THE POST-MODERN
conscientious
WOMAN

Research Report
Graduation Project
Fashion Management

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Preface

“Visit the great dressmakers and you will not feel that you are in a shop, but in the studio of an artist who intends to make of your dresses a portrait and a likeness of yourself”
- Paul Poiret - (Fillin-Yeh, 2001: 46)

As a woman myself I have often dreamed of the perfect shopping experience, the perfect store where everything is moulded around my body without the harsh moment of the wrong size or the wrong cut. Through my own attitude towards fashion I realised that shopping is not the same experience anymore as it used to be when a bunch of my teenage friends would gather up in a mall to kill the long afternoons or where a shopping trip to the next bigger city with Grandma was the event of the month. What had happened? Isn’t a fashion student supposed to enjoy shopping?

Well, maybe not. My studies were even counter productive in that sense. As a Fashion student you start questioning what is sold out there and you start being sceptical about the Marketing messages manipulating you to buy. On top of that there is a certain budget a student has and thus reduced to high street and vintage clothing. Of course, the experience at a couturier and on the high end of the market is as stimulating as Paul Poiret’s beautiful quote introducing the preface, however, considering that many women are reduced to a certain budget, yet want to look fabulous, the high street is more a point of concern. This is why the question of how the shopping experience for women could be turned to something effortless, spoiling and special again - like the experience at a tailor or a couturier - but accessible for more women.

This was the starting point for this report.

During the research for the report there were many obstacles and the harsh wake-up call that consumer culture and fashion trends are something that will not result in an answer of right or wrong. However, this project challenged me on all levels, as I was a fashion management student, a graduate, a soon-to-be young professional, a trend forecaster, an academic writer, a graphic designer, a retail expert, a detective, a spy, a psychologist, a manager, a marketeer - you name it. However, it is the reward of four years of studying at the Amsterdam Fashion Institute.
It is the reward to finally realise that I have developed an intuitive sensibility for fashion trends and the versatile skill set to be able to understand the them and create something out of it.

In the creation of the report a number of people were providing helpful information for the successful outcome of the research, which is why I would like to thank you for your help. Especially, I would like to thank my coach Brigitte Schriks who supported and motivated me during all the different stages of working out the report and and Constantin von Maltzahn who was a great help in finding the right topic for my final thesis. I would also like to thank all women taking part in the survey revealing personal information about their shopping experience and the experts who shared their in-depth knowledge with me: Jelleke Cremers, Xandra Manuputty, Urs Hesham, Bas Groefsema, Emily Swift and Kristina Scerbakova. Moreover I would like to thank Simone Rivoir and especially Isabelle Sporleder for taking the time for proof reading and being a great support and motivation.
Executive Summary

This thesis analyses the trend of the changing attitude of women towards fashion and shopping and provides specific guidelines for the future implementation of the trend into the Retail Marketing Mix of a female fashion brand/store. The project is a trend-orientated concept for a fashion store aimed at a new female consumer group.

The starting point of the research derives from a change in women’s role in society and their attitude towards shopping and fashion. Therefore it investigates the influence of changing gender roles in the social, professional and sartorial domains. All these factors have an impact on women and their way of life, behaviour and dressing. The report concludes with a recommendation for the female retail environment and defines specific guidelines for a Retail Marketing advice implementing the trend into the 7 C’s compass model.

Firstly the methods of analysis focus on trend forecasting and futurology concerning women’s shopping behaviour and attitude towards fashion. A trend cartogram outlines the economic, political, cultural and social drivers of the shift in consumer behaviour and defines key trend drivers, impacts and consequences, as well as the future of the trend. The conclusion of the trend analysis results in the definition of a new consumer tribe: the postmodern, conscientious woman. As a conclusion of the cartogram future focal points are outlined to create a basic understanding of how to react to this new consumer focussing on: Individualisation, Serenity, Flexibility through resourceful, basic elements, Practicality, Transparency and a focus on Quality of Time and Products.

After these definitions of target group and trend future the second step of the report is an in depth analysis of the values of this specific woman. Through the consideration of three different levels of her personality: her role as a woman, as a tribe and as a shopper. All three aspects make certain revelations about the values of the postmodern, conscientious woman. To support the secondary findings, primary data defines the basis of the last step of the research. Experts like sales personnel, shop managers and retail experts were interviewed, in order to reveal current specifics in the female consumer behaviour and the needs of the evolving
consumer group. Taking the focus back on the postmodern, conscientious woman primary data is collected through a survey among women aged 20-55 and through an extensive questionnaire of women from the lifestyle group. The statistics are summarised in various figures and support the understanding of the wants and needs of the postmodern, conscientious woman in regard to the retail environment. The quantitative data is used as an addition for the prescriptive advice for the trend implementation.

To conclude, the purpose of the report is the prescriptive advice for an improvement of the Retail Marketing Mix for the postmodern, conscientious woman: her shopping experience needs to be effortless, individual and straightforward with a high focus on personal service and consideration of the precious value of time. Especially important is the improvement of service aby eliminating waiting lines through multi-channel synchronisation of the cashier system, f in-store customisation and personal style advisors and the extending the service to the home of the customer.
# Introduction

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1. Introduction

1.1. Relevant

In the current state of our society gender roles have become more and more intermingled (Rosin, 2012) and in the fashion context the gender differences of “body as well as clothing” have become “completely absent” (Van Den Berg, 2010). Therefore it is no surprise that cross-dressing, androgyny and emancipation became important pillars of the fashion industry, which is highly sensitive to social developments (Jones, S.J. 2005). The question is whether or not women still have the same gender typical requirements on the sales floor or whether there is a change in their attitude shaped by an evolving outlook on dressing? The research in the following report is written in order to filter out to which extent the mindset of today’s mature, emancipated working women from Western countries has changed and in what way this has an impact on how they should be approached through Retail Marketing.

1.2. Research Question

The main research question and the starting point of the report is:

What influence does the changing role of women in society have on the implementation of the Retail Marketing Mix?

To answer this question four sub questions were relevant to help define the different chapters of the report:

1. What are significant changes, trends and developments in the last 10 years when it comes to gender roles in lifestyle and fashion?

2. Is there a target group especially influenced by changing gender roles?

3. Where are the differences and similarities of shopping experiences and shopping behaviour between men and women?

4. What aspects of the Retail Marketing Mix are significantly different by gender?
1.3. Methodology

As the centre of the Relevant is mainly consumer based, the research focuses on secondary qualitative data supported by primary findings.

The first phase of the research is defined by visual and textual secondary data from magazines, books, newspaper articles, trend blogs and other social platforms revealing women’s opinion and current influences on their everyday life.

The second phase of the research focuses on specifics in the female shopping behaviour and based on the collection of secondary data from Retail Marketing, Fashion Marketing and Consumer behaviour books. The findings will be combined with primary data from an online survey among 40 women of different age groups, extended questionnaires for potential members of the target group and expert interviews of Retail experts and Sales assistants. All relevant primary data will be indicated and can be found in the Appendix.

To get inspiration for the final advice, the third phase of the research elaborates on innovative aspects and inspirational approaches in the current shopping environment (female and male) found through secondary data and primary observations of the retail environment.

1.4. Limitations

The research conducted follows certain limitations to put the research into context and understand obstacles faced along the gathering of information:

1. Focus on Western, developed countries and their population.
2. High street segment for analysis and high end and luxury examples used as aspirational examples and inspiration.
3. The phenomenon is considered as a trend thus the solution and development is not 100 percent predictable (Jackson and Shaw, 2009: 27)
4. Consumer based research focuses on qualitative data rather than a quantitative measure
5. The primary data collected through an online survey is seen as inspiration and support for the final advice and not as an absolute result for the solution, as the trend is subject to continuous change. 
1.5. Structure

The chapters of the report are built on one another to create a solid understanding of the trend, its impact and consequences. It helps to define the future outlook with a prescriptive advice to be implemented in any Retail Marketing Concept through the use of the 7 C’s Compass Model (Solis, 2011).

First the report is going to focus on the model of a trend cartogram to determine drivers, impact and direction of the identified trend, as well as the new consumer group resulting from the analysis of a trend cartogram. Second the values, needs and wants of this group are examined through a consideration of three different layers of the consumer personality: values as a woman, values as a consumer tribe and values as a shopper. In the third step an assessment of the current retail environment and future trends on the retail environment will define the last step for inspirational input for the advice. The last chapter of the report defines the conclusion of the analysis and the basis for a prescriptive advice of the implementation of the findings into the Retail Marketing Mix made accessible through Shimizu’s 7C’s Compass Model (Solis, 2011).
1.6. Definitions

In the following there are further definitions of terms used in the report, which require further explanation prior to dealing with the phenomenon:

<table>
<thead>
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<th>1 Postmodernism</th>
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<tr>
<td>Postmodernism</td>
<td>androgynous</td>
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| A late 20th-century style and concept in the arts, architecture, and criticism, which represents a departure from modernism and is characterized by the self-conscious use of earlier styles and conventions, a mixing of different artistic styles and media, and a general distrust of theories. | partly male and partly female in appearance; of indeterminate sex.  
• having the physical characteristics of both sexes; hermaphrodite. |
| (Source: MacOS Dictionary) | DERIVATIVES |
| androgyny | |
| noun | |

2 Generation X, Generation Y and the Millenials

In the report there will be three generations referred to as Gen X, Gen Y and Millenials. For a better understanding, please, read the definitions below:

“Gen X: born 1965 - 76, they have grown up in a reshaped society (multicultural, different family structures), are focused on self and others with shared values (tribes) and are creative and independent.” (Jackson and Shaw, 2009: 11)

“Gen Y: born 1977-94, they are experiencing a much faster society in which multimedia communications and technology are central. They are more commercially aware at a younger age, but have a low level of interest in politics and religion.” (Jackson and Shaw, 2009: 11)

“The Millennials: (born between 1982-2000) is a generation raised by Boomer parents who taught them they could accomplish anything, imbuing them with a level of self-esteem that is not often seen in Gen Xers.” (Stylesight, 2012: 2)
3 Market segmentation (Jones, 2005)

In the report certain definitions of the market segmentation will be used with the main focus on the segments of Designer and High street of women’s fashion.

<table>
<thead>
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<td>Classic</td>
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<td>Designer</td>
<td>High street</td>
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<td>Middle market</td>
<td>Sportswear</td>
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<tr>
<td>High street</td>
<td>Casual</td>
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<tr>
<td>Budget womenswear</td>
<td>Budget menswear</td>
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The continuum of fashion and clothing (Figure 1) by Jackson and Shaw (2013: 91) shows the location of the considered segment in a matrix of relative price and level of aspiration. It illustrates the high street segment to be located in the centre of the matrix and shows its position indicates inspiration for a higher aspirational value in the segments of department stores, designer brands, Designers and Haute couture.

Figure 1
2. The Postmodern, Conscientious Woman Of The 21st Century

The initial driver for the research was the conflict women in today’s society are facing a shift in the definition of the female role and the definition of their individual personality (Underhill, 2010: 12). Social roles and dress codes for women and men intermingle more and more and the question is how all this changes the attitude of contemporary women towards fashion in general and how this has an influence on the Retail Marketing Mix?

The framework to start with is defined by the two adjectives: postmodern and conscientious. Postmodern, because the life of this woman is lead right with the current Zeitgeist, which is influenced by an idea of an individual ‘freed from constraints of collective ideals’ (Cova, 2001). Conscientious, because this woman is part of an educated, developed society and through her intellect cultivates a careful and mindful approach towards nature and all her tasks within the society. Furthermore, she has access to any kind of information (Daly, 2012) to judge issues of right and wrong independently.

