Management of real estate in international retailing.  
The cases of Ahold, Maxeda, Inditex-Zara and H&M.

Problem statement
The retail internationalization process is also a long, risky, complex, expensive and non-linear one. Failure rates have been high for some of Europe’s major firms. Moreover, and despite the current trend of standardization towards a single consumer, each country continues to require a specific approach. (Kostava, S. (2008), The Retail Internationalization)

So the problem now is that the internationalization process itself is a complex one and not enough insight exists in the internationalization process in the retail firms to generalize a real estate management model.

Objective:
This internationalization process has an increasing influence on corporate strategies and has extended its effects on the development of the retail sector. A body of research on internationalization in retailing has grown, yet much of this research has focused on events. There is little research done that considers the processes associated with the sequence of events before placing these processes in a model. Such a model is essential to a theoretical and conceptual understanding of retail internationalization if it is to be of use to academics concerned with how firms function and to managers who are charged with directing the firm.  
The product of this research project will be a set of real estate recommendations that can be used during the internationalization process of retail firms.

Research question:
How can we with the use of the model of Treatgold increase the insight in the real estate strategy of retail firms?

Model of Treatgold
For this research project the model of Treatgold has been used. Treatgold’s (1988) typology of transnational retailing is based on entry and operating strategy and geographical presence of international retailers. In Treatgold’s model there are four clusters mentioned: the “Cautious Internationalists”, the “Emboldened Internationalists”, the “Aggressive Internationalists” and the “World Powers”. For this research project the differences in internationalization strategies are looked into between the two clusters “Emboldened Internationalists” and “Aggressive Internationalists”.

Research results
The case studies Ahold and Maxeda belonging to the cluster “Emboldened Internationalists” and Inditex-Zara and H&M to the cluster “Aggressive Internationalists” have been researched on five research variables: innovation, brand control, adaptation, scale & scope and faster operation. From the research can be concluded that the “Aggressive Internationalists” have more focus on the variables adaptation, scale & scope and innovation. Also by giving real estate recommendations using the clustering of the model of Treatgold the insight in real estate strategy of retail firms can be increased, because never once in the past has the model of Treatgold been used in this way.

Recommendation:
Retailers should strengthen their position in existing markets first by gradually adding more stores and at the same time looking for opportunities in new markets.