AN EXPLORATION FOR THE POSITIONING OF HERITAGE BRANDS IN THE FAST-FASHION MARKET.
VIEWED FROM THE APPAREL CONSUMER’S BEHAVIOR
| INTRODUCTION |

Subject of study:

An exploration for the positioning of heritage brands in the fast-fashion market.
Viewed from the apparel consumer’s behavior

Research question:

Which steps should heritage brands take to change their positioning in the current fast fashion environment in order to cope with the changed consumer buying behavior in the 21st century?

Product outline:

The product will be a model showing how to approach the new-consumer. Within this all steps of the consumer experience, brand communication, product focus and lifestyle identification will be explained. This model aims at being easy-understandable and especially useful for Luxury brands. This tool will be designed with the goal to guide a re-positioning strategy and to find the right consumer in market.

Within this tool emphasize will be placed on brand identity, brand image and the post-demographic consumer.
Subjects of importance

BRAND IMAGE

BRAND EXPERIENCE

CONSUMER KNOWLEDGE

BRAND IDENTITY
I. BRAND IDENTITY

A clear brand identity is the key to attract the consumer and gain a consistent consumer base to re-gain a clear position in the apparel market.
KEY POINTS FOR BRAND STRATEGY IN THE CASE OF SLOW-FASHION BRANDS

<p>| Product alignment focused on key heritage items |
| Online communication consistency |
| Marketing activities that communicate a total lifestyle |
| Enhanced product to market speed |
| Distinguishable brand identity |
| Embracing technology and innovative ways to reach the consumer |
| Interest based segmentation towards the consumer |
| Create constant newness on the shop-floor |
| Innovate the brand’s heritage |
| Re-emphasize on histories success factors |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STRATEGY COMPARISON</th>
<th>FAST FASHION BRANDS</th>
<th>SLOW FASHION BRANDS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Collections</td>
<td>Up to 20 small seasons.</td>
<td>2 main seasons (Fall/winter and Spring/Summer).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pricing strategy</td>
<td>Low-segment to mid-segment, broad offer in affordable</td>
<td>Premium prices due to brand name and quality</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>prices.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Distribution strategy</td>
<td>Own-operated retail stores and web-stores.</td>
<td>Wholesale stores, retail stores and web-stores.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supply chain strategy</td>
<td>Partly Europe based and partly outsourced within</td>
<td>Outsourced and usually Asia based, higher quality in</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Europe and Asia. Company owned in the case of Zara.</td>
<td>Italy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Product strategy</td>
<td>Consumable and ready-to-wear.</td>
<td>Exclusive, timeless and high quality.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Response technique</td>
<td>Around 4 weeks.</td>
<td>6 months up to a year.</td>
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</table>
Opportunities for slow fashion/heritage brands

- Promote a distinctive character
- Communicate a lifestyle that meets the consumers' life
- Omnichannel experience
- Advanced website
- Create positive brand associations
- Use brand ambassadors and celebrity endorsement
- Clear and focused communication

- Show distinctive character
- Simplify easy understandable
- Use brand history to show value, emotions and trust
- Upgrade retail stores to show a clear business card of the brand
- Strong online presence
- Identify with consumer characteristics

- Clear label segmentation via vertical expansion
- Alignment strategy for design activities
- Emphasize on key-heritage items
- Make your products tell meaningful stories
- Implement more delivery drops or smaller seasons to stimulate constant newness on the shop floor

- Embrace technology in all production and promotion matters.
- Emphasize on the brands’ key heritage products in an innovative way
- Innovate the consumers’ experience (innovation in products, purchase matters, delivery matters)
- Enhance speed to market
- Show product innovation

- Communicate a lifestyle that meets the consumers' life
- Omnichannel experience
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COMMUNICATION