To organise the information and to outline this tangible, intuitive development, the model of a trend cartogram (Raymond, 2010) is an adequate tool to gain an overview of the relevant developments and facilitate the analysis of the mindset of this contemporary woman in western countries. As it is a trend another model is of major importance to understand the context of this new consumer group: the Roger’s diffusion of innovation (Figure 2) (Jackson and Shaw, 2009: 9)
The figure shows the tendency of consumers to choose for a new product (Rogers, 2003) and the red area indicates where the postmodern, conscientious can be expected. This new consumer will most likely be found among the Innovators or the Early Adopters because they are defined by their influence on setting new trends through moving away, adapting or even evolving a current given or style to their needs (Jackson and Shaw, 2009: 9). The figure helps to understand the experimental state of this new consumer group as well as the context of the Trend Consequences dealt with in chapter 2.7. where the Late Majority becomes a focus point.

2.1. The Trend Cartogram

The model of the trend cartogram (Raymond, 2010) focuses on trend innovators, trend drivers, trend impact, trend consequences and the trend future, which can easily be implemented on the different levels of this project. In order to take the first step of defining the direction of the change in women’s shopping behaviour and a possible target market, the emphasis of the following chapters lies on the drivers, the impact and the consequences of the trend. Five key drivers define the basis for the following: the ‘Disapproval of Fast Fashion’, the ‘Pressure of the Professional quota’, the ‘Split between Timeless Dressing and Fashion’, the ‘Impossible Beauty Ideal’ and the ‘Diversity of the Female Taste and Form’ (Appendix 6.1. Trend cartogram).
2.2. The Disapproval Of Fast Fashion

The fashion industry is an industry “prone to fast change” (Jackson and Shaw, 2009: 107) and highly sensible to changes in society (Raymond, 2010). The question is how far the current pace is approved by the female customer?

An article by Rebecca Willis for the Economist’s intelligent life shows a general discontent with the current pace of the industry: “Slow down women dressing” (Willis, 2013) in bold letters (Appendix 6.2.) on one whole page gives this message a lot of impact. In the article the striking visual is supported by the result of the survey shows that women have a rather negative view on the fashion industries current offer: many are “sick of low quality, overpriced, poorly made, ill-fitting, short-lasting clothes” (Willis, 2013) and that it would be better to “put a speed limit on how often shops change their stocks” (Willis, 2013). In addition, to that the article concludes that “the industry is wasteful and encourages a buying habit that is not environmentally sustainable” (Willis, 2013) and following trends is a time-consuming process.

As a result, women slow down fashion for themselves and change the frequency of their shopping trips. Emily Swift, a shop assistant at ‘Anthropologie’ has observed that “there are women, who come in once a season and shop their whole wardrobe because they don’t have time and they want to get it out of the way”(2013). Not only at ‘Anthropologie’ this urge of a slower experience becomes visible, but also on the level of the trend consequences in the Late Majority: The concept of the Swedish fashion retailer H&M called ‘& Other Stories’ is catering to this in a new way and they state that one of the unique points of the concept is that they have “changed the concept of fashion from fast fashion fix to a unique, personalised experience” (Pithers, 2013).
2.3. The Pressure Of The Professional Quota

With a rising number of women in leading positions of companies, women take on a more important role in the working world. The financial crisis created at the same time more pressure on women to work part-time to even out the reduction in social support (European Parliament, 2013) and the basis for more employment opportunities. The “new service-based economy” requires skills in “communication and adaptation, qualities women are more likely to have” (Rosin, 2012). However, although the European work force is to 45% defined by women, the percentage of women in senior positions is comparatively low with the Netherlands, as the weakest example with only 19% of female holders of senior positions (Leonard, 2012).

It is the issue Sheryl Sandberg, the COO of Facebook, addresses with her book ‘Lean in - Women and the Will to Lead’ (2013) published this year. Her message is that women should be braver and take responsibility in moulding the work environment to their needs instead of bailing out. (Adams, 2013: 2) However, today’s women and especially the generation of Millennials (Stylesight, 2012) are struggling with the decision whether or not to take on that responsibility, because a successful career puts family life and femininity in second place, which makes some women “choose a traditional domestic arrangement over the independence that comes with a career” (Miller, 2013). In the following, two sub-chapters the two main conflicts between family and career, and femininity and masculinity in the working world are explained in detail.

2.3.1. Family Vs. Career

Family life in general undergoes interesting changes and many women have to face the act of multitasking two worlds: family and work. There are many ways of coping with this situation and there are two contrary developments shaping the this driver for the trend: the feminist housewife (Miller, 2013) and the designated childless couple (Gard, 2013).

The first party dedicates their life completely to the family household, putting their careers aside in order to be a full-time mother and full-time manager of the household, while their
husbands switch to the traditional role of the sole caregiver (Miller, 2013). It is a decision to make the household their enterprise, to give their kids the attention they need and make family life work the traditional way, which is not at all taking a step back (Miller, 2013). A woman following this development described in the New York Times Magazine article “The Retro Wife” by Lisa Miller, believes that the definition of the modern family life and gender roles are “evolving into something that is not defined by those who came before us”.

The second party, on the contrary, are women who make the clear decision to stay childless their entire life dedicating their life to a career and time with their partner (Gard, 2013) travelling, focussing on development of themselves and their relationships.

Something both parties have in common is their clear decision, their complete devotion to it and the high focus on their private life. Private life is priority number one and the right work-life-balance is more important than monetary compensation for work efforts (Bund, K., Heuser, J.U and Kunze, A., 2013).

2.3.2. Femininity Vs. Masculinity

Since the beginning of the financial crisis in 2008 (Elliott, 2011) there is a high demand of soft leadership skills in the management of corporations like “insightful and rational judgement, calm intelligence, and control” (Fillin-Yeh, S., 2001: 154).

Sheryl Sandberg is a child of this development and is a member of the board at internet giant Facebook (Economist.com, 2012), one of the Forbes 500 companies (Adams, 2013). She is a leading example of an successful, striving woman who has established herself in the work place while having a family at the same time. The creative database ‘Behance’ revealed that women dressed in a masculine style are more likely to get hired after an intake interview (Jarrett, 2013) and although the German chancellor Angela Merkel is often mocked for her way of dressing in her signature costume (Cochrane, 2012) the revelation of her cleavage was seen as a ‘Coup d’Etat’ (Spiegel.de, 2008) just as the rather revealing dress of Michelle Obama during the Oscar evening this year, which was judged as too sexy and covered- up in the image by the Iranian media (Esfandiari, 2012).
In that sense, androgyny opened up new dress codes for women and many collections on the catwalk show a hybrid image of women and a “dialogue between masculine and feminine” (Phelps, 2013) style with examples like Stella McCartney (Phelps, 2013) and Yohji Yamamoto (Minthe, 2012). The women’s suit is a highly promoted fashion item for the season of Autumn / Winter 2013 from the high to the low-end market.

A good example of its success story is the London-based, designer Adrien Sauvage who has launched his made-to-measure women’s suits (BecauseLondon.com, 2013) and even High Street retailers like Topshop promote ‘Modern Tailoring’ for women in a campaign for Spring 2013: “No dress required” (Appendix 6.3.).

With regard to Haute Couture, Jean Paul Gaultier even took this hybridity to the next level with his 2013 Pre-Fall collection (Style.com, 2013). Bipolar outfits dividing the image of the model into a sleek, business woman in a tailored suit on one and a casual, soft, earth-toned outfit on the other side. (Appendix 6.4.)

### 2.4. The Laborious Split Between Timeless Dressing And Fashion

When browsing through women’s fashion blogs, magazines and books it is noticeable that while praising fashion trends and outstanding pieces, there is also a significant amount of articles, posts, images paying tribute to the classic pieces (littleblackdress.ch, 2013), essentials (Glamour.com, 2012) or basics. They contribute to a woman’s wardrobe to reach the status of a personal style and a ‘signature look’ (Pithers, 2013). It is a great split women are facing, because “women are always encouraged (...) to stock up on classic basics like a white button-down shirt (...) [and] are encouraged to engage in following fashion trends and styles” (Closet Feminist, 2013). Even according to Chanel’s Creative Director, Karl Lagerfeld “there are things (...) that go never out of style: jeans, a white t-shirt and the Chanel jacket” (Inside Chanel, 2013), however, Chanel still follows the seasons of Paris Fashion Week with four shows per year. Surely, his view is not purely objective due to his work for the Parisian fashion house. However, it is the same message that there are pieces that any woman must have, to reach the point of timeless style, which makes practicality and versatility paramount.
Women have to cover many roles in society (Underhill, 2008: 55) and be dressed accordingly to any occasion (Closet Feminist, 2013). To facilitate the decision many blogs, magazines are giving elaborate advise on how to make the best out of a certain collection of pieces. For instance how to pack for a city trip with a combination of basic and fashionable highlight pieces (Manrepeller.com, 2013), which is also celebrated by the luxury brand Louis Vuitton on their website (louisvuitton.eu, 2013).

The men’s luxury fashion retailer ‘Mr Porter‘ takes this practicality and straightforwardness a step further and gives elaborate style advice for specific occasions a man has to face in everyday life (Mrporter.com, 2013). In addition to that menswear in general follows the concept of “hybrid garments” (Teunissen, 2010: 8) “where formal and informal elements are paired with tailoring techniques”. The new concept store Hutspot in Amsterdam, described as a male lifestyle warehouse, gets 70 percent of their likes on Facebook from women (NRX Stijl, 2013), which shows that women appreciate this organisation of the male retail environment.

With the blurring of professional roles and beauty ideals referred to in the following chapter, it is a logical consequence for women to pick and choose certain elements they like from the men’s fashion system, because they have the freedom to do so and are required to portray a smart and masculine look to compete in the professional field (Jarrett, 2013).

2.5. The Impossible, Androgynous Beauty Ideal

Currently androgyny in fashion goes so far that the male model Andreij Pejic was promoting HEMA Push-Up bras (Welt.de, 2011) as the sole face of an entire cross media campaign and was rated number 98 on FHM’s list of sexiest women in the world (Wiseman, 2013). It is a strong bending of the gender image and takes the depicted beauty ideal for women to a whole new level. It is a level almost impossible to reach adding to an “unrealistic, ideal body” (Woodward, 2007: 17).

Since the square and strong ‘Superbody’ ideal from the 80’s (Ferré, 2004) and the supermodel era of the 90’s, with models like Cindy Crawford, Liz Turlington or Claudia
Schiffer, women in society got used to a very high aspirational standard of beauty shown through the media and billboards. In addition to the image of flawless beauty, the image of the waif\(^1\) came with the photographer Corinne Day’s work showing the young model Kate Moss (Van den Berg, 2010: 48). Considering, models on the runway it is still an established image and causes many debates about anorexia in the fashion industry. It is no surprise that the beauty ideal presented in the media is twisted. Size Zero is a status symbol (Bordo, 2004). An undefined, slender figure of models on the catwalk paired with fashion’s constant play with gender roles made it possible for a male model to blend in to the system. The further step to cross the boundaries of the sexes was Andrej Pejic wearing the wedding gown at Jean Paul Gaultier’s couture show in Spring 2011 (Style.com, 2013).

There is much debate about this image and as mentioned before it is a rather irrational concept of having a male model on the 98th spot on the list of sexiest women in the world (Wiseman, 2013). The opposite version on the female side is Casey Legler, a female olympic athlete assigned exclusively as a male model (Wiseman, 2013). On the one hand it is a sign of total androgynous freedom in fashion, but on the other hand it is a twisted beauty ideal playing with our perception and adding to the critical assessment women use on their own body (Woodward, 2007:17).

The counter movement to this almost transsexual body image is a “Skinny is not sexy, health is”-movement. It is a slogan often used on health and nutrition focussed blogs with the depiction of an athletic, muscular body and the image of a woman doing yoga, boot camps or strength training at the gym (Pinterest.com, 2013)). Tessa van der Steen, health coach at the ‘David Lloyd’ in Amsterdam knows, that women who try to reach the goal of a super skinny body, suppress the female hormone oestrogen through a hormone therapy and a special diet, but that it is an underestimated danger which is why her nutrition plan is based on a healthy variety of proteins, carbohydrates, fat and of course sufficient strength and cardiovascular exercise (2013).

