

Tips and best practices

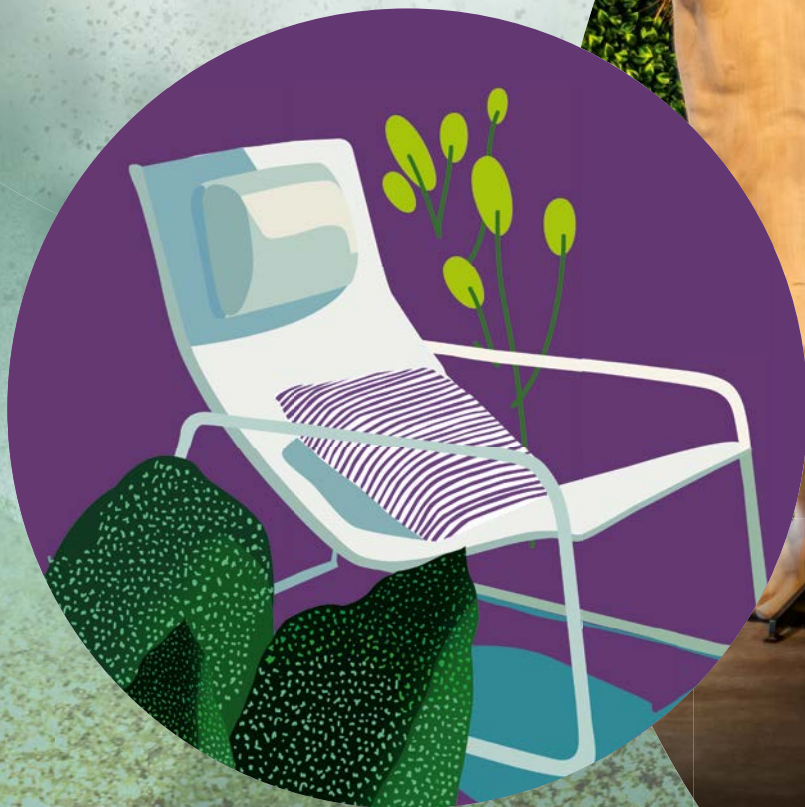
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The green business booster

by spoga+gafa
in cooperation with
Sascha Tapken,
Home.Made.Storys.



The potential of
outdoor product ranges
in furniture retail

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Guiding principle

This white paper on spoga+gafa invites you to re-discover outdoor product ranges. It highlights the potential outdoor furniture and complementary product worlds hold for the furnishing trade... and how much more is possible.

There are many good reasons for occupying oneself with outdoor living. At spoga+gafa two key aspects converge. On the one hand, the economic aspect: spoga+gafa is a platform that provides a wide-ranging offer enabling the trade to tap into additional sales potential with new product groups.

On the other hand, it unleashes precisely the passion that holistic living worlds hold for furnishing retailers - the fascination for materials, for new living spaces that build bridges between indoors and out as well as for product ranges that arouse emotions and inspire customers.

At spoga+gafa from 22 to 24 June 2026 the initial outdoor inspiration will truly ignite. Through the personal exchange, experiencing the products up-close and drawing inspiration from people, who are passionate about outdoor living.

I. Intro

Outdoor in furniture retail: an underestimated product range

Outdoor assortments have long held a niche position in traditional furniture retail. Despite growing demand for high-quality garden, terrace and balcony furniture, they are still widely considered unrelated to the core business, risky and difficult to calculate. Traditional thinking plays a central role here: garden furniture, as commonly perceived, does not fit into the established procurement and sales logic of stationary furniture retail.

Procurement logic, seasonality and perceived risks

In fact, the procurement of outdoor furniture, particularly in the entry-level and mainstream price segments, differs significantly from that of classic indoor assortments. Long lead times, container-based imports, high pre-order volumes and strong seasonality deter many retailers. In addition, external risk factors such as weather-related drops in demand and the rapid change of designs,

materials and colours from one season to the next come into play. The result: outdoor is often seen as a short-term promotional business rather than a strategic product range with long-term revenue potential.

Structural change in furniture retail requires new answers

This reluctance is all the more remarkable given that furniture retail in Germany and many other European countries is undergoing profound structural change. Declining footfall, increasing space-related challenges – particularly at locations with more than 20,000 square metres of retail space – and increasingly fragmented target groups are calling the traditional universal assortment into question. A broad product range in the classic categories of upholstery, living room, kitchen and others is no longer sufficient to sustainably inspire customers or to utilise retail space economically.

Why outdoor belongs in furniture retail

Nevertheless, furniture retailers have so far largely refrained from high-quality presentation of the outdoor segment, leaving it to other distribution channels such as garden centres, DIY stores or online marketplaces. But why is that? After all, furniture retail has the expertise to stage holistic living environments. Precisely because indoor and outdoor areas are increasingly merging, and because outdoor furniture in terms of design, materials and comfort is now fully “indoor-ready”, there is enormous potential for differentiation here.



1. Intro



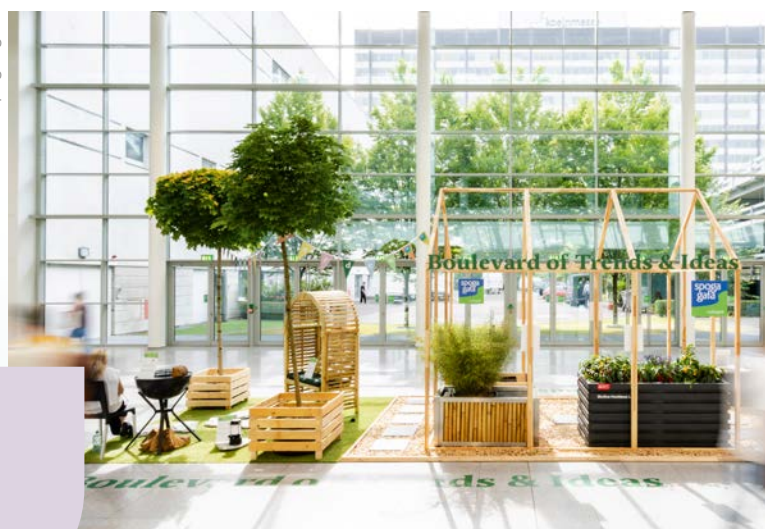
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Outdoor living environments today have the same standards of design and comfort as indoor furnishings.

The spoga+gafa as a platform for outdoor potential

This white paper shows why outdoor is far more than a seasonal supplementary business – and how it is developing into a green business booster for furniture retail. It highlights new procurement models, flexible assortment strategies and successful staging concepts, featuring insights from industry experts. At the same time, it makes clear why spoga+gafa, as the world's leading trade fair for garden lifestyle and BBQ, is a central platform for making the potential of outdoor visible and unlocking it sustainably.

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Experience outdoor ideas live at spoga+gafa

2. Market volume in figures and scenarios

The furniture market under pressure

German furniture retail is under noticeable pressure. According to the German Zentralverband Gewerblicher Verbundgruppen (ZGV) [Association of Retail Cooperation Groups] in its furniture report, industry turnover in cooperative furniture retail fell by 6.1 percent in 2024 compared to the previous year. This brings total revenue to around €23.9 billion, down from €25.4 billion in 2023.

The outlook remains subdued. For 2025, no sustainable recovery has emerged, and even 2026 – long seen as a beacon of hope for market revitalisation – has begun under cautious conditions. One key reason: the much-discussed construction boost is still not materialising. Rising construction costs, restrained investment willingness and subdued consumer sentiment – not least due to geopolitical crises in the Middle East and Ukraine – are slowing demand for traditional furniture products.

The garden market as a benchmark

The German garden market – comprising the three segments Garden Living, Gardening and Living Green – grew from €12.9 billion in 2013 to almost €14.7 billion in 2023 and reached a temporary peak of €15.3 billion during the COVID years in 2022. This is according to the Sales Performance Report 2033 by the industry service Marketmedia24.

At the same time, Marketmedia24 emphasises the high volatility of the market: due to the large number and dynamic nature of influencing factors, even short-term developments can only be forecast to a limited extent. Instead of traditional forecasts, analysts therefore work with scenarios that illustrate a possible range of development – specifically a best-case and a worst-case scenario.

Who will sell in the future

Distribution Channels

What do the scenario-based revenues in the gardening market mean for its main suppliers? To estimate this as well, it is assumed that the slight shifts in market shares seen so far will continue in the same direction and at the same pace. As a result, over the next ten years all supplier groups will each lose just under one percentage point of market share (the group of 'other suppliers' will lose 1.6 percentage points), while online retail will gain 3.2 percentage points. By linking future market shares with the revenue scenarios for the gardening market as a whole, best-case and worst-case scenarios can also be derived for the revenues of the main suppliers.



Best-case scenario	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033
DIY stores (garden centers)	4.747	4.889	5.058	5.208	5.338	5.444	5.526	5.582	5.640	5.700	5.762
Garden centers	2.535	2.639	2.722	2.795	2.857	2.906	2.941	2.963	2.985	3.008	3.033
Nurseries, tree nurseries, horticulture and landscaping	3.223	3.354	3.469	3.571	3.659	3.731	3.786	3.823	3.862	3.902	3.943
Online retail	1.993	2.175	2.297	2.414	2.524	2.625	2.716	2.796	2.879	2.963	3.050
Other suppliers	2.154	2.189	2.246	2.294	2.331	2.357	2.372	2.376	2.379	2.383	2.388
	14.652	15.244	15.789	16.278	16.703	17.056	17.344	17.731	17.735	17.946	18.165

Worst-case scenario	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033
DIY stores (garden centers)	4.747	4.489	4.326	4.210	4.135	4.100	4.103	4.143	4.186	4.229	4.275
Garden centers	2.535	2.423	2.328	2.259	2.213	2.188	2.199	2.199	2.215	2.232	2.250
Nurseries, tree nurseries, horticulture and landscaping	3.223	3.080	2.967	2.886	2.834	2.809	2.811	2.838	2.866	2.895	2.925
Online retail	1.993	1.997	1.965	1.951	1.955	1.977	2.017	2.076	2.136	2.199	2.263
Other suppliers	2.154	2.010	1.921	1.854	1.806	1.775	1.761	1.763	1.766	1.768	1.771
	14.652	13.997	13.504	13.156	12.939	12.845	12.869	13.013	13.162	13.316	13.475

2. Market volume in figures and scenarios

Classification of the scenarios by distribution channel

The scenarios by Marketmedia24 reveal several key findings:

- The delta between the worst-case and best-case scenarios amounts to almost €5 billion for 2033. Even in the worst-case scenario, however, the garden market remains a relevant segment with a volume of €13.5 billion.
- The share of online retail increases in all scenarios – even under unfavourable conditions, its share grows compared to other distribution channels.
- The share of furniture retail within the category “other providers” does not develop significantly in any scenario. However, this creates opportunities for individual furniture retailers who position themselves strategically and thereby outperform the competition.

The share of Garden Living

Under the term “Garden Living”, Marketmedia24 summarises the assortments outdoor furniture, cushions, parasols, garden decoration and equipment, as well as barbecuing and garden lighting. This segment already grew by an average of 1.7% per year before the pandemic and increased significantly again during the years 2020 to 2022 by an average of 4% per year.

