ASPECTS REGARDING THE MARKETING ENVIRONMENT OF RETAILERS

Assistant Lecturer Dan Cristian Dabija Ph. D
Babeş-Bolyai University Cluj-Napoca
Faculty of Economics and Business Administration
Cluj-Napoca, Romania

Abstract: The marketing environment in which producers or retailers act consists of the totality of factors and forces that come under the immediate control of a production or retail company and that influence the maintenance or development of profitable relationships with customers [Balaure, 2002, p.76]. It also represents the grouping of actors and of external forces of a company capable of influencing the way in which it develops and maintains satisfactory exchanges with the target market [Kotler, Keller, Bliemel, 2007, p.189]. The necessity of knowing and proper understanding the business environment arises from the perspective of two fundamental issues, namely it [Pop, Dumitru, 2001, p.73] allows a company to be able to harness the raised opportunities and also to avoid certain dangers of a random, indeterminate or antagonistic market.

JEL classification: M30, M31, L81

Key words: retailers, marketing environment, business activities, competition, market development

1. Economic and competition factors

Retailers are nowadays faced with a lot of changes of the macro- and microeconomic environment, but also of the intra- and inter-organisational management [Olteanu, 2002, p.59]. Worldwide, retailers' situation is changing constantly, characterized by strongly growing competition. Home markets of many retailers have shown a tendency of saturation since the early 90s of the last century [Baumgarten, 1998, p.186]. This has greatly induced competition to move outside national borders. Many retailers have resorted to internationalization, considering it the best way to increase sales and turnover [Pop, Dumitru, 2001, p.51]. Tackling the issue of internationalization requires a different approach when considering retailers, and wholesalers respectively. The magnitude of this phenomenon is illustrated in Table 1, which shows for 2008 the total turnover of the worldwide top 15 retailers and the number of markets they entered.

Even since times of old retailers have recognized the importance and especially the need to conduct activities on an international level; these have predominantly consisted in purchasing raw materials, and purchasing activities, as well as "theft" of knowledge and technology [Zentes, Swoboda, Schramm-Klein, 2010, p.224]. In 1992, the first 30 retailers were present in fewer foreign markets than the fingers of one hand; nowadays some of them achieve even more than 50% of their turnovers abroad.

Typically, only powerful retailers manage to internationalize successfully and to penetrate a significant number of foreign markets. Possible mistakes in the development of foreign markets could occur from proper misunderstanding of foreign consumers' mentalities or from underestimation of competitors' force.

Table no. 1 Number of markets developed by retailers versus their total business turnover

Retail Group	Origin country	Turnover (billion EUR)	Nr. employees	Number of markets			
				WE	EE	RW	T
Metro Group	Germany	66,25	251.338	13	14	7	34
Schwarz Group	Germany	54,89	280.000	17	9	-	26
Carrefour	France	87,75	475.976	6	6	12	24
Aldi	Germany	40,59	500.000	12	4	2	18
Rewe Group	Germany	50,91	326.000	5	9	-	14
Wal-Mart	USA	285,75	2.100.000	1	-	15	16
Tengelmann	Germany	24,17	167.500	3	10	-	13
Auchan	France	39,48	165.000	5	5	3	13
Tesco	UK	54,56	468.508	2	5	7	14

Caption: WE – Western Europe, EE – Eastern Europe, RW – Rest of the world (America, Asia, etc), T – total developed markets; Date valid for 2010 expressed in billion EUR;
*Sources: ***, Metro Handelslexikon 2010/2011, pp.76-89; ***, The Global 2000 Rank 2010; companies own websites.*

Surviving in an intensively competitive environment may be, of course, more easily achieved by a retailer with a large turnover than by a retailer with a little one, who therefore has a limited experience with foreign markets. The current internationalisation process of retailers is in fact a somewhat beaten path, namely by the producers in the 70-ties and 80-ties of the twentieth century [Liebmann, Zentes, Swoboda, 2008, p.346].