\(^1\) waif: a very skinny person, especially woman (Urbandictionary.com)
Off the runway people have realised the harm of the public, androgynous beauty ideal and work against it. Another movement besides the athletic image depicted on fitness blogs and in health magazines is the confidence in a fuller figure, because women realise that there are far more important things than size 0, 36 or 5 (Jane, 2013). The Swedish department store H&M caused elaborate discussions (LinkedIn, 2013) by displaying their lingerie on mannequins with more natural proportions: “softer stomachs, (and) fuller thighs” (Solé, 2013). Gayla Maccia, Visual Director at ‘The Style Ranger’, comments on a ‘LinkedIn’ discussion on ‘Fuller Figure Mannequins’: “Everyone knows in the industry that a body form changes at a size 12-14. (...) Women appreciate being represented and shown how large sized style works on the larger form. It sells to do great displays and teach your customer how to wear your merchandise.” (2013)

This image of a full-figured body is not only visible on the sales floor but also in the media. Actress Lena Dunham, starring the main character in the US TV series ‘Girls’ is showing off her rather round body with a natural nonchalance (Phelan, 2012). Women admire her for her courage and the German fashion blog ‘This is Jane Wayne’ (2013) even criticised the actress for looking more skinny on her ‘Instagram’ images lately. Regarding these pictures, it seems like Lena Dunham slowly gives in to the public pressure of a slimmer figure.

Nowadays young woman are constantly exposed to different, proliferating media channels depicting an unnatural, skinny body ideal (Woodward, 2007), which causes a constant hate-love-relationship with the own body (Jane, 2013).
2.6. The Diversity Of The Female Taste And Form

2.6.1. Form

In 2010 the heritage jeans brand Levi’s revolutionised the sizing system for women’s with their Curve ID line (Levi’s, 2010). A number of 60,000 women all over the world were measured and the result of the analysis were three proportional types of the female shape, which were translated into a sizing system first based on shape and then on size. It is a concept to cater to the different shapes of women and to facilitate shopping for them (DeBijenkorf.nl, 2013). Even women after the age of 40, who are still neglected by the fashion industry (Willis, 2013: 40), appreciate the sizing system, Cornelia Sporleder (51), housewife and mother from Düsseldorf, tells the story of meeting five other women her age in the fitting room at a Levi’s store (2013) (Appendix 6.5.) where they all had gone to get a pair of jeans that finally fits them. At other brands there is still a struggle for women to find garments fitting to their particular proportions.

This story shows that women appreciate this approach to customisation and invidualised product ranges. Three of the interviewed sales assistants at Cos, Denham and Anthropologie, stores not selling such an individualised product range, stated that “more and more people ask for customisation and it is hard for our tailor to meet the demand” (Scherbakowa (Denham), 2013) and that at least “once a day someone is asking for customisation”.

Standardised clothes often require shortening or other alterations, which is adding to the price of a garment. The solution is not that difficult, as one 27-year-old interviewed for the ‘Clothes: a manifesto’ article describes: “a middle way between couture and off-the-peg, a bit of pin and tuck. (...) (Because) a lot of women pay to have their clothes altered, adding to the price tag; and many dream of someone to alter their clothes and make them fit properly” (Willis, 2013: 40).

In general it is a present issue in retail environments, especially digital retailers face the problem of the perfect fit. Sports brand Adidas for example gave the answer to this
problem with a digital fitting room (Textilia, 2013). Now they are able to give customers exact sizing advice from their body measurements and reduce returns.

2.6.2. Taste

When it comes to fashion women have a very individual perception of what suits them and what does not (Woodward, 2007). In order to define the style women are looking for, the results of an online survey of more than forty women, aged between 20-51, where they were given adjectives of how they want to be perceived (Appendix 6.6.), was combined with the result of the survey Rebecca Willis conveyed for the Economist (2013) and the outcome showed that the top three adjectives were casual, stylish and smart. Referring back to the issue of the split between timeless dressing and fashion investigated in chapter 2.3., the variety of adjectives women named indicate a disparate variety of taste, which requires special attention when targeting the postmodern, conscientious woman.

2.7. Trend Consequences

The trend consequences show the subtle signals of how the trend has already found its way into the ‘Late Majority’ through using visual and factual examples (Appendix 6.1.)

Best of both - all three - worlds

The first significant consequence is the hybrid depiction of women put into the twilight zone between masculine and feminine style. The previously referred to example of designer Jean Paul Gaultier’s bipolar outfits (Style.com, 2013) on one model envisions the fashion split described in chapter 2.4 and confirms the thought that women want the best of both worlds, however, the concept of the two worlds of family and work are extended by the focus on the self. Postmodern society puts a high emphasis on the individual (Cova, 2001) and especially in the fashion context the Self is a significant factor in defining one’s identities (Woodward, 2007: 13).

Carpe diem
“Treat yourself because YOLO“ was a prominent slogan on Social Media platforms at the end of the year 2012 (Orr, 2013). “YOLO“ is an abbreviation for „You Only Live Once“ meaning that every person as an individual should live every day to its fullest and enhance their day with moments of pleasure. Although it was also widely seen as the most annoying word of urban culture (Orr, 2013) it reflects the widespread popularity of a „Carpe Diem“-attitude towards life.

A good example of this life philosophy is the current coffee culture. Visit a coffee place in Amsterdam on any afternoon during the week there is a multicultural mixture of different people either enjoying time with their friends, alone, studying or working. Those places have become vibrant market places for many people. Catering to a multicultural mix of individual tastes a coffee menu offers limitless possibilities of variation to meet individual tastes even beyond coffee.

Enjoying the private life is priority number one (Bund, Heuser and Kunze, 2013) and many future employees, especially of the Millennial generation, are searching for companies who try hard to make better work-life balance a reality (Stylesight, 2012). Many employers have noticed that already, which is why many offices create a comfortable, home-like atmosphere in order to blur the boundaries between work and private life and motivate their employees (Hull, 2013). Bright, friendly workspaces, coffee lounges, corporate gyms and yoga rooms are just a few examples how employers answer to this development already (Bond, 2011).

Health as the new drug

The internet, blogs or magazines offer women a significant amount of healthy life advice from healthy lifestyle blogs in countless different variations like ‘This Rawsome Vegan Life’, where food is seen as a “wholesome, natural fuel prepared with love and kindness that keeps a body living long and feeling beautiful inside and out“(2013). Other examples are ‘MyFitnessrecipes.com’ promoting protein shakes and strength exercise and the ‘Women‘s health magazine’, giving advice on how to lead a healthier life.
Exercise is seen as the magical recipe for stress relief. The image series ‘Mad Men through the 21st Century Lens’ by Shutterstock on Trendland (2013) depicts this development very well through the metamorphosis of the cigarette into a yoga mat (Appendix 6.7.). It is a movement replacing harmful addictions like cigarettes or alcohol with the obsession with a healthy lifestyle.

In that sense gyms are influenced by the same development mentioned in the paragraph of Carpe Diem and are, like employers, adapting with cafes and wellness areas to make women come to their facilities and not make them feel like they miss out on the rest of their life (Underhill, 2010).

Customisation by choice

Many brands work with such a large variation in their product line that choosing something almost feels like customising the product. Perfume brand Commodity (Packaging of the World, 2013) offers tailored scents. Customers can choose themselves or have it made for them after their personal profile. Another example is Nike ID Studio offering the possibility for individuals to design their own shoe with the help of a blank canvas and a framework of materials and colour. It is customisation made easy - a great way to cater to the variety of different tastes from chapter 2.6.2.

2.8. A New Tribe Of Women

By looking at the trend consequences and the trend future it becomes clear that the target group is less defined by age than by lifestyle and attitude. Therefore, it is logical to choose the concept of tribal marketing (Cova, 2001) to get a better understanding of how to approach this new consumer. Based on the information of the trend cartogram the description of the postmodern, conscientious woman supported and inspired by a supporting moodboard (Appendix 6.8.)

The conscientious, modern woman is a woman born, raised and living in a consumerist culture striving for modernity (Willis, 2013: 39), however, her education makes her more
sensible to the obstacles of the fast-fashion system. Despite her high level of education she is not necessarily a woman with a full-time job; however, she is defined through an enterprising mindset, whether that is focussed on her career or on running a household. Especially women from the Millennial generation find themselves in an environment where they have the freedom of choice: how to define their own role in society, how to have relationships and with whom, whether they want to be the tough career women, whether they want children or not and much more. It is a personal debate and an evolution “into something that is not defined by those who came before us” (Miller, 2013). However, considering the pressure of the financial crisis on women through the reduction of social support and welfare (European Parliament, 2013) she is very likely to be employed at least part-time.

In addition to balancing her family and work, her own identity and persona plays a big role for her as well (Jackson and Shaw, 2009:8): She is a contemplative, spirited woman with the belief in a natural balance of the world, but not an excessive follower of one explicit religion. She enjoyed a good education, which makes her a mindful, inquisitive, critical person, who noticed a long time ago that the system we live in is a rather defective one with gaps filled by capitalistic minds. Yet, she knows she is part of the system, relying on monthly wages to maintain her standard of living. Having the means to put her private life to priority and always have a right work-life-balance. She is willing to sacrifice an evening or two for the sake of the success of the company, however, time for workout on the yoga mat, the spinning bike or out in the park and time for her beloved ones at home or out in cafés on the weekend are just as important. If they both get the short end of the stick, her boss will most likely find a resignation letter on his desk.

The same way she questions the system of family and a career, she questions the system of consuming. Practicality and quality are two of the most important points for her, when it comes to purchasing lifestyle products like interior and fashion. Again, her education makes her aware of issues like sustainability and ethical labour conditions, which is why she likes to know where the goods on the shelf come from.
What started off with switching to Eco stores on the level of food - a more vital need - now spreads towards her shopping attitude when it comes to fashion.

**Distinctive characteristics of the postmodern, conscientious woman**

**Enterprising:** whether at home or at work using the freedom she has to make her personal definition of a work-life-balance.

**Investigative:** looking at the fashion system more sceptical and demanding transparent and accessible information.

**Individualistic:** deriving from a postmodern thought of the freedom of the individual.

**Idealistic:** as well deriving from her freedom in a postmodern society where impossible is nothing.

**Spirited:** putting great care into the health of her body and mind through relaxing or contemplative hobbies.

**Practical:** longing for products that enhance her life and fulfil a no-nonsense purpose.
3. Specifics In Approaching Her

The conclusion of the first chapter showed the development of a new tribe of women with specific expectations towards the female fashion system. The second step is to outline her wants and needs to be able to create effective guidelines in approaching her on the retail environment. To specify her values the specifics of three succeeding layers of her personality are considered more carefully: her values as a woman, as a consumer tribe and as a postmodern, conscientious shopper.

3.1. Specifics As A Woman

The first layer of analysing the values of the postmodern, conscientious woman is evolving around specifics defined by Retail experts who have observed the female shopping behaviour in depth over many years. Females in general are a very important target in any brick-and-mortar environment, as they “represent the larger share of the retail market. Women live longer than men, women shop more than men and women purchase more than men” (Scotti, 2013).

The following paragraphs will elaborate on three elements of special focus when approaching women on the sales floor: store atmosphere, product display, added value and comfort.

