

Annual Report 2024

Institute of Retail Management

University of St.Gallen (HSG)

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The Year 2024

Recap

At the beginning of 2024, consumers returned to bricks-and-mortar retail, which had lost much of its preference to online retail following the pandemic. However, the hunger for experiences, social interaction and a change from working from home did not last long. In the second half of the year, our surveys revealed a resurgence in online retail. Nevertheless, the topics of metaverse, augmented reality and artificial intelligence took a breather in 2024, which ultimately also influenced our key topics at Institute of Retail Management.

Highlights

A highlight in March 2024 was the HSG.Retail-Tech conference organized by our institute at the SQUARE of the University of St.Gallen. Impressive keynotes, informative panel discussions and excellent networking opportunities provided the more than 100 participants with answers to the question: Which technologies will occupy the retail sector in the future and how can companies implement them sensibly? Conferences help our institute to recognize relevant challenges from practice and address them in research. Our workshop with Amazon Webservices (AWS) and Displaydata on the future of electronic shelf labels in London in the fall of 2024 is representative of this numerous exchange with practitioners. Another highlight was our Gottlieb Duttweiler Lecture in honor of

the great retail pioneer. This was held in 2024 by Markus Länzlinger, the long-standing CEO of Migrolino. Our Metaverse Discovery Grid exhibition was also awarded the SoM "Top Story" in the HSG Annual Report 2023/24. Over a period of more than two months in 2023, more than 1,000 people were able to test Metaverse applications at 16 stations with virtual reality goggles in the Metaverse Discovery Grid.

Partnership program

As part of our Retail Lab Partnership Program (RPP), we held our CAS in International Retail Management for the 18th time. The focus was on strategic retail management, new technologies in retail, omni-channel management and the future of retail. Over 50 alumni from this program also met in Spreitenbach at IKEA. The exchange between theory and practice was the focus of our six research workshops on the topics of "Retail Management in economically difficult times", "HSG.Retail Tech 2024", "Omni-Channel Management and Mixed Reality: How do consumers experience more?", "Leadership in turbulent times", "Best Practices in Sustainability - how Retailers achieve a competitive advantage" and "How to Boost Innovation in Retailing?". Well over 100 managers from industry and retail from our more than 20 partner companies attended these workshops. In

November, 12 CEOs and members of the Executive Board met at SQUARE for our CEO Board Summit. The discussion focused on the future of retail. Our new collaboration with Bildung Detailhandel Schweiz (BDS) in Switzerland is also worth mentioning. In a pilot project, over 100 teachers are testing the benefits of our e-learning courses for the further training of teaching staff in Switzerland. We have intensified our range of webinars. These offer our partners the opportunity to provide their managers with an interesting range of training courses on current topics. In 2024, three webinars were held on the topics of omni-channel management, internet use and online shopping tourism. These webinars can also be viewed on our website at any time afterwards. We would also like to thank Migros for extending its sponsorship of the Gottlieb Duttweiler Chair until 2027.

Research

We (Matthias Eggenschwiler, Marc Linzmajer, Anne Roggeveen, Thomas Rudolph) published an article on "Retailing in the Metaverse" in the Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services. Many other scientific articles are currently in the review process. Our institute also attended numerous conferences. One of these was the Sheth Consortium in Manchester. Presentations were given there by 100 doctoral students from leading marketing universities worldwide. I was able to speak at a workshop on the transfer between theory and practice. Our doctoral student, Christopher Schraml, presented his doctoral thesis. The Chair also succeeded once

again in having a multi-year research application approved by the Swiss National Science Foundation on the subject of cross-selling in retail.

We also made great efforts with regard to practice-oriented retail literature. Worth mentioning in this context are the focus issue 2.2024 "Artificial Intelligence and Metaverse: The Next Frontier in Retailing" in the Marketing Review St.Gallen, which was coordinated by our research center, the English edition of our best-seller High 5, which was published by the renowned de Gruyter publishing house, as well as numerous consumer studies. Four studies were well received by the public. In this context, almost 500 respondents gave their assessment of various metaverse applications that they had previously experienced in our Metaverse Discovery Grid in SQUARE (metaverse study). Our omnichannel study describes the purchasing behavior of over 3,000 consumers in Germany, Austria and Switzerland. It explains changes in cross-channel shopping. Thirdly, we surveyed over 1,300 consumers in our study "Internet use and e-commerce in Switzerland 2024" about their motives for using the internet in Switzerland. We also asked about the most popular websites and the importance of social media when shopping. Our "Nutrition Atlas" is based on the shopping receipts from 250 households over several weeks and shows which nutrients and foods are consumed in Switzerland.

As part of our e-learning activities, we added a new course on "Customer inspiration in retail". We also developed the trend report as a new format for knowledge transfer. A trend report is designed to present a current retail topic in a few minutes. To do this, we use ten relevant questions, which are answered with text and videos as well as numerous in-depth links. We realized such a format for the first time in 2024 for the company Temu; more will follow.

