

---

### Abstract

This chapter discusses the main characteristics and empirical relevance of a variety of store formats applied in non-food retailing. The diverse forms of retail stores represent different strategies for selling goods and services and are a result of the diversity of product groups covered by the term “general merchandise”.

---

### 3.1 Major Types of Non-food Retail Formats

In general merchandise retailing, a variety of retail formats is used to sell non-food merchandise to consumers. This **diversity** results from the **plurality** of product groups characterised as non-food items. Even though consumer shopping behaviour varies for different product groups within the food sector, there are major differences between general merchandise and food items, based on product characteristics such as perishability, specific demand patterns, product value (e. g., in relation to product size or volume) or turnover rate. For example, while food is usually purchased daily or several times per week, general merchandise is usually purchased infrequently, and specific frequencies vary significantly: some categories such as cosmetics or household articles might be bought every few weeks, while items such as TV sets, bicycles or computers are usually only purchased every few years.

This chapter will discuss the major types of store-based retail formats for general merchandise, namely specialty stores, category specialists, department stores, full-line discount stores and variety stores, off-price retail formats and pop-up stores. These formats differ in terms of store size, typical location strategy (see Chap. 11) and store positioning when it comes to price, assortment and service strategies. Table 3.1 summarises the main characteristics of the most important general merchandise store formats.

**Table 3.1** Selected characteristics of store-based formats in non-food retailing. (Adapted from Berman and Evans 2013, p. 150; Levy et al. 2014, p. 48)

	Specialty Stores	Category Specialists	Department Stores	Discount Stores	Variety Store	Extreme Value Retailers	Off-Price Stores
Size (m <sup>2</sup> )	300–1100	4500–9000	9000–60,000	5500–7500	3000–6500	650–1500	1800–3000
SKU's	5000	20,000–40,000	100,000	30,000	5000–10,000	3000–4000	50,000
Merchandise	(very) low breadth but very high depth of assortment; average to (very) good quality	Low breadth but high depth of assortment; average to good quality	Good breadth and depth of assortment; average to good quality	Good breadth but average to low depth of assortment; average to below average quality	Good to average breadth and some depth of assortment; below-average to average quality	Average breadth and depth of assortment; average quality; varying assortment	Moderate breadth but poor depth of assortment; average to good quality; low level of continuity
Prices	High	Low	Average to high	Competitive/low	Average	Very competitive/low	Low
Atmosphere and Services	Average to excellent	Low to high	Good to excellent	Low/below average to average	Below average	Low	Low/below average
Location	Business district, regional malls/shop-ping centres	Stand alone, power strip centres	City centre, business district, shopping centres, isolated store	Business district, stand alone, power strip centres	Business district, shopping centres, isolated store	Urban, strip	Outlet malls, business district, suburban shopping strip, isolated store

Table 3.1 (continued)

	Specialty Stores	Category Specialists	Department Stores	Discount Stores	Variety Store	Extreme Value Retailers	Off-Price Stores
Promotion	Heavy use of displays; extensive salesforce	Use of newspapers; moderate salesforce	Heavy ad and catalogue use, direct mail, personal selling	Heavy use of newspapers, price-oriented; self-service	Use of newspapers; self-service	Use of newspapers; heavily price-oriented; self-service	Use of newspapers; limited sales force
Examples	<i>Douglas, WH-Smith, Gap, Abercrombie &amp; Fitch</i>	<i>IKEA, Curry's, Staples, PetSmart</i>	<i>John Lewis, Sears, JCPenny, Saks Fifth Avenue, Harrods</i>	<i>Walmart, Kmart, Target</i>	<i>Woolworth, Ben Franklin</i>	<i>Family Dollar, Dollar Tree, EuroShop</i>	<i>T.K. Maxx/T.J. Maxx, Marshalls</i>

As well as these major non-food retail formats, further retail channels and formats are used to offer non-food items. Specifically, general merchandise is often added to retailers' assortment portfolios when retailers decide to increase the breadth of their assortment. For example, many retailers originating in food retailing now include additional items in their assortments, such as toys, gift items, flowers or household supplies, leading to a blurring of food- and non-food retail channels (see Chap. 2). Therefore, customers' spending in the main retail channels is subject to change. Fig. 3.1 illustrates the share of retail sales in Germany by retail channel.

This strategy adding goods and services that are unrelated to the rest of a retailer's assortment is called **scrambled merchandising** and is followed for several reasons (see Chap. 12). Mainly, retailers aim to increase overall revenue by adding fast-selling and highly profitable items. Particularly if the popularity of the retailer's original merchandise decreases, new product lines might be sought to maintain or increase the customer base. Also, scrambling merchandise addresses several purchasing trends such as preferences for one-stop shopping and fosters impulse buying (Berman and Evans 2013, p. 145).

---

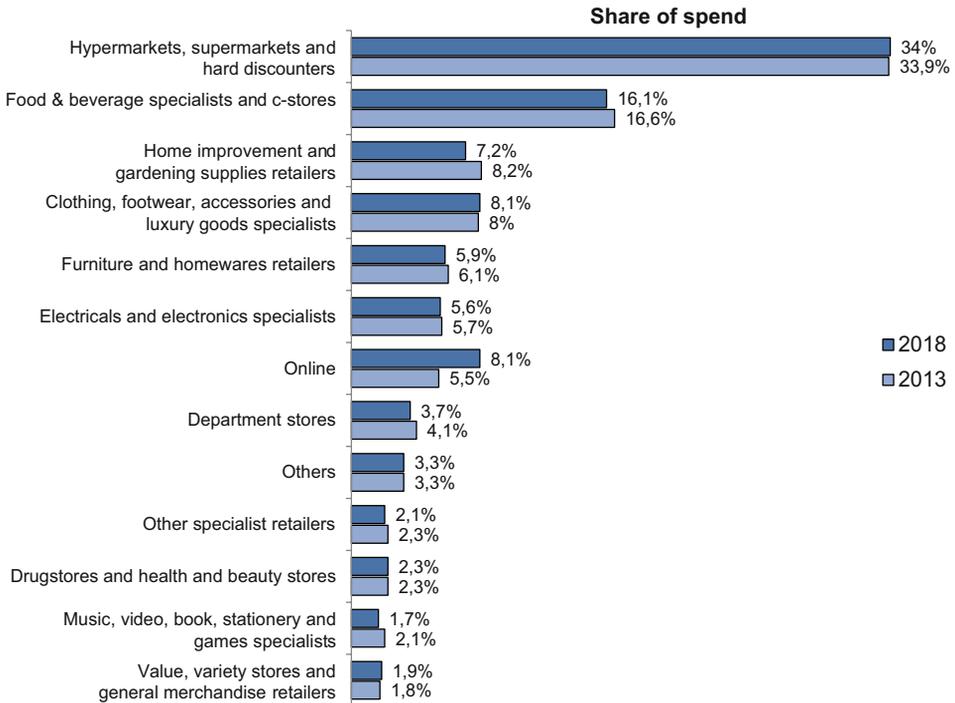
## 3.2 Specialty Stores

Specialty stores specialise in one or very few product types and consequently carry a limited number of products within one or few product (and service) lines. Usually, the merchandise is of average to good or **high quality**. While the breadth of the assortment is narrow, the depth is usually extensive, and specialty stores thus provide a **better selection** than competitors from other retail formats such as department stores (Ogden and Ogden 2005, p. 99). In addition, specialty stores offer a high level of **service** and knowledgeable sales personnel. Stores are typically located in city locations or shopping centres, are small and the **in-store atmosphere** is tailored to creating a pleasant shopping experience (see Chap. 15).