In 2023, the Garden Living market volume reached €3.24 billion. This corresponds to a share of around 22% of the total garden market – i.e. more than one fifth.

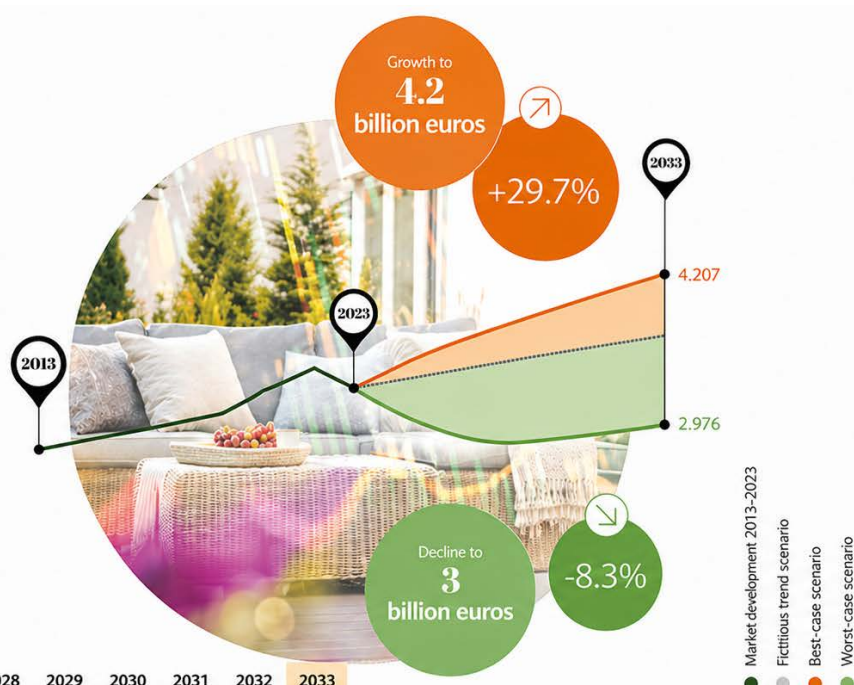
What will be sold

Garden Living

Revenue for garden living products had already grown significantly at 1.7 percent per year prior to COVID-19 and increased by a further 3.7 percent annually during the three pandemic years from 2020 to 2022.

In the **best-case scenario**, this extraordinary growth is repeated this year and then gradually weakens in small steps back to the pre-COVID trend. In the **worst-case scenario**, however, garden living revenue declines sharply as early as this year, with the losses gradually decreasing in the years that follow.

	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033
Best-case scenario	3.244	3.376	3.501	3.619	3.728	3.826	3.912	3.983	4.056	4.131	4.207
Worst-case scenario	3.244	3.062	2.929	2.839	2.786	2.768	2.782	2.829	2.877	2.926	2.976



2. Market volume in figures and scenarios

Scenarios are also considered for this segment:

- In the best-case scenario, the above-average growth initially continues and then gradually slows down to pre-crisis levels. By 2033, the market volume would rise to around €4.2 billion – an increase of approximately 29.7%.
- In the worst-case scenario, however, significant short-term declines occur, followed by a gradual stabilisation at a lower level. For 2033, this would result in a volume of around €3.0 billion, corresponding to a decrease of approximately 8% compared to 2023.

These figures make it clear: in terms of distribution channel comparison, the garden market is not a classic core product range of furniture retail, but at the same time – particularly in the Garden Living segment with a volume well above €3 billion – it is far from being a purely marginal assortment. Rather, it is a product category with strategic potential for furniture retail.



Marketmedia24

Sonja Koschel is the founder and owner of Marketmedia24, a market research and consulting institute based in Cologne, Germany.

For the past 30 years, she has combined market research with entrepreneurial strategy, developing well-founded analyses, clear recommendations for action, and realistic future scenarios. "Real market knowledge from real people for real people" – this guiding principle shaped the foundation of Marketmedia24: not as a one-person consultancy, but as a network of experienced specialists and strong personalities who combine their expertise, perspectives, and close understanding of markets. Because sustainable strategies emerge where diverse experiences come together and markets are understood holistically.

Before founding Marketmedia24 in 2010, she held senior positions, including at BBE Unternehmensberatung, where she was responsible for building and managing research divisions. She developed market analyses, scenario models, and strategic consulting approaches for companies in retail, industry, and services. For Sonja Koschel, market research is not an end in itself, but a compass for entrepreneurial decision-making. Together with her team of experts, she combines reliable data with genuine market insight to develop strategies that deliver practical value.

Marketmedia24 – Market research and studies
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3. Outdoor and the structural challenges of furniture retail



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The question of how the outdoor market will develop in the future depends not only on macroeconomic framework conditions, but increasingly also on the retail sector itself – and explicitly also on furniture retail.

While DIY stores, garden centres and specialised retail formats have consistently occupied the garden and outdoor segment for years, furniture retail has often only served this growth area marginally. In the most unfavourable cases, it is still reduced to seasonal sales tents on car park areas.

At a time when traditional product ranges are under pressure, the strategic expansion of the assortment to include outdoor and Garden Living ranges opens up

Symbol image with impact: despite their potential, outdoor furniture is often relocated in the retail sector to temporary tent structures in car park areas.

five fundamental opportunities for furniture retail:

- New usage concepts for large-scale retail spaces
- Blending of indoor and outdoor
- Extension of the season through weatherproof and creative concepts
- Image transformation through a novelty factor
- Risk transfer to suppliers

3. Outdoor and the structural challenges of furniture retail

3.1. Problem area: large-scale retail space – why new usage concepts are needed

Until around ten years ago, size in furniture retail was considered an almost unquestionable success factor.

Large sales areas stood for choice, expertise and market power. The belief that furniture stores had to act as general providers persisted for a long time – even when online retail had already been able to map a far more diversified long-tail assortment than stationary retail. Smaller, curated furniture stores with sales areas below 10,000 square metres were often dismissed rather than seen as role models.

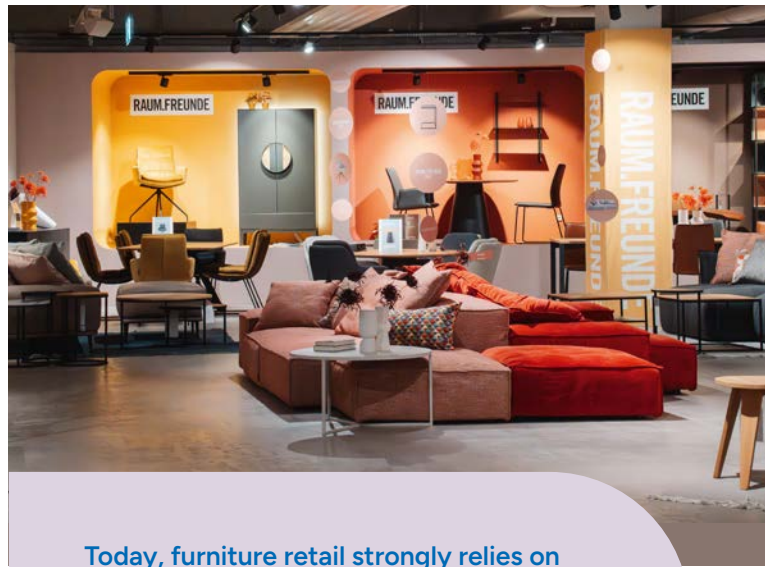
The dogma of scale advantages has fundamentally dissolved in recent years, accelerated by changes in consumer behaviour during the COVID-19 pandemic – and has in some cases even been reversed. While many smaller, clearly positioned furniture retailers are currently holding up relatively stable in the market, large-scale furniture stores are increasingly facing structural challenges. Sales areas often appear oversized, visitor flows concentrate on certain sections, while others – especially upper floors – are only accessed selectively when a specific product is sought.

The result is a gradual process of decline within stores: dead zones emerge, low-traffic areas develop, and entire sections of space noticeably impair the overall in-store experience. At the same time, awareness is growing that the “next upholstered suite” does not make the decisive difference. Instead of ever greater assortment breadth, many retailers are increasingly focusing on stronger curation and deliberately selected offerings that provide orientation and do not overwhelm customers.

All of this ultimately leads to surplus space, which in many cases results in individual areas or even entire floors being closed. If this retreat is not actively communicated and mitigated through design, it quickly has a negative impact on external perception: “Business must be struggling there” is a thought that quickly takes hold among customers.

It is therefore all the more sensible to take an offensive approach and revitalise critical spaces rather than abandoning them quietly. The outdoor category presents itself as an obvious solution for this.

Image © Europa Möbel-Verbund



Today, furniture retail strongly relies on exclusive, emotional POS concepts in classic product categories, as shown here at Schuster Home Company in Gummersbach.

As a product group, outdoor assortments are not far removed in perception from established furniture ranges among existing customers and are therefore credible.

In addition, for most furniture retailers this is not a completely new business field, but rather a segment that has so far been operated in a rather incidental way and can now be expanded in a targeted manner. The necessary space is already available in many locations. What matters now is no longer the space itself, but its strategic use.

3. Outdoor and the structural challenges of furniture retail

3.2. Blending of indoor and outdoor – a new understanding of living

Indoor and outdoor areas are no longer strictly separate worlds. On the contrary: both spheres increasingly influence each other in terms of fashion, design and function. Living styles, colours, materials and forms now naturally move from inside to outside – and vice versa. The outdoor area is increasingly understood as an extension of the living space.

This development is largely driven by rapid progress in materials and manufacturing technologies. Modern outdoor furniture is weather-resistant, durable and at the same time so high in quality that it could easily also make a strong impression indoors. Whether metal, wood, textiles, woven materials or mixed materials – outdoor furniture has long since shed its purely functional appearance and is now hardly inferior to indoor products in terms of comfort and aesthetics, as also shown in the design trends in Chapter 7.2.

The conditions for this are now in place: on the industry side, there is a broad and differentiated range of products that makes it possible to create a tangible sense of living quality, design and emotion. For furniture retail, this opens up the opportunity to consistently extend existing areas of expertise into the outdoor space – and to establish outdoor not as an additional assortment, but as an integral part of modern living concepts.

This development is particularly evident in the high-end segment. In these brands, the boundaries between indoor and outdoor furniture are blurring. Design standards, sustainability and material quality make the difference – also in furniture retail.

3.3. Season extension through weatherproof and creative concepts

The greatest reservation furniture retailers have towards outdoor assortments traditionally lies in the assumption that the season is (too) short and the economic risks are correspondingly high. However, this argument is questionable. Even in core product categories such as upholstered or living room furniture, there are pronounced peak seasons in autumn and winter as well as off-peak seasons in spring and summer. Nevertheless, upholstered furniture is not removed from the sales floor in April, but instead presented and marketed all year round.

