

Europe as an excellent example of a store chain where ELECTRONIC COMMERCE is King. It is called Schecklers (www.schlecker.com). It is referred to as a "drug store" (pharmacies here are just pharmacies....no shoe polish, potato chips, etc). So Schecklers is a variety store, dollar store, convenience, you get the idea.

Anton Schlecker (born October 28, 1944 in Ehingen) is a German billionaire, and founder and owner of the Schlecker drug store chain in Germany and throughout Europe. At 21 he acquired the degree "Meister" butcher and took over the parental butcher's shop. In 1975 he built his first drug store in Kirchheim unter Teck. Two years later there were already more than 100 stores. Now there are more than 13,000 stores across Europe, employing about 50,000 people and turning over about 6.55 billion Euros. No, Mr. Schlecker does not drive around in a pickup truck and have his picture taken with happy employees.

They run this big puppy electronically! Got to remember these are all small stores. Unlike U.S. counterparts (Family Dollar, as an example), their stores are all sizes and shapes (wherever they can rent a storefront); however they are all well laid out and present a uniform image.

Yes, I know the esteemed leader of the French Republic wants to make it easier for mega stores to open in France to "save money for the consumer". Don't get me started on that topic. We don't need Aldi and WalMart, we have Schlecker (and others) just as good at saving money for the consumer.

Let's say I like rosé wine from the Var region of France (which I do). Schlecker carries it for 1.49 Euros (\$2.34; match THAT in the US!!!). The stocking quantity appears to be 10 bottles in my neighborhood Schecklers. Go late in the day, might only be 1 or 2 left; but next morning there are 10. AND the winery in the Var has gotten a P/O to replenish stock. Schlecker warehouses are small and almost a JIT kind of operation.

In addition, they run a Home Shopping Service with delivery through DPD (www.dpd.net). Again, electronic interface with DPD.