

PRESS RELEASE

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Sporting Goods Industry – Data Harmonization Organization

Erika Schuh displays agility in times of crisis as the new president of SGI-DHO.

Erika Schuh has been the new president of SGI-DHO since the beginning of 2020. Her first year in this position was defined by the coronavirus pandemic and demanded agility from all stakeholders in the organisation. Together in a task force comprising associations and industry partners, major steps were taken in further developing the FEDAS product classification key. For instance, the bike category was completely overhauled and modernised, and the new category “virus protection equipment” was added.

The challenges posed by the pandemic are having a tremendous impact on data management in sports retail. This is primarily the claim of the Sporting Goods Industry – Data Harmonization Organization (SGI-DHO). Its main task is to develop, harmonise, and maintain commercial codes that are used by the sporting goods industry when exchanging and analysing data. Erika Schuh was unanimously chosen as the new president of the organisation. For the data specialist who works as a data analyst at SPORT 2000 International, this is a challenge she is happy to accept: *“I am delighted that the Board has placed its trust in me to shape the organisation as president of SGI-DHO. For associations like SPORT 2000 and Intersport, the standardisation of data is an important issue, since different merchandise management systems still struggle to harmonise data in a way that makes it truly comparable and analysable,”* explains Schuh, referring to the difficult environment in the industry. She adds: *“This problem concerns all stakeholders in sports retail. That is why we are together striving to standardise the data, such as by consistently updating the product classifications in the FEDAS product classification key. Here we have been able to set important milestones in the last year by expanding and modernising categories.”* Along with Schuh, Maria Seljeson (INTERSPORT International Corp.) also joined

the organisation as the new Back Office manager. In cooperation with industry partners including Nike, Tatonka, Puma, adidas, EOG, Amer Group, Service providers (B24) the sports retail groups SPORT 2000 and Intersport are working consistently towards the continuous further development of the FEDAS product classification key for sports retail.

Specialisation calls for the modernisation of FEDAS

The sports market was more dynamic in 2020 than ever before. People's health awareness and shopping behaviour are changing for the long term. People are engaging in more sports and demanding more specialised products. As a result, FEDAS in the bike category was adjusted to the developments in the bike sector already at the beginning of 2020. *"The bike category had to be completely overhauled and modernised. One of the main reasons for this was the increasing specialisation of retailers in this area as well as the growing e-bike segment. The new classification covers all different types of bike and therefore allows them to be analysed more closely,"* emphasises Schuh. Another essential change to FEDAS is the new product classification "virus protection equipment", since more and more retailers are also offering protective equipment against COVID-19 in their stores.

Goal for 2021: more-active exchange and higher acceptance

In the current year 2021, Schuh seeks to achieve more active and collaborative exchange with additional organisations, such as the npd Group, in order to get a strong partner in sports retail tracking and sports industry research on board. *"Our goal is to achieve higher acceptance of the product classification key among retailers and the industry. The more the product classification key is actively used, the better the data quality becomes. This will only be possible with active collaborative exchange at all levels,"* says Schuh. Focus also lies on the further development of FEDAS in the categories "training/fitness" and "travel/outdoor lifestyle".

About SGI-DHO

SGI-DHO represents the interests of different stakeholders in the sporting goods industry (retailers, brands, service providers, and third parties). Its main task is the development, harmonisation, and maintenance of commercial codes, which are used by the sporting goods industry when exchanging and analysing data. The focus is set on codes that have not already been standardised by international trade organisations. In addition to the FEDAS product classification key that was already developed back in 1989, and which is used by many stakeholders of the sporting goods industry, SGI-DHO has developed codes for sizes, colours, age, and gender and establishes new codes and standards at the request of the industry.

You can find further information at www.sgidho.com



Image 1:

Caption 1: Erika Schuh is a data analyst at SPORT 2000 International and since 2020 the new president of SGI-DHO.

Image notice: SPORT 2000 International (reproduction free of charge when citing the source)

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