What is therefore needed is a change of perspective: outdoor should not be seen as a purely seasonal business, but as a year-round product range to be staged accordingly. This is exactly the approach taken by industry experts such as Jörg Sommer and Jürgen Patton, Werner Quadt, Andrea Niederberghaus, Katrin de Louw and Gabriela Kaiser, who are featured in this white paper. The focus here is on creative concepts that highlight usage scenarios and emotional occasions.

Why not transform an outdoor area into an autumn garden in September? Why not create an atmospheric winter garden that serves as an additional attraction in the furniture store during the Christmas season? Outdoor furniture is ideally suited for dual placements – for example in combination with Christmas decorations, lighting or accessories.

There are virtually no limits to creativity here. What is clear is that such concepts turn sales areas into experience spaces. The point of sale becomes a point of emotion, and outdoor shifts from a supposedly seasonal risk to a strategic instrument for driving footfall, dwell time and differentiation.



3. Outdoor and the structural challenges of furniture retail



© Zurheide Feine Kost

3.4. Image transformation through a novelty factor

More than ever, stationary retail is about surprising customers and giving them repeated reasons to visit. Other retail formats – above all grocery retail – have long internalised this mechanism. Examples such as the REWE Center by Rainer Quermann in Bielefeld, REWE Stenten in Aachen, Edeka Niemerszei in Hamburg or Edeka Zurheide in Düsseldorf show how strongly the novelty and experience factor can shape the perception of a location.

That there is always something new to discover quickly spreads and remains positively in customers' memory. This effect is particularly important for a regionally rooted retail category such as furniture retail. Those who set impulses and remain visibly in motion are not perceived as stagnant providers, but as relevant, contemporary players in the local retail environment.

Introducing a new product segment such as outdoor provides ideal conditions for this. It can be staged very effectively from a marketing perspective: new collections, materials, living environments and usage concepts continuously provide fresh opportunities for communication and media coverage. At a time when furniture retail is often confronted with negative headlines, the deliberate expansion of the assortment sends a clear, positive message: standing still is not an option.

As grocery retail is particularly dependent on footfall, it also comes up with a great deal of ideas to offer customers something special, and thus serves as a strong source of inspiration for stylish retail staging. A prime example is the family-owned company Zurheide Feine Kost in Düsseldorf, which appeals to an affluent clientele with a green gastronomy concept and an elegant "Champagne Club Bar".

The importance of such an image transformation is also illustrated by prominent counterexamples. The closure of the long-established Berlin furniture store Möbel Hübner – [background in this video by rbb24](#) – in the centre of the capital after 117 years and with up to 14 floors of retail space until recently symbolises the challenges facing large-scale, traditional furniture concepts. Such news shape public perception. This makes it all the more important for the remaining furnishing trade to set its own accents and actively counteract this trend, as demonstrated, for example, by Home Company Schuster in Gummersbach, which has transformed the entrance to its multi-storey car park into a Provence landscape, complete with an outdoor line-up of garden furniture.

3. Outdoor and the structural challenges of furniture retail



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Car park entrance with a wow effect – Schuster Home Company in Gummersbach knows exactly how to become the talk of the town, or rather the talk of the region.

3.5. Suppliers take on the risk

In the highly price-driven segment, the traditional container business continues to play an important role. It enables attractive purchasing conditions, competitive pricing and therefore still provides a solid foundation for marketable outdoor assortments. In this area, the model remains fully justified.

However, furniture retail should not focus exclusively on this segment, but also deliberately look at offerings above the mid-range. In this segment, there are brands and manufacturers who – comparable to established product categories such as kitchens and living room furniture – rely on long-term collections, plannable assortments and continuous product availability.

A supplier such as the brand 4 Seasons (see following chapter) assumes a significant part of the entrepreneurial risk itself. Instead of short-term seasonal goods, the focus is on long-term developed programmes, flexible reordering options and reliable supply chains. For furniture retail, this means lower capital commitment, reduced write-down risks and significantly more planning security.

Against the backdrop of volatile demand, uncertain consumer sentiment and growing space-related challenges, this model is becoming increasingly attractive. Outdoor assortments can thus be gradually built up, tested and further developed – without high upfront investment and without the typical risks of classic seasonal business.

4. Best practice in industry.

4 Seasons on shortcomings and potential

Jörg Sommer, Managing Director, and Jürgen Patton, Sales Director DACH at 4 Seasons Outdoor GmbH, see a clearly underestimated potential for furniture retail in the professional management of outdoor assortments.

According to Patton, however, this potential is still insufficiently utilised. In many sales areas there is a lack of differentiation and design highlights, while positive standout examples show that outdoor can indeed be presented as a high-quality, assortment-rich and year-round theme.

Year-round thinking and staging as a key

Managing Director Jörg Sommer also recognises the opportunities in the segment, but points to structural hurdles. A stronger and higher-quality presentation of outdoor would be desirable, but in economically challenging times it often runs into limited investment capacity.

Nevertheless, Sommer emphasises that it is precisely now that setting clear impulses is essential. He sees a central barrier still in the mindset of the retail sector: "It is still seasonal thinking that takes much of the joy out of the outdoor business for furniture retailers."

For Patton, the key to success lies in a holistic approach: outdoor only unfolds its full impact when furniture, decoration and store design are consistently thought together and staged as an experience.

More courage for differentiation

Sommer is also very clear when looking at the external perception of many sales areas. "Furniture retail is under-selling itself if outdoor displays look like a DIY store at first glance," he emphasises. At the same time, the topic offers great potential not only on the sales floor but also in communication, as outdoor can be told in a more emotional and attractive way than many classic furniture topics.



4. Best practice in industry

Interview

Mr Sommer, Mr Patton, you rely on spoga+gafa as a marketplace. Why?

Jürgen Patton: *We see that spoga+gafa is making great efforts to live up to its claim as an international outdoor platform and to specifically bring specialist retail to Cologne. As an industry, we must jointly maintain and make use of this trade fair location.*

Why has furniture retail so far engaged comparatively less intensively with outdoor furniture?

Jürgen Patton: *There are always exceptions to the rule, such as Segmüller in Parsdorf. There, outdoor is presented in a very appealing way, with a broad assortment and high perceived value, and is thought of as a year-round product range. Fortunately, this trend is increasing. In general, however, there is still a certain reluctance across many garden furniture sales areas; much looks very similar. There is a lack of highlights that reflect the true potential of the segment. This extends across the entire value chain. It must also be said clearly that many terraces in Germany are not very well designed. It is often immediately recognisable that this is due to the surrounding garden furniture offering.*

Many large-scale retailers are today reaching the limits of their sales areas – especially when it comes to creating experiential retail concepts.



© 4 Seasons Outdoor BV

4 Seasons Outdoor GmbH is a key supplier of outdoor furniture in the German-speaking market. In this context, Jörg Sommer, Managing Director, and Jürgen Patton, Sales Director DACH, take stock and explain the potential inherent in the professional management of outdoor assortments.

Isn't this an opportunity for the outdoor segment?

Jörg Sommer: *We fundamentally also see this opportunity and would very much welcome a stronger and higher-quality presentation of outdoor. At the same time, it is well known that the willingness to invest is limited during economic downturns. However, it is precisely now that it would be important to make a statement. This, however, also requires the necessary budget.*

What other hurdles do you see?

Jürgen Patton: *Unfortunately, the topic of outdoor does not have the priority among many retailers that it deserves. It is therefore all the more important that individual companies consciously and*

independently engage with the outdoor segment and recognise its opportunities.

Also as a year-round assortment?

Jürgen Patton: *That naturally depends heavily on the spatial conditions on site. But if a retailer has 40,000 square metres or more of space available, then 1,000 or 1,500 square metres for garden furniture should also be feasible. Crucial is also making the transition zones between indoor and outdoor visible – for example with winter gardens, covered terraces or flowing spatial concepts.*



4. Best practice in industry



© 4 Seasons Outdoor BV

4 Seasons Outdoor GmbH benefits significantly from the interior design expertise of its Dutch parent company. The design level of the outdoor market in the Benelux region is generally higher than in the DACH region.

Jörg Sommer: *It is still seasonal thinking that takes much of the enjoyment out of the outdoor business for many furniture retailers. Yet there are attractive ways to consistently establish outdoor as a year-round theme.*

What is needed for a truly compelling outdoor presentation?

Jürgen Patton: *A holistic approach is crucial. Outdoor only works convincingly when furniture, decoration and store design are thought of together. Only through coherent staging does an experience emerge that excites and inspires customers. In principle, the path to this is not that far. The interior design expertise is already there; many retailers have boutique departments and the corresponding decorative know-how, and therefore access to suitable suppliers. One thing is clear: outdoor furniture is more emotional than many traditional product categories. It is about first*

impressions, material combinations, seating comfort and visual experience. This can be communicated much more effectively when accessories such as vases or planters are part of the staging.

Which price segments should furniture retailers focus on?

Jürgen Patton: *A balanced mix – just like in other product categories. Large-scale furniture retail mainly targets the middle class, and this group is currently not finding it easy to manage disposable income. Therefore, affordable products are understandably necessary. At the same time, this often leads to a form of categorisation: outdoor is then automatically equated with impulse-buy items, which does not reflect the true spectrum.*

That is the crux of the matter. The world of premium brands such as

Manutti, B&B Italia or Dedon is largely decoupled from conventional furniture retail. This is due to their selective distribution, high price levels, and the fact that a large part of their business is generated in the contract and project sector. Nevertheless, the furniture trade should at least take inspiration from this in terms of trends, materials and design, and not regard this world as something that is fundamentally irrelevant to it. It is not only the indoor cosmos that is relevant; the outdoor cosmos is also large, diverse and highly sophisticated in terms of design.

Jörg Sommer: *I fully agree. Furniture retail is underselling itself if outdoor displays look like DIY stores at first glance. It is often enough to deliberately set accents that have*

4. Best practice in industry

no place in the DIY market. This also applies to marketing. The outdoor world can be presented more emotionally and attractively via social media than many traditional furniture topics. Too often, the focus is still on quick success instead of building stronger long-term customer loyalty through inspiration.

What needs to be considered regarding ordering structures?

Jörg Sommer: Furniture retail still tends to shy away from pre-financing. This is understandable, as it puts pressure on cash flow. At the same time, the rule is: the larger the order volume, the greater the price advantage – which in turn involves both risks and benefits. These factors need to be carefully balanced. Ultimately, product availability is the decisive factor.

Jürgen Patton: This is exactly where suppliers like us come in. We bring a strong sense for trends and commercially viable collections while at the same time minimising risk for retailers. From the perspective of our partners, we operate like a supplier from the indoor segment – with services, reliability and the ability to reorder.

Jörg Sommer: Our Dutch origin helps us here, together with our own design team that continuously develops new furniture, which is then produced by us in Indonesia and, in the lower-price segment, in China. The Benelux market is significantly more trend-conscious; Germany still has room to catch up. We see ourselves as playing a pioneering role in this respect. Constant effort brings results over time. The fact that our stand at spoga+gafa is regularly among the

most frequented is not only due to our innovations, but also to the passion with which we approach outdoor furniture.

