ***digital disruption is becoming a constant for retailer marketers*** (who must now be highly flexible and adaptable), and in this respect he identified *five potential disruptors*: *Location, location, location* (as consumer’s mobile screen has become some of the most valuable “real estate” for a retailer to “occupy”, retailers must understand and interact with their always digitally connected and active consumers by adding both consumers’ current and past location-based behaviors to their toolkit – the case of Wal-Mart with store-specific apps, and of Walgreens with beacons); *Social shopping 2.0* (taking into account that the three main areas of opportunity today with social media are listening, targeting and interacting, and that the velocity of new social channels has continued to increase with emerging players like Snapchat and Wanelo); *Fast analytics* (which is built on top

of big data and by making marketing decisions in sub second timeframes a differentiator and potential disruptor); *It's about the journey, not the destination* (thanks to improved tracking and attribution technologies across differing channels, today retail marketers have the opportunity to drive increased levels of personalization); *The death of the pure-play* (today retail marketers are now in a better position to deliver personalized omnichannel experiences that differentiate their brand, either on their websites, in social media, in-store, on mobile, or – better – integrating all of these).

Next month, in March 2015, Ryan Donovan (Vice President of commerce at Sitecore, a provider of customer experience management software) argued (Donovan, 2015) that ***the new era of commerce*** (defined by experiences that seamlessly blend the digital and physical) ***is represented by brands*** (like Amazon, Target, Warby Parker, and Apple) ***which deliver exceptional experiences from beginning to end*** (or risk losing business to a savvier competitor), by seamlessly connecting everything from the first marketing touchpoint through the final sale. He identified ***three pillars of the modern commerce*** experience that build loyalty and drive greater lifetime value: ***Personalization*** (thanks to the right system for collecting and analyzing customer insights, and using the gathered insights throughout the end-to-end customer journey to better tailor the offers and interactions); ***Convenience*** (by providing convenient services, both online and offline, and making the consumer's buying journey as frictionless as possible); ***Mobile experiences*** (by offering dedicated in-store experiences that take advantage of mobile to complete the omnichannel experience and ensuring commerce happens anywhere). The same month, Rory Dennis (CMO at Amplience, a SaaS-based platform that enables brands to produce digital campaign and product media) talked (Dennis, 2015) about ***retailers' need to start thinking about delivering content fast and seamlessly across channels in order to reach "the 21st Century Retail Customer" which is expecting a consistent experience whether he interacts with a brand in-store, online or via mobile.*** Dennis reminded that last year, for the first time, ***mobile traffic has overtaken desktop traffic to e-commerce sites*** (the rise in mobile shopping also bringing about another fascinating trend so-called "***always-on shopping***" - something mobile customers are always doing – Lütke, 2014), and made the connection with ***the emergence of the new category of "super shoppers."***

But ***retailers must never forget that the foundation of retailing is understanding what customers want and need, and developing consequently a deep understanding of the decision journey that shoppers undertake.*** Retailers must understand what shoppers really value when it comes to mobile shopping for instance, as a McKinsey research (Ericson Herring and Ungerman, 2014) on mobile habits in the UK recommended. Because the above mentioned research showed that mobile shoppers really want less than many retailers think, namely: ***"clean, mobile-optimized sites with easy-to-read pages that load quickly, easy-to-use shopping carts, and smooth checkouts."*** McKinsey representatives attracted the attention on the fact that ***it can be perilous to cling to several mobile myths*** such as: the app is the answer; the difference between

good and great on mobile is “cool” features; showrooming is a show stopper; the main value of digitization is in driving self-service.

Let's finally remember the opinion expressed recently by Léon F. Wegnez, (Wegnez, 2014) General Manager, Royal Belgian Committee for Distribution (and Secretary General of the International Association for the Distributive Trade - AIDA Brussels) in the prestigious *“Distribution d'aujourd'hui”* (“Distribution today”): *“Whatever the evolution of the modern distribution, whatever the concepts of shops that engender, the achievement of purchases will keep this ludic character it carries within it, inherently, whether perceived or not by the buyers seeking time and that kind of satisfaction always bringing the acquisition of what is desired. The pleasure purchase, in varying degrees, remained a reality, and this is a distribution task to make it possible and to concretize it.”*



