

CALL FOR ABSTRACTS

Retailing in a World of Innovation and Disruption: Academic and Industry Perspectives

Overview

Since ancient times, retail activity has been recognised as one of the defining features of urbanism and a reflection of society as a whole. In the past few decades, retailing has been brought into sharp relief as the disruptive effects of e-commerce take hold, resulting in a transformation of retailing from its historically-precedented physical presence to a non-place cyber presence. Arguably, the planning and policy arena has not satisfactorily addressed this paradigm shift; evidenced by its fixation with 1950s central place theory and its physical representation in the metropolitan urban fabric.

The physical-digital retail dichotomy has resulted in significant pressure on traditional retail platforms, such as bricks and mortar shopping centres and retail high streets, to respond to these new forms of consumption. In this respect, there seems to be a focus on metropolitan retailing from a planning and policy perspective, which belies the situation at a regional level, where provincial cities and towns, as sites of consumption are in competition with each other, while within cities and towns, adherence to statutory hierarchical structures prompts a form of path dependency aimed at reinforcing the *status quo*.

Despite these characteristics, retailing appears to be an under-researched subject in the contemporary academic geography and urban planning literature. Conversely, cognate disciplines as revealed in the marketing, history, economics, sociology and consumption literatures appear to have taken up the mantle vacated by the spatial disciplines some decades ago. Accordingly, this special sessions seeks abstracts from scholars across a broad spectrum of disciplines within the social sciences, property and built environment, plus policymakers/researchers within the state/local government and industry analysts within the property development and retail sectors.

Suggested topics of interest

We welcome abstracts on a diverse range of topics including, but by no means limited to the following:

- Retail typology-morphologies – shopping centres, high streets, corner shops;
- Retail consumption;
- Disruption and technological innovation in retail milieu;
- Place-based and non-place/virtual retailing;
- Retailing in provincial cities and towns;
- Flânerie in retail milieu;
- Place attachment in retail milieu;
- Activity centre network planning and policy; and
- Historical perspectives on retailing.

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Track

City structure