Against the backdrop of these numerous activities, 2024 was an extremely dynamic year. The doctoral theses of Nora Kralle and Andreas Hauschke were successfully completed. The team implemented many new topics, for which I would like to thank all employees. The new Higher Education Act is also challenging us internally. Many changes need to be addressed. These include, for example, the renaming of our research center. We are now called the Institute of Retail Management, which entails numerous changes. The Executive Committee of our Institute will also be replaced by an Institute

Advisory Board. Against this backdrop, I would like to thank the long-standing members of our Executive Committee Prof. Dr. Manuel Ammann, Prof. Dr. Elgar Fleisch, Prof. Dr. Andreas Herrmann, Dr. Andreas Guldin, Florian Schweitzer and Dr. Sven Bradke for their valuable support over the past few years.



With best regards

Prof. Dr. Thomas Rudolph

The masculine form used in the annual report always refers to female, male and diverse persons at the same time.

Executive Committee



Prof. Dr. Andreas

GLA President, Director of the Institute
for Mobility



Prof. Dr. Elgar

Professor of Technology Management (HSG) &
Information Management (ETHZ)



Andrea Krapf

Member of the Executive Board of the
Federation of Migros Cooperatives



Dr. Andreas Guldin

Chief Operations & Strategy Officer (Member
of the Executive Board) Tengelmann Group



Florian

b-to-v Partners AG



Dr. Sven

Managing Director, President of the
Board of Directors Mediapolis AG

Employees

Current employees and new employee functions

In 2024, we welcomed a new member of staff and two new doctoral students. Since July, Katharina Zettl has been supporting the Retail Lab partnership program under the direction of Prof. Dr. Thomas Rudolph. At the beginning of the year, Tim-Florian Gerlach and Ewald Bierbaum joined us as doctoral students.

Sabrina Güntensperger left us at the end of August. She is taking on a new challenge. Christian Schäfer, Katharina Ruschmann, Christine Otto and Andrea Sasse moved to the private sector in 2024.



Prof. Dr. Thomas
Director



Rolf
Accounting/Human Resources



Susanne
Secretariat



Katharina
RPP Project Management



Sabrina Güntensperger
RPP project management
Withdrawal: 31.8.2024



Dr. Andreas Hauschke
Head of executive education



Christopher Schraml
Research assistant



Katharina Ruschmann
Research assistant
Withdrawal 31.7.2024



Christine Otto
Research assistant
Withdrawal: 31.8.2024



Andrea Sasse
REDx learning platform
Exit 31.12.2024



Dr. Nora Kralle
Practical studies



Dr. Matthias Eggenschwiler
Postdoc / Research Associate



Ewald
Research Associate



Tim-Florian
Research assistant



Christian Schäfer
Research assistant
Withdrawal 30.6.2024

HSG.Retail Tech Conference 2024: Shaping the future of retail through innovation

Head: Dr. Andreas Hauschke

What does the future of retail look like? What technologies will the industry be dealing with in the future and how can retailers implement them in a beneficial way? Answers to these questions were provided at this year's HSG.Retail Tech conference of the Institute of Retail Management at the University of St.Gallen.

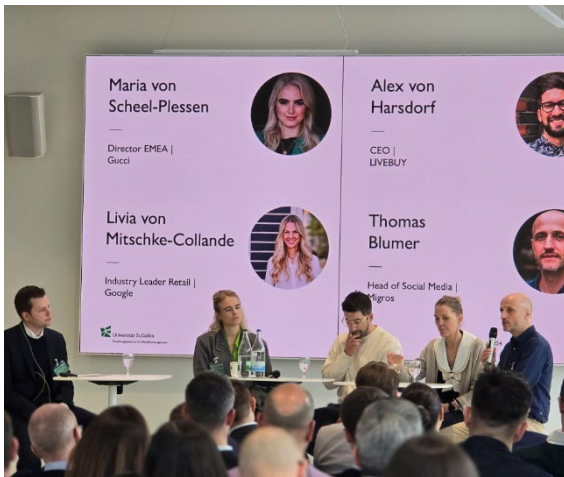


Figure1 : HSG.Retail Tech Conference 2024
Source: Own presentation, (2024)

On Thursday, 21.03.2024, around 100 participants had the opportunity to take part in numerous keynote speeches and panel discussions by top-class speakers on the topics of generative AI, social commerce and the metaverse. The networking opportunities with Bürli and bratwurst rounded off the program perfectly. The conference highlighted several exciting key takeaways:

- **The importance of customer inspiration as a sales booster** in contrast to the diminishing effect of customer satisfaction in retail. Our keynote speakers and panelists particularly emphasized the potential of immersive worlds.
- **The potential of social commerce platforms such as TikTok** revealed in particular the creative possibilities for addressing customers. Successful brands act like creators on the platform and ideally become part of the community.
- **(Gen)AI in advertising** as a driver to achieve a higher return on advertising spend (ROAS).
- **Effective measurement of the success** of technological measures is often still in its infancy in retail, and a basic data strategy is usually lacking.
- **The potential of gamification to increase customer interaction** and loyalty - with real added value for the customer taking precedence over mere novelty.
- **The implementation of retail technology** first requires a strategic discussion before a successful implementation can begin.



Figure2 : HSG.Retail Tech 2024
Source: Own presentation, (2024)

In addition to a highly varied and top-class agenda, the HSG.Retail Tech Conference 2024 also impressed with a great audience and a great atmosphere in the SQUARE at the University of St.Gallen.