Remembering important past events

Shortly after founding (spring 1996) of the Romanian Distribution Committee (CRD), an important delegation of CRD participated at the 22nd Congress of AIDA (International Association for the Distributive Trade, Brussels), which took place at the Intercontinental Hotel, Vienna, 3-6 June 1966. In the first picture below, for example, Mario Bertolini (President of AIDA, former President of the Chamber of Commerce of Parma), Theodor Purcarea (President of CRD) and Riccardo Garosci (Vice President of Economic and Monetary Commission of the European Parliament; European Rapporteur for „Green Book for European Commerce”; President of the “Commerce and Distribution” Intergroup of the European Parliament) can be seen, and the Secretary General of AIDA, Professor Léon F. Wegnez, looking at them. In the second picture below, you can see both, a fragment from the “Distribution d'aujourd'hui”, Brussels, which

referred to the 22nd Congress of AIDA, and a letter sent from Riccardo Garosci in March 1997 to the President of CRD, Theodor Purcarea.



Two years after its affiliation (in Vienna) to AIDA, Romanian Distribution Committee organized in Bucharest (18-19 May 1998), in cooperation with AIDA, the 24th Congress of

AIDA, which had as central theme *“Retailers and Suppliers with shared ambitions to improve profit performance by continuously improving the quality of their service to consumers”*.

Riccardo Garosci (Vice President of Economic and Monetary Commission of the European Parliament; European Rapporteur for „Green Book for European Commerce”; President of the “Commerce and Distribution” Intergroup of the European Parliament) talked about “European trade policy and its direct and indirect influence on the development prospects of companies in the member states and partner countries of the European Union”, while Jean-Jacques Van Den Heede (Vice-President ACNielsen) started from the fact that as we approached the year 2000, *distribution has entered a new era, characterized by the polarization of the markets, the emergence of new technologies, the diversification of the store concepts, a new type of relationship with consumers*.



After Michel Eeckhout (Executive Director, Technology and Information, Delhaize “Le Lion”, Belgium) introduced the 1st working session, Dr. Ulf Kalmbach (Project Manager, REWE-Zentral AG, Germany) approached the topic of *“Category Management and Continuous Replenishment make a decisive contribution to Efficient Consumer Response - ECR”*, while Louis Guelette (IBM Vice President, Distribution) talked about *“Information technologies, and in particular EDI updated by Internet, constitute a real revolution in the management of distribution companies and their suppliers”*.

Nikos Skoulas (Former Minister, President of NSA International, Greece) introduced the 2nd working session, and Georges Chetochine (considered an „European Advertising Guru”; Professor of Marketing at the University Paris IX-Dauphine; Chairman of IGC International, France) approached the topic of *“Distribution companies are looking for new strategies to deal*

with the turmoil of pricing. It is better to compete or set a differential? Taking risks is part of everyday life”, while Claude Sordet (Chairman & Managing Director CSC Conseils, France; Member of French Academy of Commercial Sciences) talked about “*Food distribution at a time of globalization*”, by answering a series of questions, such as: What are the causes of the enormous upheavals that commerce and distribution have experienced recently? What are the forces at work and how are they interconnected financially? What prospects for various types of retailers and retail businesses alongside the ten future major multinational groups? Who will be the men of the future, retail entrepreneurs or out-and-out financiers? What options will be open to suppliers: to keep ahead or abreast of these major concentrations, or tolerate them and make the best of the situation? The final presentation in this 2nd working session belonged to Andrew Cookson (Partner, GIRA Group, France-Switzerland), who approached the topic of “*Why and how to carry out a fundamental rethink of retailers’ advertising and point-of-sale promotion*”, taking into account the followings: bearing in mind that in 70% of cases, the decision to purchase is taken at the point of sale, it is easier to understand the essential role played by POS and its complementary nature with manufacturers’ advertising; prior consultation between distributors and their suppliers about promotional campaigns is vital, especially in an environment of ever-fiercer competition, and it is often differentiation that is the key to success; optimizing the management of advertising and promotions campaigns in stores has become a fundamental component of the marketing mix, and a study of GIRA casting a new light on the way forward.



