This latest issue of Retail Education Today includes the formal announcement of our 2016 Conference, hosted by Montclair State University. Over the past several years we received many requests to hold our annual conference in the New York City area, so we hope that all of you will send your research papers and workshop ideas to our Co-Chairs Archana Kumar and Patrali Chatterjee, through the respective track chairs in your research area.

We are coming off of one our most successful Triennial conferences in recent memory. Over three full days at the wonderful Hyatt Regency Alhambra in Coral Gables, over 130 attendees heard from top industry speakers, fellow researchers and also presented 120 papers to colleagues. Conference Co-Chairs Dhruv Grewal, Anne Roggeveen, Jane Swinney, Jens Nordfält, and Maria Vazquez did a wonderful job organizing the paper sessions, and helping to make it a great conference. Thanks also go to ACRA Board members Robert Jones and Susan Fiorito, who handled all of the registrations prior to and during the conference. We had attendees from ten different countries, which made for some very diverse paper sessions and follow-up discussions. New friends and colleagues were made, and networking opportunities increased.

At this AMA/ACRA Triennial we also unveiled two new awards which we plan to make a regular part of the Triennial conference: Lifetime Achievement honors in Academics and Industry. The inaugural awardees were Professor Michael Levy for Academics and Mindy Grossman for Industry (see more on these two awardees elsewhere in this issue). As ACRA looks to the future, the need to solidify our brand as the leader in the retail discipline is important. Recognizing individuals who have made great contributions in scholarship and in industry is essential to maintaining that leadership.

Enjoy the latest issue of RET, and have a wonderful summer!
Call for Papers!

We are excited to launch our next issue of Retail Education Today in September 2015! ACRA now offers its newsletter twice a year, in September and May. This provides ACRA members two annual opportunities to contribute in a variety of ways. Please see below for the following options and coordinating deadlines for the 2015-2016 academic year.

The BuZZ
Recently attended a retail-related industry or trade conference? Send us a 200-word synopsis of where you went, who was there, and what the major themes of the conference were!

Ask the Expert
Have a question related to teaching retailing concepts? Send your question in via email to the Editor and we will find an expert to respond!

Peer-Reviewed Research Articles
Papers should be approximately 1000-4000 words and should be unpublished and non-copyrighted. Papers will undergo a double-blind referee. The author(s) will retain copyright of their paper. Graduate students are especially encouraged to submit. The editor, along with at least one reviewer, will pursue a policy of timely and meaningful review of each paper. If the paper is accepted, the author(s) must provide the paper’s final version in Microsoft Word format. Papers should comply with APA guidelines.

Feature Articles
We are always looking for feature articles on innovative teaching or leadership strategies relevant to the retail industry and its sectors. These papers should emphasize issues and topics relevant to faculty in the classroom. Papers should not exceed 2,000 words and will be reviewed by the RET editors for publication.

Submissions should be submitted in Microsoft Word format to the Editor (cosette.armstrong@okstate.edu) and cc: the Associate Editor (mannn@montclair.edu). We look forward to serving you!

September Issue
Submission Deadline:
August 15, 2015

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Conference Highlights

from the AMA/ACRA Second Triennial Conference, March 4-7, 2015, Miami, FL

SANDY SOTO
Vice President, HSN, Inc.

is the Vice-President of Executive Talent Acquisition for HSN, Inc. (NASDAQ: HSNI), a direct to consumer retail portfolio that includes HSN and Cornerstone, which represents home and family lifestyle brands: Chasing Fireflies, Ballard Designs, Frontgate, Improvements, Garnet Hill, Grandin Road and TravelSmith.

Her responsibilities include the overall strategy and execution of executive talent acquisition, talent sourcing, and destination services for the organization and works very closely with the senior leadership. This includes providing strategic and operational leadership to her team as well as ensuring that HSNI is positioned to attract and acquire the best and external talent, delivering new sourcing strategies and evolving technologies which will bring greater efficiencies to the recruiting processes, and insuring that HSNI as an employment brand, remains on the cutting edge of acquiring talent in the market place for future brand growth and success.

KENT RUESINK
Senior Director of Space & Category Management, JDA

spent 10 years at Walmart Stores where he presided over the groundbreaking transition from CAD based planogram process to the use of graphical space management tools. He developed a three-year roadmap and directed the implementation to transform the space management process and organization from a tactical function to a strategic role of optimizing the balance between store space and inventory.

Mr. Ruesink joined JDA in 2000 through the acquisition of Intactix, where he held a role in consulting guiding strategic retail and CPG customers through Enterprise Suite. He briefly joined the JDA Sales Organization as a Pre-Sales Consultant from 2004-06. In 2006 he designed the JDA Category Advisor solution to enable Walmart suppliers to leverage their Retail Link data to develop store-specific planograms. In 2007 he joined JDA Strategic Services where he led space and category management implementation initiatives in both the US and Latin America, as well as conducting numerous business diagnostics workshops for customers.

