THE EXPLORATION OF INTERNET MARKETING THROUGH THE OPPORTUNITIES IT PRESENTS TO A SMALL FASHION BUSINESS

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ABSTRACT

Despite the increasing importance of Internet in people’s lives, many fashion businesses still haven’t taken advantage of the opportunities that online trade offers. However the fashion online market is growing and the need of Internet Marketing strategies for fashion brands has emerged. This dissertation examines the different Internet Marketing tools, the online fashion environment and the online consumer. Through an extensive research of online articles, books, reviews, reports and primary research methods it discusses key issues and benefits of implementing Internet Marketing strategies for small fashion businesses. It also analyzes the current online business of fashion brand Amana and goes into suggesting number of possible improvements of their Internet Marketing strategy based on the findings of the secondary and primary research.
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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 RATIONALE

One of the most dramatic technological developments in the past few decades by all means is the Internet, the driving media and communication force in the connected modern age we live in. According to recent research twenty three per cent of the population of the world is using Internet which amounts to over one and a half billion users with a growth rate or three hundred and forty two per cent for the year of 2008¹. Among all the various activities people are capable of doing thanks to the Internet, it gives the users an ability to obtain the most recent information available on any topic at any given time and to communicate their views on it, share it with others, shop, broadcast their own content, connect with people, companies, build businesses and more. From a business point of view the technology boom has created exciting new ways to learn about and track customers, products, services and even entirely new businesses, new channels to distribute goods more efficiently and effectively and most importantly interact with consumers in large groups or one-to-one though web sites, social networks, blogs, newsletters, podcasts and video-blogs. At present customers can find virtually any product online. They can view photos, compare prices and qualities, share opinions with other customers or directly with the company, and have their purchases delivered to their doorstep. Naturally, marketers have been exploring the advantages of these new opportunities for connecting with customers and partners in order to establish long term relationships of continuous mutual gain.

“it has been ten years since the Internet took its first steps towards becoming a mass medium in the UK (...) it is almost impossible to overstate the extent to which the Internet has changed our lives(...)” ²

There is no doubt that technological advances have changed our lives significantly but moreover it is greatly affecting the way business is done, particularly the way the fashion industry operates. Perhaps the most important change internet technology brought to the fashion business is that it increased the role of the public. Scott argues that with the arrival of

¹ http://www.internetworldstats.com/stats.htm
² http://www.nielsenonline.com/pr/pr_031229_uk.pdf
the new rules of marketing and PR (also the name of his book) the power was given back to the public. A decade ago, the Internet hype machine pitched the World Wide Web as a marketer’s dream come true – an interactive, one-to-one utopia, linking shoppers and their quarry in the electronically enabled Elysium Fields of 24-7 commerce. Today we are witnessing something different the new technologies such as broadband, 3G, cellular, and the most recent and a personal favourite: wireless. With the possibility of being in touch with the world any time of the day come the abundant opportunities to the modern fashion marketers to follow and communicate with their customers. It literally means you follow the consumer wherever they go but at their request which is incredibly powerful. Marketing’s wireless revolution is certainly genuine as by 2007 wireless innovations are expected to help generate $33 billion in new revenues for the companies that capitalize on them according to allied business intelligence (ibid).

"These days, to have one finger on the fashion pulse, you need to have the other one on your computer mouse, reading (or writing) the latest blogs." Karen Kay, (2007)³

Further on, the emergence of the blog gave the consumer the chance to take fashion in their own hands. Anyone can upload fashion related content such as images, trends, celebrities, inspirational art or their own work onto a website and express their opinion on it but more importantly they get to be read by thousands of people around the world and share views with each other. Bloggers follow the latest trends from all big and upcoming designers and are either spreading the word or voicing their own ideas of style and/or understanding of fashion. Recent research by AdFusion showed that brand-focused storytelling is popular among consumers, over fifty one per cent of the participants chose articles that included brand information as the best advertising activity.⁴ The emergence of micro-blogging such as Twitter gave the opportunity for fashion marketers to communicate with customers instantly. Along with the many blogging celebrities, which are one of the driving social forces of fashion, there are an increasing number of fashion brands and retailers getting on the “twittering wagon” ahead with the likes of American Apparel.

³ http://www.dailymail.co.uk/femail/article-428821/The-fashion-blog-stars.html
“Humans are social animals and not only have a need, but actively want to communicate with others.” (Willmott & Nelson, 2005).

Another major opportunity for marketers is found in the social networks phenomena. An increasingly global community brings the need for social networks which connect people from all over the world. People tend to travel a lot more and many of them lose touch with relatives, high school friends and co-workers. But thanks to the advancements of technology one has the opportunity to stay in touch with every single person that they had relations in their life span as long as they both use any of the online social networks. MySpace and Facebook among others changed the way people in this century communicate to each other. A few years ago, Harvard’s Robert Putnam analysed the disintegration of American society in his book Bowling Alone. He claimed that communities were coming unstuck because people no longer had enough “bridging capital” – the weaker ties you might have with people outside work or family that break irreparably as we move home, jobs, or simply grow apart. Being the fourth most popular online activity social-networking is undoubtedly an exciting and rather cheap way to connect, stay in touch with and get to know your customers. It enables marketers to add more value to their brands and offers customers an easy way to interact with them.

“Responsible marketers discover what customers want and respond with the right product, priced to give good value to buyers and profit to the producer.” (Kotler 2003:23)

Early attempts to create online shopping and electronic stores were held back by consumers concerns about security, fraud and missing or damaged goods. Over the past years the consumer confidence grew from twenty six percent in 2006 to fifty percent in May, 2009 as improvements in payment systems, standards and services are continuously being developed and introduced to the WWW users. The rise of online retail seems to be one of the few businesses that is currently overcoming the doom and gloom of the recent economic downturn by reporting a stable growth. Recent numbers show that the online clothing

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5 http://technology.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/tech_and_web/the_web/article3277046.ece
6 http://www.newbusiness.co.uk/news/consumer-confidence-online-shopping-rises
7 http://business.timesonline.co.uk/tol/business/industry_sectors/retailing/article5619091.ece

Amsterdam Fashion Institute 2009
market is estimated to worth over six billion pounds by 2012 and take thirteen per cent of the retail market in the United Kingdom. From this data in combination with articles about the rise of online shopping circulating the web space and the pages of famous newspapers and magazines producing titles like “Asos shrugs off gloom with doubled web sales” and “Retail sales rise but public finance dire”, it can be asserted that the attention of the marketers, entrepreneurs and consumers alike, has been drawn to the promising fashion online markets.

1.2 PROBLEM DEFINITION

As a young fashion brand AMANA strives to expand their business and establish their brand. At the moment the company is trading independently online via their own website and operates as a wholesaler to other online and offline stores. The manager of the brand is convinced that a good online marketing strategy will immensely increase their brand popularity and thus increase sales and expand markets. In order to create a sound and suitable online strategy this piece will research and analyze the core internet marketing tools, look at other brand’s online strategies as learning case studies and use online consumer behavior data to deliver the right mix for AMANA. At the end of each chapter there will be a recommendation based on the findings of the chapter.

To answer the main underlying question: “How can small fashion brand AMANA benefit from the opportunities presented by Internet Marketing?” the author has formulated few guideline questions which need to be investigated before it is possible to form a realistic strategy:

✓ How is the online fashion retail business developing and what is the potential?
✓ What is the basis of Internet Marketing and what are the most important principles for building an online strategy?
✓ What Internet Marketing Tools are out there that can be suitable for such strategy?
✓ How are other fashion brands conducting themselves online?
✓ Who are the online consumers and what is their attitude towards Internet Marketing?

1.3 PURPOSE, AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The purpose of this thesis is to discuss the emergence of Internet marketing and analyze the implementation of its tools by fashion brands. It also aims to discuss the current state of
online fashion retail and the online consumer behavior. All this research will be then used to propose an online strategy direction for a small ethical fashion brand AMANA which opts to expand through increasing their marketing efforts in order to decrease costs and increase sales and expand to new markets.

Objectives

• Explore and describe the new means of communication such as blogs, social networks and viral marketing
• Analyze the effect Internet marketing has on fashion brands and the development of their marketing strategies
• Critically evaluate the online retail scene and discuss the main consumer related issues it triggers
• Use the above information to assess the opportunities and difficulties the online fashion business may present

1.4 STRUCTURE

Chapter Two will discuss digital marketing: What it means and what theories and discussions are out there regarding this fairly new phenomenon. It will also feature some online marketing models which can be beneficial towards building a sound online strategy.

Chapter Three will explore the new online developments such us the blogosphere, the social networks and viral marketing, and will make reference of fashion companies that are using or not using them. Furthermore, the purpose of this chapter is to highlight the benefits or downsides of such online developments.

Chapter Four will accentuate on the current retail market in the UK trying to scope not only through high street retail but also luxury retail. It will also discuss the current economic events and their effects on the retail sector as well as the ones on the online retail sector. The focus will be specifically online fashion retail and key elements of the online fashion market.

Chapter Five will put emphasis on the consumer. The research is based on the collected data and will discuss the implications for marketers targeting the online users and the improvements that need to be made so the consumers feel more confident when shopping online. The investigation
will be focused on the psychology behind the shopping habits of the modern consumer and how shopping experience can be improved for them.

*Chapter Six* is a case study of the small British eco label AMANA. Recently they have become interested in online marketing and will discuss the steps they have to take to benefit from the online opportunities presented in this thesis.

*Chapter Seven* is a summary with discussions and conclusions on the opportunities and downsides of the discussed topics.

### 1.5 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A wealth of research methods is available to the contemporary researcher. Denscombe (2003) asserts that a strategic decision must be made by the social researcher concerning which option to take. As the calibre of the final piece will be reliant on the accumulation of quality and quantity data, it is paramount to have a focused research design which will fulfil the aim outlined. Weight is given to this contention when considering the sheer depth of information that will be encountered coupled with the constraints of time. Designing a research methodology which is specifically tailored to the investigation is therefore principally important to gain the greatest possible outcome.

#### 1.5.2 Secondary Research

The main body of the dissertation has been informed by secondary research, and has in turn made up the literary review. But more importantly for this piece is the online data gathered through online reports, news articles, online statistics, blogs and social networks which are central to the basis of this thesis. Using the Internet as a main source for building this research was necessary to indicate the significance of the Internet to the developments in modern in the fashion business and more specifically fashion marketing.

#### 1.5.3 Primary Research

The literary review highlighted a need for primary research as the information on consumer views on current online marketing developments is limited. A strength allied with primary
research is that it is able to focus implicitly on a specified area of interest thus compensating the limitations of secondary research alone.

The objectives of this study dictated that such research should take the form of qualitative and quantitative research. Investigations took the shape of three in depth interviews with fashion industry insiders. For the means of quantitative research short questionnaires are filled (also online) with a dual purpose. The questionnaire will be posted onto social network and the response to that will be measured as well as the actual survey results. At the end there is a short case study on the brand AMANA. An interview with brand strategist Erin Tabrar added greater understanding to the marketing issues standing in front of the small fashion business which was one of the reasons to start this research.

1.6 SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS OF THE RESEARCH

This thesis will be exploring some of the biggest most commonly used current Internet Marketing tools and observe how they are implemented in the fashion business in order to draw conclusions for the benefits to a small fashion brand. In the process of work the author had to choose not to discuss one very important tool- the webpage. This decision was made based on few considerations: 1) Internet Marketing would not work without having a website therefore it is viewed as an absolute necessity not an opportunity 2) developing and building a website is an entirely different topic on its own 3) the piece aims to focus on the opportunities which Internet Marketing offers to a small fashion business provided that they have already a website and would like to grow their online business. However some suggestions will be made in Chapter 5 for possible improvements on the website based on the authors personal observations during the course of this research.