Most European retail chains (Carrefour, Metro, Ahold, Tesco, Rewe, ITM Enterprizes, Edeka, Lidl / Schwarz, Auchan, Spar International) are active in the food sector [Stănciulescu, Hallier, 2006, pp.500-502]. They realized the importance of globalization in time, and properly perceived the need of "reactive expansion" in Central and Eastern Europe [Zentes, Swoboda, Schramm-Klein, 2010, p.244]. Their expansion into in culturally and geographically neighbouring foreign markets, becomes a fundamental strategic choice [Gielens, Dekimpe, 2007, pp.196-212].

This concept has not been sufficiently applied so far. Many retailers were not able to rapidly shift resources abroad, and to adapt themselves to foreign cultural, legal, and political conditions. Saturation tendencies of demand in home markets, however, forces competitors to extend to foreign markets. Even market leaders sometimes fail to intrude into foreign markets because of misperception of the specific conditions abroad.

For example, Wal-Mart, the biggest worldwide retailer with an estimated turnover in 2008 of USD 405 billion, decided in 1997 to penetrate the German market. With an initial investment of about U.S. 1.6 billion and losses of more than U.S. 3 billion they had to give in due to the strong competition of the German discounters Aldi and Lidl, Wal-Mart had failed to build up an appropriate image in Germany. In July 2006, Wal-Mart sold the German chain consisting of 85 stores to its competitor Metro [Pop, Dabija, 2008, pp.1099-1105].

Another trend is that of transit or "adventure" retailing, close to the boundaries of selected regions or countries. In 2005, 1.07 million Swiss households (compared with 0.18 million in 2002) "preferred" to make purchases outside their country, especially in Germany. As to the factors that have contributed to this trend we refer to [Zentes, Swoboda, Schramm-Klein, 2010, p.343]:

- Increase of the value of imported goods not liable to customs clearance from 100 to 300 CHF (€60 – 180);
- Decline of consumer confidence in the Swiss local retailers;
- Relatively high price difference between Swiss (expensive) and EU goods (cheap);
- A shift of attitude of Swiss consumers in favour of EU-goods.

We have also to include the costs of establishing new stores among the economic factors. Such costs are connected with the acquisition or leasing of sites for stores, and also with establishing them. Furthermore costs for various facilities such as outdoor provisions and parking lots are to calculate. Last not least communication efforts are to be financed in order to attract customers [Omar, 1999, p.35].

Even though costs of retail sites have been declining since 2008 they still are an important factor for every company. In 2009, the monthly rent for 100 square meters of retail space in Cluj-Napoca varied between €15 and 40 depending on the location (excluding VAT). According to real estate experts, retailer have to add maintenance costs (€2 – 2.5 per m^2) as well as a "marketing fee" of €1.5 – 3 per m^2. The "marketing fee" includes the monthly cost of joint advertising and promotion conducted by the shopping center's management. Retail space rents have declined by 40-70% from 2008 to 2010 [Botezatu, 2010; Roman, 2010].

2. Political and legislative factors

The legal framework set by the World Trade Organizations (WTO) - and even more important for Europe by the EU – enforces free trade, and opens new markets to national companies. In this regard, we emphasize the liberalization of world trade by agreements (GATT, GATS, TRIPS, WTA, ATC) of the WTO Member States, designed to lead to a comprehensive reintegration of world trade [Zentes, Swoboda, 2001, pp.11-14] with industrial, agricultural, textiles (ATC), services (GATS) and intellectual property rights (TRIPS), and also with regional trade agreements.

A stationary retailer may take advantage of different specific forms of operation when extending to foreign markets [Zentes, Ferring, 1995, pp.410-436; Zentes, Swoboda, Schramm-Klein, 2010, p.343]:

- Foundation and development of subsidiary companies with offices (branches) in the foreign country; this is supposed to be the most successful form of intruding a foreign market;
- Acquisitions of local retailers (acquisition strategy) or local retail chains. This accelerates to some extent the adaptation process to foreign markets and their specifics conditions. This includes knowledge of local competitors and their strengths, but also of specific habits, values and traditions of customers; the acquired local firms will have competence also with regard to suppliers and producers of goods. Furthermore no valuable time is lost for market research; some legal complications when starting off with new own offices may also be avoided. Acquiring local or national retailers can also be seen as a phenomenon of economic globalization, possibly connected with concentration of retail power.
- Cooperation with local retailers (cooperative strategy) by development of franchise stores, granting of licenses or engaging in joint ventures. These situations can be the result of legal restrictions that prevent the establishment of representative offices or branches; a local partner may also be preferred due its potential easier access to some raw materials or technologies. For example, Metro, the second European retailer according to turnover, preferred to penetrate the Chinese market