The HSG.Retail Tech Conference 2024 offered a unique platform for exchanging ideas on the latest technological developments in the retail industry as well as numerous valuable insights into the strategic implementation for retailers in everyday life.

Competence Center Shopper-Marketing, Inspiration & Pricing

Head: Dr. Andreas Hauschke

The Competence Center for Shopper Marketing, Inspiration & Pricing is dedicated to researching and implementing competitive strategies in retail. The focus is on how companies can develop a deep understanding of their customers' purchasing behavior in order to create inspiring shopping experiences. Central topics are shopper marketing, pricing and promotion design as well as customer and employee inspiration.

TEACHING

The Competence Center is closely involved in teaching, particularly in the courses "Functional Marketing" (German) and "Marketing Functions" (English). These courses provide Master's students in marketing management with practical knowledge about the core instruments of marketing - communication, product & service, price and distribution. It is emphasized that successful marketing strategies go beyond traditional advertising and enable long-term competitive advantages through targeted customer inspiration.

The competence center also plays a central role in the course "Retail Management and E-Commerce". Students gain a sound understanding of the challenges facing the retail sector and learn the ten key retail skills. Through close links with practice, including guest speakers from leading retail companies, the topics of shopper marketing, pricing and customer

inspiration are examined from a strategic and operational perspective.

RESEARCH

In 2024, the Competence Center was able to obtain funding from the Swiss National Science Foundation (SNSF) for the research project "When and How Cross-Selling Boosts Sales: The Role of Customer Inspiration" (project number: 10003458). The research investigates how cross-selling in the retail trade can be specifically optimized through customer inspiration. An initial field study was conducted with a leading Swiss food retailer at the end of the year in order to gain practical insights.

Another research focus is consumer behavior in the food trade. The Competence Center once again led the data collection for the Swiss Nutrition Atlas, a project carried out by Dr. Matthias Eggenschwiler in collaboration with the University of Rostock and the Inselspital Bern.

Shortly after the end of the year, two scientific publications were published dealing with general food consumption and the "Planetary Health Diet" in Switzerland. The results are available free of charge at www.ernaehrungsatlas.ch/downloads.

In addition, Dr. Matthias Eggenschwiler's dissertation entitled "Three Essays on Consumer-Based Strategies in Retailing" was successfully completed in 2024. The research results illustrate how important customer inspiration is for retail companies and what strategic implications this has for the future. We are working on publishing the results in scientific journals.

In addition to academic publications, research findings from the Competence Center also flow directly into practice-oriented journals. In 2024,

for example, several articles were published dealing with current developments in the retail sector. The article "Stationary stores need to work on their product ranges" was published on 26 April 2024 in "Handel Heute" and addresses the need for targeted product range adjustments in stationary retail. The article "Comet-like rise of smartphones for shopping in Austria" was published in "CASH - das Handelsmagazin" on April 25, 2024, highlighting the increasing importance of mobile devices in the shopping process. In addition, the May 2024 issue of the trade magazine "markenartikel" published the article "Fewer contact points used", which analyzes changes in cross-channel shopping behavior in the DACH region.

Competence Center Omni-Channel & Customer Experience Management

Head: Dr. des Matthias

The Omni-Channel & Customer Experience Management competence center is dedicated to researching and developing innovative retail strategies in digital and brick-and-mortar retail. The focus is on seamlessly linking different sales channels and optimizing the customer experience along the entire customer journey.

TEACHING

The competence center is important for various courses. Students learn the central principles of modern retail, with a particular focus on the challenges and opportunities in omni-channel management. Practical case studies and guest speakers are used to link theoretical knowledge with real-life challenges.

RESEARCH

In 2024, the Competence Center published two important long-term studies that shed light on current developments in omni-channel management and e-commerce in Switzerland, Germany and Austria. The study "Omni-Channel Management in Germany, Austria and Switzerland 2024" examines the shopping behavior of over 3,000 omni-channel-savvy consumers and shows in practical terms how the use of online

and offline channels has changed. The study provides insights into the networking of customer touchpoints, the role of marketplaces such as Amazon and the importance of specific touchpoints for purchasing decisions.

The long-term study "Internet Use and E-Commerce Switzerland 2024", which was first conducted in 1999, is dedicated to trends in online retail. The survey of 1,334 Swiss consumers shows that online retail reached a new record in 2024 with a market volume of CHF 18 billion. Chinese e-commerce providers in particular, such as Temu, are rapidly gaining in importance and increasingly displacing Swiss online stores.

In addition, the Competence Center 2024 initiated a new study entitled "Online Shopping Tourism Switzerland 2024". The study shows that online purchases abroad are increasing rapidly and that fashion, travel and gift items in particular are increasingly being purchased

internationally. The share of online shopping tourism has risen and reached a turnover of 5.2 billion. Companies such as Amazon and Temu are among the top 5 online platforms, while Swiss retailers are losing market share.

The competence center's research findings have not only been published in academic publications, but also in numerous practice-oriented specialist media. Articles have appeared in Leader Digital, Die Volkswirtschaft, E-Commerce Magazin, Harvard Business Manager, Handel Heute, Netzwoche and other leading industry magazines.

