

LUISS



Degree Program in Management
Luxury, Fashion and Made in Italy Major

Course of Fashion Management

***“The Secret To A Successful Product Launch
In The Fashion Industry: A Case Study”***

SUPERVISOR
Prof. Carlo Fei

CO-SUPERVISOR
Prof. Alberto Festa

CANDIDATE
Matilde Casali
Student ID 754191

ACADEMIC YEAR 2022/2023

Abstract

The launch of a product is one of the most delicate phases of a company's life since it requires very precise planning and a big investment. It is also crucial for the survival of the company as it is the way through which novelties and developments are conceived. This process requires several departments to work together and involves several steps, from the design of the samples to the definition of a marketing strategy to the final distribution of the product. Therefore, many factors can determine the final success or failure of the product launch.

This process is even more important for the fashion industry because the New Product Development coincides with the development of collections, around which the entire calendar of brands is built.

This thesis aims to provide fashion companies with a higher level of knowledge on which factors actually have an impact on the success of a product launch.

In order to do so, the previous literature has been examined, but no studies have been previously focused solely on this industry when investigating the success factors of new products. Several case studies, considering successful products according to the Lyst Index were inquired as well. The final purpose was to define a set of variables or strategies already employed by brands that could have had an impact on the success of the product launch.

It was also necessary to investigate the opinion of a population of potential customers and this was done through the delivery of a survey specifically designed for this study. A statistical study was carried out based on the data previously gathered to find empirical evidence about which variables or tactics really have an impact on the success of the products.

The results emerged demonstrated that brands should focus on several variables during the product launch which can be subdivided into five categories: Product, Retail, Launch, Communication, and Brand.

Finally, some considerations regarding the limitations of the study and future implications are given.

The secret to a successful product launch: a case study - INDEX

Abstract

Introduction

Chapter 1: The product launch in the fashion industry

- 1.1. What is a product launch?
- 1.2. The steps of a product launch
 - 1.2.1. The “Go to market” strategy
 - 1.2.2. The “Go to market” strategy in Fashion
- 1.3. The product launch in the fashion industry
 - 1.3.1. The Retail Experience
- 1.4. What makes a product launch successful: a literature review

Chapter 2: Case Study Analysis of Successful Products in the Industry

- 2.1. What is the Lyst Index
- 2.2. Analysis of case studies
- 2.3. Summary of the commonalities between the different case studies

Chapter 3: A framework for successful product launches in the fashion industry

- 3.1. The survey
 - 3.1.1. Research question
 - 3.1.2. Hypothesis
 - 3.1.3. Methodology
 - 3.1.4. Survey Design
 - 3.1.5. Data Gathering and Data Cleaning
 - 3.1.6. Data Analysis
- 3.2. Results of the survey
 - 3.2.1. Sample Description
 - 3.2.2. Analysis conducted
 - 3.2.3. Results

Discussion and Conclusion

Limitations of the study and further study proposals

Introduction

The launch of a product is a practice essential to the survival and success of businesses since it allows them to renovate their portfolio and to present innovations to their customers, reconfirming their relationship.

However, it is a very delicate process that requires a time- and capital-consuming planning, involving several departments of the company that need to collaborate.

This procedure involves several steps from the selection of the target market to the positioning of the product, from the design of the samples to its final distribution. This moment of the company's life should also be supported by a marketing strategy and strategic decisions, to reduce the probability of failure.

The plan should be tailored to several variables such as the company's objectives and identity, or similar products launched by competitors. As a consequence, it is very hard to establish a universal launch strategy, but similar features affecting the success or failure of the product can be defined.

This process is even more important for the fashion industry because the New Product Development coincides with the development of collections, around which the entire calendar of brands is built.

The present dissertation aims to provide fashion brands with a higher level of knowledge and a manual of the variables and strategies that actually have an impact on the success of a product launch, so that companies know on which ones they should invest their money and time.

The **first chapter** investigates the theoretical background explaining in depth the different steps of the product launch process and focusing particularly on the peculiarities of the procedure in the fashion industry.

In this chapter, the literature is also reviewed in order to check previous studies on the factors that influence the success of a launch. However, by doing this research, a lack concerning studies focused on the fashion industry was detected, which was one of the main motivations behind the configuration of this analysis.

In the **second chapter**, a qualitative analysis of several case studies is carried out. The main goal was to find a basis of data to subsequently develop a survey and a quantitative analysis to support and generalize the results from the study. The products to be inquired were selected based on the Lyst Indexes from years between 2020 and 2023. These reports are a quarterly overview of the brands that best performed in that period, the most popular products released, and the events that had a big impact on the industry. Some of these products were selected and their launch planning was examined from the marketing campaign to ambassadors and influencers involved, to the retail strategy, financial performance, and sometimes the shelf life of products.

In the **third chapter**, the survey and the statistical study are presented. The questionnaire was designed into four main blocks: the first two aimed at exploring the demographics of the sample and their purchasing habits and interest in the fashion industry, whereas the last two explored the variables defined in the previous chapters and their relations with success.