Unfortunately, the market often lacks qualified sales advice because good sales staff are assigned to other product categories. Yet one only needs to see how enthusiastically, and successfully, garden furniture can be sold to recognise its potential. Of course, customers can also order online, but the live experience on site cannot be replaced. ■



© 4 Seasons Outdoor BV

Are these really outdoor furniture pieces? Living environments for gardens, balconies and terraces can be this beautiful and homely today.

4. Best practice in industry

The 10 tips from the 4 Seasons team

- 1 Reassess outdoor strategically – move away from a purely seasonal business
- 2 Courageously repurpose retail space and anchor it as a permanent part of the exhibition
- 3 Prioritise experience over volume – curate instead of stacking
- 4 Think outdoor holistically – combine furniture, decoration and store design
- 5 Clearly define the price mix – show value alongside price attractiveness
- 6 Allow inspiration from the premium and contract sector
- 7 Choose suppliers as risk and concept partners
- 8 Emotionally enrich marketing – storytelling instead of pure sales logic
- 9 Strengthen consulting specifically – emotion does not sell itself
- 10 Show courage and be visibly different from the competition

Visitor tip: the Netherlands shows broad presence in 2026

The Dutch Outdoor Furnishing Association (DOFAS) will accompany the trade fair in 2026 with numerous member companies, underlining the importance of spoga+gafa as a central business platform for the international outdoor living industry. A large number of DOFAS members have already registered for spoga+gafa 2026, including among others: 4 Seasons Outdoor, Applebee, CFM Traders, Eurofar International, Gimeg Nederland B.V., Golden Care, Hartman B.V., Higold, Lesli, Living Life Outdoor Living International B.V., Platinum, Shadow Comfort, Sunsit and Winza B.V. With the return of Garden Impressions Outdoor B.V., last represented at the fair in 2019, the exhibitor landscape gains additional international relevance.

Jürgen Patton and Jörg Sommer also look forward to conversations on site: 4 Seasons Outdoor will exhibit at spoga+gafa 2026 in Hall 3, Stand B 105.

5. Best practice in retail: where outdoor truly works

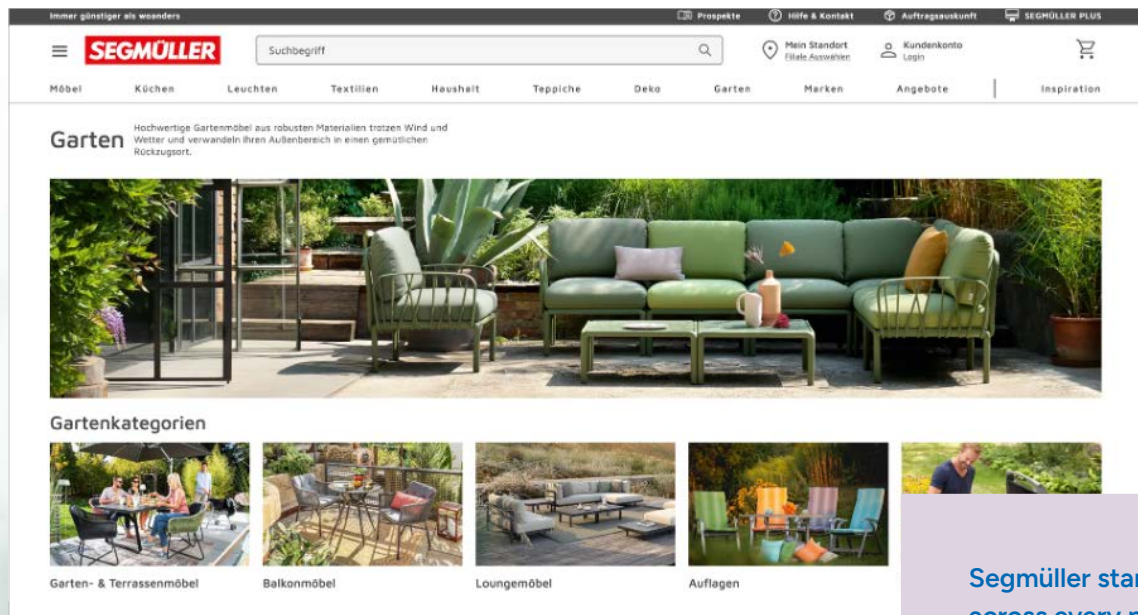
There are retailers worth taking a closer look at: with experience, a strong sense for design and decoration, and a refined understanding of customer needs, they run vibrant outdoor departments. Some locations have been deliberately selected for this white paper – they are exemplary and each demonstrate in their own way how outdoor can be successfully staged and brought to life.

5.1. Best practice: Segmüller

As always when Segmüller takes on a topic, the EMV member does not do things by halves. This also applies to the garden furniture segment, particularly at the Parsdorf location. More than 30 modernly staged furniture and specialist departments are distributed across around 45,000 square metres and four spacious floors, creating a shopping experience of superlatives that naturally includes the outdoor area. Garden furniture is not treated as a seasonal side topic, but as a fully-fledged living environment under open skies.

Segmüller confidently promotes the idea that garden chairs, benches and tables are perfectly coordinated and that suitable options are available for every need. This principle is consistently implemented at the point of sale. Material diversity is not just a promise, but visible and tangible: metal, wood, rope, woven materials or plastic are displayed side by side, combined and staged. Customers can compare, touch and draw inspiration.

The company's expertise is also evident online. The webshop offers an exceptionally broad assortment covering garden, terrace and balcony. In addition to classic garden and patio furniture, it includes balcony furniture, cushions, barbecues and pizza ovens, fire bowls and fire tables, sun and privacy protection solutions, garden equipment, hanging chairs and hammocks, lanterns, wind lights, outdoor lighting, garden decoration and outdoor rugs. Segmüller thinks outdoor holistically – both stationary and digital.



Segmüller stands for consistency
across every product category –
from the POS to the online shop.

5. Best practice in retail: where outdoor truly works

5.2. Best practice: Möbel Dick / Gartenmöbel Company

The Wohnparcs operated by the Dick family show how seriously the specialist retail approach in the outdoor segment can be taken. At all three locations in Lauchringen, Stockach and Weil am Rhein, the garden furniture category is organised within its own Gartenmöbel Company, and in Karlsruhe even as a standalone store. Outdoor is not an add-on to furniture retail here, but a clearly defined, professionally independent discipline.

This understanding is consistently reflected throughout the entire concept. There is a dedicated website including an online shop at gartenmoebelcompany.de, a clear

brand identity and an exceptionally broad assortment of well-known manufacturers. The selection ranges from international outdoor specialists to established brands from the furniture retail sector and covers furniture, parasols and accessories in great depth.

Particularly clever is the clear focus on the regional target group in the tri-border area. The Gartenmöbel Company positions itself clearly as the leading outdoor player in southwest Germany and also specifically addresses Swiss customers. For them, the company handles the complete customs clearance process free of charge and refunds German VAT. This creates real added value that underlines the company's specialist retail expertise.

The screenshot shows the homepage of the Gartenmöbel Company website. At the top, a green banner reads "VORSAISON 2026: 10% RABATT AUF VIELE ARTIKEL* >>". Below this is a navigation bar with the company logo, a search bar, and links for "Lieferland: DE", "Mein Konto", "Merlisten", and "Warenkorb". A secondary navigation bar lists categories: "Gartenmöbel", "Loungemöbel", "Sonnenschirme", "Strandkörbe", "% SALE", "Inspiration", "Standorte", and "Service". The main content area features a large image of a cozy outdoor seating area with a round table, chairs, and a fireplace, set against a backdrop of a snowy mountain landscape. Overlaid on this image is the text "2026 VORSAISON" in large, bold letters. To the right, a circular badge states "10% AUF FAST ALLES* + 3% ON TOP AUF SALE". Below the image, a black banner with white text reads "10% Rabatt auf viele Artikel + 3% zusätzlich auf Produkte im Sale*". Underneath this banner is a countdown timer showing "01 Tage", "10 Stunden", "18 Minuten", and "59 Sekunden". At the bottom of the banner, small text provides details: "*Bis einschließlich 19.01.2026 erhalten Sie 10% Rabatt auf viele Artikel* und +3% zusätzlich auf Produkte im Sale – diese nur, so lange der Vorrat reicht. Ausgenommen sind Produkte der Marken 4Seasons Outdoor, Cane-line, Doppler, Glatz, Kettler, Knirps, Stern und Sit Mobilia. Der Rabatt wird bei berechtigten Produkten direkt im Warenkorb abgezogen." A button at the bottom left says "Zu unseren Produkten im Sale →".

© Gartenmöbel Company Dick GmbH & Co. KG

Occasion-based marketing is the guiding principle for the Dick family and their Gartenmöbel Company.

5. Best practice in retail: where outdoor truly works

5.3. Portrait Möbel Niedermayer

Möbel Niedermayer has been a well-established fixture in Salzburg for decades, yet it has repeatedly reinvented itself. The most recent proof of this is the consistent expansion of its outdoor segment, which has developed into a key success factor for the family-run business. Authorised signatory and junior manager Felix Niedermayer explains how the company is driving its transformation from a traditional furniture store into a strong player in the outdoor market.



Managing Director **Felix Niedermayer**

Family continuity and the courage to reinvent

Run by two generations – siblings Daniel, Felix and Lena Stadler as well as parents Monika and Johann Niedermayer – the business combines experience, entrepreneurial drive and a strong closeness to customer needs. This mix has shaped the company's development from the very beginning, but particularly strongly in recent years.

From traditional furniture store to outdoor specialist

While Möbel Niedermayer was long known as "Möbi" for solid kitchen and furniture solutions in the mid-price segment, a very different topic has moved into focus in recent years: outdoor living. What began as a personal passion of senior manager Johann Niedermayer gradually developed into a strategic growth driver. With the new

"Gartenmöbelpark by Möbel Niedermayer" in nearby Bergheim, the company set a milestone. On 1,000 square metres, the team demonstrates how diverse, high-quality and design-oriented modern outdoor living can be. The assortment includes durable garden furniture, lounge sets, parasols and functional accessories – all consistently focused on quality, comfort and aesthetics.

The response exceeded all expectations: "Customers came in droves, demand was there immediately," reports Felix Niedermayer. The garden furniture park therefore meets a clearly identified demand in the greater Salzburg area and strengthens the Möbel Niedermayer brand as an outdoor competence centre for the region.



© Gartenmöbelpark by Möbel Niedermayer

A major project for the Niedermayer family, and certainly one of the most successful in the company's history. The new specialist store addresses demand in the Salzburg region with great expertise.

5. Best practice in retail: where outdoor truly works

Dynamic development at the flagship store

In parallel with the expansion of the outdoor segment, the Salzburg flagship store was comprehensively modernised. The rebranding, a new look for both interior and exterior areas, and a redesigned website create a contemporary, high-quality shopping experience.

Outdoor as a future strategy

For the family, it is clear: outdoor remains a core area of the business. The garden furniture park has proven that high-quality outdoor solutions are in strong demand, not only in summer, but as a year-round topic for planning, quality and lifestyle. "Möbi is our history. Niedermayer is our future." And that future lies largely in the outdoor segment.