Mr. Ruesink is currently Sr. Director Product Management Group – Space & Category Management, where he is charged with transforming customer and industry needs research into clear solution objectives and roadmaps that drive revenue growth, competitive differentiation and customer value.
The American Collegiate Retailing Association announces Michael Levy, Charles Clarke Reynolds Professor of Marketing and Director of the Retail Supply Chain Institute at Babson College, as the recipient of its inaugural Lifetime Achievement Award. Professor Levy accepted his award at the AMA/ACRA Triennial Conference in Coral Gables, FL on March 5, 2015. The award was presented on behalf of the ACRA board and organization by current President, Rodney Runyan.

This award is given to a scholar who has demonstrated a clear dedication to the retailing discipline, with a sustained and significant scholarly output over a career in the academy. This includes significant service to the discipline and/or industry at the national or international levels.

Michael Levy, PhD (Ohio State University), is the Charles Clarke Reynolds Professor of Marketing and Director of the Retail Supply Chain Institute at Babson College. He received his PhD in business administration from The Ohio State University and his undergraduate and MS degrees in business administration from the University of Colorado at Boulder. He taught at Southern Methodist University before joining the faculty as professor and chair of the marketing department at the University of Miami.


Professor Levy has worked in retailing and related disciplines throughout his professional life. Prior to his academic career, he worked for several retailers and a housewares distributor in Colorado. He has performed research projects with many retailers and retail technology firms, including Accenture, Federated Department Stores, Khimetrics (SAP), Mervyn’s, Neiman Marcus, ProfitLogic (Oracle), Zale Corporation, and numerous law firms.

Michael Levy
Charles Clarke Reynolds Professor of Marketing Director, Babson Retail Supply Chain Institute Babson College Babson, MA

Mindy Grossman is Chief Executive Officer of HSN, Inc. (NASDAQ: HSNI) and a member of the company’s Board of Directors. She oversees a $3.4 billion direct to consumer retail portfolio that includes HSN and the Cornerstone portfolio of home and family lifestyle brands. During her tenure she has positioned HSNi as a leader in boundary-less retail, offering customers a seamless shopping experience across multiple channels – television, catalogue, online and mobile. Nearly half of the company’s revenue is now generated through digital commerce.

A 35-year veteran of the retail and apparel industries, Mindy joined IAC, HSNi's former parent company, in 2006 as CEO of IAC Retail. In 2008, she took the company public and became the CEO of HSNi. Since then she has transformed HSN into a lifestyle network offering an exciting array of products, personalities and experiences designed to engage, inform and entertain. She has pioneered visionary, industry-changing innovations such as Shop by Remote, HSN Arcade and HSN Live and formed unique partnerships with brands such as Coca Cola, Toyota and Disney. She has also reshaped the Cornerstone Brands portfolio by spearheading the digital transformation of the catalogue business and acquiring fast-growing brands such as Chasing Fireflies.

Prior to joining IAC, she served as a Global Vice President at Nike, Inc., overseeing its $4 billion apparel business. At Nike, she led the development and growth of the global women’s business and served as co-chair of Nike’s Women’s Leadership Council. Earlier career highlights include serving as President and CEO of Polo Jeans Company, Vice President of New Business Development at Polo Ralph Lauren Corporation, President of Chaps Ralph Lauren, and Senior Vice President of Menswear for Warnaco, Inc. She also held senior positions at Tommy Hilfiger and Oxford Industries.

In 2014, Mindy was recognized as one of Fast Company’s Most Creative People in Business. In 2013, Forbes magazine named Mindy one of the world’s 100 most powerful women, an honor she has received three times. In 2011, she was named Corporate Innovator of the Year at the Ernst & Young Entrepreneur of the Year® Florida Awards. In both 2010 and 2011, Mindy was ranked by the Financial Times as one of the top 50 women in world business. Mindy serves on the boards of the National Retail Federation, Bloomin’ Brands and the U.S. Fund for UNICEF.
What a great conference! For me, the things I enjoy about attending conferences are the people and the ideas. And at the AMA/ACRA triennial conference in Miami, Florida this spring, I was not disappointed. I had the chance to renew many old friendships and acquaintances as well as the opportunity to meet new folks from around the world. In terms of people, one thing was abundantly clear: the professoriate is rolling over to the next generation. Many of our retail mentors who have always attended ACRA conferences have retired or are retiring very soon. But fortunately, there were many new faces in attendance who show great passion for their research, their teaching, and most importantly, for retail. The study of retailing is in good hands!