**Limited line specialty stores** are a specific type of specialty store that only carry a very narrow assortment, but offer enormous depth within this limited sector. Often, these stores offer (very) high quality merchandise and a high level of customer service and in-store design, while prices are above average.

Traditionally, retailers that sell merchandise such as clothes (e. g., *Gap* or *Abercrombie & Fitch*), footwear (e. g., *Footlocker*), cosmetics (e. g., *Douglas*, *The Body Shop* or *Sephora*), books (e. g., *Barnes & Noble* or *WHSmith*) or jewellery (e. g., *Christ*) choose specialty stores as their store format. In many cases, however, independent local retailers run specialty stores.

The main element of a specialty store's strategy is a focus on a specific market segment. While this offers many opportunities to tailor their stores to their **target group**, it also makes them vulnerable to changes in consumer tastes and preferences. They also incur the high costs that result from a **quality-oriented strategy** in terms of store environment, merchandise and service offered to customers. This often leads to higher than average prices.



**Fig. 3.1** Share of total retail spend in Germany by channel. (Retail Week 2014, cited from Statista 2015.)

While specialty stores have been the traditional format for non-food shopping, in recent years they have been one of the weakest, slowest growing retail areas and have lost market share to other store-based or non-store formats.

However, a specific form of specialty stores has evolved and is growing despite this trend. Mostly seen in fashion retailing, **fast-fashion chain stores** have emerged as a successful store format (see Chap. 6). Companies such as *H&M*, *Zara* or *Mango* are taking a new approach to specialty retailing by rapidly changing their store assortments with new product introductions several times per month. By doing this, they can guarantee very fashionable and up-to-date products in store.

This approach to quality is also different from traditional specialty retailing. Whereas traditional specialty stores suffer from efficiency problems resulting from their high quality strategies, fast-fashion retailers vary their approaches to in-store environments, products and service quality. While they ensure a minimum quality standard, the general quality of store atmosphere, merchandise and services offered is in many cases lower than average, with an explicit focus on being up to date and having short refresh periods. This strategy, combined with efficient back-end processes, especially in terms of logistics (see Chap. 18), helps reduce costs and thus enables fast-fashion retailers to establish low or medium price

strategies. It is also a strategy to enhance customers' shopping frequency thanks to the constantly changing assortments.

---

### 3.3 Category Specialists

Category specialists, also referred to as **specialist markets**, **category killers** or **power retailers**, are price-oriented stores that provide a high depth of merchandise in a particular category, usually in large stores. They offer an almost complete assortment in a particular category at **low prices** and thus can “kill” a category of merchandise for other retailers (McGoldrick 2002, p. 158), mainly specialty stores. The service level offered by category killers is usually kept low. Self-service approaches are generally applied to sell merchandise, but assistance is offered if requested by customers.

Outlets are usually located in out-of-town locations. Exceptions, such as *Saturn*, a German category killer in the field of consumer electronics, mainly focus on city locations or combine both out-of-town and city locations, as *IKEA* is currently trying.

Category killers are usually targeted at customers travelling by car, and thus they usually offer extensive parking facilities to draw customers from a **large catchment area**. Store architecture and in-store design are kept very simple and offer a shopping experience dominated by size and pricing (Wileman and Jary 1997, p. 78). Category specialists are increasingly joining into specific agglomerations, called **power centres** (see Chap. 11). Such centres provide consumers with several category specialists in one location, thus enabling both multi-purpose and comparison shopping.

The strategy of **low operating costs** in terms of rents, personnel costs and low cost designs, sometimes with a warehouse atmosphere, combined with huge buying power, usually leads to high asset productivity (e. g., space, stock turnover). This made category killers one of the retail formats with the highest growth rates during the 1990s and 2000s. They have gained market share mainly at the expense of specialty stores, because of their advantages in terms of price and product range. Category killers are now established in many non-food categories such as consumer electronics (e. g., *Curry's*, *Darty*, *Media Markt* or *Best Buy*), DIY and home improvement (e. g., *Leroy Merlin*, *B&Q* or *Home Depot*), sports (e. g., *Decathlon*, the case study for this chapter), furniture (e. g., *IKEA* or *Conforama*), office products (e. g., *Staples* or *Office Depot*), pets (e. g., *PetSmart*, *Mille Amis* or *Fressnapf/Maxi Zoo*) and toys and baby products (e. g., *Toys 'R' Us* or *Babies 'R' Us*). The format is expanding into new categories, but it is also coming under pressure in some countries, as the examples of *Best Buy* in the US, *Media Markt* in Germany and *Curry's* in the UK show.

---

### 3.4 Department Stores

Department stores are **large retail units** that carry a broad variety of merchandise and offer a deep assortment “under one roof”. Department stores often have several floors. The term “department store” is due to the store being divided into separate departments for

displaying merchandise in a manner that resembles a collection of specialty stores, i. e., each department acts as a “mini store” in the larger store. Each department not only has a specific selling space allocated to it, but also usually has its own point-of-sale terminals and dedicated salespeople to assist customers (Levy et al. 2014, p. 48).

The merchandise sold by department stores traditionally covers a wide range of categories such as clothes, accessories, appliances, home furnishings, jewellery, cosmetics, toys, furniture, sporting goods and consumer electronics. Recently, however, most department stores have been reducing product variety to focus on “soft goods” (e. g., clothes and footwear).

Department stores are usually located in **city centres** and often serve as anchor stores in **shopping centres**. Department stores offer a pleasant atmosphere, which creates an enjoyable shopping experience. In-store design and visual merchandising are thus important (see Chap. 15). Department stores also offer diverse services, which may include tailoring services for clothes or home deliveries.

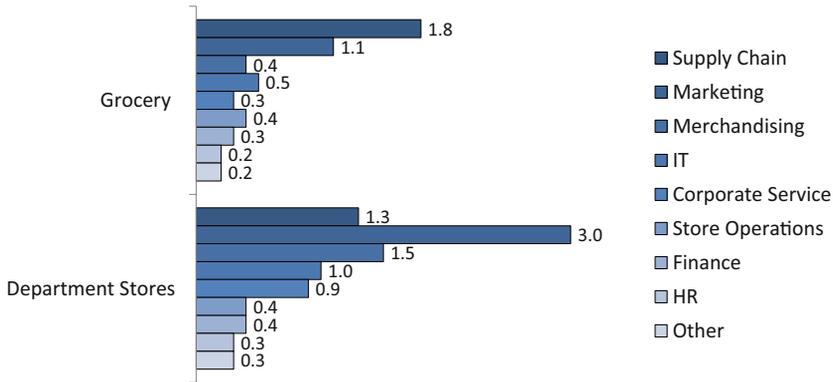
In terms of the merchandise carried and services offered, department stores can be categorised into three tiers (Weitz and Whitfield 2010, p. 91):

- Upscale, **high-fashion** stores with exclusive designer merchandise and excellent customer service; these are often the flagship stores of department store chains (e. g., *Harrods*, *Selfridges*, *Jelmoli*, *Saks Fifth Avenue*, *KaDeWe*, *Galleries Lafayette Paris Haussmann*); these are usually located in very large cities such as New York, Berlin, Paris, London or Zurich.
- Modestly priced, **mid-level** merchandise with less customer service (e. g., *Manor*, *Hoopers*, *Debenhams*, *Galeria Kaufhof*, *John Lewis*; also see the case study on *Macy's* in Chap. 15).
- Stores with **lower level** merchandise and prices (e. g., *Sears*, *JCPenny*, *Kohl's*).

Most department store chains such as *Galleries Lafayette*, *Karstadt*, *El Corte Inglés*, *House of Fraser* or *Saks* operate department stores in several of these tiers.