After Henry R. Hidell III (President of Hidell-Eyster International Inc., United States; a global consultancy specializing in water resource management and bottled water products; a member of the executive committee of the International Bottled Water Association) introduced

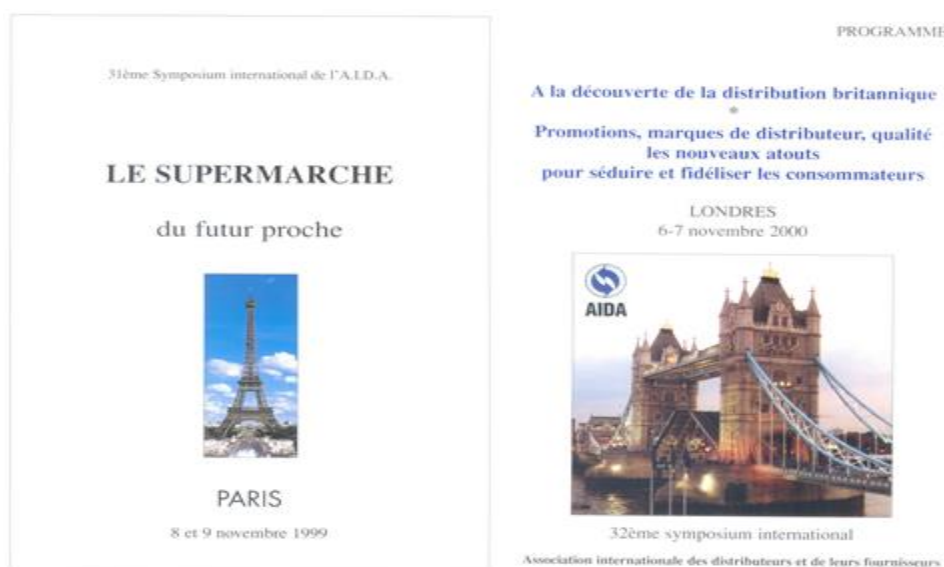
the 3rd working session, Dr. Bernd Hallier (Chairman and Managing Director, EuroHandelsinstitut, Germany, President of EuroShop, world's largest capital goods show in the retail sector; Prof. Dr. Hallier is the "designer" of the European Retail Academy) rigorously answered two important questions (*How are markets and consumer behavior changing in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe? What types of cooperation should be developed as a supplier and as a distributor?*), while Maurice de Talansier (Manager of the l'Observateur Cetelem, France) approached the topic of "*Consumers are at the heart of everyone's concern. Their versatility and ever-greater demands compel businesses always to do more in various fields*", by underlining that greater knowledge of the various customer profiles is essential to developing highly diversified and judiciously targeted approaches, the results of a study casting some light on the subject. In his turn, Jean-Pierre Ramaekers (Manager, TCC Continuity Company, Belgium-Netherlands) talked about "*How do consumers perceive the various actions taken by distributors to increase their loyalty, and what is the real influence of these loyalty campaigns on their purchasing behaviour*", by highlighting the followings: it is well-known that attracting new customers cost much more than keeping existing ones; a large-scale study identified those actions that really improve customer loyalty to stores and products, and to define their relative importance.

William S. Webb (Executive Director, The Institute of Retail and Distribution Management, London, United Kingdom) introduced the 4th working session, and Benoit Hirszowski (Marketing Manager Tetra Pak Europe) approached the topic of "*How to succeed in creating genuine cooperation between retailers and their suppliers with regard to transport and packaging systems. The decisive contribution of logistics and packaging of products to the profitability of both parties*", while Paul Schulz (Senior Vice President, Food Distributors International, United States) talked about "*Relations between distributors and their suppliers: a pairing that determines profitability. What new ways forward are open to these partners of necessity? What is the future of wholesaling? What prospects for purchasing cooperatives? The American experience holds many lessons*". At their turn, Eric Dean Rohlck (Member of the Corporate Member Division, Competition Bureau, Federal Trade Commission, United States), and Peter W. Woodward (Member of the Antitrust Division, Department of Justice, United States) captured the audience's attention with the topic "*Restrictive measures in competition and distribution: review of the situation in the United States, in the countries of European Union and the countries striving for a market economy*".