The first goal of the research is to confirm the significance of characteristics of a product launch that had been proven to be successful in the previous literature, applying them to the clothing industry. The following

purpose was, instead, to find quantitative proof that the features or strategies that emerged from the case studies investigation really have an impact on the final success of the product launch. This was done through a t-test analysis that evaluated the likability of purchasing the product in the case in which these variables or strategies were adopted or not.

The results allowed to identify several critical variables that have an impact on the success of a new product launched in the fashion industry.

The providing of this knowledge is relevant for companies since the introduction of a new product requires a lot of planning time and a lot of capital, hence it is important for them to increase the probability of success.

Moreover, this manual may act as the starting point of the new strategy planning when needed.

Finally, some considerations regarding the limitations of the study and future implications are given.

Chapter 1: The product launch in the Fashion industry

1.1. What is a product launch

Product development is a strategic process by which a company introduces innovation and new developments in the market. This practice is essential to the survival and success of a company, especially in highly competitive industries. This includes a series of activities that go from the conception of the idea of the product to its design, production, marketing, and distribution.

New products can be commonly divided into three categories:

1. **Classically innovative products** (new-to-the-world): in this case, the firm has either created a new product category and the good itself is revolutionary, or it develops a new classification but based on the existing products;
2. **New-category entries** (new-to-the-company): the product category already exists but the firm is just entering it for the first time;
3. **Additions to product lines or line extensions**: these are new versions of existing products already marketed by the firm. Usually what changes are colors, size, flavors, materials... depending on the category of the good.

Companies can generate minor product changes as well:

- Product improvements: items already on the market are replaced by “new and improved” versions;
- Repositioning: companies communicate a new use or benefit of the product;
- Cost reductions: the only change in this case is a cost reduction thanks to manufacturing, operations, or product cost savings.

However, these are not usually considered new-product development because the process is much simpler and does not require a new category entry, resulting in a less time-consuming practice.

The product launch is simply one of the steps in the first phase of the production cycle of a new item. It includes the development from the idea to the actual product and the introduction on the market. This moment of the company's life is very delicate and should be supported by a marketing strategy and strategic decisions, in order to reduce the probability of failure.

The plan should be tailored to the company's objectives and identity and also depends on the competitors that already launched similar products on the market. As a consequence, it is very hard to establish a universal launch strategy, but similar features affecting the success or failure of the product can be detected.

1.2. The steps of a product launch

As already mentioned, the development of a new product is a very complex and time-consuming process that includes several phases, from previous analysis of the market, to the actual design of the product, and finally the distribution to the customers.

1.2.1. The “Go To Market” Strategy

Usually, the summary of ideas and of activities that constitute the plan for the launch of a product in the market is known as “Go To Market”. This tactic usually includes a targeting of market profiles, a marketing plan, and a sales and distribution strategy. Having everything perfectly planned allows to increase the efficiency and the success of the actions undertaken and endures risk prevention concerning the entrance of a market.

Ordinarily, compiling an effective go-to-market strategy involves touching on some essential steps:

- It is fundamental to define the *target market* to which the product is addressed and analyze and comprehend the marketplace. The higher the number of insights, the better the possibility of the brand in finding a successful resolution and satisfying the customers’ needs.
- The company needs to define which are the features that make its product different from the competition and what is the *value added* that will push customers to buy it.
- For companies, it is also crucial to keep the costs at the lowest possible and seek the highest *return on the investment* carried out.
- Planning the *product positioning* and communicating it to the customers can also be helpful in creating expectations and excitement for the new launch. This will also attract more attention towards the brand in general, increasing its *awareness* and attracting a new wider potential customer base. Specific attention needs to be paid also to the channels across which the brand will speak to customers.
- In order to maximize the market impact, it is essential to define the *distribution and sales channels’* strategy and the consequent logistics.
- It is very important also to identify some specific *metrics and KPIs* to measure the success or the level of reach of the objectives previously established. This will also enable a continuous improvement and adjustment of the initial plan.

Before proceeding, it is relevant to distinguish a go-to-market strategy from a marketing strategy or a marketing plan.

The **marketing strategy** is usually a long-term plan that focuses on the overall business marketing objectives. When the plan refers to a specific campaign and its correlated actions it is called a **marketing plan**.

The **Go-to-market strategy**, finally, is the totality of the steps defined before the kickoff of the product on the market, so it is launch-specific and immediate.

To conclude, the GTM strategy can include a marketing plan and can be directed by a marketing strategy, but the marketing strategy or plan cannot include the GTM strategy. (Asana, 2023)

1.2.2. The “Go To Market” Strategy in Fashion

In the fashion context, the image and brand perception play a crucial role and new products allow the brand to communicate its vision, its creativity, and its unique values to consumers. A well-planned and executed product launch can lead to increased sales, increased brand awareness, and customer loyalty.

In this industry, the launch of a new product usually coincides with new **collections**, around which companies build their calendars. Two main moments of the process can be distinguished, especially in the high-tier brands: the *Fall/Winter collection* and the *Spring/Summer collection*. However, companies can also decide to announce additional **capsule collections** for special events or during specific moments or festivities of the year.

In the fashion business, it is possible to somehow divide the year into six months' time spans, which is usually the time passing between the design, the presentation, and the actual distribution of the collections.