In recent years, the overall sales and market share of traditional department stores have declined and internationally, they face substantial competition from other retail formats such as category killers and discount stores or non-store formats (e. g., online retailers). These difficulties mainly result from problems in retail positioning due to the “**all under one roof**” approach. First-tier department stores often have a clearly differentiated position and usually produce strong financial results, so these difficulties mainly apply to outlets in the second and third tiers, which lack such a clear positioning and are therefore struggling. Furthermore, the overheads and **operating costs** associated with such large retail outlets oriented towards ambience, attentive service and a broad variety of products are very high compared to more cost-focused and price-aggressive retail formats (see Fig. 3.2), which also often have better assortments in the limited lines they carry. The departments in a department store simply cannot offer the same depth (Berman and Evans 2013, p. 156).

Problems can also occur due to the sheer size of the stores, which in some cases are larger than 50,000 m<sup>2</sup>. In terms of shopper convenience, department stores offer one-stop



**Fig. 3.2** General and administrative costs as a percentage of sales. (PwC 2013)

shopping for diverse products or needs with the approach of offering general merchandise all under one roof. Because this strategy results in big stores with a large number of SKUs, it places high demands on customer orientation within the store, shopping duration and so on. Department stores therefore offer limited “mental convenience”, and shopping in department stores may be both difficult (in terms of the mental processes surrounding choices within the store) and time consuming.

Even though department stores are trying to respond to their deteriorating positions by giving stores clear profile, for example, tightening up their assortments, increasing the amount of exclusive merchandise or brands offered, introducing store brand programmes and improving customer relationship management or marketing campaigns to improve their image, this erosion of market share looks set to continue.

### 3.5 Full-line Discount Stores

Full-line discount stores are a specific type of department store that offers a broad variety of merchandise at low prices, in categories such as electronics, furniture and appliances, household goods or gardening tools (Levy et al. 2014, p. 50). This store format originates in the US, with *Walmart*, *Kmart* and *Target* as the most important players.

Store architecture and in-store design are very simple, mainly to keep costs low. The merchandise is usually less fashion-oriented than in department stores. Full-line discount stores offer both store brands in non-durable goods and manufacturer brands in hard goods (e. g., TVs or household appliances). Customer service is usually limited. Products are sold via self-service. Customers use **shopping carts** to make their purchases and pay at centralised checkout areas (Berman and Evans 2013, p. 157). Thus, operating costs are kept low. However, this store format struggles due to the less pleasant shopping experience and its similarity to hypermarkets (or supercentres) with respect to general merchandise. Full-line discount stores therefore face strong general competition from hypermarkets and category killers in each product category. Over the past few years, they have lost market

share. This has led *Walmart*, to name one example, to close some of its full-line discount stores or convert them into supercentres.

---

### 3.6 Variety Stores and Value Retailers

Variety stores, such as *Woolworths* or *Ben Franklin*, offer a broad assortment of inexpensive and attractively priced merchandise. They sell products from categories such as clothes, accessories, jewellery, confectionery and toys. Stores offer limited services and do not carry full product lines (Berman and Evans 2013, p. 158). This store format faces strong competition from retail formats such as category specialists, discount stores and (large) food retailing formats that carry a range of general merchandise of similar product lines.

While the conventional form of variety stores is struggling, several new forms have evolved over the past few years. One form is variety stores with a fast-fashion approach to their assortments. These retailers offer more focused assortments than conventional variety stores, mainly concentrating on home accessories, household supplies, textiles, and occasionally furniture and clothes. Products are offered at reasonable prices. However, these retailers do not stock products permanently, instead frequently changing their assortments to offer fashionable and up-to-date products in diverse categories. This strategy aims to increase their customers' shopping frequency, and the constantly fresh atmosphere combined with rapid changes in the assortment help develop "buy it now" shopping behaviour among customers.

Another evolved form of variety stores is **(extreme) value retailers**. These are general merchandise discount stores that mainly target low income customers and are thus located mainly in low rent, lower income urban or rural areas (Levy et al. 2014, p. 54). The merchandise sold is similar to that in conventional variety stores, but prices are much lower.

One specific form of extreme value retailers is **one-price stores** that offer every product at the same price (e. g., dollar stores or euro stores such as *Family Dollar* and *Dollar Tree* in the US or *EuroShop* and *HEMA* in Europe). These "true" one-price stores offer a wide range of products mainly from categories such as homewares, confectionery, cosmetics, gifts and stationery.

---

### 3.7 Off-price Stores

Off-price stores sell an inconsistent assortment of merchandise, e. g., soft goods such as clothes, accessories, cosmetics or footwear, at low prices. Some off-price retailers focus on fashion-oriented, brand name or designer labelled items. They target middle to upper-middle customer groups by offering products at markdown prices of 30 to 50 %. Important off-price chains include *T.K. Maxx* (*T.J. Maxx* in the US) and *Marshalls*.

Off-price stores use a very **aggressive buying strategy** without asking manufacturers for additional services such as return privileges, advertising allowances, markdown adjust-

ments or delayed payments. They often negotiate with manufacturers to discount orders, e. g., for merchandise that is out of season or for **irregular items** that have minor flaws (Ogden and Ogden 2005, pp. 99–100; Berman and Evans 2013, p. 158).

Specific types of off-price stores include **closeout retailers** that sell a broad assortment of merchandise purchased at closeout prices or **outlet stores** owned by department stores, specialty stores or manufacturers (**factory outlet stores**, see Chap. 6). These stores sell excess merchandise, overruns or irregulars while avoiding the need to mark down prices in primary stores (Levy et al. 2014, p. 56).

---

## 3.8 Non-traditional Non-food Retail Formats

### 3.8.1 Pop-up Stores

Pop-up stores are a very specific new store format, also called **temporary stores**. The aim is to create a “**limited edition**” type of retail atmosphere, as these stores only open for a specific period (e. g., a few days, weeks or months) and then close. This can be seen as a “promotional gimmick”. Pop-up stores offer a limited assortment of usually seasonal products. Because of the limited opening period and assortment, temporary stores benefit from the scarcity principle, which says scarce items are valued higher by customers and provoke urgency to purchase.

The pop-up store retail environment is usually highly experiential, conveying brand emotions in an event atmosphere. While pop-up stores can also serve as retail events to promote special offers (e. g., with marked down prices), they often serve as retail venues to present and introduce product innovations or conduct market research. Therefore, they are usually located in city centres or the trendy neighbourhoods of big cities. Thus, typical locations for these promotion-oriented concepts are very unique and experiential places. For example, *H&M* opened a “beach store” in a wooden stall on Scheveningen beach in the Netherlands and *IKEA* ran several pop-up stores in New York in the form of 20-foot cubed cardboard boxes, symbolizing the typical size of New York apartments, before opening its first store in Brooklyn. Brand manufacturers such as *Adidas*, *Nike* or *Puma* often open pop-up stores.

Vacant business locations or salesrooms in city centres are often used to establish temporary stores. Specific mall concepts have also been developed that use the idea of pop-up stores to create an environment with varied occupants. For example, the *Bikini Center* in Berlin operates a specific space, the so-called *Bikini Boxes* (see Fig. 3.3), offering flexible modular wooden spaces, available for experiential pop-up stores.

