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The Chronological Development of a Fashion Retailer Own-Brand

Stephen M. Wigley
University of Huddersfield

Eilidh O’Connor
Marks and Spencer Plc.
Introduction

• Background and context.
• Aim and objectives.
• Methodology.
• Literature.
• Primary research.
• Findings.
Background & Context

- UK fashion market characteristics.
- Branding & brand management critical.
- Retailer private-label brands dominate.

- Private label literature has focused on grocery sector – little on fashion.
- Seeks to understand how a fashion retailer’s brand is created, constructed and managed.
Aim and Objectives

**Aim:**
- Develop a model encapsulating the components contributing to the image of a fashion retail brand.

**Objectives:**
- Identify the potential components of a fashion retailer’s own-brand via an analysis of the related literature;
- Test the relative importance of each component to both fashion consumers and industry professionals;
- Propose a model illustrating the fashion retailer’s own brand and its effective deployment in the market.
Methodology

Two Phases:

• Review of literature to develop draft model.
• Test and refine the model using expert interviews and consumer focus groups.
  – Representatives from 7 brands participated.
  – Senior marketing, brand and retail managers.
  – Three focus groups using voluntary participants invited from a pool of fashion consumers.
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Literature

Synthesised with specifics from:

• Retail branding.
• Fashion branding.
• Industry insight - Mintel.

• Used to inform a draft model identifying the major components / attributes.
Draft Model

brand attributes

- high quality
- innovative
- trust
- pride
- good value
- socially responsible
- cares for environment
- great customer service
- design/VM
- user image
- market position
- name
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## Primary Research - Professionals

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</table>
Primary Research - Professionals

These elements can then become associated with the brand once the others are established.

Tangible qualities which consumers experience and shape their opinion of brand.

Brand development

Brand name

Market positioning

Distinctive image

Innovative

Socially responsible

Good to environment

Good value

Design/VM

Customer service

High Quality

Customer self image

Good reputation

Trust

Pride

When brand is created; this is the brand essence
## Findings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sub group</th>
<th>Reasoning</th>
<th>Brand components</th>
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</table>
| **Store level** | • These components were rated most important by consumers and identified by practitioners as being store facing and important at store management level.  
 • These are perceived through direct contact and experience with the retail brand. | Good value  
 Great customer service  
 High quality merchandise  
 Customer self image  
 Good reputation  
 Windows/ in store display/design |
| **Company level** | • These components, although rated low by consumers were seen by practitioners as vital elements in creating and maintaining a strong brand.  
 • These are perceived through indirect contact with the retail brand and form the strategy of the retail brand. | Market positioning  
 Distinctive image  
 Brand name/name of store  
 Innovative  
 Good to the environment  
 Socially responsible |
| **Intangible results** | • These intangible components of the brand are also important and are closely linked to other components as identified by both consumers and practitioners.  
 • According to practitioners, these are created when the other components are in place | Trust  
 Pride |
Findings

Company level

Name
Innovative
Market positioning
Distinctive image
Good to the environment
Socially responsible

Trust
Pride

Intangible

Good value
Great customer service
High quality
Customer self image
Good reputation
Design/VM

Store level
Findings

Market positioning  
Distinctive image  
Brand name

Innovative  
Good to the environment  
Socially responsible

Good value  
Great customer service  
High quality merchandise  
Design/ VM

Customer self image  
Good reputation

Trust  
Pride

Company level
These components were recognised by industry professionals as being important in establishing a brand. These represent the 'attributes' which form the backbone and essence of the brand.

Store level
These components were recognised by industry professionals as being important at store level and were recognised by consumers as being extremely important in brand perception. These represent the 'benefits' of the brand and are established after the company level attributes in order to fulfil the brand agenda and philosophy.

Intangible
These components were recognised by practitioners and consumers as elements which are created after the other elements are in place. These feelings or 'attitudes' are closely associated with other elements and represent the final stage in developing a brand.