

Preface

After years of struggle, the Fast Moving Consumer Goods (FMCG) industry is poised for growth. In countries such as France, the United Kingdom, Germany, and the United States, shoppers have started to spend again. Countries such as Spain, Greece, and The Netherlands still remain in economic recession although they are starting to show signs of recovery.

Anyway, global recession appears to have permanently changed consumers' shopping behavior and there is no return to pre-recession purchasing habits. Economic recession has affected consumers' preferences for Private labels and national brands in the retailers' assortments. Consumers have evolved to become harder to find, engage, and please. Consumers are more in control of relationships with brands and retailers. They are more aware and knowledgeable of products and services they're being offered, not only from manufacturer and retailers but also from their networks through social media. In this context, shoppers are no longer tied to a brand or retailer and instead they are looking for value, either that comes from a low price or high quality or both!

In this era of the "new consumer," it has become more important for manufacturers and retailers to work together to be profitable and successful. Retailers are demanding more from their suppliers, and manufacturers from the chains. They have realized that price wars are unsustainable for both and, even, for consumers who will not accept them if they mean lower quality products. Manufacturers must focus on joint business planning with their retail partners and convince them that stocking national brands benefits the store, generating traffic and a profit margin for the store. Retailers are the gateways to customers. They control shelf-space, so national brands need retailers to get their product to the end consumer. At the same time, retailers are also interested in promoting their own store brands or private labels to consumers so as to improve store differentiation, store loyalty, and higher profits. By optimizing their range assortment, sharing information, and working together, retailers and manufacturers can identify new areas of mutual benefit.

Therefore, both manufacturers and retailers have many new areas to explore for retail recovery. The goal is clear: to ensure consumer's products and brands are available at the right time, through the right channel, and at the right price.

Looking at those aspects underlying this new marketing era offers exciting opportunities for researchers. It is with this goal in mind that this Second International Conference on Research on National Brand and Private Label Marketing (NB&PL 2015) has been launched and organized. After the success of the first edition, this second edition is still believed to be a unique international forum to present and discuss original, rigorous and significant contributions specifically on National Brand (NB) and Private Label (PL) issues.

Each paper submitted to NB&PL 2015 has gone through a stringent peer review process by members of the Program Committee, comprising 43 internationally renowned researchers from 14 countries.

A total of 21 papers have been accepted, and they address diverse areas of application such as naming and packaging decisions, price elasticities, positioning, branding, consumer motivations, online communities, economic crisis, review of literature, and PL growth stage, among others. A wide variety of theoretical and methodological approaches have been used in these areas.

We believe that this second edition has continued with the same goals as the first edition: promote, stimulate, and publish high-quality contributions on national brands and private labels, which could help retailers and manufacturers deal with diversity of issues. Nevertheless, we hope to keep organizing this Conference which is aimed to become an international reference for advancing this promising research field.

Finally, we wish to acknowledge the support of the sponsors: *Foundation Ramón Areces* (sponsored by *El Corte Inglés* Company), *Open University of Catalonia*, *Information Resources Inc. (IRI) Worldwide*, and *Manufacturers-and-Retailers Spanish Multisectoral Association (AECOC)*. We would also like to thank all the contributing authors, members of the Program Committee, and the rest of the Organizing Committee for their highly valuable work in enabling the success of this second edition of NB&PL. Thanks for your generous contribution—IC-NB&PL 2015 would not have been possible without you all.

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<http://www.springer.com/978-3-319-20181-8>

Advances in National Brand and Private Label Marketing
Second International Conference, 2015

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(Eds.)

2015, XI, 211 p. 23 illus., 5 illus. in color., Softcover

ISBN: 978-3-319-20181-8