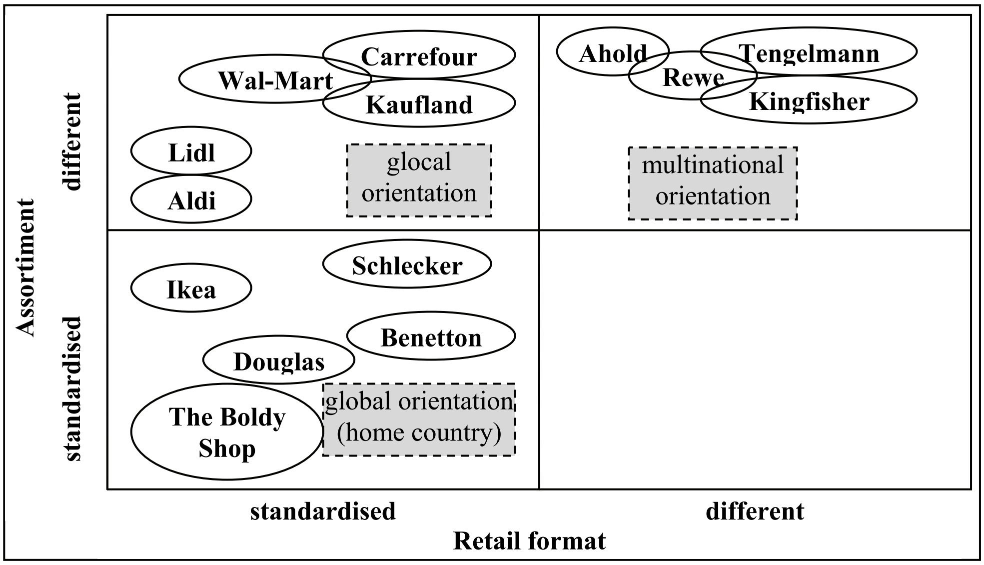
through a joint venture. In 1996 they did so, using the competence of the local retail chain Jinjiang. Currently, Metro operates over 20 stores in mainland China [***, *Metro Handelslexikon 2010/2011*, p.136].

In this context, the decision of extending to a foreign market concerns [Gielens, Dekimpe, 2007, pp.196-212]:

- Timing and size of entry: the number of stores, their size, the length or depth of the assortment or the size of sales area;
- Intra-organisational learning with respect to the company's own internationalization experience;
- Inter-organizational learning, in terms of foreign market competition;
- Market dynamics with respect to the process of internationalization of competition.

A retailer will also have to define its own degree of flexibility (or rigidity) in terms of differentiation (or standardization) in relation to the usual retail format in his home country. Within a "global" strategy (see Fig. 1), a retailer will have to choose either between standardization and differentiation. If standardizing, a retailer will copy his home business model in foreign markets. For example, he will offer the same range of assortment or use a similar communication strategy (Ikea, Benetton, and The Body Shop).

He can also opt for a "multinational" orientation, adapting known strategies to specific needs of local or regional markets. In this sense he will have to change both composition and structure of assortment, the retail format, the price, and the communication tools used (Tengelmann, Rewe). Finally, he may decide to guide himself according to a "glocal" orientation, which means that he will use a common retailing format on an international level, however, with specific adaptations to local or national characteristics (Lidl / Schwarz, Carrefour, Wal-Mart) [Liebmann, Zentes, Swoboda, 2008, pp.270-275].



Source: Liebmann, Zentes, Swoboda, 2008, p.273.