By creating a climate of scarcity through **pop-up stores**, retailers try to create a higher willingness to pay among their customers. Because there is no option for price comparison and offers are only available for short periods of time, **desirability** can be increased. In particular, temporary stores that sell special offers are consumption events for customers, whose main objective is to secure discounts. In some cases, pop-up stores are used to give



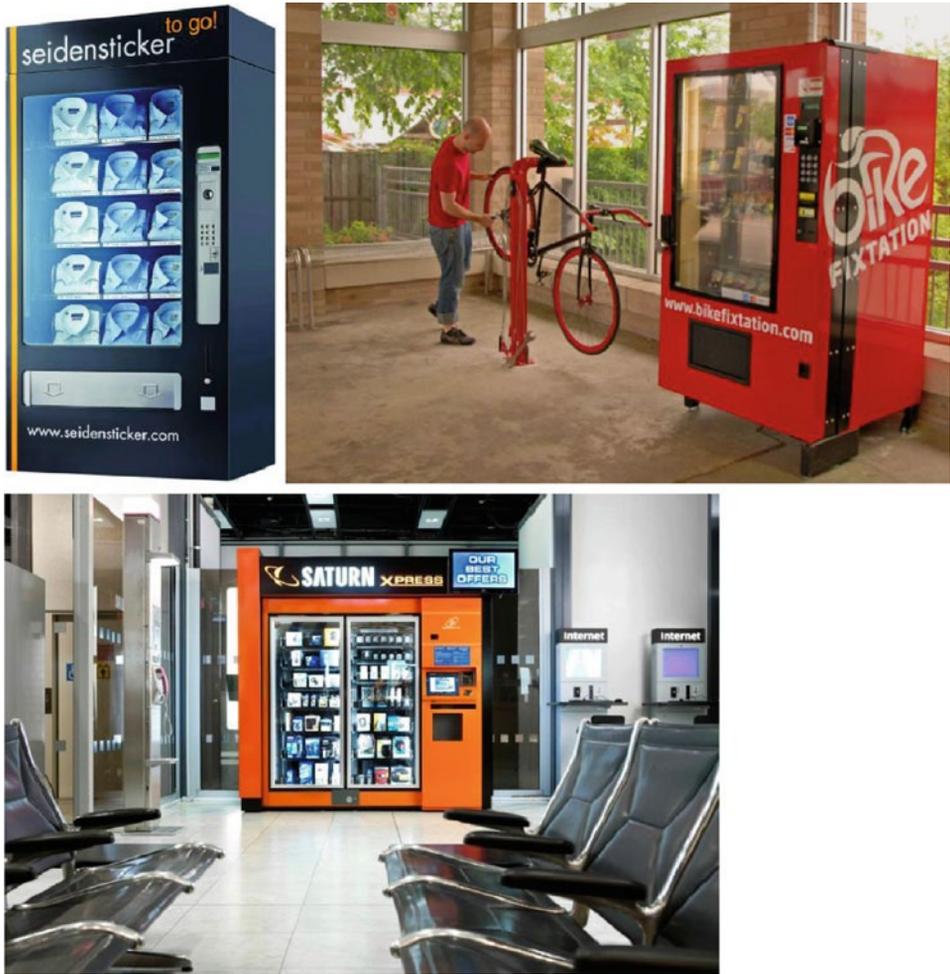
**Fig. 3.3** Bikini Center. (Bayerische Hausbau/Bikini Berlin)

special offers to long-term, high value customers. These events reinforce the scarcity effect, as the products are only available to specific customer groups, in addition to the usual **temporal limitation** on the offers. This kind of customer segmentation can be used to deepen customer relationships (see Chap. 16).

Pop-up stores offer a very high degree of flexibility for retailers. As they are not involved in long-term leases, location changes are possible and profitability is usually high. However, this store format presents difficulties in terms of customer attraction and communicating the store's existence. As they are only open for a limited period of time, the main challenge is to advertise the stores, gain customer awareness and become known among target customers. Huge communication efforts are often necessary to establish successful pop-up stores.

### 3.8.2 Non-store Stationary Retail Channels

In addition to these store formats for non-food retailing, there are other non-store, but still stationary, retail channels. Even though these are less important in terms of market share, they address customer needs of convenience (e. g., in terms of opening hours) or situational or urgent customer needs.



**Fig. 3.4** Vending machines in non-food retailing. (Media-Saturn; Bikefixtation; Seidensticker)

For example, **vending machines** can be used to sell books, newspapers, phone cards and CDs or DVDs, etc. While the operating costs are relatively low, there are logistical drawbacks, such as filling processes, stock outages and reverse logistics issues (e. g., in the case of damaged products). Several retailers, such as *Best Buy*, *Media Markt* and *Saturn*, have started vending machine operations that sell specific consumer electronics items through vending machines positioned in convenient and highly frequented places such as airports or railway stations (see Fig. 3.4).

### 3.9 Conclusion and Outlook

In general merchandise retailing, traditional retail formats such as department stores, specialty stores and pure catalogue retailers are struggling with competition from new formats such as **price-aggressive store formats** (e. g., category killers, off-price stores), retailers that sell fast-moving non-food items as **special promotions** on a weekly or semi-weekly basis (e. g., *Tchibo*) or **innovative non-store formats** such as Internet shops. This trend towards more price-oriented and flexible formats is predicted to continue in the next few years.

Apart from this trend towards discount-oriented channels, the main developments in general merchandise retail formats have come from new developments in **information and communication technologies** that have not only led to the emergence of new retail formats such as mobile commerce, but also offer potential new business models and new modes of communication to customers within the framework of existing retail formats. While substantial general merchandise retail sales are generated by traditional store-based retail formats, non-store formats such as catalogue retailing or electronic channels (see Chap. 4 and 5) are also crucial.

New developments in technology and customer behaviour in recent decades have led to a change in the relevance of different retail channels and to the evolution of **new retail formats**, mainly in the field of non-store retailing. Another important trend is that many traditional store-based or catalogue retailers have started to sell their merchandise through several retail formats. By adding additional retail channels, they are evolving into **cross-channel retailers** (see Chap. 5).

The new retail channels are not only important as **new competitors**; many retailers are expanding their existing retail formats by adding these new channels and evolving into multichannel retailers. These retail developments are creating more sophisticated customers and changes in consumers' shopping motives and behaviour, such as a desire for better prices, "more-for-less" or convenience orientation. Thus these developments can be seen as a response to customer needs.

#### Further Reading

- Ganesh et al. (2007). Retail patronage behavior and shopper Typologies: A replication and extension using a multi-format, multi-method approach. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 35(3), 369–381.
- Levy et al. (2014). *Retailing Management* (9th edn.). Boston et al.: McGraw-Hill Education.

## 3.10 Case Study: Decathlon

### 3.10.1 Profile, History and Status Quo

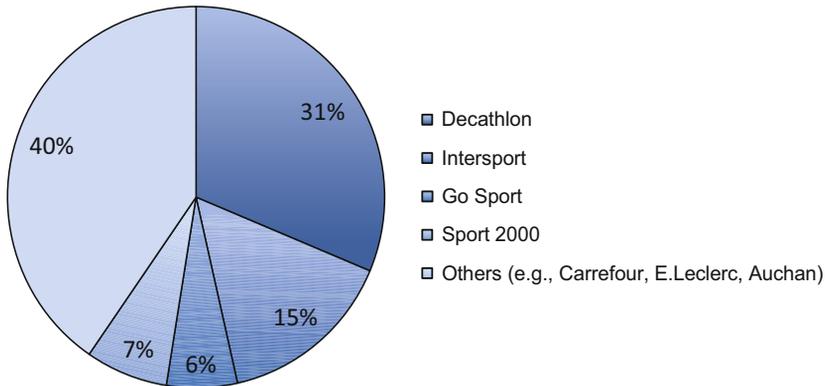
The success story of *Decathlon*<sup>1</sup>, a French manufacturer and retailer for a wide range of sporting goods including sports equipment and sportswear, began on 27th July 1976, when Michel Leclerq opened the first store in Englos, a small city near Lille in France. Leclerq is the cousin of Gerard Mulliez and therefore part of the Mulliez family, which controls retail chains such as *Auchan*, *Boulangier*, *Leroy Merlin* and *Pinkie*. Although these companies are linked by ownership, they operate independently. Although they have a similar name to the French retail chain “*E.Leclerc*”, these chains are completely different. The company is still privately owned today. About 43 % of the stocks are controlled by the Mulliez family and 42 % by the Leclerq family. Company employees control the remaining 15 % of stocks. Management has always offered a shareholding option to the workforce since the company was founded.

