

# Foreword

The challenges in the retail field are becoming more and more complex as international borders shrink, globalisation increases, and the pressure on the consumer increases. The recent surge in the price of oil, international tension in the Middle East, the deepening crises in the US economy and the threat of a world recession have all contributed to the uncertainty in the retail arena.

Some of the larger retailers internationally have already taken steps to curb the expected impact of a recession and prolonged recovery period. This has led to many jobs being lost in manufacturing and retailing.

There are however certain areas that have become a larger focus for business and retail alike. Practitioners need to constantly scan their surroundings for trends so as to keep abreast of new developments in the field.

One important trend affecting the world of business is green marketing. This is the marketing of products that are presumed to be safe to the environment, taking into context the entire production process measuring the carbon footprint that a product leaves behind. The recent Oscar award for Al Gore on his documentary in this regard is proof of the importance and exposure that green marketing and the environment are getting. Consumers have become more environmentally aware and are placing more and more pressure on government and industry to protect the environment for future generations. This has become evident with the introduction of products such as hybrid cars, organic food and ecotourism. The world organic market has been growing by 20% a year since the early 1990s, and it is estimated that the worldwide green consumers will have an annual buying power of \$500 billion by the end of the year.

The *International Retail and Marketing Review* aims to keep its readers up to date on trends by publishing thought-provoking articles and research, as well as to present new perspectives from leading scholars and thinkers within the field.

This issue includes two South African articles, the first of which places the spotlight on the dynamic of ethics within the context of globalisation, with a specific focus on the marketing function; the second discusses the effect of music and odour on consumer behaviour.

We have also included two international articles; one considers the similarities in the consumer shopping styles for goods and services in Australia, and the other examines the factors required for successful conflict management in Hong Kong.

We look forward to a stimulating and healthy debate from eminent scholars and business leaders worldwide, and we have been very fortunate to have a number of esteemed academics from all over the world on our editorial board.

Prof M C Cant  
Editor  
HOD: Marketing and Retail Department  
UNISA