For example, concerning the Fall/Winter collection, companies usually start designing the clothing pieces around July of the previous year. December and January are typically the designated months for the presentation of the collection through runway shows. Six months afterward, in July of the same year as the collection display, the items are made available in stores to be purchased.

For the Spring/Summer calendar, instead, the design and creation process start at the beginning of the previous year. Then the collection will be presented around June/July and at the end of the year it will be delivered in stores.

In this way, it is possible to define two key moments where the *communication* around the collection will be fundamental:

- The unveiling of the collection, usually through fashion shows, which coincides also with the highest moment of hype around it;
- The commercial moment when the collection will be available in stores and people will be able to actually purchase the products.

As mentioned before, companies usually try to fill their calendars through **capsule collections**, which are supposed to stay in the shops only for a limited amount of time.

According to the Business of Fashion, capsule collections were originally popularized by Donna Karan in the 1980s. The idea behind was to create a wardrobe that featured only the most essential or influential pieces from a collection. A capsule collection is essentially a condensed version of a designer's vision, often a limited edition, which transcends seasons and trends by being functional. (BoFEducation, n.d.)

Nowadays, this concept has been further developed and these types of collections usually include collaborations with other brands or with celebrities, assortments for specific purposes like ski or resort collections, or products to celebrate a specific holiday.

Capsule collections allow brands a higher flexibility both in terms of timing, costs, and creativity. However, this higher elasticity also implies a straightforward and well-defined strategy and planning, to reach the objectives stated by the brand for this selection of products.

Further to this, it is, of course, taken for granted that the planning of products to launch on the market and the subsequent building of calendars are based on the **strategic priorities** of the brand at that specific moment. For example, a fashion brand that is willing to innovate its product portfolio and gather new customers is more likely to thereupon launch a beauty line rather than a whole new collection of clothes.

Being the backbone of the launch of a product on the market, the Go-To-Market strategy is a tactic that entails the crossing and conjunction of different company departments like Retail, Marketing, Merchandising, CRM, and regional stakeholders.

Moreover, when developing a strategy of this kind, a brand should take into consideration very carefully two main pillars: **verticality** and **retail strategy**.

The first aspect refers to the delivery of a strong message to customers. In a GTM strategy, many different types of communications can be implemented, and it is important to achieve an integrated, synergic, and coherent transmission of information, both internally to the specific strategy, but also with the overall image and positioning of the brand itself. This also allows to increase the desirability of the new product.

The latter is a fundamental step in the overall strategy since it is one of the most direct touchpoints with the customer. Nowadays, retail points have become the physical projection of the brand's identity, and this choice is extremely dependent on the brand's objectives, but it will also be able to influence the customers' perception and decisions about purchasing the new product.

1.3. The Product Launch in the Fashion Industry

As we have already mentioned, in the fashion industry the development process of the product is very peculiar and can be divided into four main phases (McKinsey & Company, 2018):

- **Product creation/design and development:** it starts with the design of the overall collection and the drawings to be produced into samples are selected in collaboration with the Design and Merchandising department. Of course, this overall process is anticipated by a research phase, in which trends and customers' buying behaviors are analyzed and forecasted. Once the samples to be produced are defined, the Buying team places orders for fabrics and other materials. This is the most important phase, during which the different departments of the factories work to get the finished samples. It can be a very long process involving fabric cuttings, embroidering, sewing, washing, and so on.
- **Sell-in/market period:** When the prototypes are finished, they are sent back to the Design and Merchandising department for a valuation, and once all the necessary changes are put in place, the final product will be displayed in the new collections at Market Weeks or during Fashion Weeks. Here editors and buyers will review the collection and place orders for the stores they manage. Once the brands have received all the orders, the production starts.
- **Production and logistics:** During this phase, physical products based on orders are created and the distribution strategy is put in place in order to deliver all the produced units to the designed selling points (wholesale, retail, online).
- **Sell-out:** This is the period when the collection is available to end consumers in physical stores or e-commerce sales channels.

In the apparel industry, the **merchandising role** becomes essential, since it is the one often taking the lead concerning go-to-market processes.

The main objective of the merchandising teams is to deliver appealing products, in the right quantities, at the right time, in the right places, and with the most appealing presentation possible (McKinsey & Company, 2018). They are the originators of a strategy that, as mentioned before, involves different functions of the brand like style, pricing, communication, production, and retail. Indeed, the figure of the merchandiser is usually a merger of the CEO and the Creative Director's tasks, and a balance between creative and analytical skills is required.

Merchandisers work on a cyclical and continuous process that starts with the definition of a plan and ends with the analysis of the performance of the products sold to the customer base. During this procedure, many other departments of the business are involved, like the Style and Design or the Marketing one.