The piece will mainly concentrate on the UK market as the main market for the brand in question however due to the global nature of the Internet the information presented might not be strictly valid only for the UK and some of the used data refers to the Online Fashion Market in general.

A major limitation of the secondary research is that information regarding the subject central to this piece is being updated daily if not hourly which may make some of the information used for this thesis irrelevant in a very short time. However at the time of the research the
available information has been taken into consideration and therefore it will represent the situation at the current moment of writing.

A limitation of the primary research is the unwillingness of the big fashion brands, which were of interest to this thesis, to engage in interviews and talk about their online marketing strategies. Another limitation is regarding the survey conducted in which most of the participants were gathered through the author’s personal social network account therefore the majority are of a similar age group and economic status.
CHAPTER TWO: WHAT IS INTERNET MARKETING?

This chapter will be answering one of the sub-questions for the thesis: “What is the basis of Internet Marketing and what are the most important principles for building an online strategy?”

2.1 WHAT IS INTERNET MARKETING?

Internet marketing or Digital marketing? Is it a new type of marketing or is it just a new tool for marketing? These are some of the questions that the new phenomenon is sparking among marketers. Although textbooks and reference books on digital marketing do exist due to its constantly evolving nature there isn’t one definition on which everyone agrees. To this moment, Digital Marketing (DM) is a vague term used to describe the digital age and new technology. DM can be simply marketing using any type of digital channel to reach the customers. However if labeled Internet marketing, it can be considered too narrow e.g. we can already witness the rise of smart-phones which are perfectly suitable to use wireless Internet however their mobile nature makes them a different type of channel to communicate with the customers. Digital on other hand can be argued: is it just the way the media is received/delivered as opposed to analogue e.g. in the UK analogue television is entirely changing to digital by the end of 2010.

For the purposes of this piece the term Internet Marketing will be considered as a part of Digital Marketing as the definitions and studies of Digital Marketing fully apply to Internet Marketing but are not necessarily restricted to it e.g. Mobile Marketing, Digital Televisions Marketing, Gaming Marketing. Chaffey (2005) defines DM as:

“Applying to technologies, which form channels to market,( web, email, databases, plus mobile/wireless , digital TV, blogs, podcasts, social networks, feeds,) to contribute to marketing activities at achieving profitable acquisition and retention of customers(within a multi channel buying process and customer lifecycle), through recognizing the strategic importance of digital technology and developing a planned approach to improve customer knowledge (of their profiles, behavior, value and loyalty drivers) , then delivering integrated targeted communications and online services that match their individual needs.”

He also argues that it is not technology itself that should be the driver of DM but the business returns from gaining new customers and maintaining relationships with existing ones thus suggesting that the importance of DM lies within building strong customer relations and satisfying customers’ wants and needs through improving customer knowledge.

A fine example of using customer intelligence are websites such as Amazon which store data on what customers purchase or simply view and then gives them suggestions on what other products they might be interested in based on their vast database. A similar approach is adopted by many fashion brands such as Asos.com (Figure 1) and TOPSHOP who usually suggest shoes or accessories and even fragrances that will go well with a selected piece of clothing.
Despite the complications and confusions around the definition, Internet marketing has been an increasingly important part of contemporary business strategies. Few years ago having a web page was enough for an adequate online presence for most fashion brands. However with the advancement of technology and the increasing use of Internet among the general population (Figure 2) and the frequency of use, brands started exploring the possibilities the World Wide Web presents for not only increasing sales volumes and expanding markets but building strong online brand image and developing interactive relationships with their customers.

Scott (2007) argues that Internet Marketing has returned Public Relations back to the public suggesting that before the tools of Internet Marketing became widely accessible PR was communicating to the media not to the people therefore the relations of brands with their customers were distorted and the credibility, hence the image of brands compromised. With the complexity and variety of Internet marketing tools available and the huge market potential, there is no surprise that today, apart from having a marketing strategy; most brands need to integrate a digital marketing strategy to their business plans.
2.2 DIFFERENT COMPONENTS OF INTERNET MARKETING

The basics of the marketing concept of achieving organizational goals depending on the needs and wants of the target markets and delivering the desired satisfaction more effectively and efficiently then the competitors (Kotler, 2002) are always going to be valid as a marketing ground. However in the virtual space, in order for a business to operate successfully, it needs to focus on a new additional set of principles and models other then the infamous P’s (product, place, price, promotion, presentation, packaging). Internet marketing and digital marketing in general are a set of tools and models which alter the marketing strategies of the brands to fit the new trading and communication channels (such as Wireless and Broadband, Mobile phones and Digital TV) so it is natural both schools of marketing, online and offline, to be valid for a successful business.

Operating a business and building a brand in a virtual environment where the speed with which information reaches the customers is down to minutes proves the need of a different set of strategies than offline marketing preaches. According to Chaffey (2005) the old business, marketing, distribution, pricing and advertising models need to be adapted for the needs of the e-commerce and altered so an e-business minimizes the risks of trading online (Figure 3) and builds a sufficient, effective and efficient strategic plan for a beneficial and successful online performance.
Chaffey (2005) argues that there are five broad reasons or objectives for a company to go online and start e-marketing campaign such as:

- grow sales (through new markets, wider distribution, promotion and sales),
- to add value (give customers additional benefits online),
- get closer to the customer base (by tracking them, engaging in an interactive relationship, learning about them),
- save costs, increase profits (through saving on print, service, post, administration and transactions),
- and extend the brand online in a completely new medium.

He summarizes these goals as the 5S’s of e-marketing: sell, serve, speak, save and sizzle.

Another important part of building a sound online marketing strategy is the Online Value Proposition (OVP) which reinforces the core brand proposition and credibility. According to Chaffey the most important reason to establish an OVP is simply because the customers expect it. Research reported by Jakob Nielsen shows that new visitors to a site, particularly of a company they are unfamiliar with, will seek out a tagline or graphic that explains what the site can offer (WIFM – or What’s in It For Me). Users decide quickly (often within a few seconds) whether to stay.
or leave a site and the tagline is a large part of this. However if Internet Marketing activities are executed effectively, according to Chaffey, marketers would benefit from increase of sales, improved promotion of the whole range of stock, new customers and adding value to the brand. Parts of the Internet Marketing Planning Frame are being used later on in this thesis to analyze and propose the future online marketing actions for the brand.

Figure 4 Internet Marketing Planning Frame used by Chaffey

For the purposes of this piece parts of the first four steps (Situation Analysis, Objectives and Tactics) will be used as base analysis of the situation for the company and propose possible tactics, based on the carried research further in the piece, to start taking advantage of the opportunities IM presents for a small fashion business such as Amana.

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CHAPTER THREE: THE TOOLS OF INTERNET MARKETING

This chapter will focus on answering the sub-question “What Internet Marketing Tools are out there that can be suitable for such strategy?” It will discuss the new tools of Internet marketing such as viral marketing, community marketing (blogs), social networks marketing, search engine optimization and pay per click marketing using examples of how are they being implemented by the fashion brands.

3.1 VIRAL MARKETING

Viral marketing, buzz marketing or word of mouth is generally considered the same thing or to be more precise viral marketing is proclaimed to be the word of mouth marketing of the Internet. All of them start with one person uploading or sharing news, opinions or a video that are groundbreaking, interesting and/or hilarious and another taking on it and spreading them among others. Until a few years ago this was a natural process that wasn’t intended specifically to be a marketing tool. Today Viral Marketing proves to be one of the easiest ways to reach customers online. According to the Internet Advertising Bureau UK rich media and video boost the total online advertising to a market share of 19 per cent.9

3.1.1 Email Marketing

One of the most widely used forms of viral marketing is email marketing. Email marketing is considered to be the easiest, quickest and cheapest way to inform customers about new products, promotions or brand related events. In a recent research Adfusion.com estimated that Email Marketing is the second most effective way to engage customers and 59 per cent of the people which participated in the research for this thesis stated that they have signed up for newsletters from their favorite fashion brands.

Figure 5 H&M’s Email Marketing campaign “Fashion News” updates

9 http://www.iabuk.net/en/1/internetadvertisingspendup21071008.mxs
Many fashion brands with an active online retail business have designed special newsletters or style updates for their customers (Figure 5). There can be observed a push and pull strategies adopted by different brands e.g. Asos.com and Victoria’s Secret start sending out updates after a purchase without signing specifically for it (with the option available to cancel these) and there are brands like Topshop and River Island which are practicing a pull oriented approach and the customers subscribe themselves for the service. However this service should be practiced with caution because if emails are sent too often people might lose their interest and quickly move them to junk mail or delete without reading them.

3.1.2 Viral videos

Another available tool in this category for fashion marketers are viral videos. Viral marketing or specifically short video clips made for the purposes of the Internet using such websites as Youtube have become an industry of their own. The videos are being watched from thousands of viewers: one can leave comments about a video, rate it, discuss it and most importantly pass it around using different channels such as email, social networks or by word of mouth creating the necessary buzz that it aimed for. Scott (2007) argues that everyone who has an interesting story to tell and knows who to tell it to can do that through Internet for minimal cost and it will manifest itself in desirable results.

Fashion brands that pioneer in advertising campaigns such as Nike have been successfully using the online media to spread numerous spoof videos which are not aimed for the TV and target specifically the online users. One of their latest campaigns was using the young actress Taylor Momsen, who stars in the hit TV Series “Gossip Girl”, to appear in a seemingly spontaneous run from the paparazzi. The video doesn’t look like an advertisement it resembles “an accidental” take from one paparazzi or another onlooker. The only thing “suspicious” about it is that she was dressed top to bottom in Nike. Online users all over the world were discussing whether it is an actual ad or not thus creating the buzz needed to spread the word around it and attract viewers. This was promptly taken on by numerous bloggers and it generated more then 688,697 views for the first four months on YouTube.

According to Mintel's latest research on Fashion Online the best way to generate interest among the 18-25 customers is through online videos. Fashion brands are not only starting to use the Internet to spread their ad campaigns through video clips but also to create a stronger brand image and to complete their online value proposition. H&M has recently launched their Video Style Updates which are both streamed through their official website and on YouTube. Luxury websites such as Gucci and Chanel have completely implemented online video advertising in their websites engaging with the advancement that Web 2.0 offers opposed to the old not so interactive photo advertising.

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10 http://academic.mintel.com/sinatra/oxygen/print/id=476184
3.1.3 Challenges of viral marketing for fashion brands

Viral marketing raises a few issues concerning implementation. When it comes to viral video usually smaller brands don’t have budgets for high quality clips and choose not to invest in low quality videos which may have negative effect on their brands image (Interview). However small brands could with more creativity and the right networking produce a low budget clips which will raise brand awareness and if successful improve the brand’s profile as videos are the way forward to engage the young consumers at the moment. And the use of email Marketing can be especially pesterling for consumers so it should be applied with care not to spam the customers email box.

The use of viral marketing from small not well established brands raises yet another issue; as much as it can be cost effective it is also considered a short lived strategy which is not possible to create a lasting brand image. Holt (2004) argues that such a viral strategy can be quickly eclipsed when the next hot topic comes around. Therefore it is important for the young fashion brands to not only rely on the one big hit, but consistently build their brand on and off the web.

3.2 COMMUNITY MARKETING

Community Marketing unites all web developments who create an online community and allow users to comment, review and engage in discussions, keep in contact and etc. Normally Social Networks would be part of Community Marketing however in recent years they have become an entity on their own therefore presented as separate sub chapter.

3.2.1 Blog Marketing

Blog is derived from the term web log which is a frequent, chronological publication of personal thoughts and Web links. The first blog was launched sometime in the late 1990’s. In the past couple of years blogging has become extremely popular, it is being taught in journalism courses and is now considered as important part of modern media channels alongside newspapers and magazines. The importance of fashion blogs in particular has reached highs that an article from the renowned British newspaper The Times predicts the end of fashion magazines and the dawn of “blogazines”.