Figure 1. Standardization versus differentiation of retailers according to assortment

If a retailer chooses internationalization, he will have to take into consideration a wide range of legal regulations issued by national, regional or local authorities. They can refer to various aspects, such as [***, *Metro Handelslexikon,* pp.72-73; Gilbert, 2003, pp.244-246; Popa, November 2010]:

- Type of packaging that can be used for food or non-food products;
- Daily operation schedule of stores, the total number of weekly working hours or the days when sales activities are banned. For example stores from Poland, Portugal, Romania, Sweden, Hungary, Ireland and UK may be open for more than 160 hours per week, 24 hours per day from Monday to Saturday. Usually stores may not be opened on Sundays in Austria, Belgium, Denmark, France, Norway, Holland or Spain, excepting special days provides local or regional regulations do not contradict. In Germany stores are allowed be open on not more than 4 to 8 Sundays per year.
- Various taxes (especially the value added tax) which directly affect customers may lead to an increase or decrease in product sales. For example, there are two different levels of VAT in most European countries – a standard one for most goods, and a lower one charged for food. The Romanian VAT of 24% is among the highest in Europe, whereas Malta, Denmark and Portugal request a VAT of 5% on food, whereas the standard VAT varies between 18% and 25%. Hungary e.g. follows with 18% (standard VAT 25%).
- Duration of holidays in specific countries or regions, as well as free days when retail stores may or may not be opened;
- Permits for construction and arrangement of buildings, their proper equipment with a minimum number of parking places lots or the management of transport.

3. Technological factors

Concentration of global retailing requires optimizing of allocation, and the appropriate use of financial and human resources, dependent on technical information. Due to technological progress and improvement of organization, retailing is no longer just a distributor for manufacturers, but "emancipates" and becomes a partner not only with equal rights, but even a dominant aspect for producers [Zentes, Janz, Morschett, 1999, pp.1-4]. The professionalization of retailing was also possible due to the development of modern technologies and information systems; therefore its access to the final consumer was tremendously improved [Morschett, 2002, p.83].

Serving clients from a counter may help to collect important data: clients' habits of buying, structure and value of purchases frequency of visits [Hallier, 1995, pp.104-107]. Further information can be collected by customer cards or customer clubs. Even if retailers apply in general a mass marketing strategy, by using customer cards they can implement a personalized marketing or a "one-to-one marketing" [Morschett, 2002, pp.83-84].

Retailers may address consumers by using information technology, in order to persuade them to accept a certain retail format or a specific store. Electronic commerce and its comfort (consumer no longer have to visit retailers in order to make purchases, they need only run transactions from their computers), represent a serious alternative to traditional forms of retailing and even a possible future threat to them [Zentes, Swoboda, 2000, pp.687-706]. Electronic commerce which is also considered to be a chance for new media has some limitations concerning "wining acquisition" of new customers or establishing new distribution channels [Morschett, 2002, p. 85]. Possible problems in this sense are given by [Müller-Hagedorn, 2000, pp.11-48]:

- A lack of users confidence in the security of encrypted data transfer concerning him;
- The possibility of fraudulent use of electronic data entered into a web page by customers;
- Charges or fees not clearly declared in advance.

Retailers prefer the internet as a distribution channel since it makes the public more efficiently aware of them and strengthens their reputation. Empirical studies [Rode, 2000, p.36] show that customers look up the name of retailers who are present in the internet. This means that they already perceived them as a brand when contacting them. Thus, only retailers who succeed to position themselves as strong brands will have the chance to be recognized and accepted by users [Morschett, 2002, pp.84-86].

The retail format of different foreign markets varies. Therefore, a retailer going abroad will have to consider the retail formats specific for the market which he penetrates and the consumer's perception of certain retail formats. Thus, for example, whilst German consumers typically prefer discount stores, French consumers rather visit hypermarkets [George, 1997, p.133; Ferring, 2001, p.44]. For each phase of the life cycle of a retail format are, of course, different recommendations valid as to possible strategic market appearance. Thus, suppose a retail format has been chosen [Gilbert, 2003, p.248]:

- For the introduction phase into a market (internet, interactive kiosk systems, wholesale retail by warehouse). It should secure a favourable market position; it will probably try to focus on a cost efficient strategy. It could also aim at an appropriate differentiation from competitors thus striving for comparative advantages. In case of unstable market environment, the retailer may focus on niche markets, e.g. on clients with special habits or social positions.
- During the growth phase (discounters, convenience stores or "category killers") the retailer tries to occupy a dominant market position, and later to defend this position. The strategy will focus on cost reduction and on technological superiority. A reorientation of the entire strategy is necessary if retail format is not adequate to the meanwhile reached market position.
- During the maturity phase (hypermarkets, supermarkets) the retailer will seek to defend aggressively his – hopefully –strong market position and to permanently improve its market share. If the retailer, however, has reached only a weak market position, then he will have to reassess his strategy. He will have to plan overall improvements in order to strengthen his market presence, e.g. by competing within new consumer segments;
- During the decline phase (stores with personal selling) he may act in on a weak market position; then the retailers' best choice would be to serve the market as long as it pays. If the retailer has still a dominant position he will have to offensively defend it and to seek new ways of positioning himself among consumers.

Recent studies highlight consumers "overload" with information transmitted by "media communication" [Tomczak, 2000, pp.19-38]. While some authors argue that the this "overload" by advertising extends at least to 95% [Kroeber-Riel, Esch, 2000, p.13], others conclude that if a consumer would like to follow all advertisements shown on television, the day should have at least 40 hours [Gröppel-Klein, 2007/2008].

Due to the fact that consumers do not have the mental capacity of processing too much information, a retailer will have to arouse consumers' attention by broadcast advertisement. Furthermore he will have to make him follow the spot until the end.

Such a goal, however, has become increasingly difficult in recent years [Kroeber-Riel, Esch, 2000, p.13].

Among the technological factors affecting the development of retail or wholesale we may also include [Gilbert, 2003, pp.245-247]:

- Degree of innovation by introducing new technology to scan products;
- Level of acceptance for new electronic means of payments;
- Software implementation for automated management and control of stock inventory;
- Existence of competitive customer data management systems concerning e.g. socio-demographic characteristics, buying frequencies, data of structure and size of purchases, the breakdown to details like sums spent during certain time periods or for certain commodities.

4. Socio-demographic and cultural factors

Worldwide active retailers must take specific socio-economic characteristics of consumers into account such as [Pop, Dabija, 2008, pp.1099-1105; Gilbert, 2003, p.245; Zentes, Janz, Morschett, 1999, p.32]:

a) Evolution and distribution of customers' income and wealth;
b) Changes in the age structure of populations, the number of households of young and old people, the total number of households or the average size of them. Young people adopt innovative products usually more quickly and easily whilst older people usually prefer traditional products know to them or that they have bought for a long time.
c) Lifestyles and its impact on retailing and sales;
d) Increasing mobility of the population as a result of increasing incomes; development of wealth, state of employment.
e) Change of households size, dependent on the region and the consequences for consumption of food and durable goods;
f) Change of share of single-person and two person households with no kids, (if both partners have an income, consumption of premium or luxurious goods would increase);
g) Change of unemployment and its effects on prices (opportunity for discount retailers);
h) A higher grade of motorisation allows an easier access of retail parks outside the city borders; furthermore clients can visit several stores in within a relatively limited period of time.

For example, retailers may seek to influence preschooler children by spots interspersed with cartoon series. Even if they are no direct buyers of specific products (toys, candies, colouring books, newspapers or comic books, dolls, cloths and sport articles), they can influence their parents. Toys represent nowadays a strong industry, with annual sales exceeding 2.5 billion objects with a value of 20 billion dollars. Among the most popular and best sold toys of the last hundred years one can find [***, *Top 10 cele mai de succes jucării din toate timpurile*, 19.05.2010] "Slinky", the spiral spring invented in 1943 by a naval engineer. Until now it has been sold more than 300 million times worldwide. The shaping pasta "Play Doh" was planned to be used for the maintenance of wallpaper, but eventually has become the perfect substitute for the greasy and not always good smelling clay.