With the launch of *Decathlon* in 1976, Leclerq introduced an innovative store design to the market, which even today is part of their main service and USP. First, products for every type of sport are offered under one roof at attractive prices. There is no sport specialisation or discrimination against less popular sports (Decathlon 2015). Second, every store has a dedicated indoor and often outdoor area in order to try out the products sold in the store. Hence, *Decathlon* tries to make “**the pleasure and benefits of sport accessible to all**”. Today *Decathlon* focuses on innovations in their main activities, from research to retail, including conception, design, production and logistics, and their own brands, called “passion brands”, which have played a huge part in their success. Their twenty passion brands channel their expertise into developing simple, yet fully functional and appealing products, at the lowest possible prices to reach a maximum number of customers (Decathlon 2015). In doing so, *Decathlon* targets a broad range of consumers: from beginners to experts.

As of 2015, *Decathlon* runs 884 stores with more than 63,000 employees in 21 countries (Decathlon Corporate 2015). The top three countries are currently France (288 stores), Spain (129 stores) and China (115 stores). Since 2008, *Decathlon* has been a subsidiary company of *Oxylane*, which is part of the *Mulliez* empire, which operates multiple retail brands and networks, e. g., *ATAOS*, *Cabesto* and *Decat*. Nevertheless, *Decathlon* is the holding’s most important retail chain by far. In addition, although this case study is focused on *Decathlon*’s store-based retailing, the online shop should be mentioned very briefly. This was introduced in late 1999, although the website originally opened in 1996 as a corporate presentation and information source. Even then, the online shop gave customers the opportunity to select and buy equipment for a broad range of sports (20 categories) and offered more than 5500 articles (Archive.org 2015). Today, almost every product that can be found in stores can also be ordered in the online shop. *Decathlon* tries to closely

---

<sup>1</sup> In addition to those explicitly cited, sources used for this case study include the company websites <http://decathlon.com> and <http://corporate.decathlon.com>, various annual and interim reports.



**Fig. 3.5** French market share of sports retail chains in 2013. (Adapted from Le Figaro 2014; Isaacson 2014)

link their online shop and retail stores. For example, *Decathlon* offers a “Click&Collect” service, where products bought online can be delivered for free to the retail stores. In addition, if a product does not fit, it can be exchanged in store at no cost (e. g., for a different size or colour). A reverse link was also introduced: in Germany, almost every store has terminals called “Auswahl+” (Choice+). If a product is not in stock in that store, customers can order it via the terminals and the online shop. The receipt is printed immediately and can be paid at the checkouts in store. Then the products can be delivered to that store or any chosen destination. *Decathlon*’s online shop can be seen as an add-on to the classical stores as a convenience service and a move towards a cross-channel or, with the increase in links between the channels, omni-channel strategy (see Chap. 5).

In 2014, *Oxylane* posted a turnover of 8.2 billion EUR, before tax. Overall, *Oxylane* achieved an increase of 11 % compared to the previous year and an increase of 64 % taking the last five years into account. This turnover can be divided into the contribution for France and that for the remaining international markets. Stores in France contributed a substantial 60.5 % of overall revenue, where *Decathlon* had a market share of 31 % in 2013, double that of its closest rival, *Intersport* (Le Figaro 2014). In addition, in 2014 *Decathlon* contributed 5 % to *Mulliez Holding*’s net revenues, a record for their section (Le Blog Mulliez 2015). Fig. 3.5 shows the overall market share of sport retail chains in France in 2013. *Decathlon* has adopted the strategy of a big company willing to increase its market share by entering high margin segments (Michel and Salha 2005).

### 3.10.2 Decathlon’s Store-based Retailing: The Main Retail Format

As previously described, *Decathlon*’s core store formula is a big superstore **category specialist store** with equipment for sports enthusiasts of all levels occupying a sales area of approximately 5500 m<sup>2</sup>. The stores are mostly located out of town, and usually in industrial zones to make the huge sale areas possible. This strategy usually reduces the financial in-

vestments needed due to lower rental fees. However, as of mid-2015, there are two exceptions to this store location strategy: the *Decat' stores*, which will be described in the next paragraph, and a completely new city-store concept in Mannheim (Germany). In 2014, *Decathlon* opened a pilot 4000 m<sup>2</sup> store on three floors in the so-called “T-1-structure” in central Mannheim, almost in the centre of the pedestrian zone. The store is based on a full assortment strategy and offers the same services as the regular stores. While this midtown store concept seems completely contrary to stores in industrial zones, a closer look shows the Mannheim store is similar in terms of requiring low financial investment. The building had been vacant since 2001, required urgent maintenance work and was denoted as a “property of concern” in the heart of Mannheim (Scholl 2013; Scholl 2014). Therefore, it can be assumed that *Decathlon* received an attractive offer for rental fees, on top of the generally low rents in Mannheim (Pressebox 2015). In addition, *Decathlon* received a say in the exterior renovation, conducted by the investor who bought the building in 2007, and had it altered to fit the corporate identity (Scholl 2014). Overall, having an attractive building in the centre to attract new customer groups, in combination with limited financial investments, seems a sensible strategy that perfectly complements the classical out-of-town store approach.

*Decathlon's* products are priced from entry level to top of the range. Most stores' assortments comprise more than 35,000 items organised and displayed in 70 different sports categories (Decathlon 2015). The range of the assortment and size of each store's selling area are key factors in *Decathlon's* economic success and major areas of differentiation from the competition. *Decathlon's* assortment contains both private labels and products from major sports brands such as *Nike*, *Puma* and *Reebok*. Private labels play a particularly important part in *Decathlon's* strategy: More than 60 % of *Decathlon's* sales come from private labels, compared to only 15 % of *Intersport's* or 30 % of *Go Sport's* sales (PointsdeVente 2009).

To sell sports equipment at low prices, *Decathlon* could follow a standard *low operating costs* strategy, which would be normal for a category killer, but would run contrary to their promise of offering high quality products. Thus, to make its business model work, *Decathlon* controls almost its entire value chain. *Decathlon* is therefore both a distributor and producer of sports products:

- **Product range development:** There are around 35,000 products in *Decathlon's* range, almost all part of *Decathlon's* passion brands; this makes it easier to achieve higher margins at low prices than with third party brands.
- **Production:** In 2001, *Decathlon* created a design department, where more than 120 designers channel their expertise into developing products. As a result, no external support is needed. Production units are mostly based in low-wage countries (e. g., China and India), but local production is also possible.
- **Sourcing/Distribution:** *Decathlon's* worldwide production departments are in charge of managing production and providing cost-efficient, on-time delivery to warehouses. *Decathlon* has split multiple departments across five continents and by domain of

activity. Each of them is tasked with finding suppliers in a specific geographical area (Pecuchet 2015).

- **Outlets:** Stores are mostly located outside towns in industrial zones to reduce costs and provide enough space for the sales areas.