Competence Center Retail Metrics & Technology

Head: Prof. Dr. Thomas Rudolph

The Retail Metrics & Technology Competence Center researches how data-driven analyses and new technologies are transforming retail. The focus is on innovative business models, digital strategies and the measurement of success factors in retail management. Through the close integration of research, teaching and practice, the competence center helps to prepare companies for the challenges of the digital retail landscape.

TEACHING

The competence center is closely linked to the course Action Learning in Retail Marketing, which provides students with practical insights into operational retail activities.

Instead of attending traditional lectures, students on this course work directly in branches of partner companies. In 2024, these were Müller and C&A. The student teams develop measures to increase profitability, receive feedback on the implemented measures and compete with other student groups and management teams. This interactive approach enables students to make data-based decisions and test strategic solutions in real retail environments.

The course Retailing Innovations - New Strategies and Marketing Concepts in Retail conveys knowledge about modern retail strategies and technological trends. In addition to traditional and digital business models, students learn

about innovative revenue mechanisms such as subscription models that are changing consumer behavior and the retail landscape in the long term. The course also deals with structural and cultural factors that influence the innovative strength of companies. Through direct exchange with industry and consulting experts, students acquire practical skills for the development of innovative retail strategies and their implementation at management level.

RESEARCH

In 2024, the Competence Center published several scientific and practice-oriented publications on innovative trading strategies.

Prof. Dr. Thomas Rudolph and Dr. Markus Schweizer have published an updated edition of their book "Successful Transformation of Business Models in Disruptive Times - The High 5 Approach". For the first time, an English

version has been published alongside the German edition.

Another key research topic was retailing in the metaverse. The scientific article "Retailing in the Metaverse: A Framework of Managerial Considerations for Success", published in the *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services* (VHB ranking: B), examines which strategic considerations retail companies should take into account when integrating the metaverse. The study is based on qualitative interviews with top and mid-level managers and a survey of Metaverse users to identify success factors for

the customer experience. The results provide valuable insights for companies looking to invest in immersive shopping experiences.

At the same time, the topic was also discussed in practice-oriented trade journals. The article "Opportunities for retailers in the metaverse", published in *Marketing Review St.Gallen*, shows how augmented reality (AR) and virtual reality (VR) can increase the potential for inspiration in retail. Based on a survey of 451 users, concrete recommendations for action are derived for retail companies that want to use the metaverse economically.

Publications and research funding

Practical articles, studies and books

Eggenschwiler, M., Linzmajer, M., Roggeveen, A., & Rudolph, T., (2024). Retailing in the metaverse: A framework of managerial considerations for success. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, 79, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jretconser.2024.103791>.

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Rudolph, T., & Schraml, C., (2024). Omni-channel management. *Handelszeitung* 24.10.2024 - 10:51 am, 1-3

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Rudolph, T., & Otto, C., (2024). Brick-and-mortar stores need to work on their product ranges. *Retail Today*, (2), 36-38.

Rudolph, T., & Bierbaum, E. O. M., (2024). Comet-like rise of the smartphone in shopping in Austria. *etailment*, (11), 77-79.

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Rudolph, T., Kralle, N., & Schraml, C., (2024). *Omni-Channel Management in Germany, Austria and Switzerland 2024*. Institute of Retail Management, University of St. Gallen, ISBN: 978-3-906057-43-9.

Neumüller, K., & Rudolph, T., (2024). *Inspiring employees*. Springer Gabler, ISBN: 978-3-658-43345-1.

Rudolph, T., & Ruschmann, K., (2024). *The perception of different metaverse applications from the user's point of view in November 2023*. Institute of Retail Management, University of St. Gallen. Available as PDF in the online store.

Rudolph, T., Hauschke, A., & Hoang, M., (2024). Opportunities for trade in the metaverse. *Marketing Review St.Gallen*, 41(2), 22-30.

Rudolph, T., & Bierbaum, E., (2024). The smartphone on the rise. *Handel Heute*, (1) 16-17.

Rudolph, T., & Schweizer, M., (2024). *Successful Business Model Transformations in Disruptive Times*. De Gruyter, ISBN: 978-3-11-077208-1.

Rudolph, T., & Schweizer, M., (2024). *Successful transformation of business models in disruptive times*. De Gruyter, ISBN: 978-3-11-077208-1.

Rudolph, T., & Otto, C., (2024). Social media is becoming increasingly important in the omni-

channel buying process. *Retail Today*.

Rudolph, T., & Kralle, N., (13.6.2024). Intensive smartphone use in stationary retail. *Netzwoche*.

Rudolph, T., & Gerlach, T.F., (1.12.2024). Gen Z revives brick-and-mortar retail. *Habona Report*.

Rudolph, T., & Gerlach, T.F., (18.6.2024). Gen Z revives stationary retail in Austria. *Austrian Federal Economic Chamber*.