This process can be defined in six main stages, as shown in Exhibit 1:



Exhibit 1: The creation process of a fashion item - Source: Professor Carlo Fei

1. **Briefing:** it consists of drafting a document that includes specifications about the collection (sizing, materials, and colors), an analysis of the previous season, qualitative inputs for the Design offices, and a competitors' benchmark. Sometimes, also a moodboard representing the products requested is laid out.
2. **Collection development:** during this phase, merchandisers start collaborating with the Design and Product Development offices to select the actual materials and colors for the collection based on the analysis of trends and desirability made previously. For this purpose, the team often participates to fairs or events in which it could be easy to find new materials or fabrics.
3. **Samples and prototypes:** This step is usually simultaneous to the previous one. In fact, prototypes of the collection are developed and tested to guarantee that they can be sold on the market.
4. **Pricing:** At this point, the Finance Department is involved in defining the final retail prices of the collection before putting it up for sale to customers. The starting point is the final cost of each style based on the materials used and the craftsmanship communicated by the Product Development office. The Finance department, instead, provides an analysis of the theoretical prices that will satisfy the economic needs like margins or mark-ups to ensure a profit for the business. Finally, the merchandising team takes the ultimate decision after considering past seasons' prices, competitors and market strategies, repricing policies, the brand's positioning, and strategic objectives.
5. **Sales campaign and Retail buying:** Before presenting it to customers, the collection is exhibited to the market through showrooms, events, or runway shows. Here, retail buying teams, wholesale accounts, and franchises are invited to see the collection and place the orders for the production. Based on this, the Merchandising department will build the Master Order where all the assortment for the retail stores for the following season is noted down.

6. Retail monitoring and sales analysis: Finally, the collection is also presented to customers thanks to the different selling points both physical and online. The performance of these touchpoints is monitored continuously so that the demand in stores is always satisfied and to check if the actual performance of the collection respects the previous expectations. Retail Merchandisers need to always keep an account of the availability of pieces in stores and eventually, they may transfer them between different locations according to the selling results. To keep track of the performance of both stores and pieces of clothing, many different KPIs are designed and analyzed: for example, the *sell-through rate* indicates the percentage of sales of a specific item depending on the overall quantity previously ordered, or the *conversion rate* is used to check how many people that entered the store have actually bought something.

1.3.1 The Retail Experience

The last step of the cyclical process treated by merchandisers is **retail**, that is the sale of goods or articles directly to the consumer. It is the way, the moment, and the place in which the product is sold.

However, in the fashion and luxury industries, it denotes something more: the **experience** of shopping represents the creation of a connection and an emotional bond with the brand itself. This touchpoint becomes the projection of the brand's identity delivered through colors, music, fragrances, packaging, and employees' manners. As a consequence, the brand should develop a well-thought and effective retail strategy since it allows to influence the final decision of the customer.

With a view to establishing this plan, brands need to take into account different aspects of their business. For example, a variable that can influence the following strategy is the supply chain process adopted.

In the fashion industry, the methods usually employed are:

- 1. Make to order:** it is the model usually applied by high-end designers since it starts with the building and presentation of the sample collection. Then, orders are acquired to launch the following production and deliver products to the final customers. In this way, the company will produce only what has been actually sold to retail clients, and the remaining stocks are minimized. This logic allows to have predictable cash flows and a lower risk in the production, but it takes a longer time for the collection to market (up to 9 months) and the company is usually very unreactive to changes in the market or in the customers' demand.
- 2. Make to stock:** in this case, the Merchandising team will first deliver a sales forecast to outline the production quantities. Afterwards, the manufacturing is put in place and the orders mark the start of the distribution process. This approach guarantees, of course, a faster delivery time on the market (maximum 2 months) and a quicker response of the company to market changes. However, it entails a

higher risk for the brand since the overall production is based on forecasts. It entails also a lower investment in its image since there are fewer occurrences in which the brand presents the collection. Today, businesses are moving toward a mixture of these two models with a view to be quicker and market-responsive but maintaining the brand identity relevant. Moreover, many fashion brands are also delivering to the market a permanent collection that would always be available and be stocked in stores.

Another feature that can influence the retail strategy is the sales structure of the brand. This usually entails three types of stores:

- **Directly Operated Stores:** these are the stores directly managed by the brand. In this way, it can have more control over the overall experience of the customer, on the workforce, and on the delivery of its values and identity. They are usually implemented by more luxurious and refined brands.
- **Wholesaler or Multi-Brand store:** it is a store in which many different brands can be found. In this case it is not owned by the company itself, so competitors' products can be found on the same shelf and sometimes they need to follow local regulations. Franchisees follow under this category as well.
- **Department Store:** in this case, brands pay to have the possibility to open a store inside the overall department store. The cost depends on factors like the position of the shop, the customers' traffic and so on. However, they still have the possibility to completely manage the workforce and the selling activity.

Over the years, the strategies adopted by certain types of companies became an established model. In fact, the "Fashion Model" involves all three different types of stores, whereas the "Luxury Model" would include only directly operated stores, department stores, and sometimes franchisees.

The Fashion and Luxury industries have also developed distinct typologies of stores, each one with its own features and specific management.

- **Flagship stores:** It is usually the statement store for a brand, and they represent the best way to show its identity. They are massive and entail precious materials or artworks. They are stocked with all the products variances and all the services are available in-store. When developing their strategy, it is needed to consider the satisfaction of customers with different nationalities and needs.
- **City stores:** They are simpler and smaller shops, usually located in secondary cities, that will consider a local clientele.

