



American Collegiate Retailing Association
educating tomorrow's retail leaders

Retail Education Today

President's Corner

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Over recent years ACRA has been developing new initiatives in order to drive forward our mandate of fostering high quality retail education and research. At our Executive Board and Business Meetings in January 2007, we reviewed and discussed our financial situation and dues structure.

ACRA has always been and is currently in sound financial shape. This is due to the reserve we have built up over the years. In the past, this reserve has provided us with enough interest to finance our ongoing activities and new initiatives. We have maintained a dues structure of \$50 for domestic members that has not changed in approximately 20 years. However, over the past few years we have been using our reserve to finance our new activities and increased expenses (e.g. mailing costs), because our dues could not meet our increased operating costs, let alone our growth objectives.

Current ACRA dues cover a 1-year membership and a 1-year sub-

scription to the *Journal of Retailing*. Think about the value you receive from your membership. The *Journal of Retailing* subscription would cost \$147 if it were not for the ACRA membership. ACRA subsidizes Winter and Spring conference activities; supports undergraduate initiatives such as the Case Study Competition and the Charrette; there's the newsletter, the website, the membership directory, the clearinghouse, the archives and the hall of fame; next year we will launch a doctoral award.



We believe it is time to raise dues so that we can continue to develop new initiatives without eroding our financial reserve. Paul McGurr, ACRA Treasurer, conducted an analysis and recommended that do-

mestic dues be raised by \$25 (to \$75). Details on international dues will be forthcoming. Note that we have already taken measures to cut costs. Inactive members no longer receive mailings; the membership directory has been reworked to save printing and mailing costs.

According to the ACRA Constitution, a vote shall take place at the annual meeting, which is coming up in Chicago in April. A "yes" vote will enable us to move forward and to respond to our members' needs in new, creative ways. We look forward to hearing your feedback. Please contact Paul McGurr, Treasurer, at mcgurr_p@fortlewis.edu or send me an e-mail at drsmith@ryerson.ca.

See you in Chicago!

Donna Smith

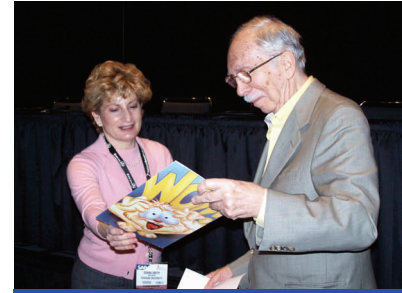
Ryerson University
ACRA President

ACRA Winter Conference—NYC Jan 14-17, 2007

The ACRA winter conference was held in conjunction with the National Retailing Federation Convention and Exposition, January 14-17, 2007 in New York City at the Javitz Convention Center.

Attendees enjoyed retail visits, paper presentations and the National Retail Federation's trade show.

Donna Smith, President, ACRA recognized Jerry Greenberg for his service to ACRA as the New York Conference Liaison. Over the years Jerry arranged retail excursions for ACRA members. Jerry as well as ACRA members reminisced and discussed the most memorable trips. Barry Berman and Chuck Mellon both from Hofstra University, are the new NYC Conference Liaisons.



Donna Smith presents Jerry Greenberg with a card on behalf of ACRA

Coming Soon—Spring 2007 Conference—Chicago

It is now time to register for the ACRA Spring 2007 Conference in Chicago, April 12- 15. Jan Owens has sent out the registration form and conference planner. If you did not receive these, contact Jan at jowens@carthage.edu (262-551-2111).

To book the hotel call 1-800-EMBASSY. Use "ACRA" or American Collegiate Retailing

Association. The rates are \$179 for a single person in a king; \$199 for two persons in a king; and \$229 for two persons with two beds in the room. This includes breakfast and cocktails. Make room reservations by March 16th. It is helpful for people to get their registration and plans for the retail visits in early because it helps in the planning process.

The location of the hotel offers many opportunities for restaurants and entertainment. Don't miss the excitement. Complete your registration today!

