AUGMENTING THE SERVICESCAPE WITH UBQUITOUS INTERACTIVE SURFACES:
FIBRESHelf TECHNOLOGY

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Abstract
Well-stocked shelves are no longer sufficient for a store to survive in today’s
highly competitive retail context. Nowadays, marketers should therefore also
focus on targeting the consumer being in a shopping mindset. One of the main
problems is that bricks-and-mortar retail stores struggle to gather information on
their customers’ path-to-purchase, which - compared to online shopping
processes - tends to remain a ‘black box’ to retail management. This paper
proposes to instrument shelfspace in an unintrusive way with optical sensing
fibres (i.e., ‘FibreShelf’ technology) to detect customer-product interactions for
three purposes: (1) automated shelf inventory management, (2) gaining shopper
insights, (3) targeting shopper needs in realtime in-store. The FibreShelf
Technology digitally enhances the self-servicescape by reporting to a backend
system on three main customer-product interaction shelf events (i.e., ‘take’,
‘return’ and ‘remove’). On top of these actions, certain applications can be built
to optimize shelf space management, and to transform shelf event data into
relevant shopper marketing information and develop shopper marketing actions
at the point-of-sale. The paper concludes with a list of priority research
propositions to further advance academic shopper marketing knowledge
regarding instrumented servicescapes and processes.

The full paper is available upon request.