- **Seasonal Stores:** They are usually small selling points, directly managed by the brand and put in place in exclusive places near the sea or the mountains like St. Moritz, St. Tropez, Portofino, and so on.
- **Travel retail:** it was an experimental way of buying apparel before the covid hit. It consisted of making the purchase while traveling on the airplane and having the package either delivered to a specific location or ready to be picked up at the arrival airport.
- **Shop in shop:** these are the stores owned by the brand inside department stores. In this case, the management is independent, and the clientele will be international. Sometimes, these stores are opened thanks to a *concession* of a space to manage from the department to the brand.
- **Corners:** This is also a type of shop inside the department stores, but in this case, the selling point and the workforce are managed by the shopping center. They are usually spaces dedicated to a single brand's products and they can also be temporary.
- **Outlets:** They are usually facilities in which you can find several different brands with pieces of clothes at lower prices with respect to other stores. Some fashion brands try to avoid this type of selling since it can be detrimental to their own image and reputation. Often the pieces of clothing that are supplied in these shops are from older collections.
- **E-commerce:** it is simply the online selling point of the brand.
- **Concept stores:** This type of shop is usually employed for special occasions like new collection launches or anniversaries and the merchandising team is appointed to create a specific atmosphere involving all the senses. Usually, customers are surrounded by pieces of art, captivating music, and delicious food.
- **Pop-up stores:** This is a temporary store created specifically for a certain product or collection of the brand. The main goal of this tactic is to widen the overall customer base and record more data about purchasing habits and clients' tastes. It is also commonly used to enter new markets or convince landlords of big department stores that the brand is worthy of having a selling space. This is a strategy that usually applies to summery or wintery collections and in fact they are opened in locations that are much trafficked by tourists. They entail a big investment for the company, but if they have a very strong reason and communication strategy, they can be very resourceful to the business. Sometimes, pop-ups can also be *not commercial*, which means they are designed simply to tell a story about the brand and not sell any product. The main goal, in this case, is to attract people who could be interested in the brand but are not customers yet.

Opening a new store for a fashion or luxury company is a very delicate phase that requires a complex decision process involving strategic priorities, financial valuations, and a good amount of organization. It has also a

strong impact on the economics of the brand. For this reason, it is a crucial step when designing a NPD plan. Moreover, as already mentioned before, these are the main touchpoints with customers that can really affect their purchasing decisions, so when launching a new product, the distribution and retail strategy is never to be underestimated. Different types of selling points are also directed to different types of customers based on their accessibility and price range, so the products should be distributed accordingly.

1.4. What Makes a Product Launch Successful: A Literature Review

As mentioned in the previous paragraphs, the procedure of a new product development is very complex, and it involves a lot of different factors that can affect the success or the failure of its launch.

There is a broad body of research that has the launch of new products as a subject since it is of great interest to different types of businesses due to the demonstrated link between innovation and profitability. One of the first studies on the topic, released in 1999, indicated that most of the factors affecting new product success are controllable by management, suggesting that brands should be interested in developing their knowledge in this field. (Di Benedetto, 1999)

However, most of the time, companies are so concentrated on the design and manufacturing of the new product, that they do not focus enough or postpone the preparation of marketing and all other variables of the process. This will probably lead to a failure of the introduction on the market. (Schneider & Hall, 2011)

According to some academics like Cooper and Kleinschmidt, and O'Dwyer and Ledwith, this is the most critical phase to the success of an innovation process because it is the one during which most costs are incurred. Taking this into consideration, it is surprising to detect that only 4% of the literature on new product development deals with the question of product launch. (Cooper et al., 2004; Kou & Lee, 2015; Ledwith & O'Dwyer, 2008; Salmen, 2021)

The study from Di Benedetto identified a categorization of launch decisions, defining two main types:

- **Strategic decisions** are the ones related to product and market issues (how innovative the product should be, to which markets it should be addressed, product positioning, etc...)
- **Tactical decisions** concern the marketing mix (product and branding, pricing, placement and distribution, and promotion)

Nonetheless, these decisions need to be backed up by information gathering and market research activities since the marketing and production plans need to be adjusted continuously to customers' and competitors' reactions, and technological or environmental alterations. (Di Benedetto, 1999)

Some of these elements are well-known from previous studies and literature.

For example, some basic marketing knowledge induces businesses to care for:

- **The distinctiveness of a product's benefits:** no item can be successful without offering a value proposition that is unique in the marketplace.
- **A strong market orientation:** it is necessary to realize a deep analysis of opportunities in the market, target customers, likely competitors, and the external environment before developing the product.
- **Product definition:** specifying the benefits to be delivered and the positioning of the product, finalizing the features and attributes, will be very helpful in the elaboration of the strategy.
- **The appropriate organizational structure:** the success of a product development depends on the people involved and the level of collaboration and performance they are able to execute. It is a matter of skills, but also of synergies.
- **A good marketing plan:** it is important to prioritize the steps of the process, but also to plan the launch carefully. The allocation of resources is a crucial factor as well.
- **Coherence with the company's culture and image:** the product developed, and the overall strategy need to fit the values and image communicated by the company, so as to be attractive for the brand's current customer base.
- **Strong support and communication by top management:** goals must be set and articulated to employees and the product development process must be given adequate resources.
- **Innovation:** there is also a necessity for experimentation to keep up with the changes in the market or the introduction of new tools, especially regarding the evolution of the digital sphere. This will allow the brand to always attract new potential customers and retain the ones already loyal to the brand.