ACRA Spring 2007 Conference
Contact
Jan Owens
jowens@carthage.edu

ACRA and SMA to Co-Sponsor Seminar

ACRA and SMA (Society for Marketing Advances) will be co-sponsoring a special topics in retailing seminar which will be held immediately prior to the Society for Marketing Advances Annual Meeting Program. The SMA meeting will be held November 7-10, 2007 at the Sheraton Gunter Hotel in San Antonio, TX (see <http://marketingadvances.org> for more details).

In terms of the co-sponsored day, research papers relating to one of these two tracks are solicited:

1. Retail strategy and management;
2. Consumer decision process related

to the choice of retail organizations

Selected papers can become eligible to be published in a special section of the **Journal of Business Research**. More details will follow as they become formalized. The conference will focus on two primary topics:

1. Strategy Formulation and Implementation in Retail/Service Organizations.

Submissions dealing with competitive positioning, industry consolidation, information systems, negotiation strategies, third-party collaboration, category management and prof-

itability analysis are strongly sought.

2. Consumer decision making in the Retail/Service Environment.

What are the retail cues to which consumers respond? What are the decision processes elaborated by consumers outside the store and inside the store? What is the contribution of the store atmospherics to the retention of consumers?

The paper deadline is June 30, 2007. The Call for papers is available on the ACRA website. For more information contact Bob Robicheaux at bohr@uab.edu for questions.

Minutes ACRA Business Meeting

Sunday, 1/14/2007 8:30—9:00 a.m.

1. **Welcome** - Donna Smith called the meeting to order, welcomed everyone to New York, and expressed appreciation to everyone for attending.
2. **Secretary's Report** - Jane Thomas presented the report in lieu of Leslie Stoel who was unable to attend. Jane also assumed the responsibility of secretary for the meeting. Minutes from the ACRA Business Meeting of April 7, 2006 were distributed. The minutes were approved.
3. **Treasurer's Report** - Donna Smith presented the report in lieu of Paul McGurr. She commented that ACRA's financial position is sound, but that the reserve is declining because of new initiatives. Several members present commented that it had been 20 years since ACRA had an increase in dues. Donna mentioned that ACRA dues may need to be increased. Many in attendance commented on dues to other professional organizations and did not have a problem with a dues increase.
4. **Conference Report** -
 - a. Winter '07 Paper Presentation Session. David Burns reported that 11 papers were submitted and eight were accepted for presentation. One paper was withdrawn. David announced that two concurrent research sessions would be held immediately following the business meeting in two adjoining rooms.
 - b. Spring '07 Chicago. Jungkun Park announced that 28 papers had been received for the conference and that 32 reviewers were involved in the review procedures. Doreen Burdalski presented the preliminary agenda for the Chicago conference and encouraged everyone to attend.
 - c. Future Conferences: Doreen Burdalski announced that the 2008 conference would be held in Durango and that a proposal for the 2009 conference was made to the ICSC (Las Vegas). Other recommendations for 2009 included the Retailing Smarter Conference hosted by the University of Florida and the EAERCD conference to be held in Europe.
5. **Membership Report** - Bob Robicheaux reported that the newest members were listed on the back of the last edition of the newsletter. He mentioned that upgrades to the website will make it easier for new members to register online.
6. **Website Report** - Nancy Stanforth invited board members who had not done so to visit the new ACRA website. She mentioned that the site was simpler to navigate and provided more interactivity. She asked for additional input on how to improve the website. All agreed that the website represents our public face and should be professional and regularly updated.
7. **Development Report** - Jane Thomas listed retailers who had been contacted (Vineyard Vines, Stein Mart, Jos. A. Bank). She mentioned that although retailers are interested in ACRA and possibly making some type of contribution, they do not understand our organization nor the benefits of aligning with ACRA. She asked ACRA members who had been interested in development and had industry contacts to call her.
8. **Student Competitions Report**
 - a. *Case Study*. Doreen Burdalski reported that 11 submissions were received for last year's case study competition. She asked for those interested in reviewing this year to contact her. The case for this spring is Walgreens.
 - b. *Donna Smith* discussed the Charrette and asked for assistance in recruiting students and business donors for the event.
9. **Newsletter Report** - Denise Ogden discussed improvements to the newsletter. Everyone complimented her on the professional appearance of the publication.
10. **Clearinghouse Report** - Donna Smith reported for Carol Kaufman-Scarborough that the clearinghouse was operational.
11. **Old Business** - Archives. None
12. **New Business**
 - a. **Constitution**. It was announced that Susan Fioritio will make a report on recommended changes to the constitution at the spring meeting in Chicago.
 - b. **Other**. A special presentation was made to Jerry Greenberg thanking him for his years of service to ACRA and for serving as the NYC liaison. Jerry spoke to the group and reminisced about retail tours that he had lead and changes in the retail industry over the past 20 years.
 - c. Donna announced plans for the retail tour on Monday morning and provided instructions on where to meet. Barry Berman has planned retail visits to Trader Joe's, Whole Foods, and the largest farmers market in the state.
13. **Adjournment** - The meeting was adjourned at 9:05am and everyone left to attend the paper presentation sessions.