It is worth to mention the important contributions to the lively and often passionate debate (please see the article published in „*Distribution d'aujourd'hui*“, Septembre 1998, pp. 22-25) made by prestigious participants such as: Leon F. Wegnez, (Secretary General of AIDA Brussels; Member of French Academy of Commercial Sciences; General Manager, Royal Belgian Committee for Distribution, Administrateur Directeur Général de l'Association Internationale Urbanisme et Commerce – Urbanicom, Administrateur Directeur de l'Association Prévention et Sécurité, Directeur Général des revues *Distribution d'Aujourd'hui* et *Distributie*

Vandaag, Administrateur Secrétaire Général du Club Diplomatique de Belgique, Co-Fondateur et Membre du Comité de rédaction de la Gazette Diplomatique), *Mario Bertolini* (Honorary President of AIDA, former President of the Chamber of Commerce of Parma), *Claude Magnan* (Chairman Managing Director Elodis, Director of International Relations Intermarché, France; new elected President of AIDA), *Pierre Arnold* (Docteur Honoris Causa de l'Université de Lausanne et Legion d'honneur 1991, ancien PDG de Migros, membre de la direction du groupe horloger SMH, siège au conseil d'administration de Swissair ; il a présidé la société qui a transformait le Palais de Congrès de Zurich), *Marco Atzberger* (Directorate of Studies, EuroHandelsinstitut, Germany), *George Cojocaru* (President of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Romanian and of Bucharest Municipality - CCIRMB), *Dr. Aurel Vainer* (Vice-President of CCIRMB), *Nicolaie Mihaiescu* (Vice-President of the Romanian Distribution Committee - CRD), Professor *Gheorghe Zaman* (President of CRD Group of Experts; Associate Member of the Romanian Academy, Director of the Institute for National Economy), Professor *Iacob Catoiu* (Member of the Board of CRD), Professor *Ion Smedescu* (Founding Rector of the Romanian-American University and Honorary Member of CRD), Professor Dumitru Patriche (Honorary Member of CRD), Professor Benjamin Cotigaru (Honorary Member of CRD), Professor Tatiana Mosteanu (Member of the Board of CRD).

Allow us also to remember that after two important AIDA international events (Paris, 1999; London, 2000) and many other CRD national events, CRD organized, on March 13, 2001, at the Romanian Parliament Palace, the International Symposium “*The distribution of fresh products*”, a real professional turning point (for example, representatives of Carrefour, Metro and Cora participated at this event), with corresponding effects. The symposium appeared as a turning moment and later, in the weekly journal “European Businesses”, no.21/ 3-9 November 2004, which pointed out, in the context, the outline of the ECR Romania Association’ structuring.





ROMANIAN DISTRIBUTION COMMITTEE
COMITE ROMAIN DE LA DISTRIBUTION
REMANSCHEN EINZELHANDELSKOMITEES



Remembering the International Symposium « The New Fresh Produce Dynamic in Romania », Palace of Parliament, March 13, 2001

Ref. C.R.D. - SYMPTPS
Date: February 9, 2001

Dear Sir,

We have the pleasure to invite you to take part in the Symposium «The new Fresh Produce Dynamic in Romania» an ideal platform for "cross-fertilization" because:

- "les frais font la différence"
- "fresh means margins and growth, quality image, differentiation, an escape from discount pressure, no health danger / protection, organic / as nature intended, farm assured / traceable, good health / pleasure, functional / energy"
- "la fraîcheur ne s'explique pas, elle se vit tous les jours, à chaque instant, la chaîne du froid et l'hygiène sont des éléments qui font également partie de la notion de fraîcheur"
- "the role of Fresh produce is to attract and make € consumers loyal"
- "humaniser les magasins par les frais"
- "Prodotti con amore!"
- "Produits frais - la nouvelle escalade de la qualité"

This Symposium will be held - under the Patronage of Romanian Authorities - on 13 March 2001, at 9 a.m., in the Palace of Parliament.

The Romanian Market changes. The expectations of Romanian Consumers also change. The motivation to buy is constantly evolving. Partnerships between distributors and manufacturers are becoming a factor increasingly enhancing the success. Competition is becoming more targeted and aggressive.

There is a rich diversity and spectacular growth of fresh produce in Europe. Fresh produce represents 40 - 60 % of the sales of hypermarkets, supermarkets and local stores, and even more in terms of profit margins. Sales are expanding fast in discount stores. Purchase decisions are now pragmatic. The combination of technological development, globalisation and open frontiers has transformed the way in which services and goods are offered to consumers. The entire food chain from the farm to the dining room must be kept under observation. Rebuilding trust in the food sector is a high priority. There are recent trends and new requirements.

