

Everything you always wanted to know about marketing channels

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For academics, practitioners, and generalists alike, an article forthcoming in the December 2015 issue of the *Journal of Retailing* can serve as a handy guide to the massively studied science of marketing channel systems. Roughly one third of worldwide gross domestic product moves through channels such as wholesalers, retailers, and franchisors, making the identification of trends, context, and perspectives both challenging and necessary as the field rapidly evolves in the era of globalization and the Internet.

Definitions, context, key theories, strategies, and analysis are included, along with many content-rich tables and citations to important literature on virtually all key aspects of the subject - a "one-stop reference for [channel](#) researchers," as the authors put it. The analysis is comprehensive, synthesizing more than three decades of writings, identifying the underlying drivers of ongoing change, and outlining research directions.

The article, "The Evolution of Marketing Channels: Trends and Research Directions," was written by George F. Watson IV, a doctoral candidate at the Foster School of Business, University of Washington; Stefan Worm, an assistant marketing professor at BI Norwegian Business School, in Oslo; Robert Palmatier, a marketing professor at UW's Foster School of Business; and Shankar Ganesan, chair of the marketing department at Notre Dame's Mendoza College of Business.

In addition to synthesizing previous literature, the authors trace the

evolution of channels from a two-party relationship to networks of channels, multiple channels, and two-sided channel platforms. They write: "We have identified four important substantive domains based on larger business trends over the past few decades that continue to disrupt existing channel systems: the shift to service economies, [market](#) globalization, increasing uses of e-commerce technologies (e.g., Internet retailing, mobile devices, cloud computing), and the expanding role of big data in channel decisions. We evaluate each of these trends to predict their effect on marketing channels."

Provided by New York University

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