At the same time, a crucial role in coming to buying decisions is played by the different types of temperament highlighted by customer. When structuring the assortment, establishing the prices or planning a communication strategy, a retailer will have to take into consideration the client's personality or his attitude towards the entire offer. In this respect, a consumer may highlight one of the four types of temperaments [Niţă, Corodeanu, 2007, p.27]:

- Lively and dynamic – people, who are optimistic, sociable, self confident; they quickly accept advices of the retail staff. They also easily adapt to new situations, goods or retail formats;
- Choleric – clients are nervous; they rapidly lose continence, make quick and sometimes impulsive decisions. Such customers find it also difficult to accept other persons' advice and do not-like contradiction;
- Calm – consumers are calm, and patient; they are offish and thoughtful and need long time for thinking, and weigh carefully the alternatives before making a purchase decision;
- Melancholy – such buyers are sensitive and sometimes indecisive. They always feel the need of advices coming from retailers stuff.

From this perspective we may speak of a behavioural versatility or of dynamics of consumer behaviour. We predominantly consider those issues that are subject to typical behavioural patterns of consumers. These consumers show a consistent and constant behaviour over time, i.e. he retains his acquisition characteristics over time. Therefore he is more easily approachable by retailers. His parole may be "I am what I have". Other consumers emphasize a "hybrid" or bipolar behaviour. Such people are willing to invest money in a given acquisition, while in other similar cases they will seek to significantly reduce the spent amount. They actually are the type of individual who buys both from exclusive stores, and from discounters. His dictum could be "I am as I live".

The "multi-optional" consumer has evolved from a "hybrid" one, by consuming or buying what he believes is proper in the very moment (but that could rapidly change if he feels otherwise). Such customers are a truly challenge for retailers and especially for the retailers' offer. Their dictum seems to be "I am how the moment requires". The "paradox" consumer is the transposition in future of the one who roams between different consumption groups and tries to swing between an inner and outer living perspective. His life style is to "be as I like" [Liebmann, Zentes, Swoboda, 2008, p.123, p.136].

In dealing with foreign markets, retailers will also have to take into account the degree to which a certain social orientation could be achieved. Such an orientation consists of several dimensions [Liebmann, Zentes, Swoboda, 2008, p.137; Morschett, 2002, p.88; Zentes, Swoboda, 1998, p.33; Zentes, Swoboda, 1999, pp.24-29; Löbbert, Hanrieder, Berges, Beck, 2001, p.137]:

- Orientation towards enhancing a shopping environment in the store. When shopping, consumers expect something exotic, a kind of retail show or "Retail Theatre". This is a true challenge for any retailer, because he must continuously innovate and adapt the store's atmosphere and the structure of assortment;
- Orientation towards convenience and comfort while shopping. Among the reasons that have lead to this new trend one may include the increased number of single-member households, the fact that women try to combine career with family, as well as the tendency for a more efficient use of time or space for living. For example a hasty consumer may combine the acquisition of milk, bread and chocolate with the

purchase of fuel in a gas station with shop. The orientation towards convenience is certainly contrary to that which focuses on price, due to the fact that products that can be purchased from gas stations at late hours are certainly more expensive than those bought from traditional retailers (discounters, hypermarkets). Sometimes a commodity that exactly meets the taste of a consumer may be found in a gas station.

- Orientation towards trendy and fashionable brands can rather be considered a phenomenon specific to the younger generation. However, this orientation may sometimes be combined with the orientation towards organic products. In such cases the brand is for consumers a safety element, or a guarantee of quality in the products origin;
- Orientation towards value is regarded as a new phenomenon for retailers, because it implies the substitution or replacement of brands by similar products sold at an almost equal quality level, but at lower prices.
- Orientation towards professionalization of acquisitions. Traditionally strategies focused on price are specific only for discounters. Consumers who buy low price articles may do this trying to achieve a best equilibrium between the most advantageous prices for a minimum level of quality. Such "intelligent" customers are considered to be "Smart Shoppers". They often take into consideration considerable efforts of time in order to reach a certain store or retailer who will offer him the item that he currently needs.
- Orientation towards organic products, healthy diets or foods offering a so called "maximum value". Retailers often include among their offer such special assortments.

5. Components of the micromarketing environment in retail

Besides macro forces, retailer will also have to take the elements of micromarketing into account. For this purpose a retailer seeks to define appropriate positioning strategies. With these strategies he attacks direct and indirect competitors, and tries to achieve a better positioning in consumers' minds. The means of such a policy are the choice of a specific assortment, the emphasis of his own brands, and keeping best relations with good manufacturers and suppliers [Liebmann, Zentes, Swoboda, 2008, p.435].