They are a few different types of fashion bloggers. Industry blogs are the ones that are maintained by a certain particular brand and are part of their marketing and PR campaign. The other types belong to industry professionals who are doing freelance blogging, and to aspiring fashionistas who want to pursue a career in fashion journalism or styling. Another kind are blogs of the fashion fans who do it just for fun.

The first fashion blog was the Daily Fashion Report (DFR) created in 2002. Blogs such as the DFR started as a freelance side project by an industry insider and now are profiting from advertising

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11 http://www.marketingterms.com/dictionary/blog/
12 http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/life_and_style/article693610.ece
and providing information to the fashion marketers by using different monetization techniques\textsuperscript{13}. A British blogger Susie Bubble started her blog as an ordinary fashion enthusiast but she became so popular, nearly 10,000 readers\textsuperscript{14} daily, that in 2008 she was among the 100 most influential people in fashion according to the Evening Standard\textsuperscript{15} at the moment she is an editor of the online edition of Dazed & Confused. \textsuperscript{16}

Brands such as ASOS.com, which are solely based on online trade, have realized for a long time the potential of the online marketing tools and have created their own online blog, style magazine, style emails network and they have been recently joined by the likes of Dolce& Gabbana, Viviene Westwood, Prada. These strategic moves towards online publicity from worldly recognized fashion moguls confirms the importance blogs have for the fashion industry as a whole.

Figure 6 Source http://ifbu.blogspot.com

The phenomenal success of blogs undoubtedly comes from the ability of common people to express themselves. Blogs give Internet users around the world a platform to voice their views and opinions over topics that no one, apart from their own immediate environment, would have ever heard or been interested in before. The online research website Adfusion.com conducted a survey which concluded that 51 per cent of the participants were most likely to respond to a

\textsuperscript{13} http://williamcharlwood.com/2008/09/24/monetization-techniques-how-to-make-cash-from-traffic/

\textsuperscript{14} http://ifbu.blogspot.com/2008/02/interview-with-susie-bubble.html

\textsuperscript{15} http://www.thisislondon.co.uk/standard/influentials08/article-23562665-details/Fashion/article.do?ICO=influentials

\textsuperscript{16} http://stylebubble.typepad.com/
“brand focused story telling” type of advertising on the Internet. Fashion bloggers discuss their own views on styles, share their own photos, or comment on new collection and designers and communicating in a non engaging, often slang manner thus relating easily to the readers. According to Scott (2007) this gives them credibility and makes people interested in following them. A lot of fashion brands adopted similar ways of communicating with their customers by creating “blogazines” such as D&G’s SWIDE.

### 3.2.2 Twitter

One of the most recent developments in the blogosphere is micro-blogging and it started with Twitter, a social networking and micro-blogging service utilising instant messaging, SMS or a web interface. With its ability to feed different sources of information to its users Twitter is a sort of a hybrid between a blog and a social network and it caught on massively in 2008 and 2009 becoming a competitor to other social networks such as Facebook and even search engines like Google. The success of Twitter is regarded to be its simplicity in connecting people. After it broke into the UK’s top 40 fastest growing websites Twitter became so popular that it has been reported that universities have started using it as a way to communicate with their students.

Twitter was quickly taken on by tech savvy celebrities in the movie and music industries of the likes of Ashton Kutcher, Lindsey Lohan, Demi Moore, Britney Spears, Snoop Dogg, Russel Brand, Rachel Bilson, Misha Barton, Yoko Ono and many more. It didn’t take long for fashion brands to start use Twitter as a quick way to stay in touch with their customers and hopefully build a new brand loyalty strategy. These are some of the brands who use Twitter: American Apparel, Urban Outfitters, Lacoste, Diane von Furstenburg, Topshop and eLuxury. The social network micro blogging site is also preferred by increasing number of small businesses which use it to market products, to keep in contact with customers and suppliers and to keep an eye on the competition.

Recent study has shown that over 20 per cent of “tweets” (the posted messages on Tweeter) are brand related. At the moment there are around 6 million users of the social micro blogging network and it’s believed that the number will reach over 20 million at year’s end. This is considered to be an important reason for marketers to keep an eye on Tweeter and follow what their brand’s customers have to say about their products, services and other brand’s related topics.

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18 [http://twitter.com/about#about](http://twitter.com/about#about)
19 [http://technology.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/tech_and_web/article6575477.ece](http://technology.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/tech_and_web/article6575477.ece)
20 [http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/life_and_style/education/student/article6802305.ece](http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/life_and_style/education/student/article6802305.ece)
21 [http://www.bizreport.com/2009/03/british_smbs_all_a-twitter.html](http://www.bizreport.com/2009/03/british_smbs_all_a-twitter.html)
3.2.3 Challenges of using blogs and Twitter

For a fashion brand to use these tools they need to find a witty and interesting people to work behind these posts and to be able to pick the right topics that will interest their customers. It could be especially tricky if posts are unfitting or uninteresting as that might drive people away rather than attract more fans of the brand. Also the frequency of postings, similar to email marketing, should be carefully monitored and restricted to a reasonable number.

Another possibility is that the posts could be sent through email posting as well but that needs to be synchronized with the email marketing campaign so it won’t take the attention away from the brand itself.

When a brand decides to use Tweeter it needs to be ready to be able to tackle negative comments in an appropriate manner as this could be detrimental to its image.

3.3 SOCIAL NETWORKS MARKETING

The emergence of social networks has transformed the way we communicate and spend our spare time online and offline. Since the introduction of social networks such as MySpace, Facebook and Bebo millions of people around the world have integrated these websites into their daily practices such as communicating with friends and family, meeting new people and joining groups, pages and communities with similar interests to their own. Because of their impact on people’s lives Social Networks have taken online globalization to a new level.

The first social network was called SixDegrees.com and can be traced back to 1997 but the first one to hit the mainstream was Friendster. Today, according to a report by Nielsen online23, Facebook (together with blogging) is the fourth most popular online activity and it accounts for about 10 per cent of consumers’ time online. The same report estimates that 67 per cent of consumers now are part of a member community and the time spent on these networks is growing three times faster than overall time spent on the Internet.

In 2008 the global spending for social networks advertising was estimated around 2 billion pounds and the increase on the year was of 46.4 per cent.24 Facebook in particular has been seen also an upcoming competitor to Google since it’s been registered recently by hitwise.com that it drives a lot of traffic towards websites, especially towards such with video content which is being virally passed around the social networks by users. Most importantly it’s been noted that online social networks drive traffic to British fashion retailers such as Topshop.25 From a marketing point of view this type of communication with the customers could be a win-win situation for the fashion brands as long as they engage fully in their social networks campaign and interact with their fans.

23 http://www.bizreport.com/2009/03/nielsen_social_networking_4th_most_popular_online_activity.html
24 http://www.investor.bg/?id=77415
Many retailers have pages and groups in Facebook and MySpace and these are perfect for announcing special offers, sales and promotions of discounts and other events related to the brand. Social networks that tailor their services toward PR and Marketing functionalities could be the perfect vessel to deliver messages to the customer base if exploited correctly.

At this moment most big fashion brands have officially joined Facebook and keep fan pages with which they communicate with their customers. It is, however, not clear why some are performing better --having more fans -- then others. It could be because of a number of reasons such as varied levels of brand popularity, especially if the users of the network do not receive enough attention from the brands marketing team on their social marketing, or the content the brands are using is not appealing to the users. Yet the increased amount of brands who have engaged in the social marketing activity in the past year, and the fact that 56.3 per cent of marketers recently polled have stated that they are planning to integrated social marketing to their marketing mix for 201026, speaks of the high potential of this communication channel. 27

3.3.1 Challenges of Social Networks Marketing

Although it has been announced in recent news that Facebook has hit 300 million users and is the first social network to start making money on its own28. Only a couple of years ago MySpace was the biggest social network on the Internet and today it is simply fighting to stay relevant among what is left of its users. Therefore investing in social networks marketing and particularly Facebook is still considered as “going with the moment” sort of campaign and only time will show whether it is worthwhile in the long run.

Another challenge for marketers might be the fact that the majority of people using social networks are not necessarily doing it for marketing related purposes but mainly to stay in contact with their friends and family.29. However as stated in the previous point a lot of major and small fashion brands do have a number of fans among the users thus leading to a conclusion that a further research in this area is needed where future developments of social media and time will be crucial to indicating the success of social media marketing.

3.4 SEARCH ENGINE OPTIMIZATION MARKETING

Search Engine Optimization (SEO) describes a diverse set of activities that you can perform to increase the number of desirable visitors who come to your website via search engines (Grappone,2008). This happens mainly through changes done directly to the website such as

27 Please see Appendix A p.54 for a list of brands and their fan base
28 http://www.electricpig.co.uk/2009/09/16/facebook-making-money-at-last/
29 http://www.bizreport.com/2009/05/is_social_media_failing_as_a_marketing_medium.html
altering the text and HTML code but also through communicating directly with search engines and pursuing other sources of traffic by making request for listings and lists.

SEO Marketing has grown to an important and big business with many agencies specializing in the service as it is very technical and time consuming. Indeed SEO can be very costly with some agencies charging up to 100,000 US dollars per year. However, as is the case with most online marketing tools, it can be carried out through an organic (meaning low-cost or no cost) optimization approach. In this way, with the right investment and some patience, it can become accessible to companies with lesser marketing budgets.

At first glance SEO Marketing in itself can be complicated and there are many books written on the subject, yet it is a very useful online tool and if implemented correctly can bring the brands website to a number one search result on search engines such as Google. For big fashion brands SEO is not a particularly an issues their brand name recognition is significant enough to drive the desired amount of traffic to their website. Therefore, the challenge in this area is for the smaller fashion brands that are fighting for a market share in the online retail industry and/or looking to attract wholesale business partners.

As with any other marketing campaign SEO requires a well thought strategy before starting implementation especially when identifying who is the target group of the website, what products are being sold and what is are the main goals for the website (which in fashion e-retail the ultimate goal will be product sales). One downside of SEO is that if chosen as a strategy to organically improve the position of the website it can take months to do so.

3.5 PAY PER CLICK MARKETING

Pay Per Click (PPC) Marketing is really straightforward in its meaning, companies pay per click to host websites for displaying their ad or listing a link to their website. In Google search this is in the “Sponsored Links” section at the right hand-side of the web page. PPC is operating on the basis of Affiliate Marketing by using host websites to attract traffic. They are two ways to determine the way of payment either by Flat Rate (a rate upon which the host and the advertising party agree) or Bid Rate (mainly used in advertising networks websites against competitive companies and how much they would pay for the ad spot).

PPC Marketing can be used by smaller businesses to attract more traffic to their websites where bigger companies may operate as hosts and get paid to list a brand or make referrals to it. In the online fashion industry PPC is not so widely used by established brands as they already have their customer based but for smaller brands it can be beneficial if they co-operate with websites such as somuch eas ier.co.uk which act as a directory for fashion retail online and lists a range of different websites to shop from.
3.6 AFFILIATE MARKETING

As mentioned in the previous point Affiliate Marketing and Pay Per Click Marketing are similar in the way they operate. In the center of the operation is the host website, the brand that sells its products via the host website and the customer. The difference between the two is that PPC is paid per click on the link provided where with AM commission is paid to the host website per sold product.

There are many companies who specialize in AM. By joining such a company they give you the opportunity to become an AM host and post advertisement of companies of your choice on your own website as well as giving the option for other AM hosts to post and ad for your brands website. One of these companies is Commission Junction who offers advertisers and publishers the opportunity to join and become part of AM. There are also software programs who allow you to become an AM host website.

