

From Return to Value: Strategic returns processing in e-commerce

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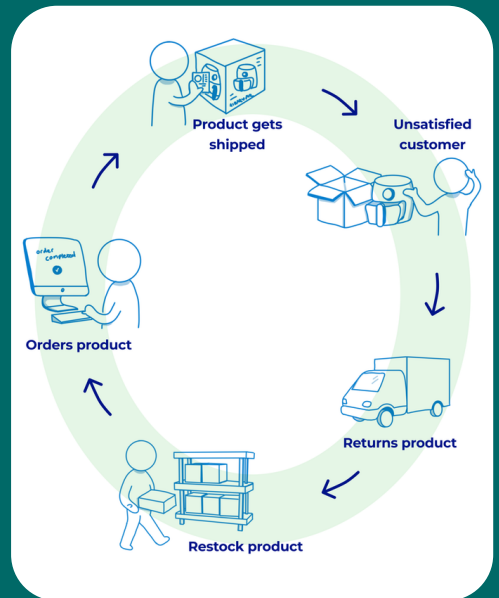
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This thesis explores how e-commerce returns can be managed more strategically. Specifically for the webshop of Action, a budget retailer operating across Europe.

Returns are a major challenge in e-commerce and contribute to significant waste each year. The European Union recently introduced legislation banning the destruction of unsold goods, including returns. Although this currently applies only to apparel, it may be extended to other product categories, making effective return strategies increasingly important.

The key question is how returns can be processed in a way that creates both financial and environmental value, particularly for a budget retailer with a broad product range such as Action.



Findings & Recommendations

A large proportion of returned items in e-commerce, including at Action, do not re-enter the sales process and are therefore not sold to another customer.



Customer behaviour strongly influences return processes. Misuse by a small group of customers can reduce retailers' trust in returned products.



At Action, the shipping packaging often creates problems for product restocking.



Read the full thesis on the Repair Lab



Improve packaging/shipping method so products can be shipped multiple times without leaving personal data or old shipping labels on the box.



Make customer actions more transparent by providing clear inspection guidelines and visual cues for returned products, as well as customer guidance to ensure products are used as intended.



Develop a clear return strategy that defines how returned products are processed and reintroduced to the market.