Competitors are very significant for retailers, because they aim by the specific retail format (hypermarket, supermarket, convenience stores, etc.) and assortment at almost the same consumer groups. From this point of view it is important to study the competition intensity, the degree of saturation and the future opportunities. Finally, especially in foreign countries, a retailer will also have to regard the number of competitors with online presence, and the number of showrooms of manufacturers', respectively.

The retailer will have to take into account the preferences, lifestyles, needs, characters or specific values of his customers. Various empirical studies outline several types of behaviour. So buyers can be classified into four types according to their attitudes with respect to retail formats, namely [Stone, 1954, pp.36-45; Cătoiu, Teodorescu, 2004, p.140]:

- Economic buyers, who are rational during the entire acquisition process. Such individuals forms their attitudes towards assortments based on prices and quality of articles;

- The personalized customer tries to interact with retailers' personnel, in order to gain their recognition;
- The ethical buyer reveals a dual attitude – a positive one attitude towards convenience stores or small independent retailers and a negative attitude towards large retail chains and stores, such as hypermarkets or supermarkets;
- The apathetic buyer who is quickly bored when purchasing. He regards buying as a waste of time and tries to minimize interaction with the retailer, and the duration of his visit.

A retailer will also seek to continuously improve its relations with suppliers. He will try to structure them according to types of benefits, articles, and to optimize the points of interconnection within the value chain. Such an objective can be achieved through by a proper Supply-Chain-Management. This management has to care of compliance with delivery times, and of the necessary stock of commodities in the central warehouse, and furthermore for all storage facilities within the branches. Further optimization possibilities may regard intra-chain logistics or transportation capacities, as well as an adequate supply for all retail formats operated. Last but not least, the spatial proximity of wholesalers, and producers respectively could represent for a retailer will be another relevant aspect in optimizing specific Supply-Chain processes [Homburg, Krohmer, 2006, pp.703-306].

Conclusions

Proper understanding of both the macro- and the micromarketing environment allows retailers a better use of market opportunities, and helps them to avoid dangers. Retailers can better outline their strategies and effectively address specific target segments, by taking advantage of fundamental environmental research. At the same time they achieve a proper and better positioning among competitors

REFERENCES

1. Balaure, V. (Ed.) şi alţii — *Marketing,* 2nd Edition, Uranus, Bucharest, 2002.
2. Baumgarten, H. — Qualitäts- und Umweltmanagement logistischer Prozessketten, Haupt Bern, 1998.
3. Botezatu, A. — Cât plăteşti pentru 100 mp de spaţiu comercial, 10.02.2009, resource available online in the section Analize on www.startups.ro, access data, 18.12.2010.
4. Cătoiu, I., Teodorescu, N. — Comportamentul consumatorului, 2nd Edition, Uranus, Bucharest, 2004.
5. Ferring, N. — Marktbearbeitungsstrategien international tätiger Handelsunternehmen, Gabler, Wiesbaden, 2001.
6. George, G. — Internationalisierung im Handel, Springer, Berlin, 1997.
7. Gielens, K., Dekimpe, M.G. — The Entry Strategy of Retail Firms into Transition Economies, in Journal of Marketing, Year 71, Nr. 2, 2007, pp.196-212.
8. Gilbert, D. — Retail Marketing Management, 2nd Edition, Pearson Education, Essex, 2003.
9. Gröppel-Klein, A. — Konsumentenverhalten, Universität des Saarlandes, 2007/2008.
10. Hallier, B. — Der Handel auf dem Weg zur Marketingführerschaft, in Absatzwirtschaft, Year 38, Nr. 3, 1995, pp.104-107.