Call For Papers



Conference or Publication	Due Date	Description	Contact
Request for Cases for <i>Concepts and Cases in Retail and Merchandise Management, 2nd ed.</i>	March 1, 2007	Cases vary in length (approximately 750—3,000 words). Contact Nancy Rabolt for full requirements.	Nancy Rabolt nrabolt@sfsu.edu
ACRA Student Charrette March 21-25, 2007 Ryerson University, Toronto, Canada		8 teams of 5 students per team will compete to solve a cross-disciplinary, integrative, real-world problem. Consider sending a team.	If interested contact Donna Smith, drsmith@ryerson.ca
International Textiles and Apparel Association (ITAA) Special Issue of the <i>Clothing and Textiles Research Journal</i>	March 2007	This special issue will focus on the increasing number of older people within the global market and the implication of that demographic on design, production, marketing and use of apparel and textile products.	Watch for the upcoming Aging in a Global Society link on the ITAA website which will detail submission guidelines www.itaonline.org Email: info@itaonline.org
Co-Sponsored Event ACRA and SMA in conjunction with the SMA annual conference Nov. 7-10, 2007 San Antonio, TX	June 30, 2007	2 Tracks: Retail strategy and management and Consumer decision process related to the choice of retail organizations. Selected papers can become eligible to be published in a special section of the <i>Journal of Business Research</i> . See article this issue.	Details are on the ACRA website. The SMA site is http://marketingadvances.org/ Also contact Bob Robicheaux at bohr@uab.edu with questions

Upcoming Conferences

- Apr 12 -15 '07: ACRA Spring Conference, Chicago, IL
- ACRA/SMA Co-sponsored Seminar, San Antonio, TX (Nov. '07, specific date to be announced)
- Spring '08: ACRA Spring Conference, Durango, CO
- Jan '09: ACRA Winter Conference/NRF Convention, New York

The ACRA Hall of Fame

The ACRA Hall of Fame recognizes individuals who were members and have contributed to the success of ACRA and the retailing profession. The Hall of Fame is currently housed at Florida State University. It is located near the Center for Retail Merchandising and Product Development at FSU. There are currently 700 merchandising/retailing majors in the program



at FSU where the Retail Center and the ACRA Hall of Fame are housed, thus making the ACRA Hall of Fame a very prominent display. At the Center Board meeting in April this year, the ACRA Hall of Fame will be mentioned and shown.

Picture shows the ACRA Hall of Fame display case.

Feature Article

Online Christmas 2006: The Long Tail Of E-Tail

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Abstract

It was the best of times for some online retailers but problematic for others in the quest for increasing sales during the 2006 Christmas holiday shopping season. Online sales reached new heights and generally exceeded forecasters' year-to-year growth projections. A series of articles appearing in the online version of *Internet Retailer* (internetretailer.com) and other sources are summarized and provide insight into 2006's record-setting online retail sales performance. Some shopping trends were predictable as others emerged or matured in the glow of the holiday season.

Great Expectations

As of the first week in November 2006, 80 percent of U.S. Internet users expected to purchase gifts online during the holiday shopping season according to AOL Shopping and Zogby International. Surveyed consumers planned on spending \$504 or 39 percent of their total holiday budgets with online retailers (Average Online Spend ... 2006). Christmas shoppers fulfilled their 2006 holiday wishes as indicated by the substantial rise in online sales.

