CONCEPT

REPORT

LIDA VAN WIJK
Amsterdam Fashion Institute
Int. Fashion and Management
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Motivation

At the start of the year 2018 I found myself in a discussion with friends about online shopping and all its advantages. We discussed how convenient it is to have all shape- and colour-variations available at once, compare brands and prices and find new products, all without having to move. However, as the conversation proceeded it came forward that despite all the advantages, we were unanimously held back from shopping online. This had to do with recurring issues linked to the sizing and fit of garments, and the hassle of having to return them. When I later started reading into the issue, I found out that there were many more women like me and my friends. I read that over half of the clothes that are bought online are being send back and that the vast majority of these returns are fit-related. I also found that when looking at women alone, these numbers reach even higher. I then decided to research why the fit-related return rate in women’s fashion e-commerce is as high as it. What I found was that the issue is influenced by many factors fuelled by consumers, brands, retailers and the industry as a whole.
Introduction

On the level of size and fit, there are three main issues that need to be solved in the women’s fashion industry: size-problems, fit-problems and fit-preferences. The first issue, size-problems, is caused by inconsistencies in sizing across the marketplace. Female consumers do not know their confection size at different brands, retailers and across different countries. This is due to the fact that labels in garments might indicate the same size, but the physical dimensions are often different. This can be intentionally or unintentionally. Another problem is that different numerical systems are sometimes handled. As a result, consumers guess their sizes when ordering clothes online or order multiple sizes. In these cases, there is a high chance or certainty, that they will have to return the order or a part thereof.

The second issue, size-problems, is caused by the fact that it is impossible for brands and retailers to cater for the many body type variations that exist in the female population of today. Next to the diverse female body types, the populations consisting of increasingly mixed ethnicities and thus increasingly diverse body shapes and proportions are even harder to cater for. In the fashion system as we know it today, garments are reduced to a set of confection sizes per style, however, this proves not to work well for many female consumers. On top of this, while these brands and retailers should put more time and mind into the fit of garments, the fast fashion industry is pressuring shorter fashion cycles. This leads to less time for the development process and ultimately affects the quality of the fit of garments.

The third and most complex issue, is the one of fit-preferences. Fit preference on itself is not a problem like the other two issues, however, it becomes a problem when contributing to the high fit-related return rate in e-commerce. The most obvious examples of fit preference that are playing a role here are things like, the preference for closely or loosely fitted apparel, for higher or lower hemlines and for a covered or revealing neckline. This issue is almost impossible for brands and retailers to solve, as it holds a relation to the subjective preferences of the consumer, which arise from personal feelings, values and experiences.

Sizing and fit are big issues in the fashion industry that need to be solved. However, due to the scope of some problems reaching through the entire industry, the conflicting interests of many brands and retailers in this matter and the subjectivity of the female consumer, it would be too costly, time consuming and on some levels simply unsolvable. I came up with an idea for a mobile application that would in a way, solve all the issues at once for the female consumer.
CONCEPT

The Size Guide App or TSGA is an application for all female fashion consumers. It helps women find the best suiting garment for their body types, while considering their preferences, feelings and values. All in the fashion system as we know it today.

VISION

Everyone should feel comfortable in what they wear.

MISSION

We guide women towards the perfect fit for their unique bodies.
How does TSGA work?
The size guide app is a technical tool that is build up from data inserted by the consumer. Reliable data is thus the most important component of the app and it will be collected as follows. The consumer will be presented with an empty grid in which she can fill out for herself what size suited her best from a specific garment group at a specific brand. This data is then collected and processed by TSGA, after which the convertors are created.

How will the problems the app is for be handled?
The main problems in sizing and fit that exist in the female population will be handled by The Size Guide App in the following ways. The problems in sizing will be handled with the convertors that will be created with the data provided by users. The problem in fit will be handled with matches that will be made by the system, between women with similar body types and preferences that will ‘advise’ each other. Fit-preference will be handled by a revolutionary system that works with the sequencing by importance of different fit features by users.

Why will consumers use TSGA?
What is inviting about TSGA for the consumer, is that she does not have to go through a time consuming process in which she fills out complicated information like body measurements. Instead, she fills out what she found suited her best for her own memory and convenience in the future. In return, she gets access to an enormous database filled with information on sizing and fit that was inserted by peers.

When is TSGA used?
As explained, data is inserted into TSGA by the consumer after she has done a successful purchase. However, real usage of the app mainly takes place on three specific occasions. First, when the consumer wants purchase an item online from a brand or retailer from which she previously purchased an item. She then uses her grid in the app to refresh her memory on what size she needs. Secondly, when she wants to purchase an item from a brand or retailers from which she never purchased before and at which she doesn’t know her size. She then consults with peer users and the convertors created from the brands database. Finally, she can use the app while shopping in physical stores, to avoid having to try on multiple sizes or in some cases even any size at all.

How will the app grow and further develop?
The app will automatically grow and improve itself as users will keep adding new brands and sizes for themselves. On top of this, as more consumers will join the platform, the data that is already inserted will become more reliable. This because firstly existing data will be confirmed by more sources and secondly more subjective views will be shared on sizes and fits. The matches that the app will make, will also be more accurate as there will be more users to choose from.

What is good about the application, is that it will be co-created by its users. The users together are already constantly improving the app by inserting data that is shared, but are also given the opportunity to introduce new features that are considered important by a significant amount of users.
TSGA has many different features. On one hand the user inserts information from herself for herself. On the other hand she can look up general information and information from others, as other users can also do from her. The features are related to problems in sizing and fit, but the most prominent and important features of the app are related to fit-preferences.