According to Retail expert Paco Underhill „White. Bright. Light.“ is the magic recipe in approaching women (Underhill, 2010: 112). A closer observation of the current retail environment shows that many female retail chains have implemented this approach already. By using white concrete, big window fronts to leave in natural lighting and minimalistic use of racks, American Vintage on the Van Baerlestraat exemplifies this creation of a bright atmosphere.
Another important factor is that women are shopping for pieces (Cremers, 2013). Many female retail environments, like COS, Zara or even small boutiques like LikeThis and Blacksheeproad arrange their products first by outfits and second by brands (in case there is more than one brand sold) which triggers the primary instinct of a collector in a woman (Underhill, 2010). However, an inspirational thought by Paco Underhill reveals the crux of this arrangement: “Imagine if dairy, soup, or crackers were arranged by designer/brand name in a supermarket” (2010: 118). Shopping for food, as a basic vital need, (Maslow, 1943), follows an assortment displayed by product type and not by designer/brand names and is a ground where an individual gets educated how to approach the concept of shopping. Putting that into the fashion context, women are not primarily shopping for designer names, but for something they like and that fits them (Underhill, 2010: 118). The fashion store Little Black Dress in Zürich, Switzerland (littleblackdress.ch, 2013) from the Trend Innovators section on the cartogram (Appendix 6.1) has implemented that approach on their sales floor already because the garments on their racks are sorted by product type and considering the rise of online shopping (Gill, 2013), many online stores follow the same organisation of their products by product groups.

In contrast to the aspect of the practical arrangement of the merchandise there is a split retailers have to consider as well: the added value of a garment. For women buying clothes means more than simply buying a product, they are buying “their lives and their biographies in order to make sense of their current identity.“ (Woodward, 2007: 11) To refer back to the quote by Paul Poiret in the Preface of the report: Women are longing for clothes that create a “likeness of themselves“ (Fillin-Yeh, 2001: 46). Through individualisation of the product this level of creation can be reached, however, only few high street retailers offer a personal tailoring service. It is a service adding to the price of a garment (Willis, 2013), however, Although at least “once a day someone is asking for customisation“ at the Swedish retailer COS (Groefsema, 2013), there is no in-store solution for that additional service. A more exemplary example is ‘Denham the Jeansmaker’ where the increasing demand for customisation (Scherbakova, 2013) is met on the sales floor with an in-house tailor.
In contrast to online stores a brick-and-mortar store is a basis of direct interaction with the customer, where comfort and security (Underhill, 2010) play an essential role. Not only is the comfort of the body a major influential factor for a woman’s decision what to wear (Woodward, 2007), but also the comfort in the retail environment. Women are categorically suspicious of the sales staff because they are aware of the profit-interested outlook of the fashion system (Scerbakova, 2013), which consequently requires the question of how to approach a woman in an appropriate way. All interviewed store assistants agreed that honesty is a good way to break the ice: “If they realise you are honest with them, they start to trust you” (Scerbakova, 2013). They appreciate the advice of the sales person if they realise that it is an upright opinion (Groefsema, 2013).

3.2. Specifics As A Consumer Tribe

The conclusion of the first chapter shows the trend of the postmodern, conscientious woman to be a new tribe of consumers and thus become subject to a tribal marketing approach. In today’s society, which is the birth place of the postmodern, conscientious woman, “links (social relationships) are more important than things (brands, products, experiences, ideas)” (Cova, 1997), which is the breeding ground of the idea of tribal marketing. People are desperately searching for social links (Cova, 2001) and in contrast to traditional tribes we belong to many little tribes and not one according to Marketing experts Cova, Kozinets and Shankar in their book about ‘Consumer Tribes’ (2007:5). The main factor setting the basis for the tribal approach is a “shared passion” (2007:16), and “strong emotional links, a common subculture, a vision of life” of a certain group of consumers. This shows that for these consumer tribes “value today is more than price” (Underhill, 2010) and it is the “why you do what you do” (Sinek, 2010) that connects consumers to a brand. This makes added value and the essence of a brand’s purpose the pivotal point of the internal as well as external communication of a brand.

Communication is an influential factor while approaching these tribes, as they want to take a more active role in choosing what to buy and what not to buy (Mossinkoff, 2012). Often marketing is seen as “the tool of relentless profit seekers” (Mossinkoff, 2012: 14) which is
why the brand has to engage with the consumer and interact with them on eye-level (Cova, Kozinets and Shankar, 2007: 8). The matrix below helps to understand the highly active, hybrid character of the consumer tribes.

![Matrix Diagram]

Figure 4

On all four levels the consumer is active in either shaping, rejecting or reshaping the brand to a certain extent. To summarise, the consumer takes an active role in the marketing of the brand/concept in either actively engaging as an entrepreneurial partner or as a pirate-like plunderer of the brand’s concept, refining it or taking it out of the intended marketing context, putting their own definition to it. Social Media and online platforms facilitate the communication of the members of the tribe and make it accessible for everyone independent from their location.

An outstanding example of creating such a tribal community is the Dutch brand Sissy Boy engaging with their customers through Farmer’s Markets and a highly active Facebook profile. Through that customers become part of the brand and its profile.
Whereas the Unique Selling Point of Sissy Boy is to be a mini warehouse for the whole family (Sissy-boy.nl, 2013) the point of emotional connection of the postmodern, conscientious woman is more centering around her self, her body and her individual experience.

3.3. Specifics As A Shopper

Due to the fact that the trend cartogram is mainly based on secondary data the support with primary data helps to outline the direction of the trend more clearly. An extended questionnaire of the online survey was sent to potential members of the new consumer tribe to determine tendencies in their shopping behaviour. The most significant outcomes are defined in the following sub chapters elaborating on the importance of shopping, the focus on resourceful, essential pieces and her vision on the perfect store.

3.3.1. The Importance Of Shopping

Selling fashion to the postmodern, conscientious woman is a complex undertaking. It does not belong to the primary vital needs according to the hierarchy of needs (Maslow, 1943) shown in the Figure 5. Depending on the context, fashion mostly addresses the top three levels of Belonging, Self-Esteem and Self-Actualisation (Jackson and Shaw, 2009: 5). When seven women who were potential members of the consumer tribe were asked, what they enjoy doing in their free time shopping was only named once (Appendix 6.9.) and in addition to that many of them were involved in a job taking 80% of their daily time and had children to be taken care at home (Appendix 6.10.), leaving only little share to the act of shopping for clothes.
It shows that the time for shopping the postmodern, conscientious woman has is competing with work, shaping her body at a yoga class, running in the park, spending time with her family, cooking, watching movies or going out to dinner. Therefore, it has to be considered that this time-squeezed, contemporary woman (Underhill, 2010: 119) does not have time to spend many hours on shopping, which requires a straightforward shopping environment, which she has access to in between her other duties or hobbies.

3.3.2. Resourceful, Essential Pieces

With the various, social roles (Underhill, 2010: 55) the postmodern, conscientious woman has to fulfil clothing is her medium enabling her to construct an “occasion-specific identity” (Woodward, 2007). To facilitate a hybrid change in between different occasions a collection of resourceful basic pieces. The four most mentioned essentials during a survey of 40 women aged 20-51 are T-Shirts (17%), Jeans (15%), Dresses (12%) and Shoes (9%) with a great variety of items like Cardigans, Pants, Pullovers, Blouses, Jackets, Skirts and Leggings. (Appendix 6.11.). A pioneer providing women with a consistent catalogue of basic
pieces is Monique van Heist, who started her brand under the aspect that “if you buy a good pair of jeans you want to get it again” (2013). The pieces of her collection do not change per season, the collection is only getting bigger and every design can be purchased any following season. Cuts stay the same, just the colour, fabric or pattern changes and is added to the catalogue.

3.4. The Perfect Store

To confirm the attitude of the postmodern, conscientious woman to a small extent and find an inspirational direction for the future implementation of the trend potential tribe members were asked how their perfect store would look like. The outcome (Appendix 6.12.) confirms that the postmodern, conscientious woman is a self-confident customer who appreciates attention, as she puts a high focus on good service. She appreciates advice and a clean environment. Furthermore a few respondents mentioned the wish for a service close to or even at home. One woman states, that her perfect store should have a home delivery after trying it on in the store. It confirms that Service is paramount (Jackson and Shaw, 2009: 84) and therefore the pivotal point of approaching her on the Retail Marketing environment and facilitating her shopping experience.

3.5. CONCLUSION: Approaching The Postmodern, Conscientious Woman

To conclude the examination of the three layers of the personality of the postmodern, conscientious women, there are certain values that help understanding the new consumer group. The most significant aspects defined by her values as a woman are: her appreciation of a bright and inviting store atmosphere and a straightforward product display arranged by product instead of brands. Moreover the role of clothes are a reflection of her identity and the focus on individual shape and personal freedom of definition are in line with her focus on an added value, a shared passion through the mindset as member of a consumer tribe. The tribal approach requires the focus on collective value of the postmodern, conscientious woman he confidence to demand individuality, good service and to demand an effortless shopping experience which is effortless and in her close environment or even extending into her home with delivery services.
4. Potential Trends In Retailing

The combination of the analysis of the consumer needs with the visual and textual direction of the Trend Future of the trend cartogram (Appendix 6.1.) helps to envision a more specific outlook on the future trends of the retail environment, which are divided into the following four chapters: Individualisation, Showrooming, Multi-Channel Automisation and Total Transparency.

4.1.1. Individualisation

Elaborating on the postmodern thought based on the believe of a “condition in which individuals, freed of the constraints of collective ideals in matters of education, the family, and sex, are operating a process of personalisation as a way of managing behaviour” (Cova, 2001) the individual steps more and more into the foreground. As a consequence individual treatment of the customer is paramount in retailing today which is why tailoring and customisation within the framework of the mass market are logical answers to that trend (CBW Mitex, 2013). An already practiced example of a more individual shopping experience is the offer of a Personal Shopper at ‘Anthropologie’. Customers can book appointments for personal advice and consultation. However, it is still an offer approached with respect on the consumer side. Emily Swift, sales assistant at ‘Anthropologie’, explains that people take the offer of the personal shopper, but that “(...) it is not doing well enough because it is not promoted enough yet” (2013). Another example where this approach is already implemented is the male online fashion retailer ‘Outfittery’, where several outfits are sent to the customer’s home after an extensive style advice through a questionnaire and phone interview with one of the style advisors of the company.
4.1.2. Showrooming

Many consumers nowadays are visiting physical retailers in order to try certain items on, but are leaving the store without increasing the conversion rate to find the cheapest offer online (Campbell, 2013). This trend is called ‘Showrooming’ and many retailers are suffering from this phenomenon. However, there are brands using the trend of showrooming in their advantage. The online eyewear retailer ‘Warby Parker’ offers example frames to try on at home. Customers can choose five favourite models online and get them sent to their home or work - wherever they want - try them on and get their own frame with the right glass after sending the examples back (Bishop, 2013).

4.1.3. Multi-channel Automatisation

Today with the status of digital technology shopping online becomes more and more important with every generation (Jackson and Shaw, 2009: 17). Therefore shopping and comparing merchandise is of major importance for the fashion retail business. For instance in the Netherlands more than 9 out of 10 people gather information about the products online before the actual decision to purchase them. However, the actual purchase mainly takes place in a brick-and-mortar store (Van Zessen, 2012). To combine both the digital and the physical store there are automated systems like ‘Vendit’, which keeps track of the stock on- and offline and automatically creates statistics for the tracking of popular and less popular merchandise. How important that is shows the example of the retail chain COS where the online store is a separate entity, causing confusion on the customer side. They come into the store to ask for products they saw online, to realise that the merchandise and even the ‘sale’ items varies from the merchandise of the physical store (Groefsema, 2013). Surely, this results in a dissatisfied customer experience, as nowadays - with digital technology - a store can be expected to link their on- and offline worlds perfectly with each other.