The major drivers for online holiday shoppers were convenience (58 percent) and the ability to compare products and prices (32 percent). As shown in Table 1, online shoppers also cited availability of products not found in stores (29 percent), free shipping (24 percent), promotions (17 percent), and ease of last minute purchasing (17 percent). These results were reported by AOL Shopping and Zogby International from a study done during November 2006 (Average Online Spend ... 2006).

Online Shopping Drivers	% of Total Responses
Saves Time	58%
Easier Comparison Shopping	32%
Product Selection: Online Versus Stores	29%
Free Shipping	24%
Sales Promotions	17%
Easier Last Minute Shopping	17%
Avoids Gasoline Expense	9%
Source: AOL Shopping and Zogby International (Average Online Spend ... 2006)	

Online Holiday Sales Show Steady Growth

Online retailers were generally very pleased with their 2006 holiday shopping sales results. The overall estimated increase versus 2005 was 24 percent to \$24.6 billion (E-Commerce Hits ... 2007). The year-to-year gain was attributed to two major factors: an increase in buyers (17 percent) and dollars spent by buyers (seven percent). The largest spending day was not the Monday following Thanksgiving or Cyber Monday, but December 13 with online sales estimated to be \$667 million according to comScore Networks. Cyber Monday ranked twelfth at \$608 million (Online Holiday Spending ... 2007). According to the National Retail Federation, total holiday retail sales including brick-and-mortar stores and e-tailers were approxi-

mately 4.4 percent higher in 2006 versus 2005 which was somewhat smaller than their estimate of five percent growth (Songini 2007). Excluding gas, autos and food, e-tailing accounts for seven percent of all U.S. consumer spending according to comScore Networks. Online retail spending for January through October 2006 was 24 percent higher than in 2005 totaling \$77.5 billion. During 2006, online retail sales topped \$100 billion (Walsh 2006).

Online shoppers delayed their purchasing in 2006 with a surge during the last three weeks of the holiday season accounting for a 31 percent increase over 2005. The last week before Christmas showed a 45 percent gain in online sales versus 2005 (Gardner 2007). A possible explanation for the delay in buying was the increase, nearly doubling, of online retailers who guaranteed Christmas Day delivery on orders placed by December 18 or 19 (Perez 2006).

Jewelry and watches accounted for the best category growth at 66 percent from the 2005 to 2006 online holiday seasons. Also strong were online sales of video games and video game consoles. However, apparel and accessories showed the least growth at 33 percent (Online Holiday Spending ... 2007).

There has been a shift in where and when online shoppers shop and place orders. According to comScore Networks, online buying from the home computer has grown faster (30 percent) than from work computers (19 percent) in 2006 versus 2005 (It's a Happy Holiday ... 2006). The shift may be explained by the increase in broadband Internet connectivity in U.S. homes. In November 2006, 78 percent of active Internet users had broadband service which was 13 percentage points higher than a year before according to Nielsen reports. Also, broadband users spend more time Web surfing and view more than twice as many Web pages than narrowband users. Furthermore, there is a subtle but noticeable difference in time of day for online shopping. According to CyberSource, the peaks and valleys have narrowed producing a trend toward 24-hour online shopping activity (In Brief 2007).

As shown in Table 3, nine of the top ten online shopping sites showed gains in December 2006 site visits versus a year earlier. Six of these sites increased significantly. Of the top ten, just three were traditional retailers: Wal-Mart, Target and Best Buy (Double-Digit Growth ... 2007).

Online Shopping Sites	December 2006 Site Visits	December 2005 Site Visits	% Change
NexTag Network	17.1	11.7	+46%
Wal-Mart	35.6	27.9	+28%
Target	29.7	24.8	+20%
eBay	66.2	57.3	+16%
Best Buy	22.0	19.4	+13%
Yahoo!	16.7	14.8	+13%
Amazon	50.6	48.0	+5%
Shopzilla Network	22.8	22.4	+2%
Overstock	19.3	18.9	+2%
Shopping Network	22.8	23.1	-1%
Source: Nielsen/NetRatings (Double-Digit Growth ... 2007)			