Idea exchange was also abundant, in terms of practice, research, and teaching. We heard from two great industry speakers, and their presentations helped me think about "the real world" in which retailers operate. There was a great mix of research presentations. In my opinion, there are some very interesting retail research efforts underway in the Scandinavian countries. And, it was also great to learn about emerging retail research in Mexico. So I hope we can ratchet up healthy research dialogue and partnerships across borders. I was also intrigued by research examining various aspects of visual retailing, such as mannequins, merchandise displays, etc. Over the years, I had assumed that this area had been well-covered in the literature, but, in fact, it has not been (really, Rod Runyan, it has not!). Or, perhaps I should say that the coverage has been so general that it is not helpful to practitioners in today’s competitive environment. We need to dive deeper into these topics.

We also heard about teaching. I want to thank Greg Clare for sharing his instructional efforts to integrate advanced spreadsheet functionality into the curriculum. A few years ago (okay, it was quite a few years ago, even before I started working on my PhD) Jack Gifford created an assortment planning spreadsheet and shared it with ACRA members; that spreadsheet package was used for years in many programs across the U.S. Finally, we see a revolutionary update. Greg has wrangled with pivot tables and power pivot, collaborated with his faculty colleagues, and experimented with his students to integrate assignments that use these spreadsheet functions in every relevant class across the undergraduate curriculum in the merchandising program at Oklahoma State. The assignments begin with fundamental skills and ramp up through to a culminating project. We had a very lively discussion in Greg’s session. Clearly, the need for this content was recognized, and I want to encourage everyone to jump on this. Ask around on your campus to learn the extent to which these skills are being included in classes. I think you will be surprised at the assumptions that various departments are making — that other departments are covering it, so we don’t have to, when in reality no one is covering it. Virtually all of the planning software on the market for retailers today, underneath it all, is based on spreadsheets and databases, so our students would benefit from progressive use of these throughout their academic program, rather than just in one or two classes.

Overall, I came away from the conference with a refreshed mind and renewed excitement for retail. If you did not attend AMA/ACRA this year, I hope you will invest your travel funding next year for the 2016 NYC ACRA conference. You won’t be sorry!

The 2015 ACRA/AMA conference in Miami, FL, was an invaluable, enriching experience. Not only were the presentations enlightening and informative, but the opportunities for camaraderie and networking were unparalleled. As a third year Ph.D. student, this was only my second ACRA conference; however, the warmth of the ACRA members and the environment that is created made me feel welcomed, nurtured, and inspired. I was able to meet a number of new colleagues and to strengthen relationships that I had formed in Dallas the year prior. I am very much looking forward to New York in 2016!
Attending the ACRA Conference in Miami was especially insightful for me, as it allowed the opportunity to not only network with other academics interested in my stream of research but also listen to industry professionals present on relevant topics to our current students. Both Sandy Soto from the Home Shopping Network and Kent Ruesink from JDA provided excellent information that can be carried over to our classrooms. The ability to interact with these industry experts has made ACRA a unique and worthwhile conference every year. I am especially excited about the 2016 ACRA Conference in the NYC area and look forward to meeting colleagues, learning more from industry partners, and hearing about current research in our discipline.

This was my first experience at ACRA, and as with attending any new conference with a group of unknown scholars, I was slightly apprehensive. However, my nerves were quickly forgotten as I immediately found the conference organized and collegial, with plenty of opportunities for networking. The atmosphere at the conference was relaxed yet professional, and the keynote speakers had been thoughtfully chosen to offer key insights into innovative areas of retailing. It was particularly clear that the organizers of the conference were keen to help with questions and make sure everyone’s experience was a good one. I made numerous connections with academics from different countries as well as gained plentiful feedback during my presentation session, which made the 9-hour flight back to the UK a happy one!

I attended the ACRA conference for the first time in 2015, following a recommendation from a colleague that it was a valuable conference to attend. I am pleased to say that I was not disappointed, as the conference and hospitality of the hosts were excellent. I arrived late on the first evening (due to flight delays) but was warmly greeted at the reception and the organizers went out of their way to ensure I was introduced to other attendees and provided with refreshments. Instantly, I felt welcome (I have attended many other international conferences and been left to my own devices for the first few days!) and could sense that ACRA attendees were part of a community of practice and not just present for a ‘job hunt’. The conference opening with a very interesting keynote speaker (perhaps I was engaged as the topic was online shopping!) and the same enthusiasm ran throughout the entire conference. Being located in Miami I presumed people would dip in and out of sessions (the lure of the weather and the beach being too much), but this was not the case. Many attendees were present for the duration of the conference which meant a friendly face in every session. The papers presented were varied and detailed, with many projects having reached completion or at a stage of initial results, this was refreshing, as I find conferences based on ‘idea pitching’ quite frustrating. I want to know what has happened and the impact of the research. The refreshments, lunches and conference dinner were an informal and rewarding time for table discussion and socialisation. During my time at the conference, I formed a number of friendships and have connected with quite a few attendees since via LinkedIn. ACRA has impressed me, and I hope to attend again in the near future.
General Conference Info
- When: April 13-16, 2016
- Hotel: Embassy Suites
  455 Plaza Drive, Secaucus, NJ
- Room rate: $199/night
- Events: Night on Broadway (optional)
- Evening receptions: Wednesday-Friday