By participating in this meeting you will have an opportunity to explore current critical issues, to forge highly fruitful personal contacts and to discover new options as well as to shape your company and your life in the future on the Romanian Market.

Hoping you will appreciate this invitation we look forward to meeting you and receiving your comments.

With our best regards,

Dr. Theodor Pădărean

President of Romanian Distribution Committee

Prodotti
con
amore !

It is also important to remember that, starting with 2000, C.R.D. emphasized the impressive European solution to the first key stage of category management (deciding upon the definitions of categories and measurement criteria), as well as the importance of the existence of a complete dynamic picture of the integrated supply chain management of all producers and distributors in a country. CRD analyzed and debated, since its formation, the framework which generated the export of the best managerial practices in the field, including the effects of involving certain global dominators in the food distribution in our country.

<http://www.crd-aida.ro/originsvocation/mentionam-ca-inca-din-anul-2000-crd-a-evidentiat-impresionanta-solutie-europeana-pentru-prima-etapa-cheia-a-managementului-categoriei>

ROMANIAN DISTRIBUTION COMMITTEE

Home News Origins&Vocation Our Team Activities&Partnership

Comitetul Român al Distribuției / Origini&Vocation / Mentionam ca inca din anul 2000 CRD a evidentiat impresionanta solutie europeana pentru prima etapa cheia a managementului categoriei

+ Informații suplimentare despre manifestare (previous entry)

(next entry) Cu ocazia desfășurării la Universitatea Politehnică din București, 9.06.2001, a Sesiunii publice cu tema „Progresele manageriale a Inginerilor: Tradii și perspective”, CRD și-a făcut cunoscut punctul de vedere asupra importanței cunoașterii la nivelul rețelei inginer-manager.

Mentionam ca inca din anul 2000 CRD a evidentiat impresionanta solutie europeana pentru prima etapa cheia a managementului categoriei (convenirea definitorilor categoriilor și a criteriilor de masura), precum și importanta existentei unui tablou dinamic complet al lanțului ofertei integrat al tuturor producătorilor și distribuitorilor dintr-o țara. CRD a analizat și dezbătut, inca de la constituire, cadrul care a generat exportul celor mai bune practici manageriale din domeniu, inclusiv efectele implicării unor dominatori globali în marea distribuție alimentară din țara noastră. De altfel, de exemplu, reprezentanții Carrefour, Metro și Cora au dat curs invitației CRD, participând, în ziua de 13 martie 2001, la Palatul Parlamentului, la lucrările Simpozionului cu participare internațională « Distribuția produselor proaspete », un adevărat moment profesional de referință, cu efecte în consecință. Simpozionul a fost semnalat ca moment de referință și ulterior, în săptămânalul "Afaceri Europene", nr.21/3-9 noiembrie 2004, care a evidențiat, în context, conturarea structurării Asociației ECR România.

Categories: Origins&Vocation
13 Mar 2001

Source: <http://www.crd-aida.ro/originsvocation/mentionam-ca-inca-din-anul-2000-crd-a-evidentiat-impresionanta-solutie-europeana-pentru-prima-etapa-cheia-a-managementului-categoriei/>

SIMPOZION INTERNATIONAL, ANULUI DISTRIBUTIA MARIFERECOR





Paul Schulz
Vice President,
Industry Relations and Conventions

December 7, 2001

Mr. Theodor Purcarea

A letter from Paul Schulz, Senior Vice President, Food Distributors International, USA

Comite Roumain de la Distribution
Calea 13 Septembrie
R-Bucarest
Sector 5

Dear Ted,

Thanks you for your involvement in A.I.D.A. and the personal help you give to Leon by sharing with him your ideas and taking the time to be involved with A.I.D.A. I hope you and your loved ones share all the best of the holiday season.

I am looking forward to seeing you and working with you in the New Year, hopefully when the board meets in Vilnius, Lithuania. Stay well and happy holidays.

Best wishes,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Paul", is positioned above the typed name.