However, in the early days of *Decathlon*, store brands were not the focus. This strategy only emerged after running into problems with the major sports brands. During *Decathlon's* launch, the major sports brands felt *Decathlon* was not suited to reselling their products. Products were delayed or not even delivered. For example, *Peugeot Bicycles* refused to supply *Decathlon* at all (Capital 2009). To counteract this problem, *Decathlon* introduced its own low-priced *Decathlon* brand, the start of an aggressive sales strategy against the established brands. The decision was a success: within ten years, a third of *Decathlon's* overall turnover came from its own brand products (Capital 2009). To capitalise on this success, *Decathlon* extended the strategy in 1997 and introduced the new passion brands. *Quechua* (mountain sports) and *Tribord* (water sports) were the first passion brands, which replaced the *Decathlon* umbrella brand. While *Decathlon* had covered the whole spectrum of sports, each passion brand focused on a particular sport (i. e., category-specific) and received a unique name. The goal of this strategy was clear differentiation across the brand spectrum.

These passion brands are increasingly pushing manufacturers' brands from *Decathlon's* shelves, although *Decathlon* still supplies their stores with products from major sports brands like *Nike* or *Adidas*, mainly because of their attractiveness and the ability to use their pull- and image-effects to attract customers. These brands also create higher consumer frequency within *Decathlon* stores. *Decathlon* can leverage this effect using its own brands and compensate for the pull effect from the manufacturer brands (Pederzoli 2011). First, the private labels are not simply "cheap" copies of the major brands; they are strongly positioned brands in their own right. Second, own brand products produce higher net margins. Hence, this pull-effect is a net positive for *Decathlon*. This assortment strategy is the result of various experiments conducted throughout the entire history of the company and also of continually extending the product range to increase specialisation and customer segmentation. In doing so, *Decathlon* is information-driven and fairly centralised. Its headquarters analyse each store's catchment area and decide on the appropriate breadth of all product categories and sub-categories. This maintains a high level of standardisation throughout the chain, while still responding to localised needs (Pederzoli 2011).

In addition, each store also offers a broad range of services to complement the products sold, including refunding, workshops for personalising sports equipment, checking and maintenance for bicycles and skis and cylinder refills for scuba divers. Some services are available in every *Decathlon* store, while other, more complex ones are only provided at regional maintenance workshops and hubs. Another very innovative service is *Trocathlon*, which lets people trade second-hand sports equipment inside a *Decathlon* outlet. These week-long events are organised twice a year and take place in marquees and special trading areas outside *Decathlon* stores in the parking and testing areas. *Decathlon* sales assistants

visually evaluate the articles before allowing them to be offered for sale. If an article is sold, *Decathlon* gives the seller the entire amount in the form of vouchers that can be used in every *Decathlon* store, and no commission is charged. The *Trocathlon* service is a way to increase shop visits and encourage contact with potential new customers. The service is beneficial to both customers and the company, because *Decathlon* lets customers sell their used sports equipment while simultaneously encouraging them to buy new products at *Decathlon*, through offers during *Trocathlon* and the voucher system. In addition, *Decathlon* offers additional services such as equipment conditioning to customers who buy the used products. This lets *Decathlon* monetise this second group of customers while reinforcing its brand.

Some French and international locations directly connected to *Decathlon* stores host a *Decathlon Village* fitness park (previously *Parc de la Forme*). These are very large areas surrounding a typical *Decathlon* store which offer a lot of different sports activities. A good example is *Decathlon's* fitness park near Marseille. It opened in the South of France in 2005 and covers 45 hectares. The park offers a broad range of activities, including beach volleyball, a football/rugby field, an adventure park and a 5980 m<sup>2</sup> *Decathlon* store with an area to try out products. The park employs 13 specialised staff, can host around 6000 sport enthusiasts and is open seven days a week (*Decathlon Village 2015*). The total investment was 30.5 million EUR (*Brugvin 2005*). Entry to *Decathlon Village* is not free, but *Decathlon* offers free training sessions and activities organised by store employees in the village area. *Decathlon* hopes to reinforce its brand through the *Decathlon Village* and create stronger relationships with local authorities. This strategy is really just an expansion of their main business concept: to let customers try out new sports at *Decathlon* and buy the necessary equipment. There were nine *Decathlon Villages* in France as of April 2015. This format cannot be introduced everywhere, because some stores are located in very busy areas and so it would be very difficult to find enough space to create these facilities. Nevertheless, *Decathlon* has already announced it will expand the *Decathlon Village* idea further, with new *Villages* in France and in international locations like the UK. Therefore, in 2011 *Decathlon*, became the “anchor tenant” for *Orford Park* in Warrington close to Manchester (*Harker 2011*). Costing 30 million GBP, *Orford Park* will include various sport and leisure facilities, including walking and cycling paths, skateboarding and *BMX* facilities and swimming pools, sports halls and a new *Decathlon* store.

*Decathlon's* core concept remains stable, even though it has undergone some internal and external modifications over the years. The current trend is to increase the average sales area, because the stores have to accommodate a growing assortment of goods and a growing number of services and areas to try out products and to entertain customers. But *Decathlon* continues to expand, even as opportunities to construct large out-of-town superstores are decreasing. It also continues to exploit the brand reputation of its passion brands.

### 3.10.3 Decathlon's Stores: Diversification of the Retail Network

*Oxylane* is not limited to selling its products via its *Decathlon* offline retail stores; they have also been testing and focusing on other sales methods (Buyse 2014). To diversify the retail network, *Decathlon* has opened specialised outlets, some under the name of their passion brands.

One example of this approach is the launch of an *Inesis* concept store near Villeneuve d'Ascq in 2006. *Inesis* is *Decathlon*'s golf brand, and the store specialises in golf products and services. Here, the idea of the sport parks was extended along with the passion brands. Thus, *Inesis* opened its own 92,000 m<sup>2</sup> golf park near Lille in 2013. The park offers a golf course and putting green, a golf school, an *Inesis* boutique with golf equipment and an indoor area to test new golf equipment. Another example of diversification is the 2007 launch of a discount hunting and fishing store in southeast France under the *Decathlon*'s *Fonisto* brand (later *Terres et Eaux*). Today, *Terres et Eaux* also includes horse riding products, pet food and accessories. The assortment is mostly composed of major international brands in each sector. In 2003, the company opened an *Ataos* brand store near Lyon in southwest France and later a second store in Lille. These stores were dedicated to second-hand sports products, displayed in a sales area of about 1200 m<sup>2</sup>. *Decathlon* charged a commission on each sale. Both stores and the website were closed in 2013 and 2014 due to decreased success. However, the ten-year lifespan must be seen as a net positive, because *Ataos* was originally introduced as a concept store (Buyse 2014) and it can be seen as a pilot scheme for the *Trocathlon* service described above.

In 2006, the company started to develop a new market renting skis and other mountain sports equipment. Here *Decathlon* did not enter the market directly, instead deciding to collaborate with independent retailers located in major tourist locations. In France, ski resort patrons often rent skis and other equipment for a week or even more, so *Decathlon* decided to try and exploit this market with its *skimium.com* brand. Their 2006 agreement with independent outlets located in France's ten most popular winter sports resorts lets these stores rent out *Quechua* and other ski products to tourists. The independent stores which participate in this scheme currently use the *skimium.com* brand alongside their own brands to show customers they belong to this national network (Pederzoli 2011).

*Decathlon*'s most successful diversification so far has been the launch of a discount retail format, based on the brand *Koodza*. The first outlet was launched in France in 2004, but the concept was not validated until 2007, when a strong expansion strategy was adopted both in France and internationally (e. g., Spain, China, Morocco). The *Koodza* format only offers *Decathlon*'s passion brands and adopts an EDLP pricing strategy (Pederzoli 2011). The stores have an average sales area of 1500 m<sup>2</sup>. Today, these shops are branded as "*Decathlon easy*" rather than *Koodza* to promote the brand connection. Like the main brand, the *Decathlon easy* shops emphasise their wide range of sports equipment, while stressing the attractive prices even more. This is a good strategy, because it lets *Oxylane* isolate the sale of their own products from the main *Decathlon* stores and can appeal to other groups of buyers with lower budgets.