Affiliate marketing is considered to be underestimated by marketers, the market for the UK in 2007 has grown by 47 per cent and generated sales worth £3 billion. Although more recent numbers were unavailable during the time these piece was researched it is believed that this particular marketing approach will still continue to further develop in the future and increase in generated profit.

3.7 RECOMMENDATIONS

For a small fashion business such as Amana the easiest way to stay connected and increase interest without any impact on their budget would be through using Email Marketing, Social Networks, Blogs and Twitter. Based on the above research these are as well the most widely recognized for positive results not only among marketers but customers themselves (See Chapter Five).

At present there aren’t many brands that don’t use some of the marketing tools described in this chapter. In fact most brands use different combinations of them. Having a combination of different tools to offer your customers is beneficial and user friendly since it gives them the ability to choose their preferred one. Having someone to regularly update the brand’s customers and find interesting content for them is essential and brings value to the website taking it to the next level and turning it into an interactive mediator between the brand and its customers rather than being just a transactional tool.

SEO management is recommended to increase the brands performance in search engines which would ensure increase in the number of unique visitors to the web site thus increase in possible sales. Although organic optimization is possible it is rather time consuming and the person performing it needs to have a significant knowledge in this highly specific marketing tool. Therefore it would be recommended to hire an outside SEO agency or specialist who would do it.
CHAPTER FOUR: ONLINE FASHION RETAIL BUSINESS

This chapter will focus on answering the sub-question formulated in the Problem Definition in Chapter One “How is the online retail business developing and what is the potential?”.

4.1 ONLINE FASHION RETAIL OVERVIEW

In the past year the fashion retail in the UK has been experiencing a significantly tough time due to the global economic downturn and the recession that followed in the country. In August, 2009 the fashion retail business has yet again taken another hit producing the lowest London sales growth in four years\(^{30}\). Despite the economical difficulties and the declining high street sales the online fashion retail has been blossoming. Players on the market such as Asos who have reported almost over 100 per cent growth in net profit during times when the high street struggled. It is not only that the fashion retail market is performing well, it is been pointed by The Times that 2009 is the year when the shop started losing the battle against the Internet. A recent survey by Price Waterhouse Coopers suggests that more than half of all retail growth would come from online retail between now and 2012.\(^{31}\)

At the time this information was accessed over the Internet many of the big brands were still not as active online. Some of the high street were there such as Topshop, Next, River Island, the pure players such as Asos and countless smaller brands. However it was always discussed the absence of some of the biggest names in fashion high street retail such as Zara, or the department store Selfridges, or the luxury brands such as D&G\(^{32}\). During the time of the research taken for this piece many of the above mentioned have embraced the online space and started trading online with the latest high street moguls to join are Zara (starts trading online for A/W10), H&M (selling online in selected countries) and there are rumors floating in the online space that the next one is budget retailer PRIMARK( who have revamped there website in the past couple of months pointing to their increasing attention towards a stronger online presence).

In the high end of the fashion scene the situation is similar. Perhaps the success of online retailers such Net-A-Porter, who saw a pre-tax profit go sky high with growth of 300 per cent and 50 per cent increase in sales in January, 2009\(^{33}\), have led the way for luxury brands to step up their online appearance. Or perhaps it is the economical difficulties plus the inevitable change in customers’ behavior due to the technological developments that drove the move for the luxury pack. But most likely it is the mix of all of the above as the shift is drastic from only 33 per cent of

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\(^{30}\) http://www.fashionunited.com/News/Leads/Lowest_London_Sales_Growth_in_Four_Years_200909152346/

\(^{31}\) http://business.timesonline.co.uk/tol/business/industry_sectors/retailing/article4858993.ece


luxury brands actively present online a year ago, today the presence accounts for 66 per cent of luxury brands who completely are embracing the online opportunities of the market.34

4.2 How big is the market and what are the prospects for growth in the future?

According to Mintel this market has still a considerable potential for growth as different factors contribute to the market such as the continuous growth of technology use and the potential from Internet users who still haven’t bought clothing online. 35 The fashion online market has consistently been growing for the past few years as and this year has been estimated to reach £4.12 billion and fashion websites have become the most to buy from stealing the first place from auction and books website such as EBay and Amazon.

4.1.2 Key factors on the market

There are a number of factors which contribute to the growth and the development in the market.

✓ **Wider choices** - Retailers such Asos and Topshop introduce up to 1000 product styles each week. 36 Customers are able to browse through thousands of products in the comfort of their home any time of the day and make a purchase. They can compare with other retailers and also browse for style updates and suggestions.

✓ **Technology and Internet usage**- As mention in the previous point the usage of technology is still in growth and developing. There are new channels arising such us M.Retail (mobile phone shopping).

✓ **Improving service and websites**- Delivery times and website’s user friendliness are among the most important factors for the market. For many customers the delivery and online payment security are among the most problematic areas of online shopping( See Chapter Five ). Retailers such as John Lewis, Asos and Topshop are introducing new delivery options to suit customer convenience such as Next day delivery or in-store pick up.

Improvement of websites should be constant to stay in line with the customer demands. Many websites are adding catwalk views of their products (D&G), rotating images (Topshop) or style update videos (H&M). Also the opportunity to post product reviews adds to the retailer credibility (as mention in Chapter Two).

✓ **The Economic Situation** – The general economic situation will always have a big influence on the market. Although the Internet gives the customers wider choice and makes it easier to find discounts and sales deals if the Personal Disposable Income(PDI) of the customers is

34 http://adage.com/digital/article?article_id=139188

35 http://academic.mintel.com/sinatra/oxygen_academic/subject/view=reports_category&levels=21627&list=cat_items&cat=14&lev=1/display/id=395662/display/id=476179?select_section=476180

36 http://www.thetimes100.co.uk/case-study--the-product-life-cycle-online-fashion--134-364-1.php
not increasing there will be a drop in consumer spending which will reflect on the fashion online market as it will on other retail markets.

- **Market Growth** - The recent influx of number of retailers and fashion brands joining the online fashion business will contribute to grow the market however it will also increase competition and make it more difficult for online retailers to attract customers.

### 4.3 What are the main innovations?

- **Look Books** – There are number of innovations regarding online look books. Some retailers use video look books such as H&M and Yves Saint Lauren who launched their last A/W collection with a video instead of a catwalk show. H&M has also created an online Fashion Studio where the customers can create their own looks using selected products of the shop’s current collection.

- **Exploring the possibilities of Interactive websites** - Many brands have redesigned their website in the past year. The website now are more in tune with the current Web 2.0 movement where the customers can interact with the website, use it communicate with other people and change content. Zara has changed the brand website by including video views from different cities around the world and gave the users the option to listed to a local radio of the chosen city. The website was also recently updated with a style book. H&M are coming very forward with their Fashion Studio, H&M Video, H&M Magazine and style guide. Uniqlo has created an online calendar which combines dance, music and video together with a world clock and it can be synced with Facebook, Twitter or other Social Networks. Chanel uses videos instead of image advertising on the brand’s website and also gives the option to either see a product in image, where close ups and details on the garment are available, and/or the customers can see the catwalk of the outfit.

- **Delivery** - Delivery is one of the reasons why online shopping appeals to people. Retailer John Lewis offers free delivery on all items. According to research by Mintel free delivery is a very good reason for customers to shop online. There is a field of innovation in this department as convenience is of major importance to the online retail.

- **Mobile Marketing** - as mentioned in previous points of this piece Mobile marketing is quickly developing being into its very early stages at the moment. Recently online retailer Net-A-Porter released an iPhone application for online shopping through their mobile phones.

- **Customer Service** – The online discount retailer BrandAlley.co.uk carries a customer satisfaction survey with every customer which gives them a satisfaction rate of 95 per cent. This strategy and the amazing results won the website the Best Online Retailer Award for 2009. 37

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Social Shopper- US firm Zugara has developed a tool enabling people to try on clothes using their web cameras when shopping online. However the software is still not available and hasn’t been adopted by any of the big online retailers.

4.4 Who are the leading players on the market: high street vs. luxury brands vs. pure players?

At the moment there are three categories in the online fashion retail market. Luxury brands were lacking behind as were some of the leading high street retailers such as Zara and H&M. Galloway argued that probably the reason luxury brands not embracing the Internet earlier is purely because they are not tech savvy and are mostly family based businesses with tradition and are strongly product oriented. However he discovered that in the past year sales of luxury goods were down 34 per cent but the traffic to their websites increased by 66 per cent. Due to declining sales and increased popularity of the online shopping many luxury brands are re-branding and starting to innovate online.

Recently most of the luxury brands have started if not trading at least engaging in various Internet Marketing activities. Most of the brands such as Dior, Prada, Chanel, Louis Vuitton have initiated selling online via their websites, however they have at the moment limited their online product ranges to mostly leather goods and accessories. In the next 20 years the main target group of the luxury brands will be the tech savvy twenty-somethings of today thus it is more and more evident that going forward with online rebranding will be necessary for the big luxury brands if they want to stay relevant.

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<tr>
<th>Pure Players</th>
<th>High Street Brands</th>
<th>Luxury Brands</th>
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<tr>
<td>ASOS.com</td>
<td>&quot;TOPSHOP&quot;</td>
<td>D&amp;G</td>
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<td>BrandAlley</td>
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<td>BURBERRY</td>
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<td>NET-A-PORTER</td>
<td>RIVER ISLAND</td>
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<td>&quot;MONDAY&quot;</td>
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<td>&quot;MOYES&quot;</td>
<td>MARKS &amp; SPENCER</td>
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Figure 7 Fashion Brands selling online

38 http://www.culture-buzz.com/blog/Zugara-No-More-Need-For-Fitting-Rooms-2222.html

39 http://adage.com/digital/article?article_id=139188
However at the moment the best all-round performance online is held by the pure players such as Asos, Net-a-Porter and the luxury discounter Brand Alley.co.uk which might be because they have no offline business to invest in and have fully concentrated on their online performance. However they are closely followed by the high street with the likes of Topshop and Next and also big high street retailers such John Lewis. It is a matter of time to see whether the luxury brands will catch on with them or will struggle selling online.

4.5 Recommendations

The online market is growing and although a positive thing it also means more competition especially for smaller fashion brands with limited popularity. The leading brands with significant resources are the ones who convert the fashion customers into online customers by implementing innovative approaches. Small businesses should focus on increasing their customer satisfaction by improving website friendliness and content. Using customer satisfaction surveys or encouraging customers to send feedback is a good way to stay in touch with your customer, be aware of the perception of the brand and navigate the brand in the right direction marketing, product and service wise.

Improving service and delivery issues is of the utmost importance for the business therefore these should be paid attention to. Keeping customers satisfied and entertained during each visit will result in them coming back and in combination with different marketing tools increase the amount of unique users that visit the website. A small fashion brand with a solid online audience and the right mix of publicity and good quality product will be able to find its way towards the big online retailers which are constantly looking to offer variety to their ranges and increase the brands they sell. Thus increasing brand’s popularity and sales.
CHAPTER FIVE: THE ONLINE CONSUMER

This chapter focuses on the consumer and answering the question:

“Who are the online consumers and what is their attitude towards Internet Marketing?”

5.1 Who are the online shoppers?

Purchasing clothes online is becoming a present day phenomenon. According to Mintel one in fifth Internet users buy more clothes online then they do in-store where one in ninth are being the same as in-store. That leaves for some third of the Internet users who still haven’t shopped online for clothing and other fashion items. According to the same research men are less likely to shop online compared to women when the reasons may vary from their traditional reluctance when it comes to clothing shopping to “male unfriendliness” of some of the websites. The results of the survey suggest that there still a lot of customers to be attracted and accommodated to online shopping.

