

Inside an “East Shop” (November 18, 1996)

Abstract

Western consumer goods virtually functioned as luxury goods in the German Democratic Republic. This phenomenon was underscored by the establishment of special “Intershops,” where Western goods could only be purchased with Western currency. After the Deutschmark was introduced as the uniform German currency, Western goods flooded the East German market for about half a year. Starting in 1991, however, a reverse trend became noticeable: almost 75% of the East German households surveyed in December 1991 expressed a preference for East German products. Through a combination of brand recognition, improved products and packaging, and ads cleverly tailored to the mentality of consumers, East German products eventually proved competitive again. For example, the cigarette brand “f6,” the laundry detergent “Spee,” and the dish soap “fit” attained leading positions in the East German market. Some products that were sold nationwide, such as “Rotkäppchen” champagne or “Radeberger” beer became popular in East and West alike.

The photograph shows a Hanko trading company shop in the Saxon town of Limbach-Oberfrohna. The shop specializes in products from East Germany. The sign at the bottom reads: "Your East Shop brings you the best quality from the new federal states."

Source



Source: picture-alliance / dpa (c) dpa-Fotoreport

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