Other store-based retail formats have been developed. *Chullanka* stores specialise in mountain sports (e. g., hiking, mountaineering, canyoning, skiing). *Cabesto* stores focus on maritime activities, with five stores currently in operation. A typical *Cabesto* store has an assortment of around 15,000 products in a 2500 m<sup>2</sup> sale area. They sell products from the *Cabesto* passion brand, but also national and international brands such as *Roxy*, *Quicksilver* or *O'Neill*. Finally, *Decat'* stores have a sales area of 600 m<sup>2</sup>, with goods from urban sports and leisure sports sectors. Unlike standard *Decathlon* stores, they are mostly located in town centres. *Decat'* stores sell hardly any of the equipment available in standard *Decathlon* stores, focusing instead on clothing and other sportswear articles. In addition, the current *Decat'* format only sells products from the passion brands. This diversification has not been entirely successful, and after years of tuning the concept, only five *Decat'* stores remain in France as of 2015. Nevertheless, the new *Decathlon* store concept opening in Mannheim can be seen as an evolution of *Oxylane's* experience with *Decat'*.

*Decathlon* offers a broad range of store-based retail formats. It is interesting to observe how *Decathlon* remains loyal to their vision of offering all kinds of sports to all kinds of people. While *Decathlon* positions itself unambiguously as “all sports under a single roof”, the outlets are consciously assigned to passion brands or a particular sport or activity area, e. g., marine sports. The advantage for *Decathlon* is obvious: By offering stores specialising in certain sports, they can better meet customers' needs, e. g., by offering more precise advice by specialists in stores for a particular sport or an ambience which better fits different clienteles like in *Decat'*. In addition, *Oxylane* can position themselves more strongly against their competition by operating specialised stores to attack competitors in each field.

Some of *Decathlon's* strategies, like the sport parks near the stores, are expanding. Thus, a whole service system was introduced around the *Inesis* brand. The idea of the sport parks was extended to a golf course with additional services like the golf school. In addition, the outlet offers a direct opportunity to try new products and buy them in a single location.

Introducing the *Decathlon easy* format (formerly *Koodza*) gave *Decathlon* the opportunity to offer even lower prices without damaging the main retail format by projecting a “low-end” image. They can introduce low-price strategies to customers with lower budgets without decreasing regular customers' willingness to pay. Except for some concepts which did not translate to long-term success or which were replaced by other services (e. g., *Ataos* and *Trocathlon*), the diversification of sales formats and stores has been a huge success (Buyse 2014).

### 3.10.4 Internationalisation Process

As mentioned above, another element of *Decathlon's* business strategy is their internationalisation process. In 1986, Leclerq opened the first store outside of France in Dortmund (Germany). Shortly after, in 1988, *Decathlon* began producing its own goods in Asia. Internationalisation became a focus and continued over the following years. In 1992, the first store in Spain was opened, followed by stores in Italy (1993), the UK and Portugal

(1999), Shanghai (2003) and the first store in Moscow in 2006 (Decathlon 2015). In 2014, *Decathlon* opened 32 new stores in China, 10 in India and 8 additional stores in Russia. However, despite its expansion in Europe, Asia and Latin America, *Decathlon* announced in 2006 it would withdraw from the US market. This was the only example where *Decathlon* entered the market by taking over an existing retail chain. At the end of 1999, *Decathlon* acquired the local sports chain *M.V.P.*, which operated 20 shops around Boston. But by 2003, *Decathlon* chose to close 14 of the 18 remaining stores. *Decathlon* failed in the US for multiple reasons (Pederzoli 2011):

- Acquiring *M.V.P.* was the first operation of that kind for *Decathlon*. Thus, they lacked experience in integrating into a different company with its own culture and organisation.
- During the acquisition, *Decathlon* faced strong competition in the US market from companies such as *Foot Locker* and *Sports Authority*. Both companies were significantly bigger than *Decathlon* and could leverage economies of scale that *Decathlon* could not. In addition, US customers were more sensitive to these national brands. There was little acknowledgement of *Decathlon's* reputation for quality private brands and the percentage of passion brand products never exceeded 20 % of their stock, even though this was important for penetrating the market due to their high margins.
- Finally, the *M.V.P.* stores were generally too small to hold the standard *Decathlon* sports collection, making it difficult to implement *Decathlon's* main services and differentiate themselves in the US market.

Although this was a failure, there are many examples of successful diversification of *Decathlon's* store-based retailing. As mentioned above, *Decathlon* decided to enter into Latin American markets (e. g., Argentina in 2000 and Brazil in 2001) and Asia (e. g., Shanghai in 2003) (Craven 2003; Pederzoli 2011). The first store in South America opened in 2001 in Campinas, about 100 km north of Sao Paulo. Following the French model, it had a sales area of about 3000 m<sup>2</sup> and a 50,000 m<sup>2</sup> park adjacent to the store. Unlike the US market entry, *Decathlon* already had a three-year experience of the Brazilian market thanks to their domestic production facilities, and it exploited this knowledge when setting up its retail activities. The first store offered an assortment where a third of the goods were based on the passion brands. The Brazilian entry is a good example of *Decathlon's* strategy of applying the French model (superstore as category specialist, additional services like the sports park) while considering local customer needs.

The first store in Asia opened in Shanghai in 2003. The retail store had a sales area of 1800 m<sup>2</sup> and was a carbon copy of the French stores (Pederzoli 2011), including the logo, colours and store layout. Like in Brazil, *Decathlon* already had over six years of experience to draw on, since *Decathlon* managed three factory outlets near the production units. The biggest difference from the French model was the very limited assortment, with only 9000 articles available. However, only 20 % of the assortment was based on national and international third party brands, with the remaining 80 % consisting of passion brands.

China is today the third most important country for *Decathlon* and clarifies the success of *Decathlon's* internationalisation strategy.

Over the past few years, *Oxylane* has not limited itself to implementing *Decathlon* internationally. The discount brand *Decathlon easy* (formerly *Koodza*) has also been developed outside France, with presence in eight countries as of May 2015, a decrease from ten countries in June 2010. However, the internationalisation process of *Decathlon easy* is still in its infancy. This format may still be a strong tool to reinforce the company's strength in countries where *Decathlon* already has a presence (Pederzoli 2011). In addition, the format is easier and cheaper to develop due to smaller sales area requirements.

In 2014, *Decathlon* opened 32 new stores in China, ten in India and eight additional stores in Russia. *Decathlon* is also scheduled to begin operations in Slovakia. The first store will have a sales area of 4000 m<sup>2</sup> at a planned cost of 236 million EUR.

### 3.10.5 Summary and Outlook

Since its founding, *Decathlon* has had a huge impact on the French market with its model of store-based retailing. *Decathlon* has succeeded as a category specialist in offering consolidated breadth and depth of sports equipment. Unlike its competition, *Decathlon* focused on attractive prices, with products to match every budget. Additional services like *Trocathlon* or the branded sport parks are unique and provide a USP for *Decathlon*.

These services provide an extraordinary example for offline retailers (even though, strictly speaking, *Decathlon* uses an omni-channel approach, see Chap. 5) for how to differentiate themselves from pure online retailers. Services like product trials and salespeople who are sports experts, and even additional services like maintenance for used products, are services which cannot be offered by pure online players.