Figure 8 Results from Mintel’s Online Fashion research report

40http://academic.mintel.com/sinatra/oxygen_academic/subject/view=reports_category&levels=21838&list=cat_item s&cat=14&lev=1/display/id=395662/display/id=476190e
5.2 Online consumer typologies

In the Online Fashion 2009 industry report Mintel recognizes three consumer typologies: Happy Browsers, Web Worriers and Net Negatives. These typologies can be also recognized among the research conducted specifically for this piece. The typologies described by Mintel are to be found in many of the answers of the users who took part in the survey such as the reasons why they like/dislike online shopping or their familiarity and opinions towards current Internet Marketing tools. The typologies described below are illustrated by the results from Mintel’s research and the survey conducted online for this thesis.

✓ Group 1 Happy Browsers

Happy Browsers are the core customers for most online fashion retailers. They would be the ones who browse and shop impulsively online as they do in-store. They also are the ones who appreciate the convenience of online shopping and consider that it saves them time from going to the store. They are usually in their twenties or teen years and are tech savvy. They also will be the ones who are comfortable and in frequent use of current Internet Marketing means of communication such as blogs, online videos and social networks.

✓ Group 2 Web Worriers

Web worriers are the customers who are not convinced of the convenience of online shopping and are the ones who would consider a serious problem not being able to touch or feel the product before buying. They would be also the ones pointing sizing, web payment security and delivery/ refunds as the reasons why they are not frequent online shoppers. They might be again in the same age group as the Happy Browsers or simply low level Internet users who are not at ease with technology.

✓ Group 3 Net Negatives

Net Negatives are the type of customers who are unlikely to be interested in browsing online just for the fun of it. They would be wedged in the old styles of in-store shopping and are most likely to be in their late thirties or forties. They also might be not the fashion type but buying clothes only when they need them and thus difficult to target by Internet Marketing. According to Mintel they are however fond of the convenience of online shopping and this might be a good way to increase their interest and attract them to shop more often online.

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41 See Appendix B p.55
5.3 What are the attitudes towards shopping online?

The information in this subchapter is mainly gathered through primary research where some secondary research information gathered through industry reports might be also included. The full results of the research can be found in Appendix B (p.55)

When asked how often they use the Internet in their daily life 73 per cent of the participants chose to reply with “all the time” and 82 per cent of them stated that they shop online where 73 per cent shop online more often than previous years and some 59 per cent shop for clothing, shoes and fashion accessories.

The main concerns of those who shop for clothing online are in the areas of delivery (time and costs) and returns policy, sizing and not being able to try the product on and security of the payment. Just few of them stated ‘no concerns’. However on positive side customers seem to favour online shopping because of the convenience, the time saving factor, the wide variety of choice, being able to browse for “bargains” and the simplicity.

From the people that participated in the survey 52 per cent stated that they are interested in discovering small independent brands online and 30 per cent stated that they haven’t thought about it before but they would be. If given same price ranges with well known brands most people said that they would opt to purchase online from the independent brands since they are different and probably yields a sense of exclusivity, however some of them stated that they would stick to the well known as the quality is tested.

5.4 What are the attitudes towards Internet Marketing tools?

- On Viral Marketing
  Some 59 per cent of the participants have already signed up for a newsletter emails from their favourite brands however only 2 per cent say these result in purchase “very often” where 36 per cent state that it happens sometimes and 25 per cent never have bought anything they’ve read about in the email newsletter. When it comes to viral videos 66 per cent say that they enjoy watching brand related videos online and 57 per cent of them consider that their interest in a brand will increase after seeing such video.

- On Blogs and Twitter
  People tend to like reading blogs over 60 per cent state that they enjoy reading blogs on various subjects however 57 per cent say they haven’t bought anything after reading about it on a said blog. The reasons people say they like reading blogs vary from the ability to share an opinion on a subject and the option of reading alternative point of view to the fact that they are entertaining and informative on many different subjects, when it comes to fashion blogs they are considered inspirational and classified as “an instant trend reports”. Around 66 per cent are familiar with Twitter but only 14 per cent are currently using it.
On Social Networks

From the 86 per cent of the participants who use social networks 64 per cent would join a group of their fashion brand or become a fan of it as the preferred social network is Facebook. Some 41 per cent pay attention to the ads displayed in their social network. However they state that the main reason they use it is to stay in touch with friends or because everyone is on it. From the people who took part in the online survey 59 per cent would be interested to know more about the fashion brands like who are the people behind them what are they into and the brand’s new campaigns.

5.5 Recommendations

The amount of Internet users and people shopping online keeps growing. Making Internet users comfortable about shopping online is essential. According to the research, presuming participants were genuine in their responses, eliminating delivery issues, more detailed sizing specifications, ensuring safe payment methods and accommodating refund policy should result in increase of sales. Online shoppers seem to be very interested in finding the best “bargain” and sending out promotional emails when during stock clearance is a good way to boost traffic and increase customer attention.

When it comes to Internet Marketing tools most of the participants seem to be responsive and desire closer contact with the brands. The interest in smaller more unique brands is encouraging for businesses such as Amana. Implementing set of Social Media tools as well as viral campaigns will increase the interest in the brand. Using online videos on their website or via the social media channels has the potential to attract a younger group of customers. Although the results of this survey point that people are not so interested in Twitter this is merely because of the scope of the said survey and further research is encouraged. Twitter has huge amount of followers and is a very useful way to get in contact with other businesses, the online media and to be discovered by new customers.
CHAPTER SIX: CASE STUDY AMANA

“How can small fashion brand AMANA benefit from the opportunities presented by Internet Marketing?”

In order to provide a consistent answer to the main question of the thesis this chapter will analyze Amana’s current marketing strategy and online performance. This will allow the author to target the current issues and based on the research from previous chapters provide advice on how to optimize the brand’s performance online by taking advantage of the opportunities presented by Internet Marketing. The information about their current marketing strategy and target group. All information regarding the brand’s Marketing Plan has been taken from Amana’s Business Plan 2008 report, which was provided by the brand’s manager.

6.1 The Brand: Who is AMANA?

Amana is an ethical fashion company. It was founded in 2006 by two fashion graduates, respectively from London College of Fashion and Central Saint Martin’s College of Art and Design in London, Erin Tabrar and Helen Pye. Currently there are five people involved in the business which share their responsibilities with the two founders heading the creative and managing side of the business.

They use environmentally friendly textiles - organic cottons and hemp mixes, and socially responsible production methods – working on a fair-trade basis with women artisans in Morocco to manufacture all of Amana’s clothes. This means they pay them fairly, give them at least a 50% advance each season, provide technical support and training, provide business advice and ensure good working conditions for all employees.

The online website www.amanalondon.com launched on 1st March 2007. They launched the wholesale element of the business in January 2008 and this now makes up over 80% of the business income.

6.1.1 The Brand’s Vision and Mission Statement

“To provide beautiful clothes with ethical origins and to illustrate that environmentally and socially responsible fashion can equate exquisite design and quality.”

Amana’s philosophy is to create clothes that marry beautiful design with ethical production practices. They source suppliers whose mission is to create fabrics that have minimal negative impact on the environment. The result is a collection of garments hand made from organic cottons, organically produced silks, soy and bamboo blends and hemp mixes.

All garments are made by women artisans in the Middle Atlas Mountains in Morocco with whom they work on a fair-trade basis.
6.1.2 The Product

Amana currently produces a collection of 25-35 pieces each season. The focus is mainly on smart casual and softly tailored womenswear. The range retails at mid-market prices, from £45 for jersey separates to £200 for printed silk dresses. The brand currently has 14 stockists in the UK, Europe and America as well as retailing direct to customers through their own website.

6.2 Who is Amana’s Target Group

Amana currently targets the stylish, fashionable eco-minded women aged between 25-40 years old mainly based in the UK. However the online market gives them the opportunity to market to the stylish, fashionable eco-minded females from around the world. Also by adding certain interactive marketing tools they have the ability to bring in younger customers. It is important that customers are always in the centre of an online strategy. Based on the research from Chapter Five the author has found that customers need to be involved, nurtured, served and given value to.
Core customer aged between 25 and 40

Young professionals in London, Brighton, Edinburgh and Bristol

Those with ethical lifestyle interests - buy fair-trade and organic food, re-cycle, use eco-friendly cleaning products such as Ecover.

Women buying for themselves

ABC1 Socio group

Culturally aware

6.2.1 Why This Segment is The Target Market?

The new consumer we have identified is young and stylish with ethics having an impact on their purchasing decisions.

25-40 year olds make up the majority of this new consumer base. They lived through the consumer driven 1980’s and are now beginning to question the unethical practices of many multi-national companies.

London, Edinburgh, Brighton and Bristol are cities that attract young creative professionals, and where new trends such as ethical living first became fashionable and are now well established.

Those consumers who already have an interest in living a more ethical lifestyle and make conscious choices to purchase more ethically, such as buying organic and Fairtrade food are most likely to respond to ethical fashion.

Mintel has found the most ethically active are those in ABC1 socio groups and suggests these groups remain the key target groups for future growth.

The core customers are likely to be educated and understand the arguments surrounding sweat shop labour and the damage to the environment caused by conventional cotton farming. Consequently they are likely to read The Guardian, The Times or The Observer and may read ethical magazines such as Sublime, New Consumer, and The Ecologist.

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42 See Appendix C p.71 for the NRS Social Grade Definitions (UK)
6.3 Current Marketing Mix

Amana’s current strategy focuses mainly on wholesale and some online retailing. The brand has good relations with the press and gets regular features in some of the biggest fashion magazines and newspapers in the UK. They use their website not only for transactional purposes but also as a promotional tool and are benefiting from positive feedback from their customers.

**Product** – The nature of garments lies deep with being stylish and contemporary. They are design oriented focusing on smart/casual wear with soft tailoring. Their unique selling point us the ethical origins of the product.

**Price** – The products are segmented in the upper end high street price range to compete with the likes of Joseph, Nicole Fahri and Reiss but are cheaper than other ethical brands in the same segment such as Noir. Prices range from £70 for a silk top to £250 for a winter coat.

**Place** – The brand is sold through other retailers in the UK, Europe and America. They also retail through their own website and other online retailers. 43

**Promotion** – The brand attends major fashion fairs twice a year in Paris and London to increase its popularity among retailers and has established relations with major press magazines and newspapers such as Elle, Marie Claire, Grazia, The Times, The Telegraph and The Observer among others. 44

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43 Refer to Appendix D p.72 for more information on points of sale

44 Refer to Appendix E p.73 for examples of Press coverage
6.4 Amana’s Online Performance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>March 2007</th>
<th>March 2008</th>
<th>March 2009</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unique Visitors</td>
<td>1734</td>
<td>1991</td>
<td>1872</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Visits</td>
<td>2434</td>
<td>2756</td>
<td>2658</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visit Duration Average (in seconds)</td>
<td>238</td>
<td>157</td>
<td>223</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visit Duration from 0-30 seconds %</td>
<td>44.7</td>
<td>58.2</td>
<td>58.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Referrals from Search Engines %</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>3.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Referrals from other websites %</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>88.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Main sources of referral (starting with the most)</td>
<td>- Other online retailers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Online Media</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Blogs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Content sharing websites (delicious.com)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Online Media</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Trade Shows websites</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Blogs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Other Online Retailers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Facebook</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Online Media</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Other Online Retailers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Blogs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Facebook</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Unique Visitors for the year</td>
<td>11 621</td>
<td>22 706</td>
<td>14 241</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presence in Social Media Networks</td>
<td>Group on Facebook</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Own Blogs</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Viral Campaigns</td>
<td>Email subscription for promotional events</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1 Source: Amana’s website statistics

6.4.1 Analysis of web performance and online presence

Amana’s number of visitors, as that the company has a small business which is just staring, in the first month of the launch of their website is reasonable however the growth year on year is insignificant and even declining. This can be explained with the fact that the company has not
prioritised using the web and online marketing possibilities to grow their business and were more involved in growing through wholesale.

