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BRAND BRITANNIA: Britishness in Fashion Branding

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Aims...

Made in Britain?
- Identify what defines ‘Britishness’ in context of fashion marketing.

Cool Britannia?
- Discern applications within branding and promotion.

Fad or Fashion?
- Contemporary relevance & sustainability.
Made in Britain?

Defining ‘Britishness’:
• Context of society, history & fashion.
• Practical & conceptual interpretations.

• Seek to dimensionalise the influences ‘Britishness’ has on UK fashion brand identity and promotion.
Practical Interpretations

Craft heritage:
- Wool, weaving & textiles.
Practical Interpretations

Industrial Heritage:

• Industrial Revolution - 18th Century.
Practical Interpretations

Commercial Heritage:

- Mercantilism, empire & trade.
Conceptual Interpretations

Patriotism:

• Confidence, pride & arrogance?
Conceptual Interpretations

Tradition:

• Class system, heritage, craftsmanship.
Conceptual Interpretations

Innovation:
• Rebellion, eccentricity, creativity.
Britishness in fashion defined by interpretation & application of distinctive economic, social & cultural influences in market strategy.
Cool Britannia?

- Identify how ‘Britishness’ is expressed in UK fashion firm branding strategies.
- Expressed with subtlety...
  ...and more overtly.
- Differing context according to domestic / international market setting.
- Applications considered in respect of basic marketing mix – 4 P’s
Product - Designer

• Alexander McQueen 2008 / 2009
Product - Designer

• Mulberry AW 2011

“Amongst taxidermied foxes, tumbledown sheds and silk birds, models presented a jaw-dropping collection inspired by ‘the English countryside, English wildlife and Turner landscapes.’ Not to mention a healthy dose of Roald Dahl’s ‘Fantastic Mr. Fox’”
Product – Mid-range

• Ben Sherman:
Product – High Street
Scottish tweed gets a show of its own

British designers celebrated Scottish tweed last week with a fashion show in Stornoway on the Isle of Lewis, featuring the island’s Harris Tweed fabric. Vivienne Westwood, Henry Holland and Ben Sherman designed pieces for the show, while Alison MacLeod, a textile artist based on the island, teamed up with Scottish designer Judy R Clark to produce a range of coats.
I am very supportive of seeing if we can open more factories in the UK. There is an opportunity to look at derelict factories to see if we can re-open them again in an intelligent way.

Sir Philip Green, Arcadia Group & BhS.
Price – Domestic Market

• Weak pound & high commodity costs...
• High profile UK retailers positioning themselves as championing British industry.

The high street must take responsibility and “keep production lines flowing” at UK factories.

Ben Lewis, Chief Executive, River Island.
Price – International Market

- British identity is beneficial...
- British Premium / Luxury brands command a price premium: Taiwan +33%
- British fashion brands are recognized globally:
  - Aquascutum
  - Burberry
  - Paul Smith
Place

- London / Paris / New York ‘Syndrome’.
- London as a fashion capital...
  ...endorsed by Burberry 2009.
Place

- UK fashion retail market recognised as extremely competitive and dynamic.
- UK fashion retailers among the most innovative and influential.
- World-famous trading brands:
  - next
  - TOPSHOP
  - MARKS & SPENCER
  - new look
Promotion

• A facilitator to foreign market entry:

a Little Brit of the big apple
Promotion

• An element of advertising in the international market:
An endorsement of brand positioning:
Fad or Fashion?

- Explore contemporary relevance and sustainability.
Fad or Fashion?

- Most successful brands are compelling, consistent and tangibly substantiated:

- Viability of ‘Britishness’ as an element of fashion branding dependent on how its relevance is made clear & substantiated.