The entire outdoor universe inspires customers, for example with smokers and fire pits. Fire up the grill! A wide selection and strong product presence are simply part of a consumer-oriented specialist store.



Trend topic outdoor kitchens: such staging concepts need space to attract attention, perfectly implemented in the garden furniture park.



Assortments are presented and experienced: the lounge sets clearly differ from one another and offer the right atmosphere for every taste.



Zoned layouts and wide aisles repeatedly invite visitors to pause and breathe, allowing parasols in particular to stand out effectively.

5. Best practice in retail: where outdoor truly works



Dein Ankerplatz in Rostock is an institution for outdoor and barbecue enthusiasts.

5.4. Special case: Dein Ankerplatz

The Ankerplatz Garden Furniture & Grill Store in Rostock is a prime example of how outdoor retail can work beyond traditional retail structures.

The combination of garden furniture and grilling assortments with an event and experience area creates active expertise and strong customer loyalty, especially when it comes to barbecuing. The focus here is clearly on premium grills, outdoor kitchens and the corresponding accessories, combined with high-quality outdoor furniture, for example from Joop! Outdoor and 4 Seasons Outdoor.



The retailer is a prime example of how outdoor retail can work.

Equipping and designing terraces or balconies in one place provides customers with real added value and can, in individual cases, generate additional sales.

An important component is the in-house grill academy. Regular courses are offered here that not only transfer knowledge but also foster customer loyalty and additional revenue. The assortment is deliberately curated and clearly sets itself apart from the mainstream. Representative brands such as Broil King, Monolith, Napoleon or Miele Outdoor are complemented by an additional product range. Here, customers find everything around BBQ – from knife sharpeners by Horl, to high-quality knives from Forged, to premium spices from Rock'n'Rubs or Klaus grillt. This brand diversity underlines the high standards of quality, functionality and passion for the topic of outdoor cooking.

The strong regional component is completed by meat from local butchers, spirits from Rostock, and cooperation with the Störtebeker Brewery & Distillery.



The Ankerplatz grill academy is an important component. Only meat from regional producers is used over the fire.

6. Expert voices: success factors for the outdoor business

You cannot know everything on your own. That is why this white paper features recognised experts who shed light on the outdoor segment from their perspectives. The focus is on store design and decoration – two key drivers for a convincing and successful outdoor world.

6.1. Store design factor: Werner Quadt on the green magic at the point of sale



Werner R. Quadt

Werner R. Quadt (born 1963) studied interior architecture at the University of Applied Sciences Lippe-Detmold from 1984 to 1989. After his early professional years at a trade fair and exhibition construction company, he founded his own studio in Cologne in 1994. Since then, he has developed interior and store concepts across Europe for the furniture, kitchen and specialist retail sectors. Under his leadership, more than 500 projects have been realised – ranging from showrooms to store fittings and exhibitions. Werner Quadt is a member of the Chamber of Architects of North Rhine-Westphalia (Architektenkammer NRW - AKNW) and the Association of German Interior Architects (Bund Deutscher Innenarchitekten - BDIA).

Clear structure as a success factor

Few store designers know the furniture retail sector as well as Werner Quadt. For already many years, he has been developing retail concepts, including impactful outdoor departments. For him, the decisive factor is not only visual appeal, but above all a clear structure: customers must be able to orient themselves quickly and find the desired products immediately. In particular, accessories such as cushions, pillows, parasols or outdoor lighting also require sufficient stock availability.

Emotions through materials and visual worlds

To create emotional impact, Quadt recommends the use of large-scale imagery with a holiday character as well as authentic materials. Floor coverings that resemble terraces or natural stone, combined with the targeted use of

greenery or moss, enhance the outdoor feeling and also support the theme of sustainability. In terms of presentation, both large “kojen” (display bays) and more compact areas can work, but ceiling designs such as pergola structures, slats or fabric sails create a particularly strong effect.

Strategic year-round usage

Year-round use also needs careful planning. It is particularly economically viable when the outdoor area is strategically integrated into the sales floor, for example near boutique or lighting departments. Alternatively, many retailers opt for selective opening on high-footfall days. International examples, from elaborately staged trade fair appearances to experience-driven retail formats, show how strongly outdoor concepts can emotionalise and consistently combine shopping with the outdoor world.

6. Expert voices: success factors for the outdoor business

Interview

Mr Quadt, what makes an outdoor department appealing for customers?

Werner Quadt: *In addition to visual and tactile perception, the department should, in my view, be clearly structured and logically organised so that customers can find the products they are looking for at first glance. Particularly for items such as seat cushions, cushions, parasols, outdoor lighting or artificial plants, sufficient stock availability also plays a decisive role.*

What architectural design tools can be used?

Werner Quadt: *Large-format visual worlds that stage sun, sand and sea immediately create associations with holidays and relaxation. In addition, authentic flooring materials that convincingly replicate terraces, paving stones or gravel beds are important. Green plants and mosses, whether real or artificial, add further accents and also support the theme of*



© Dipl.-Ing. Werner R. Quadt

The striking wooden cladding combined with lush greenery creates strong accents in the entrance hall of Home Company Hesebeck in Henstedt-Ulzburg, showing how materiality and nature interact in modern furniture retail.

sustainability. For presentation, both display bays and more compact areas can be used. Ceiling designs

such as pergola structures, slatted constructions or fabric sails have a particularly strong impact. Elements such as daylight, fresh air or water installations further enhance the impression of a natural environment and make the space tangible for visitors.



© Dipl.-Ing. Werner R. Quadt

A visual highlight at Wohnzentrum Jungmann in Brixen: the lush vertical greenery combined with digital screens and sculptural elements creates an inspiring atmosphere between nature and living culture.

6. Expert voices: success factors for the outdoor business

How can an outdoor area be operated year-round?

Werner Quadt: *In retail, there are certainly outdoor exhibitions that are open all year round, especially in large-scale retail spaces where sufficient room is available. However, this model only becomes economically viable if the area is strategically well positioned, ideally near departments such as boutique or lighting. This also allows existing sales staff to be used flexibly.*

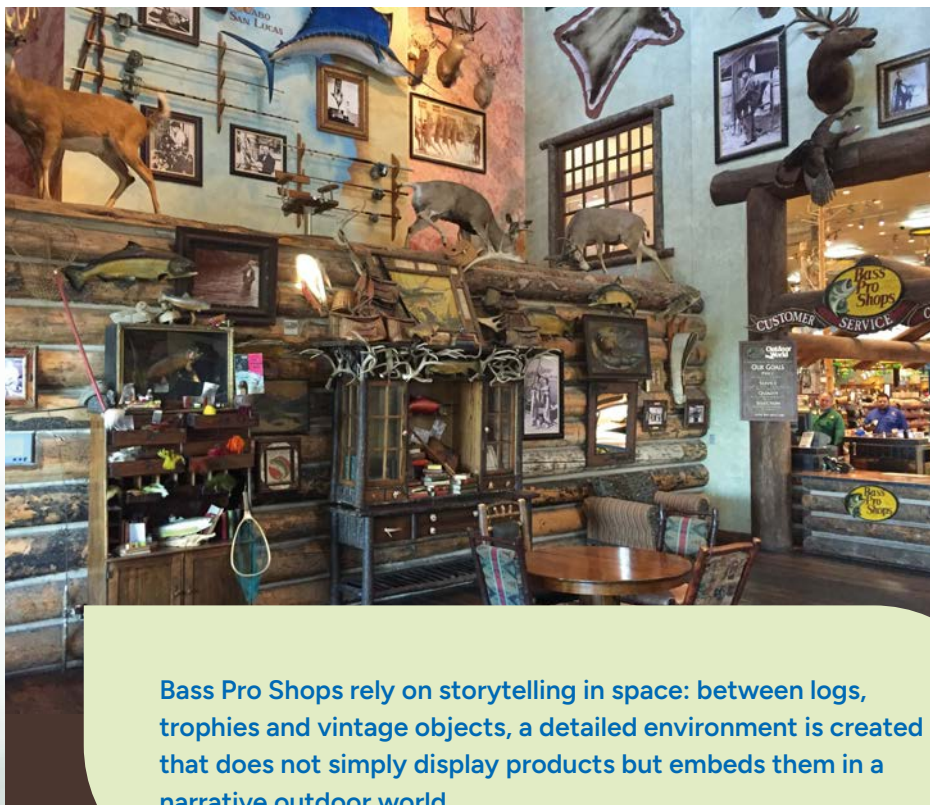
Stand-alone concepts, on the other hand, usually follow a more selective approach. Many open only on specific weekdays, often primarily towards the weekend. The reason is obvious: in the winter months, demand is so low that continuous

operation would hardly be economically sustainable.

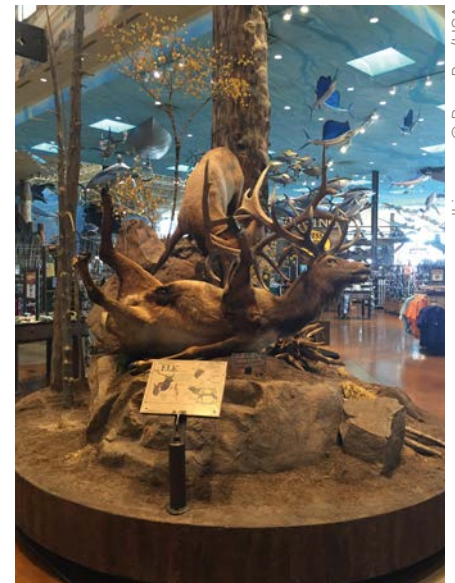
What else would be possible when designing a true outdoor experience shopping area?

Werner Quadt: *One moment I will never forget is the Birkenstock presentation at imm cologne 2019: a staging that felt more like an elaborate stage set. With dense jungle greenery and a surrounding water moat. Only koi carp were missing. Another extreme can be found at Bass Pro Shops in the United States. There, an amusement park and a large retail store merge into an outdoor world that generates annual revenues in the hundreds of millions. From fishing hooks to fully automatic weapons,*

you can get everything that makes the heart of many American outdoor enthusiasts beat faster. Compared to that, even a retailer like Globe-trotter appears almost curated and restrained. ■



Bass Pro Shops rely on storytelling in space: between logs, trophies and vintage objects, a detailed environment is created that does not simply display products but embeds them in a narrative outdoor world.



Elaborately staged natural and wildlife worlds define the store design of Bass Pro Shops in the USA: the detailed scenery with wildlife dioramas creates a unique shopping experience that goes far beyond conventional retail spaces. Outdoor adventure at the point of sale!

all images © Bass Pro/USA

6. Expert voices: success factors for the outdoor business

The 10 tips from Werner Quadt for shop design

- 1 Structure clearly:** Well-organised areas make orientation easier and increase willingness to buy.
- 2 Create emotion:** Large-scale visual worlds immediately evoke holiday and relaxation associations.
- 3 Use authentic materials:** Flooring such as wood, stone or gravel ensures credibility.
- 4 Integrate greenery:** Plants and mosses, real or artificial, bring in naturalness and sustainability.
- 5 Maintain sufficient stock levels:** Customers should not be faced with empty shelves, especially for accessories.
- 6 Work with height:** Ceiling designs such as pergolas or sails add depth to the space.
- 7 Experience instead of products:** Outdoor departments should be walkable living environments, not pure product storage areas.
- 8 Think year-round strategically:** Proximity to other departments facilitates staff deployment.
- 9 Stay flexible:** Selective opening hours can be more economical than continuous operation.
- 10 Be bold in staging:** Extraordinary concepts stay in people's minds – and differentiate from the competition.