Paul Schulz
Senior Vice President Industry Relations & Membership
Vice President A.I.D.A.
Food Distributors International

Within this context, it is also worth to highlight that the first International Congress of food security and the 32nd International Congress of AIDA were organized in Parma, Italy, 4-7 June, 2006, by the AIDA Brussels in cooperation with the European Food Safety Authority, Municipality of Parma, Chamber of Commerce of Parma, University of Parma and Food Industries from Parma. According to the prestigious "*Distribution d'Aujourd'hui*", Brussels, September 2006: "This large international meeting of AIDA allowed: scoring of traceability issues, of national and European regulations constraints; finding out new synergies considering the essential principles of ethics; underlining the imperative for indispensable food education of consumers customers ..." (CRD-AIDA.RO, 2006)

On the other hand, it is also nice to remember two articles published in "*GAZZETTA DI PARMA*", Lunedì 5 giugno 2006, namely: "*Focus sulla sicurezza alimentare. CONGRESSO Intensa tre giorni alla Camera di Commercio*" by Stella Ricchini, and "*Calabrese, l'uomo delle piramidi. Il nutrizionista a Parma: << L'Efsa? Sta lavorando molto bene >>*" by Giacomo Talignani.

32ème congrès international de l'A.I.D.A.
**Les nouveaux impératifs de la
sécurité alimentaire**

PARME
4 – 7 juin 2006



Europa in movimento

Dai campi alla tavola

Prodotti alimentari sicuri per i consumatori europei



Association internationale de la distribution



Source: <http://www.crd-aida.ro/2006/06/evenimentul-international-al-anului-2006-primul-congres-international-al-securitatii-alimentare/>

**Romania is reconfirming its positioning as an important market
for the large distribution chains**

A year ago, in September 2014, (Purcarea, 2014) we talk about the continuous development of the Romanian retail market, and the increased competition on this relevant market primarily on the basis of creating great customer experience. We underlined that: a

requirement for today's omni-channel retailers is the ability to track and manage the customer journey, by intelligently predicting what a consumer is going to do at every step along this journey, considering both, personalization as the future of retail marketing, and customer data and analytics as the lifeblood of retail marketing; the retail sector is reshaped by the digital interaction, consumers engaging any moment with brands in-store, online, mobile; ***as the retail industry is in the midst of this significant digital evolution, there is a real opportunity to begin to envision the store of the future by extrapolating the actual trends***; the key characteristic of tomorrow's winning retailers will be ***the "hyper agility"*** that allows retailers to quickly and effectively respond and transform their operations, by simultaneously focusing on specific areas.

According to the retail audit company Vektor Marktforschung, (Tanase 2015) the number of stores in Romania independent trade fell from 63,301 units in 2013 to 58,836 units in 2014 (reduction of nearly 4,500 units), while the international retail chains stores raised to retail 1,353 in 2014, compared to 1,103 the previous year recorded version (so more with 250 units). In Bucharest, Angst, the most important independent retail player, decided to leave the franchise Express of Carrefour and to sell to Mega Image (Delhaize). According to the study Shopping Basket (Mystery Shopping made by Mercury360; average time spent in the shop to a purchase visit was 30 minutes), published monthly in "Progressive Magazine", (Stancu, 2015) customer traffic flow in the stores remained low in 2014, and the largest number of shopping carts was recorded among supermarkets (with an average of 1.86 persons), followed by discounters (1.77) and hypermarkets (1.25). The highest flow of customers was registered to Lidl, Profi and Market stores. These findings show that the purchasing power remained low and there have been changes in the purchasing behavior of the Romanians, who have intensified the visits to convenience stores. Average time spent at the cash register stands, as the last year, within 4-5 minutes per visit to the shops and the longest time spent at the cash register was recorded in Cora and Profi stores, followed by Kaufland, Billa, Market, Metro and Lidl stores. The lowest number of shopping carts found at the cash register was recorded at Selgros and Auchan. Shopping for Shopping Basket were carried out for 11 months between the dates of the month 1-5, in 13 stores owned by international retail chains present in Romania (Auchan, Cora, Kaufland, Real, Carrefour, Profi, Carrefour, Billa, Mega Image, Selgros, Metro, Lidl and Penny Market).