My size guide
When opening the app, the consumer finds herself on the home screen called ‘my size guide’. On this screen the different features of the app are visible, as well as different tools on the app’s fixed toolbar. On the fixed toolbar the consumer can choose the options: Search size, Add size, Me and settings. The screen ‘My size guide’ consists of the features: My grid, My brands, All brands, My advisors, Tools and preferences. On the right upper side of the screen a notification icon is placed.

Add size
With the add size button, the user can add a size of a garment (group) from a specific brand that suited her well to her grid.

Search size
When the consumer is thinking of purchasing a new style from a brand or garment group she doesn’t know her size for, she can look up the style in TSGA. If the specific style she is looking for isn’t in the database yet, she can try to search on the garment group at that brand. If that data is in the app, she can purchase what would be likely to be her size.

Me
In the section ‘me’, the user inserts information about herself. The information is about her body type or something that might influence her body type. The information inserted here is: Height, Weight, Age and body shape.

Settings
In this section the user can adjust her account settings. An important part in the user settings are the privacy settings, which can be adjusted to the user’s preferences here.

My grid
In ‘My grid’, the consumer finds an overview of all the sizes she added over the time she used the app. On this screen on the left side, the brands will be placed under each other in a desired order (e.g. most used, alphabetical, etc.). Behind this column of the consumer’s sizes are placed per garment group of that brand.

My brands
In my brands the consumer can find an overview of all the brands she has ever added a style from and all the brands she is following. Whenever something is happening around that brand, so for instance when her size of a new style or garment group is added, she will get a notification on this.

All brands
On the ‘All brands’ page, the consumer can find all the brands for which a size has been registered in the history of The Size Guide App. When pressing on a brand from this list, the brand page within the app will open on which a grid with all the registered information in TSGA from the brand will appear.

My advisors
Users that match each other on many levels are each other’s ‘advisors’ and they follow each other. The most important parts in which they have to match, are ‘preferences’ in which their fit-preferences for different part of garments are registered, ‘Me’, in which their body characteristic is registered and ‘My brands’, in which is visible what brands the user usually buys. The sizes they usually purchase also have to match.

Tools
‘Tools’ is the information page of The Size Guide App. On this page the user can find all sort of general information and overviews like standard measurements charts, how to measure instructions and international size convertors. The user can also find the TSGA size convertor here which rather than showing the conversion of UK sizes to US sizes, shows a quick overview of the conversion of sizes of big and popular brands.

Preferences
in ‘Preferences’, the consumer can fill out her personal fit preferences for different aspects of garments. These aspects include, the fit around the body, the hemline, the shoulder breadth, waist, sleeve-length and pipe-length. For the fit around her body for instance, she choose her fit preference in five categories ranging from tightly fitted to oversized. After this she can prioritise the different factors that she finds most important. What is more important to her, the depth of the neckline or the length of the sleeves?

Notifications
Whenever something that is relevant for the consumer happens in the app, she will be notified. This can for instance be another user adding a style in her size from a brand she follows or a new brand being added to the database.
Hi Sarah!

My grid

Blouses   Tops   Sweaters

Acne Studios
- 38 M
- 36 L
- 36 M

Chloé
- 38 M
- 38 M
- X  X

COS
- 38 M
- 38 M
- 36 S

H&M
- 36 S
- 36 M
- 34 XS

ZARA
- 40 L
- 40 M
- 38 M
COMPETITION

The Size Guide App will have three main competitors: FitAnalytics, fits.me and Virtusize. All three are successful companies that provide fitting enabling tools or ‘virtual dressing rooms’ for prominent clients in the fashion industry.

**Concept:**
In the Fit Analytics tool, consumers insert required data about their bodies and fit-preference into the system. The fitting tool then comes with a recommendation of a size for the consumer, the size that is presented by the tool, is based on what the majority of other satisfied consumers with similar physical properties and preferences inserted.

**Required data:** Height, weight, age, belly shape, hip shape, fit preference

**Clients:** Asos, Inditex (Pull&Buyer, Zara, Mango, Bershka, Massimo Dutti), Tommy Hilfiger, Calvin Klein, Vans, Burberry, Stella McCartney

**Concept:**
In the fits.me tool, consumers insert required data about their bodies into the system. The consumers’ fit-preference is not included here. fits.me than comes with a recommendation of a size the consumer, based on peers with similar physical properties.

**Required data:** Height, weight, age, body type

**Clients:** Mud Jeans, Rhone, Henry Lloyd, Christy Dawn

**Concept:**
In the Virtusize tool, consumers compare the garment they are about to purchase to a previously purchased garment or a garment that they already own, from the same garment group. They can then visually play around with the fit of the garment and place it relative to the body until it meets their fit preference.

**Required data:** Own garment or previous purchase

**Clients:** Filippa-K, Acne, Nudie jeans, maison kitsuné
CONCLUSION

Multiple companies are trying to eliminate the extensive issues in of sizing and fit in women’s fashion e-commerce, each in their own well thought-out ways. Fit analytics is strong in looking at previous success stories, but repeatedly asks the consumer to insert a lot of information. fits.me is strong in looking at peers, but does not include the crucial element of fit preference. Virtuesize takes something that the consumer already loved and tries to get as close to that as possible, but with that bases everything on one single piece. All the competitors’ tools have positive and negative sides to them. TSGA takes in and develops these positive sides and learns from the negative ones.

The Size Guide App will work with just the right amount of data on the consumers’ body and previous successes of the consumer and her peers. The unique element of TSGA however, is the emphasis that will be put on the consumer’s fit preferences. Not only will the app have many options within one fit-preference, preferences can be expressed for all different parts of the garments and can be sequenced on importance. The Size Guide App will eliminate the problems in sizing and fit for women while strongly considering their fit preferences, making online shopping a truly pleasant experience.