6. Expert voices: success factors for the outdoor business

6.2. Decoration factor:

Andrea Niederberghaus and her tips for unique outdoor worlds



Andrea Niederberghaus

Andrea Niederberghaus is a decoration expert focusing on point-of-sale staging in medium-sized furniture retail. She develops concepts for the design of retail spaces, particularly for outdoor furniture, combining product presentation with themed experience worlds and seasonal cross-use of retail space.

The presentation of outdoor furniture at the point of sale is changing. Instead of showing outdoor exclusively as a separate area or seasonal add-on, a stronger integration into the existing showroom is becoming increasingly important. Outdoor furniture can be staged as versatile individual pieces that complement different living areas and create new visual narratives in the furniture store – regardless of the season. The following 10 tips by Andrea Niederberghaus show which approaches work in practice.

Integrate outdoor furniture into the showroom instead of displaying it separately

Outdoor furniture can be staged as part of the regular showroom, not only in the garden section or as a temporary area in front of the store. Distributing it across different living areas increases visibility and positions outdoor as a complement to the entire assortment: from sleeping and living to hallway, bathroom, kitchen, dining and office.

Room-specific placement creates concrete usage ideas

Integration works particularly well when individual outdoor pieces are placed where they “fit” thematically. In dining areas, outdoor tables, outdoor chairs or outdoor lighting can be displayed. In bedrooms, a relaxed outdoor lounge can be staged, complemented by lighting, side tables, rugs and artwork, for example as a “Moroccan bedroom” combined with a standard wardrobe.

In offices, a comfortable chair, a lamp, a plant and a shelving unit can create an outdoor-inspired setting without displacing the core assortment.



© AI visualisation by ChatGPT

AI as a visualisation tool: A fairy tale from One Thousand and One Nights, this is what a Moroccan-style bedroom could look like.

Position indoor-outdoor furniture as flexible solutions

As living spaces become smaller, households change more frequently and people move more often, furniture that can be used in multiple ways is becoming increasingly important. Individual pieces that work indoors as well as

6. Expert voices: success factors for the outdoor business

outdoors support flexible living concepts and can be prominently positioned as high-quality choices, for example furniture that functions as a standalone piece in different rooms.

For consumer-oriented outdoor products: group them, but stage them with quality

Not every outdoor assortment is suitable for integration into living environments. For more mass-market outdoor furniture, concentrating it in a dedicated area can make sense, for example in disused departments. What matters is a coherent presentation: not a makeshift setup on carpeted flooring, but a space with a clear idea and appropriate context.

Themed worlds instead of product rows: outdoor areas need a visual narrative

Outdoor becomes more convincing when the area tells a clear story. Themes such as “holiday in the rose garden”, a concept around lavender, or a staging with greenery and bamboo create atmosphere and orientation. Such themed worlds give outdoor products character and increase perceived value.



“Holiday in the rose garden”: this is what it could look like with AI support. It would make people want to stay in the furniture store.

Make cross-selling across product categories visible

Outdoor can be combined with many other product groups and thus presented as a complete scene. Rugs, lamps, home accessories (from baskets to fairy lights), freestanding refrigerators or outdoor kitchens complement the furniture and bring spaces to life. The effect is strongest when these combinations are deliberately designed as a coherent world.

Activate outdoor all year round – even in winter

Outdoor can be made tangible throughout the year through events and collaborations. In winter, formats such as “Ice & Hot” with seasonal winter flavours (cinnamon, almond) are suitable, as well as Christmas events with a bar (e.g. hot Caipirinha), partnerships with burger restaurants, and suppliers of grills and barbecue equipment. Additional cooperation with fashion (summer, swimwear or winter clothing), nurseries or providers of water features and pool solutions can create new occasions.



“Ice & Hot”: the magic of the elements in one place. AI can be a valuable tool to bring visualisation closer to reality.

all images © AI visualisations by ChatGPT

6. Expert voices: success factors for the outdoor business

Create recognisability through a "green outdoor world"

Distributed outdoor areas appear particularly coherent when they share a common visual identity. A consistent green design – for example across walls, flooring and textiles – creates recognition, labelling and orientation. This allows outdoor displays to exist in multiple departments while still being perceived as one connected world.

Consultation as the key: "Outdoor = indoor" must be communicated clearly

For successful in-store integration, the idea behind the concept must be clearly understandable. Consultation and staging work together when the versatility of individual pieces becomes visible and their multiple everyday uses are explained in a way that customers can easily relate to.

Get creative: use the freedom

Anyone who enjoys working with specialist assortments and has a talent for staging can be even more experimental in the outdoor segment – the creative freedom is greater, both in terms of space and product density. Outdoor is ideal as a testing ground for new presentation and staging concepts.

The 10 tips from Andrea Niederberghaus for unique outdoor worlds

- 1 Integrate outdoor furniture into the showroom instead of displaying it separately.
- 2 Create concrete usage ideas through department-specific placement.
- 3 Position indoor-outdoor individual pieces as flexible solutions.
- 4 For consumer-oriented outdoor products: group them, but stage them with quality.
- 5 Themed worlds instead of product rows: outdoor areas need a visual narrative.
- 6 Make cross-selling across product categories visible.
- 7 Activate outdoor all year round – even in winter.
- 8 Create recognisability through a "green outdoor world".
- 9 Consultation as the key: "outdoor = indoor" must be clearly communicated.
- 10 Get creative: use the freedom.

7. Trend radar: where is outdoor heading?

Trends provide inspiration and orientation. They serve retailers as guidelines to set priorities, respond to changing consumer needs, and recognise customer preferences early, ideally even help shape them actively.

In this white paper, recognised trend experts share their perspectives. They sharpen the retail sector's view of what is coming and what is highly likely to be experienced in Cologne. At a leading trade fair such as spoga+gafa, trends are not only presented but also set and further developed.

7.1. Trend factor:

Katrin de Louw on fields of tension, sustainability and new colour nuances



Katrin de Louw

Katrin de Louw is an interior architect and has been a leading expert in furniture, materials and design trends for more than 20 years. In 1997 she founded the agency Trendfilter, through which she advises companies in the fields of trend research, product development and material design. She is the initiator of the Furniture Future Forum and founder of COLORNETWORK®, which promotes sustainable colour and material concepts.

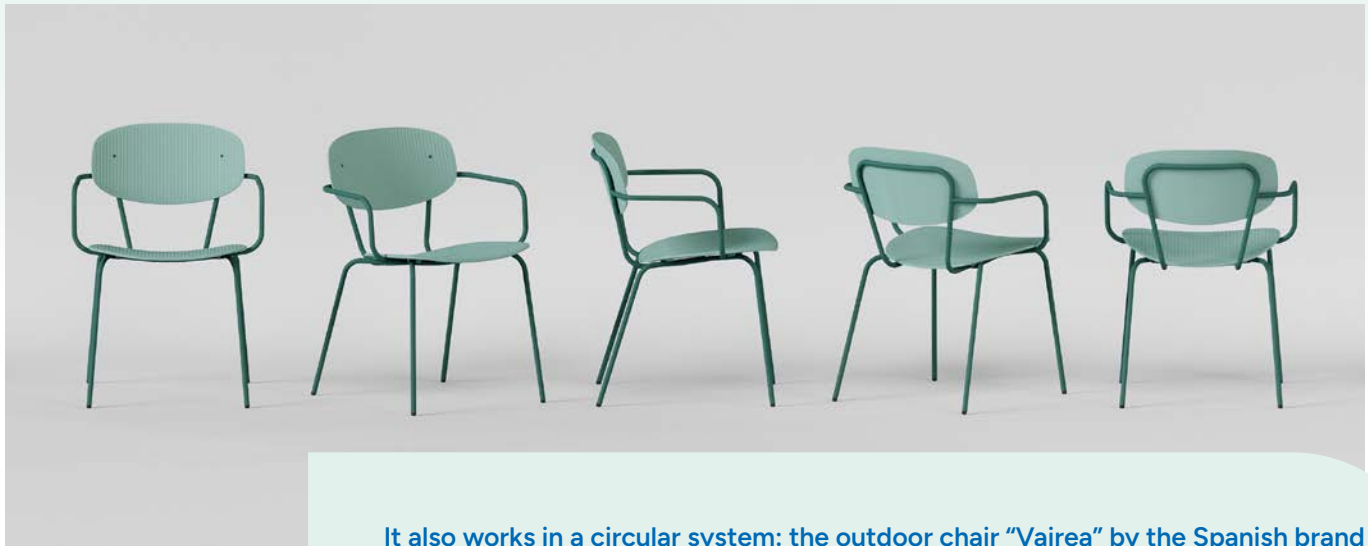
Outdoor living in the tension field of societal megatrends

For Katrin de Louw, outdoor living is strongly shaped by societal developments. "In an increasingly digital world, which is becoming faster through AI technologies, peace and relaxation in and through nature are gaining massive importance, for individuals as well as for society." Greened and designed outdoor spaces contribute not only to wellbeing, but also to climate adaptation.

Sustainable materials and new energy concepts

In the outdoor segment, de Louw continues to see natural materials such as wood and stone as defining elements, complemented by recycled and reused materials from Urban Mining. At the same time, the demand for functional solutions and closed material cycles is growing. "What matters is not only that they are 100 percent recyclable, but that reliable systems finally exist to actually return these materials fully into the cycle." In addition, the use of the sun as an energy source is becoming increasingly important.

7. Trend radar: where is outdoor heading?



© Musola

It also works in a circular system: the outdoor chair “Vairea” by the Spanish brand Musola combines contemporary design, comfort and a consistent commitment to the circular economy. “Vairea” is made from 100 percent recycled and fully recyclable polypropylene, while the frame is also made of 100 percent recyclable stainless steel.

Seamless transitions between indoor and outdoor

From a design perspective, the boundaries between indoor and outdoor areas are increasingly blurring. Interior living concepts are consistently extended into outdoor spaces through materials, colours and furniture. This trend is particularly visible in outdoor cooking, where kitchen and living areas are functionally extended into the open air.

Additional sales potential for retail

For furniture retail, the outdoor segment offers growing potential. Holistic indoor-outdoor concepts, flexible furniture solutions and homely designed outdoor areas create additional purchase incentives while also increasing dwell time, both in private environments and at the point of sale.



7. Trend radar: where is outdoor heading?

Interview

Ms de Louw, which megatrends are influencing the outdoor topic?

Katrin de Louw: *Alongside the urgently needed reconnection with nature in the sense of protecting the planet, health and demographic change play a central role in the trend towards outdoor living. In an increasingly digital world, which is becoming faster through AI technologies, peace and relaxation in and through nature are gaining massive importance, for individuals as well as for society.*

Whether in rural or urban environments: greened and designed outdoor spaces are essential to create places of relaxation while also contributing to climate adaptation. They not only provide protection against heat but also create valuable retreats that sustainably enhance our wellbeing.