On the other hand, according to IKA Romania – RetailerAnalysis, (IKA.Progressive Magazine, 2015), the total current number of shops per channel type in March 2015 was as follows: Cash&Carry – 54; Discount Store – 356; Hypermarket – 177; Proximity Store – 504; Specialized Store – 72; Supermarket – 377. Within this context allow us to mention that Carrefour recently (Stancu, 2015) opened the 4th Supeco store (discount profile; 1.500 – 2.000 sq.m.; < 7.000 SKUs). It is also worth to remember that Romania population density is 83.6 people per square kilometer. (Country Meters, 2015)

Allow us to also take a look at the TOEMM picture from March this year:

Table No. 1: Top Retailers on the Romanian Market, TOEMM, March 2015

No.	Name	Group	Store type	Number of stores		Year of entrance on the Romanian market
				Total	Bucharest	
1	Carrefour	Hyparło	Hypermarket	26	9	2001
2	Cora	Delhaize	Hypermarket	8	3	2003
3	Auchan	Adeo	Hypermarket	31	7	2006
4	Kaufland	Schwarz-Gruppe	Discount Hypermarket	102	10	2005
5	Metro	Metro	Cash & Carry	27	6	1996
6	Selgros	Rewe	Cash & Carry	18	4	2000
7	Praktiker	Praktiker	Do It Yourself	27	3	2002
8	Hornbach	Hornbach	Do It Yourself	5	4	2007
9	Dedeman	Dedeman	Do It Yourself	40	3	2002
10	Mr.Bricolage	Mr.Bricolage	Do It Yourself	3	1	2006
11	Leroy Merlin	Adeo	Do It Yourself	2	1	2012
12	Brico Depot	Kingfisher	Supermarket	6	1	2013
13	Carrefour Market	Hyparło	Supermarket	83	11	2008
14	Billa	Rewe	Supermarket	85	12	1999
15	Mega Image	Delhaize	Supermarket	178	83	1994
16	Lidl	Schwarz-Gruppe	Discount supermarket	183	35	2010
17	Penny Market	Rewe	Discount supermarket	153	6	2001
18	Ikea	Ikea	Specialised store	1	1	2007
19	Altex	Altex	Specialised store	55	8	1992
20	Domo	Domo	Specialised store	126	13	1994
21	Flanco	Flanco Retail	Specialised store	75	9	1992
22	Media Galaxy	Altex	Specialised store	13	4	2004
23	Shop & Go	Delhaize	Proximity store	174	77	2012
24	Profi	Delhaize	Proximity store	255	25	1995
25	La Doi Pasi	Metro	Proximity store	625	21	2012

Source: TOEMM, Romanian-American University, March 2015

As our readers remember, in the article entitled “ Distribution, the challenge of the super agility” (Romanian Distribution Committee Magazine, Volume 5, Issue 3, Year 2014, pp. 19-26) we referred to the findings of a quantitative and qualitative research study (Retail Meter, aiming the habits and the buying behavior in stores) conducted in September 2014 by the company “Exact Cercetare si Consultanta” (<http://www.exactcc.ro/studii.aspx>), highlighting, among other issues, that the top three preferences of the buyers of FMCG (considering the price-

quality relationship while also looking for the product variety) were occupied by Kaufland, Lidl, and Carrefour. We also referred to the fact that within the new reality of the digital world of the Internet having gateways into our physical world (the “Internet of things” taking that concept to the next level), the new reality of “the always-on and always-there consumer”, (Beun, n.d.) “the spread and evolution of mobile technology” (Rowinski, 2014) and as “mobile is becoming the place for media consumption”, (Danova, 2014) we recalled some other opinions expressed in Romania in April 2014 and approaching the “War of online retailers” (Wall-Street.ro analyzing their visibility, authority in Google and the number of links to them, by using analysis tools such as: SeoMoz, Majestic SEO and SimilarWeb.com) (Goaga, 2014) and the topic of “Which retailer attracts most visitors from paid traffic”(share of traffic to stores like Emag, Altex and Domo comes from paid keywords - mostly Google AdWords - and which these words are; EvoMag.ro attracted the most traffic from Social, especially Facebook; eMag.ro and Altex.ro generated about the same percentage of direct traffic; Altex.ro relied more on display than competitors). (Goaga, 2014)

Instead of a Conclusion

And taking into account what we showed in the second part of the present article, we dare to say that the Romanian retail market will also be an interesting “battlefield” in what concerns competing in offering customers consistent experiences whether they interact with a brand in-store, online or via mobile, by delivering them content fast and seamlessly across all these channels, while also not forgetting that the foundation of retailing is understanding what customers want and need, and consequently developing a deep understanding of the decision journey that the new shoppers undertake.

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