For example the recommended for fashion blogs is between 2000 and 5000 per month and online retailer ASOS got 5.4 million unique users in December 2008.\textsuperscript{45} However ASOS is a website with many loyal customers and is an online phenomenon in the fashion business these numbers are just for orientation. For a small fashion business the amount of visitors for an average popularity fashion blogs should be a good target.

6.4.2 Current Issues

From the data presented in the previous point several issues can be derived as follows:

- The low number of unique visitors
- The majority visitors do not return to the website more than once a month
- The duration of average visit is too low which implies that website content must be improved in order to keep the visitors for longer
- The referrals from Search Engines is at a very low percentage
- The content in the brand’s Facebook group is rarely updated since its creation thus the number of members has not increased thus leading to insignificant visits to the brand’s website
- The brand doesn’t have a blog or any other interactive tool that would increase the interest and respectively the time spend on their website
- Although there are some referrals from outside blogs and content sharing websites these are at a very low number
- Although the brand offers an email subscription to its visitors and have a positive feedback from customers, they are sporadic and don’t drive enough web traffic.
- Lack of other forms of viral campaigns
- The brand doesn’t use other content sharing websites or a combination of social networking tools which enables the customers to easily stay connected and interact with the brand
- The website visits tend to increase after publications in the press and these result in increase in sales as explained by the brand’s manager in an interview.

These issues will be addressed in the next chapter by developing a set of goals and a strategy mix of objectives and tactics to improve their performance.

\textsuperscript{45} http://business.timesonline.co.uk/tol/business/industry_sectors/retailing/article5549326.ece
6.5 Goals Performance

As discussed in Chapter Two Chaffey(2006) has established a set of online goals which are referred to as Internet Marketing’s 5S’s. They are used to measure the current performance of a business regardless whether it is already based online or is looking towards entering the online market. In this case this an analysis of Amana’s goals performance at this point of their online business development. Some of the information needed for this and the following steps of the brand’s online performance analysis has been taken out of interviews or from the website statistics.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goals</th>
<th>Goal Performance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sell</td>
<td>Amana sells mainly through third parties and they bring 80 per cent of the company’s revenues. Although selling online the brand hasn’t taken advantage of the full potential the online market offers. In March 2009 the online sales amounted 3.7 per cent from the site unique visitors for the month.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serve</td>
<td>Amana has a positive feedback from their customers about their product and they have a strong USP which wins the customers. Tackling issues such as delivery, payment security and refunds will be beneficial to increased customer satisfaction.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speak</td>
<td>There is an option for customers to contact the brand with feedback. However there is no direct interaction on the website, the use of Social Networks as a tool although existent seems to be neglected and there is a low duration of time spent on the website due to the lack of engaging content.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Save</td>
<td>At this point there is no information how much are the costs for the brand’s online business therefore an investigation of this, which could lead to cost reduction, will be beneficial for the brand.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sizzle</td>
<td>At the moment the full potential of building the brand online, by facilitating interactive opportunities and bringing extra value, is not being used.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

46 Please refer to Appendix F p.74 for full interview with Amana’s Manager Erin Tabrar
### 6.6 E-Market SWOT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STRENGTHS</th>
<th>WEAKNESSES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Established reputation for high quality garments that are priced lower than other ethical alternatives of similar design and quality</td>
<td>• The low number of unique website visitors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Established good name and brand identity with buyers and press</td>
<td>• Website content</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Positive feedback from customers</td>
<td>• Search engines optimization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Differentiated by ethical status in the mainstream and by strength of design in the ethical</td>
<td>• Maintaining interactive relationship with customers via Social Media</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Presence in blogs and content sharing websites</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Low Email Marketing activity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Lack of other forms of viral campaigns</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OPPORTUNITIES</th>
<th>THREATS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Expanding internationally</td>
<td>• Rapid increase in sales will result in increase in production facilities investments which may be untimely</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Using the online business to grow offline</td>
<td>• Negative customer response to social media campaigns may result in hurting the brand’s image</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Growing sales</td>
<td>• Wrong choice of website content may have reverse reaction on the brand’s existing customers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Increasing brand awareness and popularity through online social media and other Internet Marketing tools</td>
<td>• Online competition from other ethical and non ethical brands</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Increasing customer satisfaction</td>
<td>• Value online retailers and discounters which lower consumer’s idea how much it costs to produce garments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Adding more value through offering customers to interact with the brand</td>
<td>• The unpredictability of popularity of Internet Marketing tools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Creating new B2B connections</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Strengthening brand’s image and transparency by offering customer behind the scenes materials</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Establishing the brand early on in the growing online market</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 6.7 Brand Perception

The brand has been known for its tailored garments and high quality designs as well as their ethical origins. It has been very well received by the press and has a variety of publications online and offline. However since the online ethical market is very small compared with the mainstream at the moment Amana is trying to emphasize more on the fact that they are fashion brand without compromising its ethical USPs.
### 6.8 ONLINE MARKETING STRATEGY MIX

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goals</th>
<th>Objectives for the first six months</th>
<th>Tactics for reaching the Objectives</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Sell** | ✓ Creating new B2B connections by contacting new online retailers.  
✓ Increasing web traffic by 50 per cent to reach an average of 3000 unique users per month  
✓ Increasing sales to 8 per cent of site visitors | ✓ Investing in upgrading the current website to meet the demands of contemporary online fashion retail market |
| **Serve** | ✓ Increase time spent on the website (decreasing the current average of 50 per cent who spend between 0-30 s)  
✓ Add more value to the website and the brand by providing customers with additional entertainment such as a brand blog or videos  
✓ Create new promotional events for regular customers  
✓ Increase interaction with other content sharing websites | ✓ By creating entertainment on the website it will both increase the time stickiness and add value to the brand  
✓ The brand may benefit from implementing a blog on its website which it can provide their views on current fashion and ethical issues. Propose style advice and just inform their customers on what’s going on with Amana  
✓ Adding video content for example of their production facilities in Morocco and the brand’s team travels there will increase the brand’s transparency and credibility  
✓ Making referrals to content sharing website such as digg.com may drive more traffic and create buzz |
| **Speak** | ✓ Provide customers with the option to follow the brand through Social Media Websites  
✓ Survey at least 200 customers online  
✓ Increase the visitors to the blog or other community section of the website  
✓ Grow email coverage | ✓ Simply inserting links to follow the brand online on Facebook or Twitter will make it easier for the brand to stay in touch with customers and update them on new initiatives and products  
✓ Design a stylish interesting newsletters to be sent out every few weeks with updates on products, promotions and entertaining new content from the website |
| **Save** | ✓ Generate more sales through using the same marketing budget or with minimal increase by using a combination of free Internet Marketing tools | ✓ Implementing the above tactics in period of time will result in increase of visitors and will give new insight for future strategy and improvement and point areas that cost reduction is possible |
| **Sizzle** | ✓ Improve the brands reach through Search engines  
✓ Increase brand awareness through Social Media | ✓ Hire a SEO agent to optimize the website reach or organically drive traffic by using the above tactics and optimizing the key words search  
✓ Update regularly Social Media with interesting content and stay in touch with the brand’s customers |
CHAPTER SEVEN: CONCLUSION

Several years ago having an online website was enough for a fashion brand. Many of them used them simply to provide information pointing to their nearest store or display the collections without the option of purchase. Social networks were just emerging into the mainstream and online fashion in all its forms was used merely as a source of inspiration for the fashionista. This has all changed now and so has the face of fashion and fashion marketing. Utilizing the opportunities which Internet Marketing and the online fashion market present small businesses with is time consuming and ever evolving process. The online fashion market is still growing and new Internet Marketing developments and industry innovation are constantly emerging. Perhaps this text fits more the Introduction chapter because no conclusion would be final on this topic until technology keeps developing. Internet Marketing will continue adapting and implementing new ideas and theories to apply into the growing market. The emergence of new technologies and the growth of ones which are currently in the “early adopters stages” (Mobile Marketing) will demand new ways of modifying them to existing marketing models. The online fashion marketing is a hands on experience for any company and this is proven by the late entrance of many of the big high street and luxury brands which until recently had shied away and have been concentrating on different priorities. However at present the competition for the online shopper is increasingly fierce and therefore a full attention to ones online performance and strategies is essential.

During an interview Erin Tabrar, the manager of Amana, has mentioned that among the amount of other daily issues paying a serious attention to Internet Marketing has been low on their priority list47. However she recognises that there is a need for a change. For a small fashion business (SFB) which has no own stores focusing on online performance may not only increase direct business to consumer sales but also create potential for expanding through new business to business ventures and entering new international markets. From the brand web activity analysis in Chapter 7 could be seen that when the company was attending industry events the traffic towards the website from the said event website increased significantly. However in order to keep potential customers on the website it needs to be content driven, attractive, easy to use and most of all interactive. With the increasing amount of online competition in the fashion industry it is essential for brands to re-brand,-re-mix and adapt for the online market.

The customer is the core of any marketing strategy and even more so when it comes to Internet Marketing because the main reason for success in the online market is providing extra value. Using social media, social networks and community marketing will not only create increased brand awareness and popularity but also provide first hand valuable insight of who are the brand’s customers and what are their needs and wants. On other hand it will serve to the customer as an update when something new is going on that they might be interested in. It proves important for the online shopper, as discussed in Chapter Five, to know more about the brand they buy from which can be explained with the significant amount of choice offered from countless brands.

47 See Appendix F p.75 for the complete interview with Erin Tabrar
Providing the option to the customer to be part of the brands world and know more about it results in increased credibility and improves brand image. However using the social media and viral marketing should be applied with care as they can work both ways and end up ruin brand’s reputation. A big name in fashion may bounce back and even earn in the long run from the created buzz but for a small brand which is still building its relationship with the customers it could be fatal.

Small fashion brands should also work on their online value proposition and improve their service of deliveries and refunds as one of the main issues in the market for the customer. The leading brands are the innovators who have the appropriate resource on hand thus adopting forward strategies to attract more customers to shop online by focusing on the major problem areas as discussed in Chapter Four. This can be useful for SFB as they can benefit from introducing the solutions to their own websites.

Fashion businesses should constantly monitor their online performance and conduct online surveys which will keep them up to date with the changing consumers. The fickleness of the market is significant therefore keeping constant track on the customers’ desires or dissatisfactions will prove important in future where evaluation of current strategies and developments will show what works in long term. Although this piece has concentrated on the benefits or setbacks of the online fashion business it is important to combine internet marketing methods with traditional marketing for stability and more complete brand strategy. The author is convinced that further research in the areas of web developments and software, social media, online media and online shopping will indicate new directions and new strategies for the fashion brands.