Search and Research

According to a study by Opinion Research Corporation, 58 percent of adults planned to do online research during the 2006 holiday shopping season while 43 percent expected to make both online and offline purchasing decisions based on that research. Respondents also tended to be brand sensitive. Nine of ten people surveyed indicated that they always (28 percent) or sometimes (62 percent) bought the exact brand they researched online. Seventy-seven percent who did online research said that they made purchases when shopping at a store. Fifty-two percent of that group of shoppers bought the same item they researched while 18 percent stated that they bought the item researched as well as additional items (Online Research Influences ... 2006). Another study by Cowen and Company indicated that 55 percent of respondents began their

2006 online shopping at search sites versus 51 percent in 2005. Also, the Cowen and Company study reported that 60 percent of those surveyed used comparison shopping sites in 2006 versus 55 percent in 2005 (Online Shopping's Strong ... 2006). Online research is definitely a significant factor in how holiday shoppers reached purchasing decisions during the 2006 season.

In performing online shopping research, many consumers use Internet search providers rather than accessing a particular merchant's Web site directly. During December 2006, Nielsen/NetRatings reported data on the leading Internet search providers as shown in Table 4. The top three Internet search providers, Google, Yahoo! and MSN/Windows accounted for nearly 83 percent of all December 2006 searches with Google clearly leading the field with a whopping 50.8 percent share of searches. In addition, Google (+22.6 percent) and Yahoo! (+30.1 percent) recorded impressive gains compared with December 2005 (Nielsen/NetRatings Announces ... 2007). A study by the E-Tailing Group and Start Sampling reported the importance of various Internet search tools preferred by 2006 online holiday shoppers. Keyword search was considered the most important search tool by 83 percent of those surveyed followed by advanced search at 63 percent and quick shop (entering a catalog product number) at 52 percent (Most Holiday Shoppers ... 2006). Online retailers are advised to carefully consider how their prospects and customers find their merchandise and devise strategies accordingly.

Table 4: Leading U.S. Internet Search Providers for December 2006

U.S. Internet Search Providers	December 2006 Searches (millions)	% Change vs. December 2005	2006 Share of Searches
Google	3,036	+22.6%	50.8%
Yahoo!	1,413	+30.1%	23.6%
MSN/Windows	500	-9.7%	8.4%
AOL	362	+7.8%	6.1%
My Way	142	+4.7%	2.4%
Ask	128	+17.2%	2.1%
EarthLink	32	+17.6%	0.5%
Dogpile	30	+2.1%	0.5%
Comcast	27	N/A	0.5%
NexTag	27	+123.2%	0.4%

Source: Nielsen/NetRatings (Nielsen/NetRatings Announces ... 2007)

The National Retail Federation commissioned a study done by BIGresearch during October 2006 to determine various demographics of U.S. consumers who performed online research before purchasing in person. There is considerable online research activity as well as gender differences which vary greatly by product category. Not all product categories reported involve typical gift purchases but many do (Grau 2006). Electronics, apparel and jewelry/watches which have been leaders in online shopping growth are noted in the study. Clearly, traditional retailers must have a well planned online presence in order to steer shoppers to their stores.

Online shoppers are more able to find exactly what they desire at least partly because of more sophisticated Internet search functionality and their familiarity with search sites and general search techniques and tools. Smaller niche retailers have benefited from Internet search sites, word of mouth social networks or social commerce, and blogs. A study by Compete reported that when making buying decisions, social network participants give more weight to peer feedback than to any other information source. The long tail concept of e-commerce has allowed small online and offline merchants to compete against established giants in retailing (Perez 2006).

The long tail model details the effects of many products being offered by many retailers facilitated by Web ordering and distribution. Chris Anderson poses an interesting question: What happens when everything becomes available to everyone? One effect is that a product need only sell in small quantities in order to be profitable. Part of the reason is that online

ordering and commercial shipping greatly reduce inventory costs thus allowing adequate profit margins for even the smallest retailer. Products need not sell in massive quantities any longer. Shoppers can now find the exact product to satisfy their need and wants. As the subtitle of Anderson's book states, "Why the Future of Business Is Selling Less of More" (Anderson 2006).

