



Bachelor or CEMS Master Thesis

## **Levers and potentials for online retailers to reduce emissions**

### **Key tasks and objectives of the thesis**

Companies in all industries are facing the sustainability challenge: How do I master the energy transition? How do I make my business operations energy-efficient? What role do PV/solar systems play for me? How can I become climate neutral while keeping my energy costs manageable? These and other questions are increasingly becoming the focus of corporate strategy considerations.

Environmental or sustainability aspects are also being addressed in the context of online retailing, with climate targets taking on special significance among them. What can a "store operator" do in concrete terms to become climate neutral? Considerations can start with the product range - in almost all product areas, there is a difference between those consumer goods whose production pays attention to sustainability and those that do without. In addition, packaging and shipping play a special role: shipping orders means that more packaging material must be used, and delivery by parcel service providers causes higher CO<sub>2</sub> emissions - according to accusations about the increasing online activities. According to the German government, the per capita amount of packaging waste has risen since 2003 from 187.5 kg to 212.5 kg in 2013. There are many reasons for this increase, and online growth is playing its part. A study by the German Clean Tech Institute has now been able to show that - limited to transport routes - the CO<sub>2</sub> footprint of an online purchase is even better than originally assumed.

The work is to carry out a structured research of scientific as well as practice-oriented sources, to

- identify the emission drivers in the business model of an online retailer
- assess the current status of online retailing in Germany with regard to these drivers
- determine starting points for emission reduction
- discuss the overall potential for emissions reductions in German online retailing and
- quantify emissions on the basis of a calculation model.

The thesis can be written in English or German.

### **Your profile**

- Study of economics, best with focus on energy economics
- Interest in sustainability topics
- Independent, with a drive to acquire new knowledge

### **Literature**

- Cheris et al. (2017): How to Cut Carbon Emissions as E-Commerce Soars
- Zimmermann (2020): Die Ökologisierung des Onlinehandels – Teilbericht 1
- Zimmermann (2021): Die Ökologisierung des Onlinehandels – Teilbericht 2

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