Why You Should Attend
- 3 days of research presentations!
- Potential retailer visits
  - Toys R US Corporate
  - Macy’s Distribution Center
  - Children’s Place
  - Warby Parker

Location! Location! Location!
- Hotel in popular retail and shopping district
  - No taxes on clothing/accessories in NJ!
- 3 miles from New York City
- NJ Transit Bus outside hotel
- Secaucus train station – 5 min. walk
  - 6 miles from Teterboro Airport
  - 13 miles from Newark Liberty International Airport
  - Complimentary hotel shuttle in 2 mi. radius

Important Dates
- May 30, 2015: Call for Papers, Special Topic Sessions
- August 31, 2015: Deadline to submit papers, proposals for ACRA 2016

March 10, 2016: Hotel reservation blocked up until this date
April 13-16, 2016: Conference Dates
May 31, 2016: Journal of Research in Interactive Marketing (JRIM) Special Issue “Digitization in Retailing”
  - Best papers from ACRA will be submitted to the journal
  - JRIM Best Paper Award $300

Contacts
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  - Patrali Chatterjee
  - Archana Kumar

Direct e-mails to: acra2016@gmail.com
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President: Rodney Runyan

Professor and Director of the School of Family and Consumer Sciences at Texas State University. FCS enrolls approximately 1,500 students, both graduate and undergraduate, with 40 faculty and staff. Rod maintains an active research agenda, with his work appearing in scholarly outlets such as the Journal of Retailing, International Marketing Review, Journal of Business Research, International Review of Retail, Distribution and Consumer Research, and the Journal of Marketing Management. As President of ACRA, Rod continues to be committed to the growth of the organization, strengthening the research focus of the organization, and raising the profile of ACRA in the scholarly community, just as he did while serving the past two years as ACRA Secretary.

Vice President: Jane Swinney

Associate Professor of Merchandising at Oklahoma State University. Following time as a manager and buyer in retailing she transitioned to the academic world. Her research interests are primarily in the areas of entrepreneurial orientation and rural retailing. She has published in the Journal of Small Business Management, the Journal of Business Venturing, the Journal of Developmental Entrepreneurship, and Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice. She is also an active member of the United States Association of Small Business and Entrepreneurship. As Vice President of ACRA, Jane is committed to continuing the growth in the organization she has seen during her 5 years as a member. She wants to encourage graduate students to make membership in the organization a priority arena for sharing their research work.

Secretary: Robert Jones

Assistant Professor of Marketing and Associate Director of the Center for Retail Enterprises at The University of Texas, at Tyler. Prior to joining academia he enjoyed an extensive retail career. His research interests are in shopper marketing, and how brands and branding contribute to shopper value. He has published a chapter on Consumer Behavior at Retail in Marketing at Retail, and in journals such as the Journal of Retail and Consumer Services, International Review of Retail, Distribution, and Consumer Research, and the International Journal of Retail and Distribution Management. As Secretary of ACRA, Robert will work on expanding the organization’s membership as well as increasing its scholarly and industry profile. He will work with colleagues and industry to make ACRA a destination for research and industry/academic partnerships.

Treasurer: Susan Fiorito

Professor at Florida State University since 1990, Susan has published her research in the Journal of Retailing, Entrepreneurship: Theory and Practice, the International Journal of Retail, Distribution and Consumer Research, Fashion Marketing and Merchandising, Clothing and Textiles Research Journal, International Journal of Retail and Distribution Management, Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services, and the Journal of Small Business Management. Susan was the first woman president of ACRA from 1992 to 1994. Prior to this position she was also the secretary, vice president and NRF liaison for ACRA and was a conference chair or co-chair for four ACRA Spring Conferences. She has also been a track chair for the AMS/ACRA Triennial Retailing Conference since 1991. Susan has served one term as the ACRA treasurer and one year as interim treasurer.
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Position listings, ads and feature articles can be submitted for review at any time. Please send submissions in electronic format to the Editor and Associate Editor.

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