The Multi-Channel Conundrum

According to studies during 2005 by Forrester Research, multi-channel shoppers spent in excess of 50 percent more than single-channel shoppers and typically purchased bigger ticket products such as electronics, appliances and computers. However, studies by Gartner indicate that although multi-channel shoppers spend more and do so more frequently, they tend to be less loyal than single-channel shoppers. The Gartner studies concluded that the primary reasons are that multi-channel shoppers are more sensitive to prices arising from online price comparisons and that they have higher customer service expectations. Retailers must, therefore, realize that multi-channel customers may be lost if they don't deliver superior customer service (Lucas 2007).

A general multi-channel strategy is to persuade online shoppers to visit the store where sales personnel have the opportunity to trade up shoppers or pitch accessory items. If applicable, the reverse also applies: get store shoppers to visit the Web site where they can browse a larger number of product offerings. A key area of a multi-channel strategy is understanding how shoppers move between the Web and the store. Tracking shopper behavior across all channels provides insight into multi-channel strategic performance (Lucas 2007). According to a study by Gartner, multi-channel shoppers frequently use more than one source of product information before purchasing. Seventy percent of subjects said they rated in-store visits as a source of product information. Word of mouth and product reviews tied at 45 percent while the Internet overall was mentioned by 31 percent and product advertisements by 25 percent (Lucas 2007).

A study done by Zoomerang and Affluent, Inc. found that 41 percent of 2006 online holiday shoppers surveyed were less likely to visit a retailer's store following a frustrating online experience with that retailer's Web site. Also, 59 percent of the same subjects said that a frustrating online experience hurt the image of the retailer or brand. Eighty-two percent stated that they were less likely to revisit Web sites that produced shopper frustration (41% of Shoppers ... 2007).

KPMG found that 81 percent of 2006 holiday shoppers said they would shop at a store that had their desired item in stock and 75 percent stated that a simple return policy helped them choose a retailer (Well-Stocked Store ... 2006). There are several examples of retailer attempts to make multi-channel shopping seamless. Target Corporation has introduced an e-commerce tool which is designed to reduce shopper frustration regarding out-of-stock situations at their stores. Target's online feature is called "Find it at a Target store," which permits shoppers to confirm merchandise availability on Target's Web site prior to making a store visit (Target.com Expands ... 2006). Best Buy, Sears and Circuit City have buy online and pick up at a store programs (Multi-Channel Shoppers May ... 2007).

Satisfy the Shopper

Customer satisfaction at a profit is the essence of the marketing concept. But what do customers want? What do they expect in their online shopping experiences? According to ForeSee Results' research done in early December 2006, overall e-tail customer satisfaction, at 76.5 on a 100 point scale, is two points below the same period in 2005. ForeSee Results concluded that the decline was not attributable to site performance, pricing or any other individual measure. Therefore, they surmised that rising shopper expectations accounted for the decrease (Shoppers' Rising Expectations ... 2006). A study by KPMG reported that 39 percent of 2006 holiday shoppers shifted retailers based on which one best met their needs. Nearly half of that group said that they made the decision to switch retailers because of best selection of merchandise (Well-Stocked Store ... 2006).

Gomez, Inc. indicated that poor site performance leads to considerable shopper dissatisfaction. They report that more than 90 percent of online shoppers abandon a Web site following three or fewer unsuccessful attempts to complete a purchase. Seventy-five percent of the same subjects complained about slow loading sites and that more than half of those shoppers said they would switch to a competitor's site in such situations. They further conclude that free shipping, great deals and security assurances cannot overcome poor site performance (Good Site Performance ... 2006).

An interesting study was done by the J.C. Williams Group and Start Sampling that compared shoppers' and merchants' perceptions of various Web site features and promotion tools. As shown in Table 5, there are wide discrepancies between the two groups. Several traditional site features were not nearly as popular with shoppers as they were with merchants as noted by their perceived values: What's New (51 percent vs. 73 percent), Top Sellers (39 percent vs. 74 percent), and Gift Suggestions (35 percent vs. 63 percent). These site features do assist shoppers to understand what is available on the site but apparently shoppers desire more specific product information. In sum, today's online shoppers want a more interactive and engaging experience (Freedman 2007).

