

Call for papers for the  
**Omni-Channels Special Issue**  
of

*International Journal of Physical Distribution & Logistics Management*

**Guest Editors:** Mike Bernon, Michael Bourlakis, Soroosh Saghiri, Richard Wilding (Cranfield School of Management)

Traditional models for retailing are going through radical change leading to consumers experiencing an ever increasing array of ways in which they can research, purchase and obtain products. For example, consumers could, *inter alia*, visit retail stores to purchase products but they could purchase products on line and receive them at home or could collect them at various collection points (e.g. local post office, retail stores, dedicated collection points etc.). The above indicate the potential use of various, multiple channels (Dennis et al. 2016) and the involvement of numerous supply chain members (e.g. manufacturers, retailers, logistics firm etc.) to support the consumer experience. Subsequently, we have witnessed the emergence of the multi-channel and omni-channel phenomena over the past years (Verhoef et al. 2015). Multi-channel systems were developed initially by retailers to meet the extra challenges posed by the success of e-commerce. Multi-channels work in isolation to each other, they produce fragmented supply chains and have major difficulties to deliver a satisfactory consumer experience (Wilding, 2013). Due to the independent nature of these channel activities, numerous operational challenges are anticipated, including product information inconsistency, insufficient planning of transportation routes and poor inventory forecasting to name a few. To address these issues and to provide consistency across all channels the concept of omni-channel has been evolved (Brynjolfsson et al. 2013) where a holistic view of all channels is developed. In the omni-channel system, consumers have the ability to move seamlessly smoothly from one channel to another; hence, they could identify a product in one channel (e.g. manufacturer's website), place an order for a product via another channel (e.g. online retailer), and get the product delivered from another channel to the location of their choice (e.g. home). Hence, the omni-channel system provides extra information visibility and other benefits (e.g. cost saving, operational synergies etc.) for the channels involved (Piotrowicz and Cuthbertson, 2014). The above have also far reaching implications for supply chain members. For example, omni-channels require significant investment in supply chain assets including warehousing, transportation, automation and information technology. Similarly, retailers restructure their supply chain operations and develop new transport networks, new fulfillment centres and new strategies for home delivery, other collection points and product returns; overall, new business models are emerging.

The logistics research community has been active in this area, helping practitioners understand these changes in the marketplace and their implications for supply chains (see for example, Rao et al. 2009). However, the dynamic and evolving nature of the omni-channel phenomenon means that it is necessary to continuously investigate new developments to understand it better. More importantly, the emphasis in the omni-channel research needs to shift from sale-based descriptions to supply chain-wide view to omni-channel structures and mechanisms. This special issue intends to address the growing opportunities for research and to provide managers with the latest, up-to-date thinking in this field. Potential topics include, but are not limited to:

- Omni-channel logistics and the consumer
- Demand Chain Management (in an omni-channel context)
- Value proposition, cost to serve and financial issues related to omni-channels
- New business logistics models for omni-channels
- Logistics collaboration in omni-channels
- Transport and distribution in omni-channels
- Warehousing and omni-channels
- Logistics innovation and technology in omni-channels
- Automation, intelligent Transport Systems and ICT
- Tracking and tracing
- Logistics analytics and big data in omni-channels
- Modelling and simulation in omni-channels

- Operational issues related to omni-channels
- Green and sustainability issues related to omni-channels
- Reverse logistics operations and omni-channels
- Benchmarking and performance measurement in omni-channels

Manuscripts should be prepared following the normal guidelines for International Journal of Physical Distribution & Logistics Management and may be submitted through the journal's online system. Details on how to submit and the author guidelines can be found at:

[http://www.emeraldgrouppublishing.com/products/journals/author\\_guidelines.htm?id=ijpdlm](http://www.emeraldgrouppublishing.com/products/journals/author_guidelines.htm?id=ijpdlm)

Both conceptual and empirical papers are welcomed incorporating various methodologies and approaches. Paper submissions are due no later than **30 September 2016** and publication is anticipated for 2018.

**Special issue papers should be submitted to IJPDLM Scholar One Manuscript Central no earlier than 1<sup>st</sup> September 2016 (please ensure you check the Omni-channels special issue option).**

All submitted papers deemed topically appropriate will undergo the standard *International Journal of Physical Distribution & Logistics Management* review process. For questions, please contact any of the Guest Editors below.

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