After conducting the research for the purposes of writing this piece the author believes that being part of the fast paced, ever changing and evolving world of the online fashion industry and taking advantage of the opportunities it presents, by adopting creative internet marketing to their existing strategies, is at the moment the best chance for success to ambitious small fashion businesses.
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### APPENDIX A

### BRANDS WITH FANS ON FACEBOOK

Last checked 06.11.2009

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LUXURY BRANDS</th>
<th>HIGH STREET BRANDS</th>
<th>SMALL INDEPENDENT BRANDS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>D&amp;G-384,568 fans</td>
<td>H&amp;M- 1,325,831 fans</td>
<td>AMANA- 303 fans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BURBERRY- 699,596 fans</td>
<td>Zara- 1,355,830 fans</td>
<td>Eco Boudoir- 49 fans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRADA-281,730 fans</td>
<td>Topshop- 311,109 fans</td>
<td>CHOUCHOU Couture- 246 fans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mark Jacobs- 172,211 fans</td>
<td>River Island- 266,951 fans</td>
<td>People Tree-1,002 fans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alexander McQueen-38,712 fans</td>
<td>French Connection-108,726 fans</td>
<td>Rare Fashion- 665 fans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bottega Veneta- 20,338 fans</td>
<td>Primark- 59,904 fans</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHANEL-62,323 fans</td>
<td>American Apparel- 153,227 fans</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dior-72,805 fans</td>
<td>Mango- 240,542 fans</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miu Miu-53,557 fans</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DKNY-  62,323 fans</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ralph Lauren- 489,022 fans</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## APPENDIX B

### Final thesis questionnaire

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Element</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. What age are you?</td>
<td>multiple choice (max.1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. What is your gender?</td>
<td>multiple choice (max.1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. What is your occupation?</td>
<td>multiple choice (max.1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. How often do you go shopping for clothes/shoes?</td>
<td>multiple choice (max.1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Would you say you are fashion conscious/follow trends?</td>
<td>multiple choice (max.1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. How often do you use the Internet in your daily life?</td>
<td>multiple choice (max.1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Please list the main reasons you are using it for like study, work etc.</td>
<td>textline</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Do you shop online?</td>
<td>multiple choice (max.1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. If you do would you say you shop more often online now then couple of years ago?</td>
<td>multiple choice (max.1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Do you buy online any fashion items such as clothes, shoes, accessories?</td>
<td>multiple choice (max.1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. What are your main concerns when shopping online such as security, delivery etc?</td>
<td>textline</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. What do you like/dislike about shopping online?</td>
<td>textline</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question</td>
<td>Type</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. How important is for you the interface of the website you shop from?</td>
<td>multiple choice (max.1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Have you signed up for newsletters from any favourite brands?</td>
<td>multiple choice (max.1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. If you have, how often would you say they lead you to buying something from this brand after reading such newsletter?</td>
<td>multiple choice (max.1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. If you haven't signed up for any newsletters from favourite brands can you please say why?</td>
<td>textline</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. Do you use social networks?</td>
<td>multiple choice (max.1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. Which one would you say it's your favourite and why?</td>
<td>textline</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. continue. . .</td>
<td>New Page</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. Would you follow your favourite brands there and join a group or become a fan?</td>
<td>multiple choice (max.1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21. Do you pay attention to the ads in your network?</td>
<td>multiple choice (max.1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22. Do you read blogs? Please state briefly why are they appealing/not appealing to you?</td>
<td>textline</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23. Have you ever bought anything after you read about it in a blog?</td>
<td>multiple choice (max.1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24. Do you know what Twitter is?</td>
<td>multiple choice (max.1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25. If yes are you using it?</td>
<td>multiple choice (max.1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question</td>
<td>Type</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26. Would you follow a fashion brand, fashion reporter, blogger on Twitter?</td>
<td>multiple choice (max.1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27. Do you like fashion blogs showing the latest trends on the street or from the catwalk?</td>
<td>multiple choice (max.1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28. Would you be interested to know more about favourite fashion brands, being updated one what they do on weekly basis, new campaigns, or what the people working there are into?</td>
<td>multiple choice (max.1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29. Did the economic situation in the past year have any effect on your shopping/spending habits?</td>
<td>multiple choice (max.1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30. Do you like watching videos on websites such as YouTube involving viral campaigns of brands that are meant to be entertaining, rather than purely selling a product?</td>
<td>multiple choice (max.1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31. Would you say that your interest in a brand would increase after seeing such a video that grabbed your attention?</td>
<td>multiple choice (max.1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32. Are you interested in discovering and buying clothes from new small fashion brands that are not highly popular but have interesting products and appealing image on the Internet?</td>
<td>multiple choice (max.1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33. Considering the price range of the clothes is the same and both offer products you like, Would you rather buy online something from a small independent brand or would you stick to the well known big fashion names? Please provide brief explanation.</td>
<td>textline</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34. Provided that you have the finances, would you buy clothes online from luxury brands such as Chanel, Dior, Prada and etc. or would you rather go to the store?</td>
<td>multiple choice (max.1)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
35. Finally, would you please explain shortly why do you prefer the option selected in the above question?

MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTIONS RESULTS

**What age are you?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>under 20</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20-25</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25-30</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-35</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35+</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

n=43

**What is your gender?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>female</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>male</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

n=43

**What is your occupation?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>student</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>professional</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>unemployed</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>none</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

n=43

**How often do you go shopping for clothes/shoes?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>more than once a week</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>once a week</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>every couple of weeks</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>once a month</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>once in few months</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>several times a year</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Would you say you are fashion conscious/follow trends?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Yes, definitely</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>#12</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28%</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

How often do you use the Internet in your daily life?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>All the time</th>
<th>Frequently</th>
<th>Not very often</th>
<th>Rarely</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>#32</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>74%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Do you shop online?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>#36</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>86%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If you do would you say you shop more often online now then couple of years ago?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>#32</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>76%</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Do you buy online any fashion items such as clothes, shoes, accessories?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>#26</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>62%</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

How important is for you the interface of the website you shop from?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Importance</th>
<th>Very important</th>
<th>It doesn't matter as long as they have w...</th>
<th>Not important</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>#31</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>76%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Have you signed up for newsletters from any favourite brands?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>#26</td>
<td>63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>#15</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### If you have, how often would you say they lead you to buying something from this brand after reading such newsletter?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very often</td>
<td>#1</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Happens sometimes</td>
<td>#16</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hardly ever</td>
<td>#9</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Never</td>
<td>#11</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Do you use social networks?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>#38</td>
<td>90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>#4</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Would you follow your favourite brands there and join a group or become a fan?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>#28</td>
<td>74%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>#10</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Do you pay attention to the ads in your network?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>#18</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>#20</td>
<td>53%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Have you ever bought anything after you read about it in a blog?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>#14</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>#25</td>
<td>64%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you know what Twitter is?</td>
<td>74%</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If yes are you using it?</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>82%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Would you follow a fashion brand, fashion reporter, blogger on Twitter?</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>61%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you like fashion blogs showing the latest trends on the street or from the catwalk?</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Would you be interested to know more about favourite fashion brands, being updated one what they do on weekly basis, new campaigns, or what the people working there are into?</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did the economic situation in the past year have any effect on your shopping/spending habits?</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>51%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Do you like watching videos on websites such as YouTube involving viral campaigns of brands that are meant to be entertaining, rather than purely selling a product?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>#29</td>
<td>74%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#10</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Would you say that your interest in a brand would increase after seeing such a video that grabbed your attention?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>#25</td>
<td>64%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#14</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Are you interested in discovering and buying clothes from new small fashion brands that are not highly popular but have interesting products and appealing image on the Internet?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>Never thought about it but why not</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>#23</td>
<td>#13</td>
<td>#3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>59%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Provided that you have the finances, would you buy clothes online from luxury brands such as Chanel, Dior, Prada and etc. or would you rather go to the store? or would you rather go to the store?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I'd shop online</th>
<th>I'd go to the store</th>
<th>Don't mind either way whichever is more convenient</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>#6</td>
<td>#20</td>
<td>#13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15%</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
OPEN QUESTIONS RESULTS

QUESTION 7 Please list the main reasons you are using it for like study work etc.

Work, Shopping, Communication
work, information
to check my facebook and do trend research
for information
Recruiting, News, Sports, Networking
studying, web
study, hobby
study & personal interests
work, entertainment, news, inspiration
mostly work-related, but also to check what's going on in the world
for educational purposes, for entertainment news, for shopping
Entertainment, daily issues
to stay in touch with friends, for research purposes, for latest news
study, work, shop, fun
chattting to friends, procrastinating
email, social networking, work purposes, flat hunting, job hunting, banking
research, latest designer collections, news, work
main use is for work - I'm graphic designer. also to check skateboard competitions and shop for t-shirts with cool prints!
stay in touch with friends, inform myself on different subjects
study, entertainment
work, connecting with friends, communication, shopping, information etc.
work
internet
communication, shopping, for work
work
entertainment, work
I'm studying computer science, working with web applications, for fun
work, news, research, entertainment
search, shopping, info

entertainment, chat, information
work, fun
Work, study, communication, blogging, read news
work
school work, browsing sites for news or trends
research
both work and leisure
work, fun
to relax the hard day's work stress, for study, sometimes necessary for my job
work, study, shopping, communication
work, entertainment, education
at this time - pastime, usually - for study
Work, leisure, networking
QUESTION 11 What are your main concerns when shopping online such as security, delivery, etc?

Security, Delivery
the quality of the delivered products

delivery
Card Payment
size
security
delivery & mistaking size or colours
If the product will look actually look as good as on the photo
don't really have any concerns
Perhaps delivery time
Security, Delivery, Unable to test the product, wrong placed order
Mainly the security of my credit card
transportation costs are often too high
untrustworthy websites, scams, failed delivery
Delivery charges, or not being home and so missing deliveries
on-time delivery
time of delivery
if the clothes will fit me well
The quality and sizing of the product not meeting my expectations.
delivery
it's cheaper and easier
price security
delivery and originality
size
delivery time & rates
I'm not sure if the clothes would suit me
unable to try it on before buying; returns
n/a

security
delivery
Quality of product, credit card fraud

it's mainly because I don't have credit card although I would love to shop online for some brands that do not have here in Holland
like to view before buying
website's return policy, website’ layout is user friendly, delivery times
quality
main is about if this is the right thing for me, as I didn't saw it on me; delivery, too (as I live in bg)
sizing is my main concern
converse, kappa

Security, quality, return policies
may be delivery
QUESTION 12 What do you like/dislike about shopping online?

Not being able to touch, feel fabric
delay of the delivery

I don’t Shop Online for god sake
cannot try on!
it takes no time
it is faster than normal shopping but it’s risky because you might not be satisfied
that I cannot touch/try on the product
I like that I am able to find some stuff I can’t find in real shops; also it's sometimes cheaper shopping online
I like that I don't have to spend hours going from shop to shop in search of a certain thing when I can easily and quickly often find it online
cheaper prices, wider range
I like that there is a lot of choice on all kinds of products/ I dislike that a lot of online shops don’t ship to Bulgaria
I dislike that sometimes transportation costs are too high
simple, easy, wider choice
I like being able to price-check products on different websites, also put off by delivery charges
I like how quick you can find what you are looking for; dislike that I cannot actually try the products before I buy them
I like that I can find things that I can’t usually find in the stores in Serbia/ I don’t like that I need to wait that long to get my purchases
I like that there is so many options, u can find almost anything u want!
Sometimes the product looks better in the pic, not when I see it myself.
I dislike the difficulty in choosing size. I like that it does not take lot of time. it's convenient
price
It is very fast and uncomplicated
that you can’t touch the thing that you buy
like - convenience; dislike - delivery time & rates, not enough on-line shops in BG
it's easy, fast, a lot of stuff, there are comments and recommendations from other people
unable to try it on before buying; returns
like it all. do not like to shop food online because they always bring food close to the exp date
you can do it any time and without going out
dislike: see the item only 2 dimensional
LIKE: The good bargains sometimes, the convenience.

I like because I can purchase things from around the world, I dislike because I barely know if it's a good fit or material
taking a risk without seeing what im buying
Like: more straightforward and less time consuming than shopping on the highstreet; no hassle, the convenience of anytime shopping, usually better value. Dislike: Delivery time if longer than couple of days
its fast
can't touch or feel the product
great variety of items, better prices
it takes time
it very easy
QUESTION 16 If you haven't signed up for any newsletters from favourite brands can you please say why?