Research funding

In 2024, our chair successfully secured the research project "When and How Cross-Selling Boosts Sales: The Role of Customer Inspiration" (project number: 10003458) funded by the Swiss National Science Foundation (SNSF). Led by Prof. Dr. Thomas Rudolph, the project is investigating how cross-selling can be made more effective through targeted customer inspiration. The research project will run from November 2024 to April 2027 and aims to better understand the psychological mechanisms behind successful cross-selling. While many companies

rely on promotions to generate additional sales, this project focuses on customer inspiration as a key influencing factor. It analyzes which product combinations are particularly suitable for triggering impulse purchases and how digital sales channels can be used specifically for inspiring cross-selling. With funding of over CHF 400,000, the project is helping to develop scientifically sound strategies for the retail trade. The project partner is Prof. Dr. Heiner Evanschitzky (University of Manchester).

In addition, the SNSF project "Marketing Education in a Digital World: The Impact of Gamified Experiential Education on Transformative Learning" (project number 201138) by Prof. Dr. Marc Linzmajer (formerly IRM-HSG, University of St.Gallen, now University of Rostock) continued. Project partners are Prof. Dr. Gerard Beenen (California State University), Prof. Dr. Kristina Kleinlercher (Management Center Innsbruck) and Prof. Dr. Thomas Rudolph.

Retail Lab Partnership Program

Our **Retail Lab partnership program** at the Institute of Retail Management (IRM-HSG) offers around 20 partner companies from the retail industry a comprehensive range of continuing education events as well as an intensive professional exchange. The program builds a bridge between science and practice and offers both sides valuable impulses for successfully mastering current and future challenges in retail.

As part of the partnership program and beyond, we offer the following training opportunities:

Workshops, webinars and conferences

Our partners have the opportunity to participate exclusively in our top-class training formats. These include full-day research workshops, interactive webinars and our "HSG.Retail Tech Conference". These events offer unique access to the latest research findings, innovative technologies and practical insights, especially for managers and experts in the retail industry.

Exclusive access to research results

This gives our partner companies access to our latest research findings, which provide in-depth insights and practical impetus for the retail sector. These current studies such as our new "Internet Use and E-Commerce Switzerland 2024" or "Online Shopping Tourism Switzerland 2024", as well as specialist literature, including the 5th edition of the standard work "Successful Transformation of Business Models in Disruptive Times - The High 5 Approach". In addition, our partners benefit from a subscription to the practice-oriented magazine "Marketing Review St.Gallen",

which offers practical research insights on a quarterly basis.

Action learning course for students and companies

The "Action Learning" course offers students, in cooperation with our partner companies, the unique opportunity to apply theoretical knowledge in a practice-oriented way. Students develop innovative approaches to improving profitability using state-of-the-art technologies. The aim is not only to increase profitability per unit area at the POS, but also to improve the customer experience in stationary retail.

Special conditions for our programs

Our partner companies benefit from discounted conditions for our renowned continuing education program, the Certificate of Advanced Studies (CAS) in International Retail Management. This program offers first-class insights, practical content and valuable strategies for successfully mastering the challenges of modern retail

REDx learning platform

The REDx learning platform has been available to our partner companies since 2021. It offers targeted and diverse knowledge transfer on current retail trends, such as the rise of the Chinese platform Temu or the transformation of business models. The range of courses is continuously being developed and expanded in order to always cover the latest developments and challenges in the industry. The modular structure of the courses enables an individually tailored and sustainable learning experience that optimally prepares employees for future requirements.



Figure 3: Our partner companies 2024
Source: Own presentation, (2024)

Research Workshops

In cooperation with our partnership program, five top-class research workshops and a full-day conference were successfully held in 2024.

Workshop 1: In our first workshop 2024 "**Retail Management in difficult economic times**", on 12.03.2024, Prof. Dr. Thomas Rudolph (University of St.Gallen) and Urs Riedener (Chairman of the Board of Directors Emmi AG) highlighted the challenges facing retail in uncertain times - from supply chain problems and customer preferences to digital technologies - and showed how manufacturers and retailers can use the point of sale as a strategic location for brand staging and competitiveness.

Workshop 2: For the "**HSG.Retail Tech Conference**", on 21.03.2024 under the direction of Prof. Dr. Thomas Rudolph, we brought together top-class guest speakers: Maria van Scheel Plessen (Gucci), Paul Wiedmeier (Meta), Yves Mäder (Google), Dr. Evangelos Avramakis (Swiss Re), Alberto Menegazzi (AWS), Stefan Binkowski (SAP), Alex Bögli (Zühlke), Mirco Hecker

(TikTok), Dr. Nicolas Wüthrich (Roland Berger), Paul Winsor (Snowflake), Alex von Harsdorf (LIVEBUY), Thomas Blumer (Migros Supermarkt AG), Livia von Mitschke-Collande (Google), Tina Werro (Swisscom), Simon Falke (Falke), Nino Bergfeld (Salesforce) and Dr. Axel Nitschke (IBM Consulting). The digital future of retail was highlighted - from AI and generative AI, mixed reality and digital assistants to metaverse and social commerce - to show how retailers can use technological innovations to gain a competitive edge and meet customer needs in an even more targeted manner.

Workshop 3: "Omni-Channel Management and Mixed Reality: How do consumers experience more?", on 28.05.2024, Prof. Dr. Thomas Rudolph, Dr. David Biernath (ALDI Suisse) and Dr. Maximilian Weber (HOLY FASHION GROUP) discussed how omni-channel management can increase sales through innovative experiences. The focus was on strategies for combining digital and stationary channels - from live events in the store with social media

integration to activities in the metaverse - in order to inspire customers in the long term.