4.1.4. Total Transparency
With an educated consumer, who knows of a ‘partial manipulation’ of today’s marketing (Cova, Kozinets and Shankar, 2007: 8). “Current society moves towards total transparency” (v.d.Bergh and Behrer, 2011) and the sustainable luxury label ‘Honest by’ by the Belgium designer Bruno Pieters, founded in 2012 (2013) has formulated a logical answer to that. While seeing Bruno Pieter during a symposium at the Pakhuis de Zwijger in Amsterdam he explains the absolute transparent concept of his collection. Customers are able to find any supplier for any piece of material on the garment with an elaborate description of the sustainable material used (2013). In his point of view, the problem is that “we are paying producers to be unsustainable so why should they change?” (2013), which is a reasonable question taking the context of fashion towards a more idealistic idea and again relates to Simon Sinek’s theory of reflecting on the substance of your brand through “why you do what you do” (2010) to justify a reason of existence.
4.2. CONCLUSION: The Future Store

To conclude the four retail trends of Individualisation, Multi-Channel Automisation, Total Transparency define a basis for the guidelines of the future implementation and help to create a framework of six key values for the approach of the postmodern conscientious woman:

**INDIVIDUAL**
A personal experience with individual attention is of major importance. This requires not only an individualisation of the shopping experience but also of the garments to make them cater to the unique shape of her body. In addition the strong need of belonging (Cova, 2001) indicates the need of a familiar approach.

**SERENE**
A clean, bright (Underhill, 2010) and contemplative environment with interiors combining sleek design with nature. The shopping environment is on a competing level with introvert free-time activities like yoga, running, craft projects and contemplative activities linked to nature, which is why it should speak the same relaxing language and define a relaxing experience for this time-squeezed woman (Underhill, 2010)

**PRACTICAL**
Resourceful basic elements tailored towards multiple purposes for an effortless experience. Contemporary women are tool-belt-divas (Underhill, 2010) who know how to make things work, which gives them a high level of appreciation for craftsmanship and quality. In addition a practical, straightforward and effective shopping trip fits right into her timetable.

**TRANSPARENT**
Show where things come from, how they are made and how the price of a garment comes into existence to cater to her critical assessment (Scherbakova, 2013). If you have nothing to hide you can reveal everything like the label ‘Honest By by Bruno Pieters.'
5. Trend Implementation Into The Retail Marketing Mix

To conclude, a new trend in the female consumer mindset could be defined in consideration of the changing social environment and other cultural and sartorial drivers influencing the contemporary women’s attitude towards fashion and shopping. Through defining her layers of belonging to the female gender, a consumer tribe in general and to the specific group of the postmodern, conscientious woman as a shopper in chapter two, specific values and potential trends in the Retail environment catering to her needs could be be defined. The research led to a definition of the four major key values: Individual, serene, practical and transparent, which are the basis for the future implementation of the trend into the 7 C’s Compass Model by Shimizu (Figure 6). The values and the 7 C’s are put into a matrix to facilitate the implementation of all key values on all levels of the Retail Marketing Mix. (Appendix 6.14.)

Figure 6
Explanation of the 7 C’s compass model

Compared to the 7 P’s of Marketing the 7 C’s are a more consumer-focused alternative defined by Shimizu in 2003 (Solis, 2011). The model follows the metaphor of a compass with the circumstances and consumers on the outer, most influential circle, defining the different direction N, W, S, E. On the level of Circumstances they are defined by National and International, Weather, Social and Cultural and Economic. On the consumer level they are defined by Needs, Wants, Security, Education.

On the next level the main Retail Marketing Mix is defined through Cost, Commodity, Channel and Communication, which leads to the Corporation itself in the centre of the compass.

5.1. Guidelines For The Implementation: The Four C’s

5.1.1. Circumstances

The Circumstances are defined through the trend drivers in the report which can be implemented into the different directions of N,W,S,E as followed:

**N For National And International**

The fast pace and consumerist outlook of the fashion industry with fast changing seasons and trends demands a lot of effort and adaption of the consumer.

**W For Weather**

Global Warming causes awareness of the environment and of a healthy, mindful lifestyle

**S For Social And Cultural Circumstances**

Androgynous beauty ideal in fashion adds to critical self-assessment of women

**E For Economic Circumstances**

The financial crisis increases the importance of females (European Parliament, 2013) in the working world through their soft skills and increases the pressure to work at least part-time to support the household with another income.
5.1.2. Consumers

**N for Needs**
A straightforward, effortless shopping experience to create their personal identities on all levels of their lives

**W for Wants**
To look casual, fashionable and smart and enjoy good service that is close to her home or even reaches to her home for convenient deliveries.

**S for Security**
Consistent collection of garments and personal profile with measurements for in-house tailors

**E for Education**
Transparency on all levels
Consumer is treated on eye-level with formal respect.

5.1.3. Cost
Through the tangible pressure of the crisis on the household income the money spent on fashion is subject to a careful decision, which is why the ‘value for money’ (Willis, 2013) is of major importance. For the postmodern, conscientious woman the practicality and purpose of a garment justifies the price. However, with commercially driven competitors from the high street like COS, Zara or H&M the components of the price have to be 100 percent transparent. Due to the focus on brands with a sustainable production and with a transparent approach the prices will be defined by the Cost Price, a profit margin of 5 for clothing, which is comparable to the Designer segment (Figure 7; Jackson and Shaw, 2009: 130) justified by the inclusive, additional tailoring service and a profit margin of 3.5 on the non-tailored collection (Accessories, Lifestyle products)
PRICING

All pricing should be transparent and listed with the description of price segmentation on a separate price tag. Even prices without the use of decimals are in line with a straightforward tone of voice. Below there is a list of prices per category and the tailoring services will add to the price tag, however, with a bonus card and a 10th purchase for free.

PAYMENT OPTIONS

To facilitate the check-out procedure and eliminate waiting lines the cashier system will be implemented through multi-channel automatisation to have the possibility to equip personal style advisors with portable systems where the purchase can be closed from any location in the store like the system at the ‘Apple’ genius bar (Apple.com, 2013). The payment options will be direct debit, on delivery/pickup or, if the account is linked with the customer profile: Credit Card and PayPal.

5.1.4. Commodity

The product range should focus on the enterprising and practical side of the postmodern, conscientious women who wants an efficient shopping experience without waiting in line (Appendix 6.12.). Additionally the retail environment should act as showroom where
women are able to try on, choose and have other outfits, colours and sizes delivered to their home. The collection of products should be resourceful basics that can be worn interchangeable on any occasion complemented by accessories like nailpolish, lipsticks or socks in basic colour ranges for direct implementation into purchased outfits.

RESOURCEFUL BASICS
The criteria for the product/brand portfolio in the retail space are flexibility and sustainability. Basic cuts and colours define the perfect basis for garments fitting to various different other elements in her wardrobe. In addition to that a focus on sustainability is important to match the products to the value of transparency.

ADDED VALUE
The Unique Selling Point will be created through an In-Store tailoring service where all garments on the sales floor can be adjusted to the individual shape of the customer. In addition to that coffee, tea and water are offered for free and complementary lifestyle products like magazines, natural care products or basic make-up products will create a, effortless one-stop shopping experience.

5.1.5. Channel
When it comes to the recommended location of the retail space an outskirt of a metropolitan area is recommended, where the target woman most likely lives and works or where she is easily able to get to by car, bike and public transport. All her social life takes place in and around the city, which makes a vibrant location with many cafés, bars, gyms etc. particularly recommendable and to create the basis of a by-chance discovery moment. A good location example is the ‘Westerstraat’ in Amsterdam surrounded by hip cafés and bars, a daily food market, the ‘Noordermarkt’, other fashion boutiques, a sports club and a supermarket. It is a multifunctional, resourceful area where they are likely to spend time and are able to not only shop for clothes, but also combine it with another activity.
MULTI-CHANNEL AUTOMATISATION

It is highly recommended to have the brick-and-mortar location complemented by an online catalogue to offer a flexible basis of contact and access to a personal customer profile. In addition to that the website and the stock overview should be integrated into the cashier system to give the opportunity of a mobile check-out on an in-store iPad, no waiting lines and an overview of the stock and the merchandise at all times.

VISUAL MERCHANDISING

Considering a serene and practical setup of the store the interior should not distract from the merchandise. A simplistic, clean and light atmosphere combined with natural material instead of elaborate metal shelf systems will speak to her link to nature and create a more spirited, mindful atmosphere. The display of the clothing should resemble a gallery and display a unique piece per style next to other items from the same product group (like in Paco Underhills example of the supermarket (2010)) Seating spaces and a coffee corner should be inviting, yet not create a café-like atmosphere, but more a contemplative place where the self can relax and enjoy some quality time for a moment.

In addition to that an atelier for the tailors is recommended to be incorporated directly into the retail space for the personal and transparent character.

5.1.6. Communication

To set oneself apart from bigger retail chains like COS or Zara the Marketing approach is a subtle and old-fashioned one. The promotion material is not ought to find them, but they are supposed to discover it in their social environment. Subtle business cards placed in other locations of her leisure activities like smaller high street boutiques, cafés, yoga studios or gyms with link to online catalogue and word-of-mouth through their friends or family members will get the message through to them.
IN-STORE
In the brick-and-mortar location there a focus on the personal profile of the customer is paramount. Especially trained style advisors with a basic understanding of pinning and tucking the garments put customer and staff into direct contact from minute one. In-store events like the store opening and workshops are recommended to be promoted through serene and subtle personal invitations with the option of bringing friends and family.

ONLINE
Referring to the demand for transparent quality catalogues and lookbooks available on and offline give access to the whole product range. The transition of entertainment, shopping and well being is important to that customer and creates a welcoming environment to return to.

TONE OF VOICE
It is important to focus on a straightforward tone of voice, no-nonsense, no belittlements, straightforward, practical information. Especially in this case the male example of ‘Outfittery’ with a formal yet personal tone of voice is a suitable example. As the postmodern, conscientious woman is an enterprising character yet idealistic, enjoying a personal treatment, thus the imitation of the interaction with the local butcher or baker is a suitable scenario to brief the employees: style advisors as well as tailors. Formal, friendly and service-focused and only moving to the first-name basis if explicitly demanded by the customer.

5.1.7. Corporation
The most suitable organisation on the level corporation is a multibrand concept and the offer of included tailoring. The multibrand portfolio offers women the right measure of freedom of choice and the offer of individualisation creates the added value they are
longing for in a concept because they will finally have the clothes work exactly around their own, individual identity creating a likeness of themselves (Fillin-Yeh, 2001: 46).