The key success factors in *Decathlon's* long-term success can be divided into three areas:

- Products: large range of products, adaptation to the local market, quality of products, research and development policy.
- Managerial expertise: implementation, i. e., geographic implementation and high number of stores, relationship with suppliers in the form of strong partnerships with sub-contractors but worse relationship with big brands.
- Marketing expertise: communication and advertising policy and services and customer relations.

In the future, it will be interesting to see how *Decathlon* implements smaller stores in inner cities to target high wages and urban populations. There are multiple strategies available, such as expanding *Decat'*, creating a new brand or adjusting the standard *Decathlon* store format. In addition, targeting new countries with low purchasing power may prove a successful strategy due to *Decathlon's* competitive advantage throughout the whole value chain.

---

**Questions**

1. What was the difference between *Decathlon* and its competitors during the launch? How exactly could *Decathlon* position itself relative to its competitors?
  2. What are the main success factors of *Decathlon*'s core store-based retailing concept? How could it be improved in the future, e. g., additional services?
  3. *Decathlon* expanded its store-based retailing by adding new brands to its portfolio and introducing new stores under its passion brands. Considering the internationalisation process, how could this concept be a competitive advantage?
- ▶ Take a look at the different sections of *Decathlon*'s corporate website at [corporate.decathlon.com/en/](http://corporate.decathlon.com/en/) to get an impression of *Decathlon*'s brands, services, past direction and future orientation.
  - ▶ This chapter contains multiple examples of store-based retail concepts. Consider how the sporting equipment category fits perfectly with these store concepts and the possible additional services in this context.
  - ▶ Analyse the article by Hillairet et al. (2009) to get a better insight into the *Decathlon Group*'s dual innovation management and adapt this information to the internationalisation process.

---

**References**

- Archive.org (2015). Decathlon.fr. <https://web.archive.org/web/20000303010857/http://www.decathlon.fr/magasin/index.asp>. Accessed September 04, 2015.
- Berman, B., & Evans, J. (2013). *Retail management: A strategic approach* (12th edn.). Upper Saddle River/NJ: Pearson Education.
- Brugvin, E. (2005). *Parc de la Forme de Marseille*, Point de Vente – 2005.
- Buyse, N. (2014). Decathlon revient aux fondamentaux. [http://www.lesechos.fr/journal20141126/lec2\\_industrie\\_et\\_services/0203965019066-decathlon-revient-aux-fondamentaux-1068115.php](http://www.lesechos.fr/journal20141126/lec2_industrie_et_services/0203965019066-decathlon-revient-aux-fondamentaux-1068115.php). Accessed June 24, 2015.
- Capital (2009). Décathlon le colosse qui écrasertoussesrivaux. <http://www.capital.fr/enquetes/succes/decathlon-le-colosse-qui-ecrase-tous-ses-rivaux-408261>. Accessed June 24, 2015.
- Craven, N. (2003). Decathlon poised to open first Chinese megastore. <http://www.retail-week.com/international-news-decathlon-poised-to-open-first-chinese-megastore/1722288.article>. Accessed June 24, 2015.
- Decathlon (2015). Decathlon. <http://www.decathlon.de/>. Accessed June 24, 2015.
- Decathlon corporate (2015). Our retail formats. [corporate.decathlon.com/en/our-brands/retail-formats/](http://corporate.decathlon.com/en/our-brands/retail-formats/). Accessed June 24, 2015.
- Decathlon Village (2015). Decathlon Village. <http://www.decathlonvillage.com/>. Accessed June 24, 2015.
- Ganesh, J., Reynolds, K. E., & Luckett, M. G. (2007). Retail patronage behavior and shopper Typologies: A replication and extension using a multi-format, multi-method approach. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 35(3), 369–381.

- Harker, J. (2011). Decathlon invests in UK sports park. <http://www.bikebiz.com/index.php/news/read/decathlon-invests-in-uk-sports-park/011188>. Accessed June 24, 2015.
- Hillairet, D., Richard, G., & Bouchet, P. (2009). The dual management of innovation by the Decathlon group. A distinctive strategic system on the sport goods market. *Journal of Innovation Economics & Management*, 1(3), 189–210.
- Isa-Conso (2014). Yannick Morat et Stéphane Solinski Sport 2000 sort de sa convalescence. <http://www.isa-conso.fr/yannick-morat-et-stephane-solinski-sport-2000-sort-de-sa-convalescence,180511>. Accessed June 24, 2015.
- Le Blog Mulliez (2015). Ventes en hausse de 10.6% sur 2014 chez Décathlon. <http://www.leblogmulliez.com/2015/04/ventes-en-hausse-de-10-6-sur-2014-chez-decathlon.html>. Accessed June 24, 2015.
- Le Figaro (2014). Decathlon baisse ses prix pour mieux rebondir. <http://www.lefigaro.fr/societes/2014/03/30/20005-20140330ARTFIG00102-decathlon-baisse-ses-prix-pour-mieux-rebondir.php>. Accessed June 24, 2015.
- Levy, M., Weitz, B., & Grewal, D. (2014). *Retailing management* (9th edn.). Boston et al.: McGraw-Hill Education.
- McGoldrick, P. (2002). *Retail marketing* (2nd edn.). London et al.: Mc Graw-Hill Education.
- Michel, G., & Salha, P. (2005). L'extension de gamme verticale clarification du concept. *Recherche et applications en marketing*, 20(1), 66–78.
- Ogden, J. R., & Ogden, D. T. (2005). *Retailing – integrated retail management*. Boston et al.: Dreamtech Press.
- Pecuchet, H. (2015). Decathlon Corporate (ex-Oxylane). <http://international.iteem.ec-lille.fr/europe/decathlon-corporate-ex-oxylane/>. Accessed June 24, 2015.
- Pederzoli, D. (2011). “En route” towards world leadership in the sports goods sector – Oxylane Group. In J. Zentes, B. Swoboda & D. Morschett (Eds.), *Fallstudien zum Internationalen Management* (4th edn., pp. 535–560). Wiesbaden: Gabler.
- PointsdeVente (2009). Décathlon assure son titre de champion. <http://www.pointsdevente.fr/visualisation-darticles/detail/decathlon-assure-son-titre-de-champion.html>. Accessed June 24, 2015.
- Pressebox (2015). Geringer Leerstand und günstige Mieten prägen Büromärkte in Heidelberg, Ludwigshafen und Mannheim. <http://www.pressebox.de/pressemitteilung/metropolregion-rhein-neckar-gmbh/Geringer-Leerstand-und-guenstige-Mieten-praegen-Bueromaerkte-in-Heidelberg-Ludwigshafen-und-Mannheim/boxid/724746>. Accessed September 04, 2015.
- PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) (2013). *Measuring up – retail benchmarking survey*. Ontario: PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP.
- Scholl, R. (2013). Decathlon will T1 unbedingt. <http://www.morgenweb.de/mannheim/mannheim-stadt/decathlon-will-t-1-unbedingt-1.1283020>. Accessed September 04, 2015.
- Scholl, R. (2014). Im Mai richtet sich Decathlon ein. <http://www.morgenweb.de/mannheim/mannheim-stadt/im-mai-richtet-sich-decathlon-ein-1.1655226>. Accessed September 04, 2015.
- Statista (2016): Share of total retail spend in Germany in 2013 and 2018, by channel, <http://www.statista.com/statistics/379427/retail-spend-per-channel-in-germany/>. Accessed June 28, 2016.
- Weitz, B. A., & Whitefield, M. B. (2010). Trends in US retailing. In M. Krafft & M. Mantrala (Eds.), *Retailing in the 21st century – current and future trends* (pp. 83–99). Berlin et al.: Springer.
- Wileman, A., & Jary, M. (1997). *Retail power plays: From trading to brand leadership*. New York: NYU Press.