COLLECTIONS

IDENTITY

INNOVATION
II.
CONSUMER KNOWLEDGE

Relevant and up-to-date consumer knowledge is key to position your brand and create a suitable brand experience to build a relationship.
CONSUMER CHARACTERISTICS
The post demographic consumer purchases from different brands and price levels, with different motivations and often different channels as can be seen below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Product</th>
<th>Fast fashion</th>
<th>Post demographic consumer</th>
<th>Slow fashion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Trend-conscious, Fashion forward</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lower to mid-price segment</td>
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<tr>
<td>Timeless, high quality, simplicity</td>
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<td>Lower to mid-price segment</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mid to high-price segment</td>
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<tr>
<td>Buy new items regularly while giving them a shorter life expectancy. More about quantity and a quick style turnover.</td>
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<td>Purchase products as an investment or reward, with the intention to have a long-lasting wardrobe. More about quality.</td>
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<td>Keeping up with trends</td>
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<td>Retail stores with a broad offer, online channels.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Retail stores or department stores.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Impulsive, temporary use.</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Planned purchase, wardrobe building.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Temporary, variety, replaceable, trend conscious,</td>
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<td>Timeless products with a long lifespan, high quality and uniqueness.</td>
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POST – DEMOGRAPHIC CONSUMER PROFILE

- Shopping is a psychological process
- Orientation via online channels
- Target towards lifestyle, not demographics
- Personalized communication and products
- Easy online shopping experience and fast delivery
- Combine different brand segments and price levels
- Frequent purchases / trend sensitive
- Constant newness in products / replenishment
- Positive brand associations / celebrity endorsement or influencers
- Emotional and social values are important
- Looking for recognition
- Attract to the store
- Brand experience through retail stores
- Distinguishable and recognizable products
- Social identification via brand image
- Experience society

Shopping is a psychological process

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CHARACTERISTICS OF POST-DEMOGRAPHIC CONSUMERS’ BUYING BEHAVIOR

Consumers buying behavior is formed on behavioral and psychographic characteristics instead of demographic characteristics. Behavioral characteristics are focused on Lifestyle, use of product, social forming and identification. Psychographic is focused on attitudes, values, opinions and interests. These characteristics are subdivided into below points and explained.

**CULTURAL**
Income equality, globalization and the consumption society have changed the old-fashion demographic based segmentation to irrelevant
Freedom to be by a less religious society has made identification a free process.
Individualization

**SOCIAL**
Influencers are forming positive brand associations to stimulate purchases
Desire to keep up with the rapid changing trends stimulates regular purchases.
Broad access to information and the ability to compare via online channels is increasing transparency
Brands are a social form of expression

**PSYCHOLOGICAL**
Buying behavior is marked by the absence of clear patterns
Influenced by the brand experience, newness on the floor and positive brand associations via influencers
85% of our thoughts when shopping are sub-conscious and influenced by the in-store experience, customer service and brand associations

**PERSONAL**
The brand image has to fit with the consumers’ personality/ - lifestyle
Consumers are marked by attitudes instead of demographics - Personality
Identification via brands - Self concept
III. BRAND IMAGE

The brand image reflects the positive associations the consumer should have in order to stimulate willingness to purchase.
Important points to influence a positive brand image in market

**Brand image**

- Positive brand associations via relevant celebrities of influencers such as bloggers.
  - Possibility to personalize products
- Create a consumer experience via stores and purchases
  - Enhance customer service
  - Show a lifestyle via online channels
  - Enhance presence of retail-stores
  - Create clear separations between sub-brands
- Maintain the same look and product direction between sub-brands
- Combine marketing activities from owned and licensed products
  - Good level of service aimed at personalization
IV. CREATING THE BRAND EXPERIENCE
Steps to reposition for heritage brands

I. CLEAR BRAND IDENTITY
   - Emphasize heritage
   - Retail strategy
   - Online presence
   - Aligned centralized design
   - Distinctive character
   - Enhanced speed to market

II. RELEVANT CONSUMER APPROACH
    Interest based segmentation aimed at lifestyle identification
    - Behavioral and psychographic characteristics

III. POSITIVE BRAND IMAGE
    - Positive brand associations
    - Social identification matters
    - Consumer experience in store and purchase
    - Recognizable image
    - Emphasize online channels

POSITIVE BRAND EXPERIENCE
Consumer willingness to purchase