The interaction with the customer is a main focus to be able to continuously improve the experience, the tailoring technique and create a customer database for an even more convenient, effortless experience. The staff is defined by a small, familiar team of Store Manager, style advisors and tailors interacting on first-name basis. Through the creation of expertise and a customer portfolio the aim is the creation of an own collection after two years to guarantee full transparency and have the supervision of products as well as service under one roof.
6. Appendix

6.1. Image of trend cartogram
scale 1: 10 ©Stefanie Schellwies
### Summary trend cartogram ©Stefanie Schellwies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INNOVATORS</th>
<th>DRIVERS</th>
<th>IMPACT</th>
<th>CONSEQUENCES</th>
<th>FUTURE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Who is pushing the trend forward?</strong>&lt;br&gt;Brands, People, Professionals</td>
<td><strong>Five key points as an influence and reason for the trend</strong>&lt;br&gt;1. Pressure of the professional quota&lt;br&gt;2. Disapproval of fast fashion&lt;br&gt;3. The Impossible Beauty Ideal&lt;br&gt;4. The Split between Timeless and Outstanding&lt;br&gt;5. The limitless variety of the female</td>
<td><strong>Proof of the trend</strong>&lt;br&gt;E.g. retail examples, videos, books, packaging, consumer behaviour etc.</td>
<td><strong>How is the trend already implemented in the Late Majority?</strong>&lt;br&gt;Hybrid depiction of women on the edge between masculine and feminine style&lt;br&gt;Women want the best of both its, however, both became all three: &lt;br&gt;1 family 2 work 3 self&lt;br&gt;“Carpe that fucking diem”</td>
<td><strong>Five to six key insights how the trend is influencing the future and how is it executed?</strong>&lt;br&gt;1 INDIVIDUALISATION&lt;br&gt;The product range of lifestyle products offers so much variety that it is almost an individualised experience to choose from it&lt;br&gt;2 EVERYWHERE AT EASE&lt;br&gt;The lines between home and outside world blur&lt;br&gt;Interiors designed to make the whole world your home&lt;br&gt;Contemplative interiors combining sleek design with nature&lt;br&gt;3 FLEXIBILITY&lt;br&gt;Resourceful basic elements tailored towards multiple purposes&lt;br&gt;4 PRACTICALITY&lt;br&gt;The tool-belt-diva as a woman who knows and wants to know how to make things work&lt;br&gt;Fast, honest, straightforward information&lt;br&gt;5 TRANSPARENCY&lt;br&gt;Show where things come from and how they are made&lt;br&gt;Honest by concept - if you have nothing to hide you can reveal everything&lt;br&gt;6 QUALITY TIME&lt;br&gt;Not only quality time with family and the self but also time for quality is important</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| **SHERYL SANDBERG**<br>Author of the book „Lean in“ with the message for women to be braver and take responsibility in moulding the work environment to their needs | **A. SAUVAGE**<br>Designer with first line of made-to-measure women’s suits | **LITTLE BLACK DRESS**<br>Designers from Switzerland who base their collections on the essential „Little Black Dress“ every woman should have in her wardrobe | **LEVI’S CURVE ID**<br>First female sizing system primarily based on shape and not on size, 4 proportional types based on measurements of 60,000 women<br>**THE GENTLEWOMAN**<br>Magazine for modern women of style and purpose with intelligent information about strong, incandescent women of today | **ELLEN DEGENERES**<br>American TV moderator wearing only suits even on the red carpet and playing with variation within that frame work | **SOPHIA COPPOLA**<br>Movie director with clear, basic outfit choices evolving around basic colours and even flat shoes on the red carpet |
Illustration for article Clothes: a manifesto by Rebecca Willis

Source: http://www.debutart.com/illustration/ilovedust/slow-down-women-dressing#/illustration-portfolio
6.3. Picture 2

Topshop campaign Spring 2013

Source: topshop.co.uk
6.4. Picture 3

Image of Jean Paul Gaultier Pre-Fall 2013 Collection (Style.com, 2013)
Hallo Fanny, habe deinen Bogen ausgefüllt.  
Im Levis Store war das so, Isabelle hat mir gesagt, dass Levis die Frauen neu vermessen hat. Ich hatte immer Probleme eine gut sitzende Hose zu bekommen (ausser Closed sitzt immer auch wenn du zugenommen hast, sind mir dafür aber zu teuer)’ deswegen bin ich zu Levis gegangen. Ich wollte eine Jeans hell ohne alles haben eng sitzend. Da war ich nicht die einzige meines Alters, in den 5 Umkleidekabinen waren alles Frauen meines Alters, alle Top Figur, die alle das gleiche suchten, die etwas dunkler, aber eben ohne alles. Die Beratung war gut, als die gemerkt haben, das wir uns gegenseitig ausgetauscht haben, haben sie sich auch zurückgehalten. War eine ganz witzige Situation. Wenn du noch Fragen zu dem Fragebogen hast ruf mich an.
6.6. Outcome online survey about how women want to be perceived
(accessible: http://www.thesistools.com/web/?id=332358)
6.7. Picture 4

Image for photo series: 'Mad Men Through the 21st Century Lense' by Shutterstock (Trendland 2013)
6.8. Moodboard target group
6.9.

Outcome survey/Leisure activities

(accessible: [http://www.thesistools.com/web/?id=332358](http://www.thesistools.com/web/?id=332358))

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Count</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>FITNESS</strong></td>
<td>YOGA</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SURFING</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SPORT</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>RUNNING</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>TENNIS</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>FOOD</strong></td>
<td>COOKING</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>READING</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>EAT OUT</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>DINNER</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>EATING</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>FAMILY &amp; FRIENDS</strong></td>
<td>PLAYING WITH KIDS</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>HANG OUT WITH FRIENDS &amp; FAMILY</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ENTERTAINMENT</strong></td>
<td>MOVIES</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CONCERTS</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>FESTIVALS</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>GOING OUT</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SPIRITUALITY</strong></td>
<td>WALKING</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>MEDITATION</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PHILOSOPHY</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>NATURE</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>GARDENING</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CREATIVITY</strong></td>
<td>DESIGN &amp; BUILD FURNITURE</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SHOPPING</strong></td>
<td>SHOPPING</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
6.10.

Outcome survey / Work involvement

*(accessible: [http://www.thesistools.com/web/?id=332358](http://www.thesistools.com/web/?id=332358))*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Do you currently work? If yes, how much percent? (full-time, part-time etc....)</th>
<th>Do you have children?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>yes: 60%</td>
<td>yes, 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80proc</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes, 80%</td>
<td>yes, two</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>work 80 - 110%</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes, 4 days / week</td>
<td>Yes, 2 boys, 6 &amp; 7 years old</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes, 36 uur</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes, part time</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
6.11. Outcome survey / Essential pieces

(accessible: http://www.thesistools.com/web/?id=332358)
6.12.

Outcome survey / Description perfect store

(accessible: http://www.thesistools.com/web/?id=332358)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>good advice</th>
<th>light</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>next door</td>
<td>spacious</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>payable basics combined with trendy details</td>
<td>not too crowded</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>good personal contact</td>
<td>not too many clothes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>try, choose and other colour / size</td>
<td>not too clean</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>delivered to my home</td>
<td>authentic</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6.13.

Outcome survey / On- and offline preferences

(accessible: http://www.thesistools.com/web/?id=332358)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OFFLINE</th>
<th></th>
<th>CON</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PRO</td>
<td>Feeling the fabric</td>
<td>Wait in line</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Experience of touch</td>
<td>Size not available</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Wider range of products</td>
<td>Masses on Saturday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Able to try everything on</td>
<td>Hassled / judged by shop assistants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Seeing clothes „live“</td>
<td>Too loud music</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Checking quality</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Seeing fit of clothes and colour</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Relaxing experience</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Day with friends</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ONLINE</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRO</td>
<td>Quicker / Saving time</td>
<td>Overwhelming</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No hassle to try on stuff</td>
<td>Seems like dumping of unperfect pieces</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Comparing prices better</td>
<td>Not knowing what to expect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Finding rare products</td>
<td>Clothes in real look different than online</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bigger choice</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Shopping outside of your city/ country</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Inspiration from abroad</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Looking for specific items</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Comfortable from home</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Flexible time / also for Windowshopping</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Getting ideas</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>If you know brand already ideal</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**7 C’s Compassmodel**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CIRCUMSTANCES</th>
<th>CONSUMER</th>
<th>CORPORATION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>National and international</td>
<td>Innovators of a new female consumer tribe influenced by a postmodern, conscientious mindset.</td>
<td>Multibrand concept store and tailoring atelier with online catalogue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fast pace of consumerist culture (especially fashion with fast changing seasons and trends)</td>
<td>Needs: A straightforward, effortless shopping experience to create their personal identities on all levels of their lives</td>
<td>Focus on interaction with consumer and build experience to improve tailoring technique and customer database. First-name basis among employees and with customer if they offer it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weather</td>
<td>Wants: Look casual, fashionable and smart</td>
<td>Creation of an own line after two years.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Global Warming causes awareness of the environment and of a healthy, mindful lifestyle</td>
<td>Security: Consistent collection of garments and personal profile with measurements for in-house tailors</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social and Cultural Circumstances</td>
<td>Education: Transparency on all levels Consumer is treated on eye-level with formal respect.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Androgynous beauty ideal in fashion adds to critical self-assessment of women</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic Circumstances</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial crisis increasing importance of females in the working world and pressure to work</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Core values)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INDIVIDUAL</th>
<th>COMMODITY</th>
<th>COST</th>
<th>COMMUNICATION</th>
<th>CHANNEL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In-Store tailoring service to adjust garments to customer’s body shape</td>
<td>Individual choice of using tailoring service on top of price on price tag</td>
<td>Kick-off: Old-fashioned personal marketing through flyers with link to online catalogue create domino effect</td>
<td>Outside of main shopping area in outskirts of a major city where the P.C.W. works. Opening hours during the weekend by appointment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collection width: Focussing on essential pieces and lifestyle products</td>
<td></td>
<td>Focus on personal profile of the customer especially by the style advisors</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collection depth:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Serene)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COMMODITY</th>
<th>COST</th>
<th>COMMUNICATION</th>
<th>CHANNEL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Comfortable, basic cuts and natural fabrics. Complementary lifestyle products: magazines, natural care products Coffee, tea, water offered for free Personal appointment basis on the weekends</td>
<td>Direct debit Payment on delivery/ pickup Even prices / no use of decimals</td>
<td>Social Media pages like static professional profiles / no constant posts and updates Events like store opening and workshops only on personal invitation basis (open for friends of friends)</td>
<td>Subtle window display. Away from main shopping streets in quiet area. Easily reachable by car, bike and public transport / personal parking space Coffee counter and comfortable, flexible seating areas</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(PRACTICAL)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COMMODITY</th>
<th>COST</th>
<th>COMMUNICATION</th>
<th>CHANNEL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Resourceful, basics that can be worn interchangeable on all occasions Complementing accessories in basic colour ranges for direct implementation into purchased outfits</td>
<td>No additional cost for after-sale service No cost for measurement customer profile</td>
<td>Straightforward tone of voice. Simple, yet formal use of language. Imitation of interaction with the local butcher or baker. Formal, friendly and service-focused.</td>
<td>Area enclosed with supermarkets (or even a market), yoga studios, gyms. Multi-channel automation: Brick-and-mortar complemented with online catalogue and database. Simple wall displays ordered by product group</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Transparent)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COMMODITY</th>
<th>COST</th>
<th>COMMUNICATION</th>
<th>CHANNEL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Brand portfolio with a focus on sustainable production and with a transparent approach to production</td>
<td>Additional bill with price calculation of the garment, margin and tailoring.</td>
<td>Personal story why brands are chosen and where the idea of the concept comes from</td>
<td>Tagline on window and website: Female Clothing, Pin and Tuck All information accessible</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
6.15. Interviews
6.15.1. Interview Kristina Scerbakova

Interview 16.04.2013
KRISTINA SCERBAKOVA
Sales assistant
Denham the Jeansmaker

WHAT IS SPECIAL ABOUT THE STORE CONCEPT OF DENHAM?
When I started both women’s and men’s store were together, which everyone found really handy, because our target group are many couples who go shopping together. So if the man is a Denham buyer, the woman mostly gets drawn into the brand as well.

HOW DO YOU APPROACH YOUR CUSTOMERS?
We serve them snacks, drinks, sometimes wine on the weekends and especially in the old store that caused a really friendly atmosphere. People would just hang around at the fitting room and talk to us. The main focus is a close bond between the brand and the customer, so we are treating everyone more on a peer level. In the old store we even had casted sales people, who were really good looking and trained in approaching people very open. Sometimes that makes customers come back and ask for one specific sales person.

DID YOU HAVE SALES TRAININGS IN HOW TO APPROACH CUSTOMERS?
Yes. We had a Denham Training Day and we got a big manual with the values, the collections etc. We are taught to approach the customer rather aggressively on a friend-to-friend basis creating a dialogue. Aggressively means we have to talk to them the minute they come into the store. Things like: „Nice shoes.“, but of course always in an honest way.
It is important to have customer contact from the beginning until the end. Nevertheless, we are not working with a bonus per customer on the staff side, because we are all one team and not competing. Customers always like to have more than one opinion, so if my colleagues are around, they just recommend things as well and in case there is an Asian woman I am happy to recommend my Asian colleague. Through the cultural diversity of the staff we can connect.