Workshop 4: "Leadership in turbulent times", 10.09.2024, led by Prof. Dr. Thomas Rudolph and Prof. Dr. Wolfgang Jenewein. Together, we explored the extent to which managers need to adapt their leadership approaches in the face of technological upheaval, skills shortages and hybrid working environments. The focus was on strategies for retaining talent through self-development and autonomy, mastering speed and complexity and developing leadership concepts that meet the requirements of modern working cultures.

Workshop 5: "Best Practices in Sustainability - how Retailers achieve a competitive advantage", 24.10.2024, led by Prof. Dr. Sara Rosengren. How can retailers promote sustainable consumer behavior? Prof. Dr. Sara Rosengren showed how gaps between ambition and action can be closed - with concrete strategies and solutions for practice.

Workshop 6: "How to Boost Innovation in Retailing", 27.11.2024, led by Vis. Prof. Lluís Martínez-Ribes (ESADE). Together we went beyond "Best Practices" and highlighted the "Next Practices" for visionary retail managers. The focus was on customer orientation as the key to innovation. Using insights from consumer research and practical tools, the participants developed innovative concepts and learned how to implement them successfully.



Figure4 : Research Workshop Zurich 2024
Source: Own presentation, (2024)

Board Summit

This year's Board Summit took place on October 1, 2024 at SQUARE at the University of St.Gallen. The central topic was "Retailing in the 21st Century". Our exclusive event was attended by 12 CEOs of well-known retail companies from Switzerland and abroad.

Recruiting for partner companies

Once again this year, members of the Retail Lab partnership program were able to take advantage of the opportunity to make contact with students from the University of St.Gallen at . Many of the partner companies also gave a specialist presentation as part of our lectures and showed the students the entry and career opportunities in their company. In addition, internships and entry-level positions were successfully arranged through the Retail Lab partnership program. Cooperation in the context of

final theses is also becoming increasingly popular.

Certificate program

The **Certificate of Advanced Studies (CAS)** in International Retail Management of the University of St.Gallen (HSG) is a further education program tailored for senior management in retail and industry. The program is characterized by its strong practical relevance and is always geared towards current management challenges.

In 2024, our **Certificate of Advanced Studies (CAS)** in International Retail Management was held for the 18th time. Under the direction of Prof. Dr. Thomas Rudolph, the CAS has established itself as one of the leading further education courses for managers in international retail management



Figure5 : Certificate participants in the St. Gallen 2024 module Source: Own illustration, (2024)

Our CAS program is designed to prepare retail managers for the challenges of a dynamic global market. It consists of four modules on

excellence in retail, covering a diverse range of topics. These include strategy, business model transformation, data management and analytics, omni-channel management, leadership skills and insights into the future of retail.



Figure6 : Certificate participants in the St. Gallen 2024 module
Source: Own presentation, (2024)

In addition to the four face-to-face modules, our program relies on an innovative blended learning approach. This integrates e-learning elements via our own REDx platform and enables participants to design their training even more flexibly and individually.

We are particularly proud of the close cooperation with our top-class speakers from research and practice. They provide participants not only with in-depth specialist knowledge, but also with practical skills that are crucial for success in the retail trade. Thanks to the strong practical relevance and the focus on current management challenges, participants gain valuable insights that they can incorporate directly into their everyday work.

The CAS in International Retail Management is aimed at top-level managers and offers an internationally recognized qualification. We are convinced that the impetus from this program will not only advance the individual careers of our participants but will also have a positive impact on their companies.

Overall, we can look back on a successful 2024, in which we once again successfully held the CAS in International Retail Management once again. Last year, 12 managers from industry and retail completed the program. The focus of our first module in St.Gallen was on strategy

and business model transformation. The second module in Berlin focused on basic knowledge of data management and data protection as well as current trends in customer-oriented data analysis. Our third module in Barcelona focused on strategies for successful omni-channel management. The fourth and final module in St. Gallen dealt with modern management approaches and an understanding of the future of retail.

Courses

Practical insights from top-class guest speakers

In 2024, our department offered a wide range of courses at Bachelor's and Master's level covering current developments in retail management and marketing. A particular highlight were the numerous guest speakers from leading retail companies such as Migros, the Schwarz Group, Swarovski, HelloFresh, KiK and OBI, who contributed valuable practical insights to our lectures. At Bachelor's level, the lectures Retail Management and E-Commerce as well as Distribution and Retail Management were offered. At Master's level, students were able to take part in the courses Functional Marketing, Marketing Functions, Action Learning in Retail Marketing and Retailing Innovations. Thanks to the close integration of science and practice, students gained a sound and application-oriented knowledge of modern retail management.