11. Homburg, C., Krohmer, H. Marketingmanagement, Strategie – Instrumente – Umsetzung – Unternehmensführung, 2nd Edition, Gabler, Wiesbaden, 2006.
12. Kotler, P., Keller, K.L., Bliemel, F. Marketing Management, Strategien für wertschaffendes Handeln, 12th Edition, Pearson Education, Prentice Hall, 2007.
13. Kröber-Riel, W., Esch, F.R. Strategie und Technik der Werbung: Verhaltenswissenschaftliche Ansätze, 5th Edition, Dtv, München, 2000.
14. Liebmann, H.P., Zentes, J., Swoboda, B. Handelsmanagement, 2nd Edition, Vahlen, München, 2008.
15. Löbbert, R., Hanrieder, D., Berges, U., Beck, J. Lebensmitteln: Waren – Qualitäten – Trends, Europa Lehrmittel, Haan-Gruiten, 2001.
16. Morschett, D. Retail Branding und Integriertes Handelsmarketing, Gabler, Wiesbaden, 2002.
17. Müller-Hagedorn, L. E-Commerce im Handel: Zentrale Problemfelder, in Müller-Hagedorn L., Zukunfstperspektiven des E-Commerce im Handel, dtv, München, 2000.
18. Niţă, V., Corodeanu, D. Merchandising, Concepte, principii, reguli de bază, standarde, Tehnopress Iaşi, 2007.
19. Olteanu, V. Management – marketing: o provocare ştiinţifică, Ecomar, Bucharest, 2002.
20. Omar, O. Retail Marketing, Pearson Education, Essex, 1999.
21. Pop, N.A., Dabija, D.C. Tendencies of Internationalization in Retailing, in Analele Universităţii Oradea, Ştiinţe Economice, Tom XVII, Volum IV, 2008, pp.1099-1105.
22. Pop, N.A., Dumitru I. Marketing internaţional, Uranus, Bucharest, 2001.
23. Popa, C. Dilema preţurilor, Revista Piaţa, November 2010, Nr. 71.
24. Rode, J. Europäer kaufen im Web – BCG erwartet 9 Mrd. Euro Internet Umsatz, în Lebensmittelzeitung, anul 52, Nr. 6, 2000.
25. Roman, V. Chiria spaţiilor comerciale din Capitală a ajuns la jumătate faţă de anul trecut, 5.10.2010, published in Adevărul.
26. Stănciulescu, G.C., Hallier, B. How Retailing has Changed? What Marketing Did for this Change?, in Supplement of Studia Universitatis Babes-Bolyai.Oeconomica, Cluj-Napoca, 2006, pp.500-502.
27. Stone, G.P. City shoppers and urban identification: Observations on the Social Psychology of City Life, in The American Journal of Sociology, July 1954, Nr. 60, pp.36-45.
28. Tomczak, T. One to one marketing im Lebensmitteleinzelhandel – Grundlagen und Perspektiven, in Zentes, J. (Ed.), One to one Marketing – Sinnvoll und umsetzbar?, Ergebnisse des 9. Bestfoods Trend-Forum, TrendForum Verlag, Gabler Wiesbaden, 2000, pp.19-38.
29. Zentes, J., Ferring, N. Internationales Handelsmarketing, in Herrmanns A., Wissmeier U., Internationales Marketing Management, Vahlen, München, 1995.
30. Zentes J., Janz M., Morschett D. Neue Dimensionen des Handelsmarketing, Institut für Handel und Internationales Marketing, Walldorf, 1999.
31. Zentes, J., Swoboda, B. Auswirkungen des Electronic Commerce auf den Handel, in Die Betriebswirtschaft, Year 60, Nr. 6, 2000, pp.687-706.

32. Zentes, J., Swoboda, B. Grundbegriffe des Marketing: Marktorientiertes globales Management-Wissen, 5th Edition, Dtv, München, Stuttgart, 2001.
33. Zentes, J., Swoboda, B. Handelsmonitor I 98, Trends&Visionen: Wo wird im Jahre 2005 Handel „gemacht”? Deutscher Fachverlag, Frankfurt am Main, 1999.
34. Zentes, J., Swoboda, B. Profilierungsdimensionen des Tankstellen-Shopping, Institut für Handel und Internationales Marketing, Leckerland Deutschland, Saarbrücken-Frechen, 1998, pp.30-39.
35. Zentes, J., Swoboda, B., Schramm-Klein, H. Internationales Marketing, 2nd Edition, Vahlen, München, 2010.