In 2021 Alexander Salmen published an article that encompasses an integrative review of the previous literature about the success of new product launches. One of the objectives of the article was to find evidence about the effect of some researched factors taking into consideration different markets and types of products. This article seems to confirm that the elements previously mentioned have an actual impact on the success of a new product when launched on a market. Indeed, Salmen mentions that the categories with the highest significance in the creation of product launch success are “product advantage and innovativeness, management, pricing, market orientation, marketing and market research, international context, launch timing, cooperation within the supply chain, resources, market attractiveness”. (Salmen, 2021)

In particular, the study examines each variable mentioned in depth. Concerning **product advantages and innovativeness**, it is proven that to be successful a new product must outperform competitors and bring significant benefits to its potential customers. (Rijsdijk et al., 2011) However, it is crucial that these peculiarities are also communicated to buyers so that they are aware of these advantages.(Kuhn, 2007)

The research also underlines how company **management** is able to influence the launch success through several actions like supporting activities, motivating the team, providing a clear market orientation, intensifying employees' education, encouraging cooperation inside the company, planning carefully, and providing the right resources. (Kuhn, 2007)

Pricing is another thorny variable that revealed itself as a determinant when considering a launch's success or failure. Indeed, it is not the pricing alone to affect the result, but companies need to develop a tactic that is coherent and coordinated with the overall strategy and that is in line with customers' expectations and perceptions. (Calantone & Benedetto, 2007; Lee et al., 2011)

Related to this last feature, past literature has proven that in order to choose the right pricing strategy, companies are required to conduct extensive **market research** and know **its necessities** to achieve better financial results and proclaim a launch successful. (Calantone & Benedetto, 2007) In this case, it is likewise important to communicate and establish a relationship with customers to exchange opinions and discuss strategies.

In addition, it goes without saying, that for R&D investments to have a positive effect on the launch, the market needs to have a good **potential**. (Song et al., 2011)

The findings also underline the importance of the right **launch timing**, which is considered a "result of coordination within processes around logistics, production planning, and the involvement of suppliers". (Salmen, 2021) Most notably, the quality of the launch in terms of timing and supply management has been proven to be more critical for product performance than the innovations themselves.

Furthermore, at the basis of new product development are obviously **resources**, which appear as a side factor in almost all the studies previously mentioned, since they are helpful to increase the products' performance. (Kim et al., 2016)

Lastly, in comparing all the previous literature on the topic, Salmen uncovered additional aspects that demonstrated to have an impact on the success of the new product launch. For example, the **personality of salesmen** has a high influence on the final decision of customers, and this is undoubtedly correlated to the **compensation system** of the brand. Moreover, sometimes the **placement** of the new product in physical stores, for example, if they are positioned on a stand-alone shelf, can increase its performance. Some studies also show that, under certain circumstances, pull factors like **consumer acceptance** and **brand awareness**, have a higher influence on the launch success than push factors like price, and promotion. This may also be connected to the certified increasing favorable effect of the use of **online advertising** and **social media communication** in the months previous to the launch. (Salmen, 2021)

Another research from Anthony Di Benedetto, investigated the previous literature to assess the factors contributing to a product's performance in terms of profitability, market share, and relative sales. (Di

Benedetto, 1999) In this case, the factor that contributed to the success of launches was a perception of **superior skills** in the fields of marketing research, sales force, distribution, promotion, R&D, and engineering. The study focused also on the implementation of **cross-functional teams, timing strategies, and logistics practices** in the planning and proved that they were strongly related to successful launches.

Other tactical activities perceived to determine the success of new products are the **quality of selling effort, advertising, and technical support**; but also the qualified management of key aspects of the launch like **marketing plans, distribution activities, sales force training, pricing strategy, and timing** with respect to competition and customers. Specifically, the more new product development activities are performed, the higher the chances of success. The results also suggested the importance of **market testing** and gathering of **customer feedback**. (Di Benedetto, 1999)

A critical point regarding these main pieces of literature is that they are all based on a sample concerning general businesses and they are never focused on a specific industry. This may be problematic since the development and launch process concerns factors that may be very product- or market-specific. Moreover, different markets have different requirements. (Bruce et al., 2007)

Salmen, as well, pointed out in his study the limited comparability of the results found. He stated “whereas it is more or less clear, which general success factors and input factors influence product launch, in detail the results do not show a complete picture about differences between product markets, company sizes, and other specific indicators which create differences of launch factors.” (Salmen, 2021)

This study focuses on the fashion industry which, as seen previously, has very peculiar product development and distribution processes. Moreover, the industries of the study from Salmen operate in sectors like automotive, mechanical, high-tech, engineering, manufacturing, telecommunication, and pharmaceutical, which are all much different from the clothing field.

Consequently, it is not possible to take for granted that the evidence from the past literature is applicable to fashion brands.