I don't like to be bothered just like this survey
I have!
it is spam
irritating really, I know when I want to check my brands without being given newsletters!
sometimes the thought of receiving too many newsletters puts me off signing up
I don't want it to fill up my inbox.
no time
Because it is very annoying to get so much e-mails.
i'm shopping from sites like amazon.com and online bookstores, but as mentioned no clothes
no reason actually, just accustomed to clicking "no" when asked
Whenever I wish to shop online I'd visit their webpage. It happens very rarely.
don't have any
no spam
wish to see more important letters in my mailbox
I don't need anyone suggesting me what product could I or should I buy.
I haven't time to read all newsletters

QUESTION 17 Which one would you say it's your favourite and why?

MSN Messenger, instant communication
Facebook, because it's informal and almost all of my colleagues are using it, too;
facebook, because I have many friends there
Facebook
Facebook... it's easy to use
facebook , studievz
because I found old friends and I can keep in touch with those who live far away
I don't use any social networks, I am very protective of my privacy
facebook, cause most of my friends are there
facebook and twitter, I like to stay in touch with lots of friends who live abroad
Facebook, Everybody's on it
facebook cause most of my friends are there
facebook, to stay in touch with friends and to network
facebook - tidy, easy to use and my friends use it
facebook - this is the only one I use but I like being able to stay connected with all my friends in one place. It is particularly good for sharing photos
facebook, it's very good for networking
MySpace to promote my band and my t-shirt line; facebook to interact with people who I don't see often
facebook to keep in touch with friends and to network
Facebook. Everyone uses it, it's easier to find old friends.
facebook, because it has very good interface and I have many friends there.
MySpace - it helps me with my hobby
facebook
StudiVZ because all my friends are there and a good platform for new films, music and trends.
Facebook, cause there isn't a better 1 (to be in touch with my friends)
maybe twitter.com because it saves time
facebook; it got me in touch with friends from the past from all over the world
facebook, a lot of people in it
Facebook. All my friends have an account there
Facebook because I can reunited with old friends and meet new people
facebook . a lot of people I know use it
Facebook ? helps keep in touch with and "re-discover" old friends/family; allows you to share your day to
day life with people anywhere in the world whilst giving you control over the amount of information you wish to share.

facebook
facebook is fun and useful
I use social networks but don`t like them. The one I use most is my least favourite: Facebook. It`s a waste of time combined with crappy interface.

fb

Facebook
facebook

QUESTION 20 Do you read blogs? Please state briefly why are they appealing/not appealing to you?

Instant trend reports
Yes, I do; variety of subjects and interesting positions
I usually skip them.... I haven`t really thought why
Not appealing
nope
do

yes. they are usually updated on a daily basis, they are up-to-date, informative, inspirational, written by real people (not necessarily professionals in that area) for real people
I like to read street style blogs, to see what people around the world are wearing
I do read fashion blogs. They give me outfit ideas and could be very inspirational.
Sometimes. Some of them are very interesting and well-presented
Yes cause some of them are very professional and also can learn a lot from them
no...mostly very pretentious and borish
only one, my boyfirend's blog. I just don't have the time to get into any others - sometimes it feels like there is too much information out there
yes I read. they are informational and written by passionate people
yes because I can read other people's opinions on issues that I'm interested in
I like fashion blogs, there are links to where I can get the clothes and they are usually very affordable
No, I have no time.
sometimes
I don't
sometimes
No so often except it is a music thing :)
no

Yes, convenient access to the info I need
yes, there are a lot of solutions there
a different/alternative point of view
very rare, well I don't mind them
only sports
Yes. Like the different points of view, the input from the participants, I find lots of entertaining postings
and comments
I read some fashion blog to get inspired n knowledge about what people are wearing these days
no
very occasionally
no
If they're too aggressive to catch an attention, I hate them
I don`t. I tried reading and writing in blogs when they appeared but they are such a mess that made me quit doing so. Never gave them a second chance.
sometimes...to read something new
No
often
QUESTION 31 Considering the price range of the clothes is the same and both offer products you like Would you rather buy online something from a small independent brand or would you stick to the well known big fashion names? Please provide brief explanation.

Big brands are tried and tested. Smaller brands sizing, quality, fabric and finishing may be an issue
Yes, I would buy indy, because of the one-of-a-kind-ness
no I wouldn't because im finiky about the size and the fit so id stick to the brand im affiliated with as id be sure of the fit etc
NOOOOOO probably independent brands because I don't like having the same products as everyone else
if I like the small-independent-brand-clothes, yes I buy it/them
no, I cannot be sure if it suits me
Depends. I would probably prefer to touch the material and try on the garment, so probably I would choose to buy directly from the shop of a big fashion company
i'm always on the lookout for new cool stuff so i'll go for the independent brand
I would say it very much depends. Would be curious to get my hands on garments from an independent brand but would probably trust the well-known brand more
I choose the small independent brand, always cool to discover something new and worthy maybe small independent brand, sounds cooler
small brand...better to support smaller businesses and more personal...additionally its unpleasant buying everything from major corporations
I would rather buy from an independent brand, as it is more likely that no-one else I know or see will be wearing the same outfit. Also I like to support independents when I can as it can be a struggle for smaller companies and they give the market some v
I can always buy from the well-known brand, so I would try the small independent one definitely online independent brand, that's how I do most of my shopping
maybe online independent brand, i'm always up for trying new stuff
If the website is popular - which means that it is more likely to be safer - I'd choose the small independent brand.

I would prefer big fashion names because I know what the quality is
I don't care what the brand is as long as I like the clothes
20 euro-100 euro
I would like to buy clothes from a small independent brand or label because the brand is unique and in the same I'm too.
I will buy from them both, depending on my current mood
there are clothes I like and I'd gladly wear, and there are clothes, I won't. the brand doesn't matter for me would buy from the independent; fashion is all about individuality and uniqueness of personal style
does not matter the brand I buy what I like
does not matter the brand I buy what I like
I will buy the clothes I like most in certain price. I do not care about the brand if I like it
I guess I will try something new, if it comes to clothes
I'd go with either one. It depends whether I like the product or not. I'm not that brand oriented
if I can find in the store here I will definately buy in the store
Not bothered
would consider both
I'd stick to the well-known name, sure, because it's a well known quality
Main concern here is quality. Online I can’t touch the material or examine the finish. Definitely wouldn’t buy online something from an independent brand priced as a big fashion brand.
Combination of both
QUESTION 32 Finally would you please explain shortly why do you prefer the option selected in the above question?

Spending large amounts of money, you would prefer to make sure you a making the right decision, whereas cheaper products are not so risky because I can see it for real and then decide if I want it because some things look great in pictures and not so great when u see them for real
I DO NOT SHOP ONLINE
I need to make sure I love something before I make such a huge purchase like that!
I enjoy much more shopping in the stores
I f I am going to splurge on a luxury designer item, i’d rather try it on first before buying it. sometimes you can find items from old collections online that you can't find in the stores anymore
I want to fully enjoy the experience inside the real store!
cause I might be able to get them for much less money than in the shp (if they are old collections or used)
wherever I can get it cheaper :)
both can be appealing in different ways
I don't like to buy clothes online, I prefer to try them on first, feel the fabric etc
if I give that much money, I would like to be sure it fits me well!
I don't have the time to go shopping, i’d much rather shop online
I will definitely manage to get it cheaper, like on eBay
I can evaluate the products myself - look, touch - and would know if the product meets my expectations.
I would go to the shop because of the atmosphere there
It depends what suites me best at the moment

... Because when I had so much money to buy such clothes it will be nicer to buy it at home on computer. You don’t have to rail by Subway or Bus in the city and so on.
The above mentioned brands have for many years have created their own style and there are some things are classic (sorry for the bad English)
no need to explain - my answer is: Don’t mind either way whichever is more convenient because I like online shopping, but not for clothes, because I could never be sure how some clothes would suit me. buying and then returning a fashion takes time and I don't have much of it...
I like to try things on; to sample the fabric and so on
I would prefer to touch and see the clothes in real not on the net
Because that's what I think cause I am practical
Proximity of shop. Availability of collection. Depends on the product in focus here. If it's sunglasses, for ex., I’d never buy it online. If it's a bag or belt I probably would.
Because I can see and touch the product itself, considering it's expensive items
I like to try clothes on before purchase
both have their advantages...
convenience, surely
Buying clothes from a luxury brand is not only buying an item. You buy attitude, customer care and extra services such as correcting the product to fit you perfectly and etc. Why would one want to deprive himself of all this? After all it’s all calculated it takes less time
Because walking around sporting a Prada bag is not the same as an H&M bag...
## APPENDIX C

### NRS SOCIAL GRADES DEFINITION (UK)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>social grade</th>
<th>social status</th>
<th>occupation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>upper middle class</td>
<td>higher managerial, administrative or professional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>middle class</td>
<td>intermediate managerial, administrative or professional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C1</td>
<td>lower middle class</td>
<td>supervisory or clerical, junior managerial, administrative or professional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C2</td>
<td>skilled working class</td>
<td>skilled manual workers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>working class</td>
<td>semi and unskilled manual workers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>those at lowest level of subsistence</td>
<td>state pensioners or widows (no other earner), casual or lowest grade workers</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

APPENDIX D

The collections are sold mainly through other retailers and boutiques. We will be exhibiting at two trade shows in Paris (Pret-a-Porter) and two trade shows in London (On/Off at London fashion week) each year where we sell directly to retailers in the UK, Europe and America.

Current Stockists:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stockist</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Brennels – the Netherlands</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kiddo - Corsica</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The B&amp;B Line – New York</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anna Lizzio - UK</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equa - UK</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stella - UK</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sourced - UK</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BelleEtik - Ireland</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fashion Concience - UK</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moo Clothing - UK</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Free Range - UK</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Made in Ethic - France</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oxfam Boutiques - UK</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greentrading - UK</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Amana 2008 Business Plan
APPENDIX E

Amana in the press
APPENDIX F

Interview with Amana’s Manager Miss Erin Tabrar

1. As a small fashion brand’s manager what advantages/disadvantages do you find in online retail for your business?
The advantages are the low cost compared to a bricks and mortar store and the ability to access an international customer base. The main disadvantage is getting potential customers to actually find you.

2. What do you believe are the most important online techniques for building a successful brand image and how these differ from the standard marketing techniques you use to channel your brand?
I think that the most important online tool is obviously your website. We also find email mail-outs to customers very useful. We also spend a lot of time trying to get editorial coverage in online magazines and getting listed on appropriate directories. Our marketing budget is small we mainly concentrate in media publications from fashion or ethical magazines. At the moment going to fashion forums and trade shows is probably the most important for us in terms of increasing revenue and getting our brand across.

3. At the moment do you have any strategy or a plan how to optimize the use of Internet in order to achieve more traffic, increase revenue and brand awareness?
Up until recently we’ve been putting the developing of a proper online strategy in the background. Managing a small company with just few people is very time consuming and sometimes you end up stretched between controlling the production, making sure the whole sale clients are happy and working the marketing, financial and pr part all in one day. However we have been re-evaluating our online strategy and we are planning on strengthening it.

4. How do you see the current online retail market compared to the conventional fashion market?
I think in the current retail climate online retail still seems to be doing relatively well. We’ve seen a deep in our wholesale orders to shops but we’ve just had the best season selling online that we’ve ever had.

5. Would you invest more in future in developing a stronger online presence for AMANA and how do you plan on doing this?
Yes, we want to redevelop the website relatively soon. We currently use Facebook but we’d like to develop this more and perhaps add a weekly blog as a start. The marketing and pr part all in one day. However we have been re-evaluating our online strategy and we are planning on strengthening it.

6. What would you expect on achieving with a new online strategy?
Ultimately we’d aim to increase sales and brand popularity. The main objective here will be obviously to increase traffic first and keep the interest of the customers.