HOW DO PEOPLE REACT TO THAT AGGRESSIVE APPROACH?
I am surprised: Very well. Personally I prefer to wait a little and approach them more passive, but I was corrected, that that was too passive.

HOW DOES THE SHOPPING BEHAVIOUR OF WOMEN AND MEN DIFFER?
Men are very practical. They come in: „I need a shirt for work.“ what makes it easy to help them. They are happy about our help and if they like the model of the jeans they come back for it. They are not as suspicious as women. In their store are also real „Jeans experts“ which makes them really trust them.

Women are very critical. With themselves, with the sales staff. They know about the whole fashion system, that everyone wants to make money, so they are suspicious. However, if they realize you are honest with them, they start to trust you. Another important factor in helping them is asking what they
want and giving them 2-3 models they can try and choose from, because women get frustrated very easily. If there was only one model and that one doesn’t look right, they leave right away. I usually start with the bigger size as well to pamper them a little.

Another important point: Women really listen to what their partner is saying. If they say: „That doesn’t suit you“, they will never buy it.

**DO YOU HAVE SPECIAL TRAINING TO HELP WOMEN FIND THE RIGHT FIT?**

That comes with the experience, I guess. Also, everyone from the sales team gets a Denham outfit, so we try the fits ourselves and get the feeling for it.

We only have 3 models of our jeans and all of them come in different styles and with different washings, so after some time you can see which model fits which body type. As soon as they try one model they are likely to ask for other models as well, not like men, who stick to one, if it fits. Women are very curious and open to new things. Sometimes none of the models fits, but in general the basic fit suits everyone.

**WHAT ARE THE MOST SOLD ITEMS IN YOUR STORE?**

Definitely the Jeans and the T-shirts. Denham’s motto also is: Your Jeans and T-shirt kind of girl. We are also reknown for our jackets, which are very expensive, but people are happy to buy them and see them as an investment.

The Tops are less popular.

**WHAT KIND OF CUSTOMERS DO YOU HAVE?**

Since both stores are separate I noticed that we sell less and it is a lot quieter. We have many tourists coming in, many occassional customers and some loyal ones who come in every other week to check what’s new.

**HOW IS THE NEW STORE DIFFERENT?**

It is very bright and feminine. What technically is totally against the whole concept of RAW. The interior is very pastelly with light wood and some women seem to miss the rough edge of Denham in the woman’s collection. For example, there are no VIRGINS in our women’s collection. The jeans you have to break in yourself and not wash for a while to create your own washing.

The women’s collection is more commercial and that might also come from the fact that comfortable jeans need the Stretch in them.

Although we get a positive feedback on the new interior, there are some parts missing from the old success story evolving around tension and sexiness. If there are men and women together, there is always a kind of tension and the interaction is more sexually loaded and teasing - which sounds weird, but makes it a cool experience. Now it is more practical: „Buy pants, and bye“

**DO WOMEN ASK FOR THE VIRGIN JEANS?**

A few. Most of the times women who work in fashion and know stuff about it or girlfriends who saw them on their boyfriends.

**DO YOU OFFER CUSTOMISATION IN THE STORE?**

Yes. We have a tailor area in the back with the whole tailor atmosphere: sewing machine, measuring tape, pins etc. and it is not only for customising jeans, but also repairing them. It is supposed to be a jeans for life.
For the new collection the customisation is for free and for Sale items it costs the usual 10-15 bucks. However, now that we are separated and our tailor left there was no one skilled enough to take over, so we, from the women's store bring the jeans to the men's store, but somehow it is not working as smoothly anymore. To still create a crafty experience we already pin the jeans in the store, because the store staff can do that as well.

DO MANY PEOPLE ASK FOR CUSTOMIZATION?
Yes and it is getting more and more.

HOW LONG DOES IT TAKE UNTIL THE JEANS IS READY FOR THE CUSTOMER?
We always say that there is no guarantee when, but we write down their details and give them a call when the pants are ready. Sometimes, if people live outside Amsterdam, we even send the jeans to them.

DO YOU ALSO HAVE A CUSTOMER MEASUREMENT DATABASE?
Mostly for the newsletter, but not for the store itself. My boss sometimes takes notes if there are customers who come in often, but we don't have anything like a measurement database.

WHICH AREAS ARE THE BUSIEST IN THE STORE?
The fitting room area. Because many people come in with their mother, child, boyfriend and there is a couch to sit and wait. In the store they pretty much go through everything.

HOW ARE THE JEANS DISPLAYED?
We have a denim wall, where there are big frontal images of the 3 models and one model hanging and in front of that there is a table, where you can find the different washings per model. They lay there in one size, but we get them in the right size for the customers.
The other merchandise is displayed diagonal and the jeans are hanging folded on the hanger.

WHAT MAKES DENHAM JEANS SO UNIQUE?
Because it is something new and unique. It is all about the DENHAM Experience. With jeans you have a certain framework, but within that framework they managed to make the models unique through e.g. 7 pockets in contrast to the standard 5-pocket model.

WHAT ARE THE PROMOTIONAL FACTORS FOR MEN AND WOMEN TO BUY THE JEANS?
For men, we focus on craftsmanship and the Jeans as a „project”, with events for the VIRGIN and with actions to follow the life of your own jeans.
With women it is a little different. Their main focus is to be sexy in a pair of jeans so it is mainly about the fit, the finishing, the washings.

HOW OFTEN DO YOU CHANGE MERCHANDISE?
The collections come in step by step, so we get new products every 3 weeks. We have a Visual Merchandiser who works for both the men’s and the women’s store. The way the collection is hanging in the store is not changed, it is more that stuff is added to it, in spite of the mannequins with the outfits, they are change every 2-3 weeks to make them wear the clothes that well good. Other than that she changes the windows every two months.

HOW DO YOU FINISH THE CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE?
We take the items and bring them to the register, sometimes drop a nice comment on the purchase again or what I often do is giving care advice, which people really appreaciate. The purchase then is put in our special branded Denham bags, which are made out of felt and we also have „New Collection“ bags. Because we get many tourists sometimes they even ask for a nice place to eat or go and we help them, sometimes print some directions for them to just make is a great experience. When a customer buys a lot - that doesn’t happen too much but it does - we give them an extra, like a scarf from previous collections, after consulting with the Manager.

HOW MANY PIECES DOES AN AVERAGE CUSTOMER BUY?
Two to four pieces I would say. The average is probably 2: a jeans and a t-shirt or sometimes also a pair of shoes, because they are not as expensive as the Converse. Some people also have their names put on the waiting list for the jackets, especially the leather jacket and the ones from the A/W collection. We again take their details and call as soon as the jackets come in.
6.15.2. Interview Urs Hesham

Interview 04.04.2013
URS HESHAM
Founder/Owner
Like This

HOW IS IT GOING WITH YOUR NEW STORE?
Although people go for the sale stuff in the crisis and they question the price of everything, the reactions are positive. People are relieved there is something new and they rather buy one nice piece than many. In this so-called crisis people want to look different.

DO YOU FEEL THE CRISIS IN YOUR STORE?
Just recently I read an interview I gave two years ago and back then I was so proud to say that I didn’t feel crisis. But now, especially since I have the shop, I notice it, because many retailers cancelled our collection this season and so we have less shops where we sell additionally to our own store and the Option store unfortunately changed their concept, which means they are not selling any clothes anymore.

HOW IS YOUR CONCEPT DIFFERENT FROM OTHERS?
Well, I wanted the brand to be like me. I had a budget of 100-200 € per month. I don’t want getting dressed to take too much time but still want to look nice. So my collections are pretty much time-saving collections.

WHAT ARE THE BEST-SELLING PIECES?
The knitted pants Erika Badu wore - they sell like sweet cake - the overall and the dip-die pullover.

IN WHAT WAY DO THE CUSTOMERS INTERACT WITH YOU WHEN THEY COME IN?
If there is service, people buy stuff. Unfortunately I have no money to hire staff but if someone is there to help right away we sell more.

HOW DO YOU APPROACH CUSTOMERS THEN TO SELL MORE?
It is pretty much a gut feeling how to approach them. You fell if you should leave them alone. My friend José is really good with that, but she also has a lot of experience in Retail. If people stick around we also get coffee for them, because we a coffee counter since two weeks.

DO PEOPLE REALLY GET A COFFEE THEN?
Yes. During the week and when it is rainy not so much, but when it is sunny, people sit outside on our bench. The Noordermarkt is also a great location for that.
DO YOU GIVE PEOPLE SOMETHING SPECIAL WITH THEIR PURCHASE?
Yes, we do. All online orders and In-store sales are wrapped nicely into silk paper and everyone gets a LIKETHIS postcard with it.

ARE YOUR ONLINE SALES GOING BETTER THAN IN STORE?
Sometimes. If it is cloudy people don’t come, but then we still might have online orders and very few return the things they order. Which is nice.

WHAT WAS THE BUDGET YOU NEEDED FOR OPENING A STORE?
I think around 20,000 €, but only for the clothes and the accessories. I didn’t have any budget for the interior so we made most of the things ourselves with MDF Wood.

HOW DO YOU GET PEOPLE TO COME TO THE STORE?
We have some other brands also for men, but mainly we get tourists who pass by and see our card stand outside or people who heard from us through their friends. When we are in any Magazine also many people come - it’s good PR.

WHAT OTHER BRANDS DO YOU SELL? ANY SPECIAL CRITERIA OF CHOICE?
We sell other brands that are not available here. For example Peter Jensen, Henrik Vibskov, Uniforms for the Dedicated, Knit-tet, Bag’n’noun, the Natwerk Limoncello - that one sells really well - „I hate perfume“ a special perfume from a New York cab driver who was fed up with smells in his cab and created smells like „cigarettes“ „experience in old library“, so everyday smells made nice for your nose. Other than that we also sell Magazines and Books and also Postcards by Laura George. The books were sold really fast, especially in December before Christmas.

SO THE BOOKS DROVE CUSTOMERS IN YOUR STORE?
They came for clothes in the first place but bought them. The card stand outside draws people inside and also the bench. As soon as someone is sitting on it and the door is open, people come in.

WHICH IS THE BUSIEST AREA IN THE STORE?
The Sale rack. We try to hide it, but people just find it.

WHAT ARE ESSENTIAL PIECES WOMEN ALWAYS BUY?
Jeans, a basic blouse, a jumper, black dress, a cardigan, a suit jacket and then extra pieces to spice it up.
6.15.3. Interview Bas Groefsema

Interview 06.04.2013

BAS GROEFSMA
Sales assistant
COS Amsterdam

HOW DO WOMEN SHOP AT COS?
- there are two different kinds of women: the first just runs through the store and doesn’t want to be talked to and the second type really appreciates our help and wants to be helped
- the second type are mostly women 30/35+

DO YOU HAVE WORKSHOPS FOR THE STAFF TO IMPROVE SERVICE?
- Yes. But I was already skilled from my experience at Diesel so I had an introduction into the company, which is really important to them
- A few weeks ago we had a Special Training called „Just looking, thanks“ where we learned how to approach customers in an open way to get another response
- e.g. certain phrases like „Were you looking for something else?“, which makes them think and interact with you or „Thank you for waiting“ if there was a long line - as soon as we say that they are like: „No problem“ and all the anger from waiting in line is gone.

IS IT HARD FOR YOU TO APPROACH WOMEN AS A MAN?
- No. Because I am gay I’d say it is even easier. I use jokes or small compliments on their outfits or their choices to start the conversation. But I always do it in an honest way.

HOW DO MEN SHOP DIFFERENTLY AT COS?
- They are way more focussed and for them the store shouldn’t be busy. We have only 3 fitting rooms and there sometimes is a long line. Men don’t wait in line. If they see it they hang the clothes away, turn around and leave the shop and 90% of them even just tries the clothes in the store. Women are different. They are annoyed, but they wait.