This research aims to investigate the conformity of the success factors within the fashion businesses. In order to do so, some case studies of successful product launches are dissected and examined, to identify success factors specific to the industry. In particular, the fashion items to be analyzed are selected from the Lyst Index reports.

Moreover, taking inspiration from the study conducted by Di Benedetto in its paper “*Identifying the Key Success Factors in New Product Launch*”, a survey will be carried out with the aim of inspecting the relation between these components and the launch success.

Chapter 2: Case Study Analysis of Successful Products in the Industry

2.1. What is the Lyst Index

Lyst is a company that operates both in the online shopping and fashion insights field. It offers an inventory-free platform and provides a personalized shopping experience for the wide range of brands with which it is partner. However, what Lyst is most known for is its source of fashion data insights and the Index that it publishes, exploring the hottest brands and products worldwide.

It is one of the most reliable indexes in the fashion industry, since the Lyst shopping platform covers 17,000 of the world's leading brands and retailers. Moreover, the number of yearly shoppers is around 150 million and the items bought is 8 million, giving a very reliable base of data. (The Lyst Index, n.d.)

In particular, the List Index is a quarterly overview of the brands that best performed in that period of time, the most popular products released, and the events that had a big impact on the industry.

This index allows to track and anticipate customer behaviors and shopping patterns, the creation of trends, and the changes in consumer attitudes.

In order to create these reports, Lyst takes into account its shoppers' behavior on their website including the conversion rates and sales. However, it also involves data about Google searches and social media actions like mentions and engagement rates. This is valued worldwide and considering a time span of three months.

Lyst also publishes a yearly report where it gathers and summarizes the data from all the quarterly indexes and it "elects" the brand of the year. In these reports also trends, relevant moments, and people of the fashion world are explored. This is also why each report is slightly different from the previous ones, being it completely shaped on the different events and tendencies of the year analyzed.

For the purpose of this study, it was decided to take into account the reports from recent years (2020-2023). This is mainly due to the fact that the fashion industry is extremely variable, especially with the identification of the latest technologies, and trendy items can change very frequently. In this way, it is also easier to gather more information about recent launches and strategies of the products analyzed.

2.2. Analysis of case studies

Case study #1: Bottega Veneta padded Cassette bag

In the first quarter of 2020 the Bottega Veneta padded Cassette bag was elected the most successful product of the womenswear collections.

Bottega Veneta is known to be the brand without a logo. Its excellent selection of products, their manufacturing, and craftsmanship allowed the brand to grow and be recognizable without a symbol. In the 60s

the fashion house also developed its signature weaving technique of leathers, which was then labeled as “intrecciato”.

The Padded Cassette bag is the perfect representation of the brand, being simple, essential, and elegant. This product brings the intrecciato technique to a whole new level since the weave is blown up to extravagant proportions and each strip of leather is quilted to give it a pillowy effect. This gives the piece a pop art feel and a contemporary appeal, also thanks to the different colors in which the bag is available, including a palette of both classic neutrals and brights.

The launch of this bag coincided with the runway debut of the newly appointed creative director Daniel Lee, presenting the Ready To Wear Fall 2019. (Vogue, 2019) The whole collection was focused on the brand’s identity and heritage and the campaign brought back the famous tagline “When your own initials are enough”, displaying the sentence in posters and advertisements.



Exhibit 2: Andy Warhol’s poster for the Cassette Bag marketing campaign – Source: HighSnobiety

The actual original imagery of this campaign was overseen by Andy Warhol in person for the *Interview* magazine in 1978. (Exhibit 2)

The new interpretation of the bag and the Bottega Veneta house's signature in parakeet green, made the Warhol's campaign feel fresh again. (HighSnobiety, n.d.)

The diffusion of the bag at the time was mainly due to the variety of celebrities that wore it on different occasions. Even though the brand was not actually paying any celebrity or influencer to wear it, the hype created around the product was massive. According to British Vogue, some of the first adopters include Rihanna, Rosie Huntington-Whiteley, Hailey Bieber, and Victoria Beckham. (British Vogue, 2022) Another moment to remember, however, was the arrival of the Euphoria star Jacob Elordi at the

autumn/winter 2022 runway who was wearing a chocolate-brown Cassette crossbody, reinforcing the genderless purpose of the bag.

Its simple and essential style and its versatility allowed this bag to still be in vogue four years after its release. However, the brand developed the product by adding some little variations to its shoulder strap or to the color palette and materials available.

Nevertheless, Bottega Veneta's marketing campaigns are very peculiar. In fact, the brand subsequently decided to abandon all social media in 2021 and has since then advertised its products through billboards and murals. The Cassette bag, in particular, has become an icon product of the brand and has been associated with it in these advertisements. One example is the 3D billboard of Seoul (Exhibit 3), the art wall presented on the roof of the LA airport (Exhibit 4) or the pavement of the Australian Bondi Iceberg. These very impactful actions imply that the brand is very talked about on social media, even without its actual presence.