What material trends do you currently see?

Katrin de Louw: *In the outdoor sector, natural materials such as wood – ideally from FSC- or PE-FC-certified sustainably managed forests – and stone remain among the most important trends. Re-used and recycled materials from Urban Mining are also increasingly in demand. Modern grass or gravel stabilisation grids are gaining relevance as they stabilise functional surfaces without fully sealing them.*

Recycled products containing plastics, however, must be viewed critically: what matters is not only that they are 100 percent recyclable, but that reliable systems finally exist to actually return these materials fully into the cycle. Too often, they still end up in residual waste.

Another strong trend is the use of the sun as an energy source from solar-powered lighting and balcony photovoltaics to outdoor features such as solar grills or solar phone charging stations.

Which colour worlds are currently defining style?

Katrin de Louw: *The current outdoor colour trends are as varied as a flower bed. Since natural green is already present in the planting, many consumers tend to choose either cheerful colour contrasts or elegant neutral tones that create a refined outdoor atmosphere. At the same time, outdoor furniture is increasingly understood as part of nature itself and deliberately takes a step back through soft earthy reds and browns as well as calm stone shades.*

Classically or romantically patterned cushions and outdoor rugs also shape the picture, giving terraces and balconies a timeless and stylish atmosphere. In addition, a trend towards new pastel shades is emerging, including ice blue, lemon butterfly yellow, nude apricot and soft violet.



Are indoor furniture designs essentially the driving force behind outdoor furniture design?

Katrin de Louw: *Even though nature and gardens increasingly inspire our interiors, the trend in the coming years is moving in the opposite direction: the homely atmosphere of living rooms, dining rooms and kitchens is being extended outdoors through seamless transitions. Flooring such as tiles, for example, is often laid continuously from inside to outside to create a harmonious spatial flow. The upholstery of terrace chairs echoes the colours and materials of indoor dining chairs, and other stylistic and colour concepts continue seamlessly through wide sliding doors.*

This trend is particularly visible in outdoor cooking. More and more covered outdoor areas make it possible to extend kitchen and living spaces functionally into the open air, protected from sun and rain.

7. Trend Radar: Where is Outdoor heading?

Which revenue potentials are opened up for furniture retail through the outdoor segment?

Katrin de Louw: *The revenue potential grows with the increasing need of people for relaxation and nature in their own living environment. For furniture retailers it is therefore becoming increasingly sensible to also help shape the outdoor areas of their customers in a homely way and to create additional purchase incentives through holistic indoor and outdoor concepts.*

Many new furniture items today are flexibly usable – indoors as well as outdoors – and offer consumers tangible added value. Herb and plant pots near the kitchen area are also developing into sought-after outdoor items that complement the area around the kitchen unit.

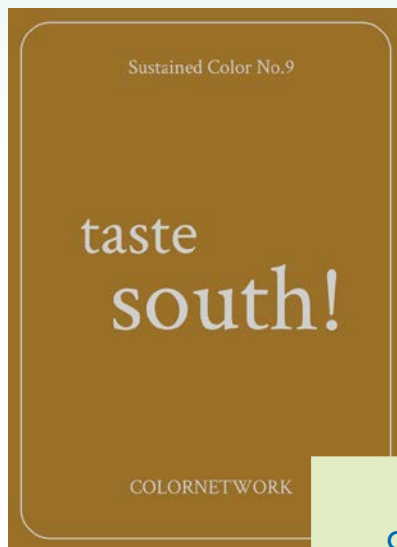
For retailers this not only opens up the possibility of generating additional revenue. They can also design their own outdoor area, for example as café or garden space, in such a way that it already invites people in from the street and

encourages customers to stay longer. This creates real added value for the traditional furniture retail sector. ■



7. Trend Radar: Where is Outdoor heading?

7.2. Trend factor: A piece of the Mediterranean with “taste south!”



© Colornetwork and Ballerina-Küchen

Guideline for designers: Sustained Color No. 9 from the COLORNETWORK captures the colour tones of the Mediterranean region and gives both indoor spaces and outdoor environments a calming, sun-drenched effect.

Design orientation for brands, designers and interior fitters: the already ninth Sustained Color from the COLORNETWORK® is called “taste south!” – an ochre-yellow, natural earthy tone inspired by Southern Europe and in particular the Mediterranean region. The colour evokes associations with endless sandy beaches, ancient city walls, a Spanish finca or an Italian villa.

In Mediterranean architecture, ochre has played a defining role for centuries, as this tone can be traced back to one of nature’s oldest pigments. It occurs worldwide in different nuances and stands for earthiness, warmth and authenticity. “taste south!” reflects warm sunlight in a soft and flattering way, which has a demonstrably positive effect in interior spaces: “The Sustained Color No. 9 creates a happy, cheerful and optimistic atmosphere and can help to promote creativity in working and movement spaces,” explains COLORNETWORK® founder and curator Katrin de Louw.

The basic colour yellow is considered the colour of summer and is associated with positive emotions such as joy and energy. “taste south!” therefore fills spaces with the power of a midsummer’s day. Like a concentrate storing centuries of sunlight, the shade has a calming, relaxing and stress-reducing effect.

The COLORNETWORK® is an association of design and material experts developing sustainable and long-lasting colour worlds for architecture and interior design. The so-called Sustained Colors are released annually and form a continuously growing collection of harmoniously combinable tones.

7. Trend Radar: Where is Outdoor heading?

7.3. Lifestyle factor: Gabriela Kaiser formulates four trends

Gabriela Kaiser is a true jetsetter when it comes to trends. She travels extensively to observe closely, absorbs new themes, materials and colour schemes, and condenses these impressions into trend reports that provide orientation for the retail sector. Above all, her analyses stand out due to their high level of practical applicability, this is what makes them particularly valuable. For this white paper she has described four outdoor trends.



Gabriela Kaiser

Gabriela Kaiser is a trend expert, future analyst and owner of the TREND-agentur trend office in Landsberg am Lech. For many years she has been advising companies from industry, retail and design on societal developments, consumer trends and their impact on product worlds and brand strategies. Through her lectures, studies and workshops she is one of the most sought-after voices in trend and future research in the German-speaking region. Her strength lies in translating complex developments into understandable insights and concrete recommendations for companies.



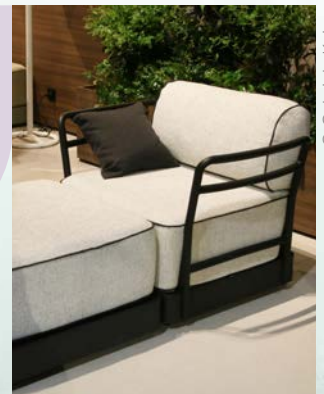
© Gabriela Kaiser

Trend 1: Back to Black & White

On the one hand white and cream tones, on the other hand black or dark brown. In times of sensory overload, the contrast between light and dark in design acts like a point of calm without being boring. The interplay of light–dark contrasts creates tension and generates structure, clarity and depth with a pleasantly restrained effect. This classic dualism makes a statement: calm, elegant and timeless.

Resol invites sitting or lying down with full elegance.

Ferm Living creates a festive atmosphere.



© Gabriela Kaiser

7. Trend Radar: Where is Outdoor heading?



Ames is always a brand for designs that are surprising on the one hand, yet feel entirely familiar on the other.



Muuto adapts to its surroundings in a spectacular way.

Trend 2: Modern Africa

African influences merge with contemporary boho style to create a warm, cosy atmosphere with a hint of adventure. Craft-inspired aesthetics with expressive surfaces, rattan weaves and ethnic patterns define the look. Warm earthy tones form the base and are occasionally contrasted with bold colour accents such as violet, pink or orange.

Trend 3: Urban Greens

The fusion of urban and natural influences defines this trend: natural materials meet a reduced design language, while urban materials such as metal, plastic or concrete are increasingly combined with natural surfaces and olive- or grey-green tones. Nature-inspired patterns, such as leaf motifs, appear as sketched line drawings, graphic interpretations or modern photo prints. On rooftops and balconies in urban environments, green oases emerge as places of retreat and relaxation.



Nardi shows: if green, then properly done.

7. Trend Radar: Where is Outdoor heading?

Trend 4: Happy Energy

This trend focuses on the deliberate use of bold colours to charge both indoor and outdoor spaces with joy and optimism. Bright tones such as yellow, orange or pink have a mood-lifting effect, stimulate the senses and clearly communicate a sense of joie de vivre. Design becomes a creative playground: individual colour combinations are explicitly encouraged, and furniture is allowed to carry the charm of a playful patchwork aesthetic. Materials such as recycled plastic, metal and printed textiles with cheerful patterns invite bold, personal choices and promote a carefree, expressive style.

A skilful interplay
between Vitra and Artek.



all images © Gabriela Kaiser



Normann Copenhagen sparks joy –
even at first glance.

7. Trend Radar: Where is Outdoor heading?

7.4. Social media factor: Pinterest Predicts™ 2026

Every month, 600 million people come to Pinterest to search for their next source of inspiration. This gives the platform unique insight into what will soon become popular. Its trend tracking goes far beyond simple search queries. Pinterest looks at the bigger picture: the colours, aesthetics and style directions that inspire people. By analysing annual growth, Pinterest identifies trends that are gaining momentum particularly quickly and consolidates these findings in a report called Pinterest Predicts™.

Pinterest Predicts™ therefore provides early indications year after year of which aesthetic and functional needs will shape consumers in the future and thus trends that often become visible on social media months before their mainstream breakthrough.

For the outdoor segment, this view into the future is highly relevant: Pinterest forecasts show how living environments are evolving, which styles and materials are gaining importance, and what expectations consumers have of living and leisure spaces. This provides valuable impulses for brands and exhibitors aiming to align their assortments with upcoming demand.



From the 21 Pinterest Predicts™ for 2026, here is a selection of five trend themes with strong relevance and implementation potential for the outdoor market:

Pinterest Predicts™ 1: “Cabbage Crush” – Green, greener, cabbage!

The crush for 2026? CABBAGE. Baby Boomers and Gen X are celebrating the new star of the kitchen. Whether as a crispy “steak”, kimchi cocktails or extra-crunchy wraps – it’s getting leafy, crunchy and seriously cult. It’s crunch time. But cabbage doesn’t have to stay in the kitchen, it can also move into décor.

This allows an outdoor department to be effectively tuned into the trend: the Portuguese porcelain brand Bordallo Pinheiro, for example, already features cabbage-inspired designs in its collection.



Pinterest
Predicts
2026

Search interest
among Pinterest users
(09/23–08/25):

- Cabbage dumplings (+110%)
- Cabbage roll soup (+95%)
- Cabbage Alfredo (+45%)
- Sauerkraut (+35%)
- Fried Pak Choi (+35%)

7. Trend Radar: Where is Outdoor heading?

Pinterest Predicts™ 2: **“Khaki Coded” – the secrets of the desert**

Fashion and lifestyle are exploring new terrain. In 2026, Gen Z and Millennials are going on a stylistic off-road adventure. Khaki-coloured Bermuda shorts, functional vests and survival-inspired outfits: if a look can withstand desert temperatures, it is set for 2026.