HOW MUCH DO WOMEN BUY IF THEY COME INTO THE STORE?
- We track the pieces per receipt every evening and 2 pieces is the aim. I think we are at around 1,7.

WHAT IS IMPORTANT IN APPROACHING WOMEN?
- Especially at COS it is important to have a conversation with the customers and a loose atmosphere. So it is more on eye level.
- At Diesel, where I worked before, it was much more pushy, snobby and kind of an arrogant and cool vibe we had to portray as store staff.

HOW OFTEN DOES THE SETUP OF THE STORE CHANGE?
- Major changes are made every 4 weeks. Then we get a new window display and the front area behind the window is equipped with a certain theme or trend.
- The other merchandise behind the counter is changed every day by the Visual Merchandiser and his assistant.

**DO YOU HAVE LOYAL CUSTOMERS WHO COME IN EVERY WEEK?**
- Yes. We have some people who come every week. Mostly people who live in the area of the Negen Straatjes and especially a few elder women who also buy one piece every other week.
- Some other customers come in only a few times a month and buy entire outfits, some of them come to Amsterdam especially for COS.
- In general I think most of the women buy more than they intended to.

**WHICH ARE THE MOST BUSY AREAS IN THE STORE?**
- Definitely the fitting rooms and the whole area after the register. People tend to pass the first section very quick and look more in the second part of the store.

**IS THERE A CERTAIN FOCUS ON SALE?**
- In Sale season there is a different kind of customer coming into the store - you can tell. During Sale people are much more greedy and take 20 pieces into the fitting room instead of 10.
- Most of the elder women skip the sale.

**DO YOU HAVE A CUSTOMIZATION SERVICE AT COS?**
- No. But we are very focussed on giving them advice where they could go to. e.g. I give them a card for a good tailor in the area, where they can have changes done.
- Once a day there is someone asking for that service and most of the time I advice women in the fitting room to have the pants shortened for a perfect fit. So it is not necessarily that they ask for it, it’s more a service I offer, because I want to give them my honest opinion.

**ARE THERE ANY COMPLAINTS ABOUT FITS AND SIZES AT COS?**
- Dutch women are a little bigger, so they have bigger breasts for example. That makes the styles with a high neck especially tricky for them, because they don’t want to look like a huge block.
- We have women of any shape and size coming in, but curvy women need more help, I’d say. Also because our sizes only go until Large and 44 and the Large is a quite small size.
- With men we have more of a problem, because the styles at COS are rather fitted and tighter and we need to educate them that the clothes are not too small, but that this is the way they are supposed to fit on your body. But normally the COS customer knows.

**YOU HAVE MANY MALE SALES PEOPLE IN THE STORE, RIGHT?**
- Yes and all of them are gay. Most of us study in Art/Fashion/Photography so we portray a very hip lifestyle and personality.

**IS YOUR STORE CONNECTED WITH THE ONLINE STORE?**
- No. The styles sold in our store are even different from the ones in the online store. Sometimes people come and ask: „I saw this style online do you have it here?“, but the online store is an entirely different store and we are not able to order styles from there. Even the Sale works different, which I find quite stupid. If an item is on Sale online it is mostly not on Sale in our store and vice versa.

**WHAT OTHER TRICKS DO YOU USE TO CREATE A GREAT SHOPPING ENVIRONMENT FOR WOMEN?**
- We have an elaborate lighting system and a special soundtrack with a collection of Swedish, hip songs from artists like the Knife - so the Underground, but also already popular tracks.
- We always have fresh flowers! There even is a book telling us how to buy the flowers, which ones and how they are supposed to look like etc.

Like the flower book and the way to put the sticker on the sold items, everything is pretty organized and restricted at COS.

**HOW MUCH STAFF IS ON THE SALES FLOOR?**
- On a Saturday I think 7-8 people are in the store and 6 of them are store staff plus the two Store Managers who have other things to arrange as well.

**IS THERE ANYTHING ELSE YOU REALLY FOCUS ON WHILE SERVING CUSTOMERS?**
- Yes. I always try to give them care advice, how to wash the items. Many people love that and appreciate it a lot. We even have give-away washing bags, which amaze people, when they get one.
- Packaging is of course very important as well. We learn a special technique to fold the clothes at the register, wrap it in foil, put a sticker on and put it in a nice, branded COS paper bag and sometimes give them one of our magazines with it. Almost like a present. I know from myself how much I love presents, so people always say: „It’s so nice that you pack everything“.
- Women are impulse buyers, it is funny to see that the items close to the fitting rooms are all gone by the end of the day. Because while waiting in line most women grab one of the pieces hanging in that area.
6.15.4. Interview Emily Swift

Interview 04.04.
EMILY SWIFT
Sales assistant
Anthropologie

WHAT IS SPECIAL ABOUT WORKING AT ANTHROPOLOGIE?
At Anthro they really focus on teaching us what the brand is all about. The concept is: HER IN MIND. Our target group is 28-54. It is part of Urban Outfitters, but with an older demographic.

WHAT IS THE BRAND ALL ABOUT THEN?
In the concept it states: An intimate knowledge of our customer and exceed her expectations in surprising and delightful ways.

HOW DO YOU IMPLEMENT THAT?
Mainly through service. We open up a fitting room for them, bring their items to the cashier already, while they have to wait in line and during Christmas we for instance serve hot apple cider.

HOW MUCH TIME DOES A CUSTOMER SPEND IN YOUR STORE?
Around 1,5 hours I’d say, because they look at the clothes and also at the home section.

IS EVERY ANTHROPOLOGIE THE SAME?
No. Many products can only be bought in our store to maintain a unique boutique feel.

WHAT SPECIAL SERVICES DO YOU OFFER TO THE CUSTOMERS?
First we have a Personal Shopper, they can call and make appointments with. Second we have Shopping events women can organize with their friends and then they get snacks and the Personal Shopper to give them advice. There are book events, dog events, children’s book readings - many events to engage the customer and follow it on Instagram.
Another very great thing is the Store display event. Because all displays are handcrafted we give customers the opportunity to sign up and help us make the display. Usually 10-20 people sign up and take part.

HOW DO YOU INTERACT AS A SALES PERSON DURING SUCH EVENTS?
We are supposed to feel like the host of the party and make the most out of the visitors experience like starting fitting rooms, introducing them to products etc.

ARE THERE ALSO MEN WHO COME TO THE STORE?
Not a lot, but some. 99% of them shops for their girlfriend, mother, daughter and searches for a present. This is why we usually ask them the first minute: „Who are you shopping for?“ to give them the proper advice.

IN WHAT WAY DO YOU TRY TO ENHANCE THE STORE EXPERIENCE?
The store attracts all five senses, e.g. smell through the candles we sell, sometimes we serve snacks, the eyes are engaged through the elaborate, self-made decoration. First time shoppers are always surprised by the smell and the decoration.

WHAT AREAS ARE MOST BUSY IN THE STORE?
The Sale room is always a big attraction.

HOW OFTEN DO YOU CHANGE THE SETUP OF THE STORE?
The clothes are re-merchandised every day, because some customers really come in every day. On a monthly basis our head office creates concepts to be executed by our Visual Merchandiser on the sales floor with the themes of different women, e.g. Ayla the Traveller - so everything is very bohemian and bazaar-like.

WHAT ARE THE BEST SELLING ITEMS?
Definitely our not-so basic tees, which are technically fancier basic t-shirts with an edge like raw edges or elaborate pockets. Other than that of course, the Sale room and our promo pieces, which we have quite often. And the monogram mugs! We sell at least two a day.

DO PEOPLE REALLY TAKE THE OFFER OF THE PERSONAL SHOPPER?
They do, but I think it’s not doing well enough. It is not promoted enough I’d say. But some women call to spend an hour or two with her.

DO YOU HAVE MANY LOYAL CUSTOMERS?
Yes. They come in almost every day and know and are known by everyone in the store. They come in and ask „What’s new?“ or they are even so familiar with the collection that they find the new merchandise themselves. Although we know them on a first name basis we still try to treat them equal to every other customer. I’d say there are 3 who come on a daily basis, 10 weekly and then we also have occasional shoppers who don’t live in the city.

ARE THOSE WOMEN BUYING ONLY ONE PIECE OR WHOLE OUTFITS?
Mainly pieces, but we also have customers who come in once a season and buy their whole wardrobe. They spend around 5000 at once. They either have no time to shop or wanna get it out of the way, which doesn’t mean that they are less fashionable than others. Actually most of our Personal Shopper women are like that. One time a guy came in on Valentine’s Day and got his wife a 2000 pound gift card. So those women are definitely wealthier women.

ARE THERE CERTAIN SEASONS ESPECIALLY GOOD OR BAD?
January and February are very slow months in Retail, I’d say. But now I start realizing that it’s getting more.

DOES THE LOCATION PLAY A BIG ROLE?
Generally Anthropologie stores are in richer and posh areas, which makes sense, because the styles are in a very high price category.

DO YOU GET STAFF TRAINING TO IMPROVE THE SERVICE?
Every morning there is a 30 Minute morning session we also get paid, where we learn about the concept in the store, sometimes we have fit sessions to try the clothes ourselves and get a feel for their fit, or we learn about bestsellers or how to put a gift together.

WHAT ARE OTHER SPECIAL SERVICES YOU OFFER?
At the register we wrap everything in tissue paper, we have one person in the front zone to greet the customer, one person starting the fitting rooms and another person looking for items in the store.

IS YOUR STORE CONNECTED TO THE ONLINE STORE?
There are a lot of different items online, however, we can’t order them through the online shop. It’s an own store in a way. Also because it is a US company I think the inventory differs a lot so it is better to come into the store.
DO YOU KNOW ANY EXCEPTIONALLY GOOD STORE CONCEPTS FOR WOMEN?

There are a few store examples with a very high standard of service. For example Nanette in Amsterdam Zuid and Sukha. My favourite store is in Italy close to where my parents live. It is a small store where the owner dresses you and where there are lots of brands but only one piece of each item on display. I always thought they were very exclusive and felt like I was buying the most special pieces on earth - women like to feel exclusive. Once I had to use their bathroom and saw that they have all the stock in the basement of the store They are very local so they don’t even have a website. Another example is the French Trotter Store, because they have nice branded hangers. And A.P.C. That’s my favourite brand. They have big fitting rooms and you can see all pieces in a catalogue and the sales person will get it for you in your size.

WHAT ARE OBSTACLES YOU SEE IN SHOPPING FOR WOMEN?

Not all women have the taste to choose on their own. I have a few friends who are not too much into fashion and they usually go very few times per year and then they go to stores with good service and style advice like Kikki Niester and buy a lot. One of them never shops online, only in the store. It is more high end though. A friend of mine is a stylist on job hunt and recently she was offered a job as personal stylist who helps people at home to shop online. It was a crazy story.

ARE THERE MAJOR DIFFERENCES APPROACHING MEN AND WOMEN?

In our marketing campaigns only content-wise but not in the approach. Especially not in Social Media. However, my friend Peter has a multibrand store and he noticed that guys are more loyal to brands and women shop pieces. This is why he tries not to shop brands but focus on nice outstanding pieces for women. I know myself that a drawback of that is the problem of matching it with other pieces in your wardrobe.
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8. Access To Primary Data

The significant results of the survey conducted via thesistools.com are outlined in the text, however, in case the access to the entire collected data is required, please feel free to send an e-mail to schell58@hva.nl for further information about the findings.

9. Statement Of Authenticity

Hereby I truthfully declare that this final thesis is written entirely by myself and without any help. All literal quotations are indicated as well as the use of other author’s ideas within the respective section of the Report.

I am aware of the consequences for me in case of a violation of the authenticity and if fraud can be proven, I will be liable for any costs associated with the investigation and the sourcing of original documents.

Moreover, I declare that the written, printed version are exactly the same as the digital version of the Report.

Amsterdam, 06th June 2013

Stefanie Schellwies