Guest speakers 2024 in our courses

Roland Armbruster, Manor

Rainer Baumann, Federation of Migros Cooperatives

Robert Buchbauer, Swarovski

David Castro-Gavino, HelloFresh

Rageth Clavadetscher, Glatt Center

Philipp Dautzemberg, Prodega

Laura Frobel, Schwarz Services

Dominic Millioud, formerly Eat.ch

Michele Molon, Swarovski

Lea Sonderegger, Swarovski

Lennart von Ackern, 4flow SE

Dr. Gonn Weide, OBI Group Holding

Patrick Zahn, KiK Textilien und Non-Food GmbH

Courses 2024

Bachelor level

Fall semester 2024

5,101,1.00	Retail management and e-commerce	Prof. Dr. Thomas Rudolph
5,144,1.00	Distribution and retail management	Dr. Andreas Guldin Robert Buchbauer

Master level

Spring semester 2024

8,052,1.00	Funktionales Marketing	Prof. Dr. Thomas Rudolph Prof. Dr. Marc Linzmajer Prof. Dr. Sven Reinecke Prof. Dr. Michael Paul
8,053,1.00	Marketing Functions	Prof. Dr. Thomas Rudolph Prof. Dr. Marc Linzmajer Prof. Dr. Sven Reinecke Prof. Dr. Michael Paul
8,082,1.00	Action Learning in Retail Marketing	Prof. Dr. Thomas Rudolph
8,072,1.00	Retailing Innovations - New Strategies and marketing concepts in retail	Prof. Dr. Thomas Rudolph Dr. Severin Bischof Joern Taubert



Figure7 : Our teaching
Source: Own illustration, (2024)

Supervised Bachelor and Master theses

Completed Bachelor theses

Katinka Schneider Gesa	Touch-Point Nutzung im Modehandel unter besonderer Berücksichtigung von Kundeninspiration
Lucio Nunes	Direct-to-Consumer im stationären Handel – Ausmass, Formen und Handlungshinweise
Philip Lehrmann	Retail Media – Stufenkonzept zur rentablen Einführung von Retail Media
Nadine Galliard	Die Auswirkungen von In-Store Technologien auf den Detailhandel – Arten, Anwendungsbeispiele und Handlungsempfehlungen

Completed Master theses

Lisa Gerner	Metaverse im Omni-Channel Management
Peter Rapp	AI and Metaverse: Implications for the Retail industry
Selina Knuchel	Das Metaverse als neuer Kommunikations- und Distributionskanal im Handel
Tobias Hutter	Virtueller Handel im Metaverse: Chancen, Herausforderungen und Handlungsempfehlungen
Ann-Sophie Kahnau	Nachhaltigkeitsstrategien im Handel - Stringente Umsetzung in wirtschaftlich schwierigen Zeiten
Judith Langer	Future outlook of quick commerce in grocery retail market
Melanie Schwarzer	Webrooming im Handel - Herausforderungen, Ausmass und Handlungsempfehlungen
Linda Zaugg	Kundeninspiration im Social Commerce: Formen, Messung, und Handlungsempfehlungen
Jennifer Hess	Showrooming im Handel - Herausforderungen, Ausmass und Handlungsempfehlungen
Cristina Brunner	Nutzung von Social Commerce im Lebensmittelhandel - Arten, Erfolgsbeispiele und Handlungsempfehlungen
Marc Bölsterli	Tiktok-Challenges von Unternehmen: Chancen, Herausforderungen und Handlungsempfehlungen

Lisa Mathys Pascale Geschäftsmodelltransformation im Handel unter besonderer Berücksichtigung des Omni-Channel Managements

Bachelor & Master theses in progress

Constantin Adler	GAP-Analyse für Verkaufsdefizite im Pharma-Handel
Jeannine Ehrler	Das Verkaufsprinzip Reziprozität im Handel: Formen, Ausmass und Handlungsempfehlungen
Beverly Chanda	Customer Steering in Richtung Click & Collect
Felix Baumgartner	Augmented Reality im Handel: Erfolgsbeispiele, Herausforderungen und Handlungsempfehlungen
Paul Rika-Luisa Hanna:	Die Verkaufsprinzipien «Liking» und Autorität im Handel: Formen, Ausmass und Handlungsempfehlungen
Kaya Muhammed Talha:	KI, AR und VR zur Kundeninspiration im Handel: Formen, Erfolgsbeispiele und Handlungsempfehlungen
Maximilian Gröger	Shoppable Videos im Online-Handel: Formen, Wirkung auf die Kundeninspiration und Handlungsempfehlungen» am Forschungszentrum für Handelsmanagement
Julia Logo	Generative AI in Customer Service: Typology, Best Practices, and Recommendations
Paul Sillich	D2C-Konzepte im Handel: Identifizierung und Analyse von vielversprechenden Geschäftsmodellen
Martina Mauerhofer	Geschäftsmodelltransformationen im Handel: Ausmass und agile Managementmethoden
Joshua Halbich	Kundeninspiration im Metaverse: Chancen, Herausforderungen und Handlungsempfehlungen
Sebastian Iblacker	Immersive Technologien im Handel: Arten, Erfolgsfaktoren und Handlungsempfehlungen
Valentin Hannak	Principles of customer inspiration
Noah Tschopp	Marketplaces in Retailing: The perception of new providers such as Temu, Wish, etc.