For the outdoor retail sector, the khaki trend is not only relevant in terms of colour choices for furniture and accessories. Large-format prints can also bring emotion and a sense of openness into the exhibition space. Why not surprise visitors with a desert-inspired look? After all, outdoor does not always have to be green.



**Pinterest
Predicts
2026**



**Search interest
among Pinterest users
(09/23–08/25):**

- **Brown linen shirt**
(+100%)
- **Field jacket outfit for men**
(+65%)
- **Work shirt**
(+45%)
- **Pleated trousers**
(+30%)
- **Palaeontologist aesthetic**
(+35%)

7. Trend Radar: Where is Outdoor heading?

Pinterest Predicts™ 3: “Neo Deco” – a touch of eccentricity

The Art Deco trend receives a modern update: glossy, elegant and adapted for 2026. After years of minimalism, Gen X and Millennials are bringing this retro aesthetic back with sharp zigzag patterns, fan-like arches and other geometric accents. Everything is refined with chrome or brass – bold, glamorous and slightly eccentric.

This style can also elevate outdoor spaces, because outdoors does not always have to mean wood and woven textures. And lighting should definitely be part of the concept as well.



 **Pinterest
Predicts
2026**



Search interest
among Pinterest users
(09/23–08/25):

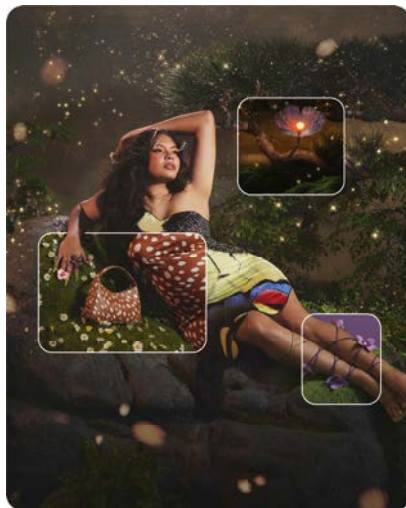
- **Antique bar cart**
(+100%)
- **Red marble bathroom**
(+80%)
- **Pendant lamp**
(+40%)
- **Brass aesthetic**
(+35%)
- **Leather bench**
(+35%)

7. Trend Radar: Where is Outdoor heading?

Pinterest Predicts™ 4: **"Wild World" – animal playfulness**

A trend that whispers rather than shouts. In 2026, Gen Z and Boomers are fully embracing animal aesthetics but with a refined sensibility. Playful deer freckles, butterfly nail art and fox-inspired outfits bring a touch of woodland magic into everyday style.

At the point of sale, this trend can be picked up quite literally. How about a few animal figures in the aisles or large-scale animal prints on the walls? It would feel almost like stepping into a fairy tale.



**Pinterest
Predicts
2026**



**Search interest
among Pinterest users
(09/23–08/25):**

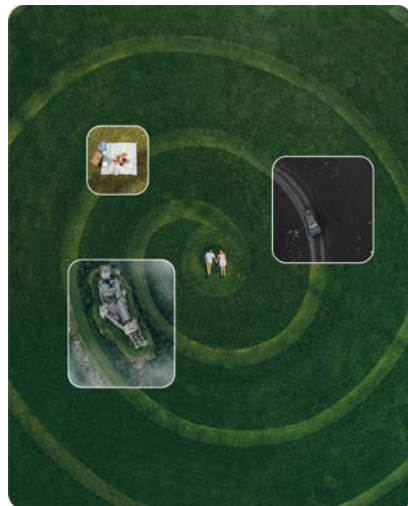
- **Dragonfly nails**
(+145%)
- **Floral outfit for men**
(+105%)
- **Animal-inspired outfits**
(+90%)
- **Beetle jewellery**
(+60%)
- **Deer aesthetic**
(+55 %)

7. Trend Radar: Where is Outdoor heading?

Pinterest Predicts™ 5: “Mystical Worlds” – into the unknown!

Fantasy shapes one of the biggest travel trends of 2026. Millennials and Boomers are seeking playful, mystical destinations: abandoned ruins in the mist, natural spirals and atmospheric, enchanted forests. And those who return with more questions than answers have done everything right.

But before travelling far away, the retail sector can itself aim to enchant visitors. With mystical sounds in the outdoor department... a large indoor fountain and imaginative decorative staging.



 **Pinterest
Predicts
2026**



**Search interest
among Pinterest users
(09/23–08/25):**

- **Scotland landscape aesthetic** (+465%)
- **Faroe Islands aesthetic** (+95%)
- **Salar de Uyuni, Bolivia** (+70%)
- **Arashiyama bamboo forest** (+50%)
- **Heavenly places** (+45%)

8. spoga+gafa as a marketplace of opportunities



Claudia Maurer
Director of spoga+gafa

The preceding chapters have shown that successfully engaging with the outdoor segment is only possible if the furnishing trade moves away from a purely product-centred approach and thinks in holistic living and lifestyle concepts instead. This is precisely where one of the key strengths of the furnishing trade lies.

spoga+gafa offers the suitable platform for this purpose. It unites a comprehensive offer – from price-sensitive items to high-quality brand name products – representing as such the entire spectrum of the international outdoor market. It sees itself not only as an ordering platform, but also as a place of inspiration and innovation for the trade, industry and planners.

New theme worlds and experience areas

The established main themes Living (Decoration & furniture), Creation&Care (Equipment and technology for garden design, plants and plant care) as well as BBQ remain to be the key pillars of spoga+gafa. In 2026, these sections will be strategically expanded – to include theme worlds that pick up on the current market trends and address additional target groups.

Outdoor adventure

The new theme world Outdoor Adventure reflects the growing desire for exercise, nature and adventure. Whether camping, hiking, fishing or games and fun in the garden. It unites products for the small adventures

directly on one's doorstep, a modern outdoor lifestyle and functional leisure solutions for diverse target groups. The furnishing trade can also look forward to interesting approaches to and points of contact with the theme world Outdoor Adventure.

Flavour Market

From 2026 onwards, spoga+gafa will expand its BBQ theme world every two years to include the Flavour Market - an experience area focusing on indulgence, exchange and presentation. Here, product presentations meet tastings and emotional brand experiences. Connecting BBQ, food and lifestyle themes creates new cross-selling potentials and addresses the specialised trade, the retail and DIY trade as well as the food service area.

From 2027 onwards in September

Note it down in your diary now. spoga+gafa is strategically realigning its exhibition dates: As of 2027 it will be held in September. In this way, Koelnmesse is responding to key feedback from the industry and strengthening the event's market alignment. For maximum planning security, the dates for the next three issues have already been set.

07. – 09.09.2027 (Tuesday to Thursday)

05. – 07.09.2028 (Tuesday to Thursday)

04. – 06.09.2029 (Tuesday to Thursday)

9. Conclusion: Don't be frightened of outdoor adventures



© spoga+gafa

POS Green Solution Islands – as experienced at spoga+gafa 2025.

The diversity of products, theme worlds and concepts present at spoga+gafa clearly demonstrates one thing: The outdoor segment offers the furnishing trade an opportunity that extends far beyond purely selling products.

Outdoor living opens up the opportunity to attract customers with holistic narratives, emotional experience areas and innovative ideas of usage. It is not just about placing additional line-ups, it is about furnishing living environments – from indoor living to living in the open air. Storytelling at the POS becomes a decisive factor here: for traffic, dwell duration and brand profiling.

spoga+gafa demonstrates impressively how broadly and flexibly the theme outdoor can be thought through today – from design-oriented premium concepts and indulgent or experiential formats to functional leisure and lifestyle offers. This thematic openness offers the furniture trade the chance to reposition itself with outdoor products and use existing space in a creative, bold and future-oriented manner.

The guideline for visiting spoga+gafa in the year 2026 can thus only be: Don't be frightened of seemingly alien product ranges. There is no such thing as can't be done.

9. Conclusion: Don't be frightened of outdoor adventures

Ten good reasons for visiting spoga+gafa 2026

1 Unlocking new sales potential

Outdoor furniture is evolving from a purely seasonal topic into an independent growth area - with attractive price ranges, new purchasing occasions and additional margin opportunities.

2 Access to specialised outdoor suppliers

spoga+gafa offers a comprehensive overview of manufacturers and suppliers that specialise in outdoor product ranges and pursue different procurement and logistics models.

3 Effective use of large sales areas

Outdoor line-ups are ideal for creating emotional presentations and experience worlds on large areas.

4 Holistic product range and concept ideas

Not only furniture, but entire outdoor worlds are presented – from lighting and textiles to accessories and decoration.

5 Flexible entry options

spoga+gafa offers a variety of approaches - from a selective start with individual product groups and modular line-ups to temporary test areas or cooperations with specialised suppliers. This enables the step-by-step and tailor-made development of outdoor concepts.

6 Addressing new target groups

Outdoor products address new customer groups and attract additional visitors to the furnishing store.

7 Inspiration for the long-term presentation of outdoor ranges

Concepts that extend the outdoor experience beyond the classic spring season and enable year-round marketing are showcased.

8 Early access to relevant trends

Materials, colours, functions and usage concepts can be identified earlier and strategically assessed.

9 Practical insights and best practices

The personal exchange with exhibitors, industry colleagues and experts provides concrete ideas for the implementation in one's own company.

10 Enthusiasm as a driving force

In addition to all the economic arguments, it is the emotional power of the trade fair that opens up new perspectives and encourages the rethinking of product ranges and sales areas.



About the authors

The long-standing collaboration between Sascha Tapken and spoga+gafa demonstrates how strong partnerships can generate innovative solutions for the green retail sector. Discover not only in our white paper, but also live at spoga+gafa (22–24 June 2026), the latest trends and topics.

There you will find further international best-practice examples, inspiring trend themes and forward-looking concepts that enrich your point of sale.

More about the authors and further information can be found here and at www.spogagafa.de



Sascha Tapken

Sascha Tapken is an industry expert and journalist. For the spoga+gafa white paper, he has taken an in-depth look at how outdoor assortments are marketed in furniture retail and has identified many untapped areas of potential. Since 2021, he has run his Hamburg-based agency Home.Made.Storys., focusing on B2B communication in the home & living sector.

A large part of his professional career was spent at the trade magazine möbel kultur, where he progressed over 13 years from trainee to editor-in-chief. Since 2022, he has also been responsible editor of the industry initiative Moebel Digit@l, since 2024 managing director of the German Cork Association, and since early 2026 managing partner of the press portal TrendXpress.

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spoga+gafa

spoga+gafa is the leading global trade fair for garden lifestyle and BBQ. As an international trade fair held at the location in Cologne, it sets impulses for the entire garden world.

The garden, BBQ and outdoor industry discusses the product ranges and trends for the coming season and presents solutions for current and future challenges here. The focus of spoga+gafa lies on the trends and innovations in the BBQ, Creation&Care, Living and Outdoor Adventure sections.



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