

This case study will analyse the role of knowledge transfer in the development of revised retail marketing and management strategies in four retail Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) that have each entered into two year Knowledge Transfer Partnerships (KTPs.) Interviews were conducted with senior managers of three completed projects and a content analysis was undertaken of review meeting minutes from all four projects. The findings clearly indicate that an innovative partnership approach is preferable to utilising elements of the traditional consultancy model when developing new retail initiatives. Furthermore, the embedding of core retail merchandising systems and marketing practices are highlighted as critical when ensuring sustainable growth and a return on partnership investment costs. Although not generalisable to other industry sectors, this case study provides timely insight in to some of the key issues faced by food and charity orientated retail SMEs as they engage with knowledge transfer processes. This paper is particularly relevant given the continued development of retail as an academic discipline in its own right and the recent (2013) ESRC Retail Sector Initiative which recognises "The UK retail sector is an important part of the economy and has a profound impact on the whole of our society."