Ongoing dissertations in 2024

Dr. Matthias Eggenschwiler **Research assistant**

Dr. Matthias Eggenschwiler submitted his dissertation entitled "Three Essays on Consumer-Based Strategies in Retailing" in 2024, successfully defended it and graduated with the highest distinction of *summa cum laude*. In his thesis, he examines how retail companies can use consumer-based strategies to achieve long-term customer loyalty and commercial success. The dissertation is divided into three academic articles: The first article systematizes the existing knowledge on cross-selling and cross-buying and creates a clear delineation of these concepts for modern retail. The second article analyzes a three-year field study and shows how thematically coordinated in-store advertising in food retailing influences purchasing behavior and increases customer satisfaction. The third article develops management approaches for metaverse retailing and highlights the potential of immersive shopping experiences to inspire customers. With these findings, the dissertation makes an important contribution to research and shows practical implications for the strategic orientation of retail in an increasingly digitalized world.

Ewald Bierbaum **Research assistant**

Ewald Bierbaum is a doctoral student at the IRM and is currently finding a topic for his dissertation. He is investigating the phenomenon of upselling in online retail and the psychological mechanisms behind it.

Tim-Florian Gerlach **Research assistant**

Tim-Florian Gerlach's dissertation deals with ordering models such as Click & Collect. In this context, he is currently completing a systematic literature analysis as a first step.

Christopher Schraml **Research assistant**

Christopher Schraml is a doctoral student at the IRM and his dissertation focuses on the effects of short video formats in e-commerce on success indicators such as conversion rates. His overarching focus is on social influences on consumer behavior along the customer journey, particularly in the online context. A central component of his research is the use of video analytics to analyze consumer behavior and understand how visual content influences purchasing decisions.

Completed dissertation in the year 2024

Dr. Nora Kralle

"Data-driven personalization in brick-and-mortar stores"

Brick-and-mortar retailers are facing the challenge of declining sales and visitor numbers. The competitive advantage of brick-and-mortar retail used to lie in the personalized advice provided by employees. However, online retail has overtaken brick-and-mortar retail thanks to the ability to collect and use data for personalization. The situation is getting worse as previously online-only retailers such as Amazon are now opening brick-and-mortar stores and using these capabilities. New technologies make it possible to collect data about their customers in the physical world and thereby personalize the shopping experience. These advances are bringing data-driven, personalized advertising from online marketing to brick-and-mortar retail. The goal of this dissertation was to show how brick-and-mortar retailers can use data-driven personalization in their stores to become more attractive to consumers and increase their sales.

Dr. Andreas Hauschke

"Promoting Adaptive Service Experience with Inspired Frontline Employees: A Replication and Extension Study in Retailing"

The long-term success of brick-and-mortar retail companies depends to a large extent on the excellence of their service. Sales staff in particular have a key role to play here. In view of the drastic changes in consumer behavior due to COVID-19 and intensifying competition, brick-and-mortar retailers are struggling to survive on the market without cutting staff costs. In this context, brick-and-mortar retailers need to ensure the training of their sales staff. In addition to the how and why of adaptive sales behavior, retailers must also create the necessary structural working conditions. Brick-and-mortar retailers need to find new ways to interact with their customers and offer an inspiring shopping experience. Customer inspiration promises to increase spending per customer, promote cross-selling and improve the profitability of retail companies. Sales staff in particular are an important driver of inspiration. Against this background, the aim of this dissertation was to identify triggers of employee inspiration and the resulting recommendations for action in order to show how employee inspiration can be promoted in stationary retail.

Outlook and objectives

One challenge that should not be underestimated is the difficult retail situation. Competition from foreign online retailers has increased massively in recent years and will be met with cautious consumer sentiment in 2025. We are endeavoring to provide our partner companies with the best possible support in this difficult situation. Accordingly, we are addressing research topics that provide answers for retail management in difficult economic times.

In 2025, we will continue our successful chair work. This includes, in particular, our partnership program, our proven courses and our efforts in the area of research. A particular highlight in 2025 will be the 25th anniversary of the Gottlieb Duttweiler Chair of International Retail Management. With this chair, Migros has enabled the University of St.Gallen to offer a high-quality range of courses with retail-related events for a quarter of a century. On June 19, 2025, we want to celebrate this special event with a ceremony in Rüslikon. Together with our advisory board, former doctoral students and employees of the institute, we want to take a closer look at the future of retail. I would like

to take this opportunity to thank Migros and look forward to continuing our collaboration.

We are also looking forward to a number of publications, including the fifth edition of my textbook "Modern Retail Management", together with my colleague Prof. Dr. Marc Linzmaier from the University of Rostock. We are also planning a study on shopping tourism in Switzerland and the use of artificial intelligence in retail.

Overall, however, 2025 will be a quieter year for our institute, especially as I will be able to spend a sabbatical abroad from summer on.

I would like to thank the chair team for their great commitment.

St.Gallen, March 31, 2025



Prof. Dr. Thomas Rudolph

Ready for 2025

CAS 2025

The St.Gallen module of our CAS program will take place from February 11 to 13.

19th of June 25 Years GDL Anniversary

Cross Border Shopping Study

The study is based on an online survey of approximately 3000 cross-boarder shoppers from Switzerland and examines the purchasing behavior of Swiss consumers abroad in nearby border regions.

CAS 2025

The Berlin module of our CAS program will take place from June 18 to 20.

CAS 2025

The Barcelona module of our CAS program will take place from September 3 to 5.

CAS 2025

The St.Gallen module of our CAS program will take place from November 19 to 21.