Table 5: Comparison of 2006 Online Shopper's and Online Merchant's Perceptions of Site Features and Promotion Tools

Online Shopping Site Features and Promotion Tools Deemed Valuable	Shopper Positive Responses	Merchant Positive Responses	% Difference
Free Shipping*	89%	76%	-13%
Live Chat	41%	28%	-13%
Loyalty Programs*	54%	38%	-16%
Customer Reviews	60%	39%	-21%
Store Locator	68%	45%	-23%
Product Comparison	64%	33%	-31%
Custom Content	45%	58%	+13%
What's New	51%	73%	+22%
Gift Suggestions	35%	63%	+28%
Top Sellers	39%	74%	+35%
* Promotion Tool Source: J.C. Williams Group & Start Sampling (Freedman 2007)			

Discussion

Online retailers were very pleased with the 2006 Christmas holiday shopping season with total spending up 24 percent to \$24.6 billion from 2005. Online retail sales during the 2002 holiday season were just \$10.6 billion. From 2002 to 2006, online holiday sales increased by a hearty 132 percent. Online retailing continues to grow and has become a significant part of all U.S. retail operations.

Multi-channel shoppers continue to be courted by online retailers because they spend more than single-channel shoppers. Many e-tailers, however, have been slow to refine strategies and Web site features that result in sales to multi-channel and single-channel shoppers. Moreover, online merchants have apparently misjudged what shoppers desire from their Web sites. E-tailers are advised to listen to their site visitors and give them what they want.

Research reported here indicates that online holiday shoppers are increasingly using research and search tools. Online and offline retailers must carefully study the decision processes involved in order to gain sales and loyalty. Because of easy Web access and rising household penetration of computers, online shoppers are better able to find exactly what they desire. Even the smallest online merchant can now compete against traditional retail leaders. The niche online retailer has become a vital part of the long tail model of e-commerce where inventory and other costs are reduced to the point of making low demand products available. No longer must the product be a "hit" to be profitable. Refinements in search capabilities have also contributed to the emergence of the long tail. How long the tail will extend remains a question to be asked and answered during 2007 and the next online Christmas season.

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NOTICE - Searchable Clearinghouse Becomes Reality

Try out the newly-revised Clearinghouse (Archive) that is now a searchable index. The clearinghouse includes past papers and presentations from ACRA. There is a link on the ACRA website: <http://www.acraretail.org/clearinghouse.html>

Send feedback to Carol Kaufman-Scarborough at ckaufman@camden.rutgers.edu

THANKS to Carol for taking the lead on this project!

Position Openings

There are many positions starting in the Fall of 2007 (summary below). If interested, the complete listing is on the ACRA website at <http://www.acraretail.org/PositionAnnouncements.htm>. Notification when a position is filled is appreciated.

University	Position	Rank Depending on Qualifications/Experience	To Start	Review of Applicants Begins
East Carolina University	Merchandising	Asst	Aug. 20, 2007	3/19/ 2007
Univ. Of Southern Mississippi	2 Positions 9M—Tenure Track Fashion Merch.	Asst	Aug. 2007	1/15/07 until position filled
CA Polytechnic Univ., Pomona	9 M—Tenure Track 1 or more positions Fashion Retailing/ Apparel Management	Asst—Assoc	Sept. 2007	1/15/07 Until position filled
University of North Texas, Denton	9M-Tenure Track Faculty Program Coordinator for Electronic Merchandising Degree	Assoc—Prof	Aug. 2007	12/1/2006 Until position filled
University of North Texas, Denton	9M-Tenure Track Merchandising Division	Asst.	Fall 2007	12/1/2006 Until position filled
Kent State Univ.	9M Tenure Track Fashion Merchandising	Asst.	Fall 2007	11/17/2006
North Carolina State University Raleigh	College of Textiles Product Design and Development	Asst—Full	Not Indicated	Until position filled
Auburn University, AL	9M Tenure Track Apparel Merchandising Design & Textiles	Asst—Full	Aug. 16, 2007	2/1/2007 Until position filled

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Submit address changes to Paul McGurr, ACRA Treasurer. Do not send changes of address to the editor of Retail Education Today!

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Feature articles can be submitted for review at anytime. Send submissions in electronic format to the editor.

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