Exhibit 3: Bottega Veneta's 3D billboard in Seoul depicting the Cassette Bag – Source: Sold Out Service Website

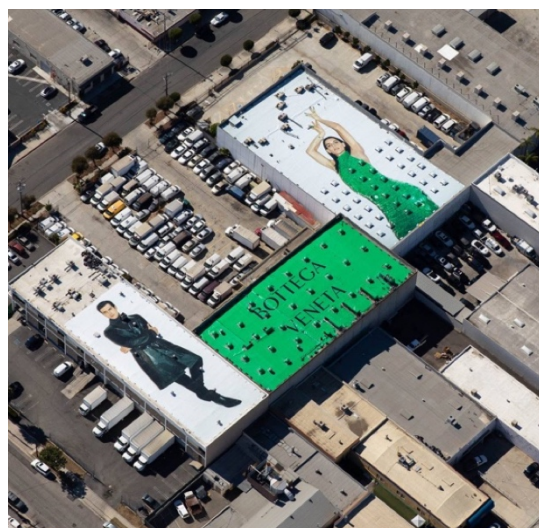


Exhibit 4: Bottega Veneta's rooftop campaign near LAX. (Paul Turang) - Source: The Business of Fashion

For what concerns the distribution channels choices of the brand, they reflect the exclusivity of Bottega Veneta. The bag is available on the brand's website, some selected physical shops and some wholesales websites like Luisa Via Roma and My Theresa.

The amazing success of the bag and the new Bottega Veneta collection from Daniel Lee found confirmation in both the economic performance of the brand, but also in the awards won that same year. In fact, at the 2019 British Fashion Awards Daniel Lee has been proclaimed best designer of the year and best accessories designer. Moreover, Bottega Veneta won the prize for brand of the year. (The Fashion Awards, 2019) 2019 was also the first year in which Bottega Veneta was inserted in the top 20 brand ranking of the Lyst Index and at the end of the first quarter of the following year, the Cassette Bag was elected the first hot products of the womenswear collections.

According to Kering's CFO, the Italian label has benefited from the fresh interpretation of its new creative director Lee, and the impact of new products, which accounted for 60% of the label's range in the last quarter of 2019. During this quarter sales for Bottega Veneta grew by 9.4%, driven by strong performances in both its mono-brand stores and wholesale channels. (Mira & Fashion Network, 2020)

The Bottega Veneta's bag is the demonstration of how much influential people can increase the notoriety of a certain product in such a small amount of time.

Case study #2: JW Anderson Color Block Patchwork Cardigan

During the second quarter of 2020, the JW Anderson Color Block Patchwork Cardigan appeared among the 10 hottest men's products.

This is a very peculiar case study. The cardigan was released with the Spring/Summer 2020 menswear collection, but it became very famous and desired only when the pop star Harry Styles was seen wearing it at rehearsals for his Today Show appearance (Exhibit 5).



Exhibit 5: Harry Styles wearing the JW Anderson cardigan during the Today Show rehearsals - Source: Getty Images

From that moment onward the cardigan became viral on social media and the fans of the singer wanted to own it. The popularity of the product also caused a new challenge to rise on TikTok, where people tried to knit themselves a version of the cardigan that was as similar to the original as possible. The challenge was identified with the hashtag **#HarryStylescardigan**, which received more than 114 million views, and online searches for the product went up by 166%.

The brand itself embraced this wave and published on its website a video tutorial and some downloadable sheets to recreate the cardigan. The designer declared: "I am so impressed and incredibly humbled by this trend and

everyone knitting the cardigan. I really wanted to show our appreciation, so we are sharing the pattern with everyone. [...] You never really own a design anyway. You have to let go of it." (JW Anderson, 2020)

Unfortunately, being JW Anderson a small private brand it is not possible to evaluate also its financial performance in the same year as the explosion of this product.

However, around February 2020, the multicolored patchwork cardigan has been among the top 10 most-searched-for products from the JW Anderson brand, according to global fashion search platform Lyst. Online searches between February and March 2020 including keywords such as "patchwork," "crochet," and "knitted" also rose collectively by 78 percent. (Vogue, 2020)

This generosity and involvement demonstration by JW Anderson is not to be taken for granted, but of course there are some benefits for the brand too. This action allowed to widen the potential customer base and to increase the curiosity and willingness to gather more information about it.

“This is the first time that a brand, especially an emerging one, has enjoyed this level of organic virality on TikTok”, says Brian Mandler, cofounder of TikTok ad agency, The Network Effect. (Vogue, 2020)

This case demonstrates how much social media can influence the popularity rise of a product and create a bigger hype for its ownership. However, it needs to be taken into consideration the context of this happening. Being 2020 still a time when the Covid pandemic was obliging people to stay at home, it may be that this interest in the self-making of clothing wouldn't have had the same success in another period. On the other hand, the Generation Z community is showing an increasing interest in hobbies related to creativity, creating a space for brands to experiment, and be inspired by this in future collections and products, bringing the engagement of customers to another level.

Case study #3: Dior x Nike Air Jordan 1 High OG sneakers

The third quarter of the year 2020 marked the Dior x Nike Air Jordan 1 High as the hottest product for the men's portion of the report.

Dior announced its collaboration with the sneakers brand Jordan by announcing the release of the Air Jordan pair at the pre-fall 2020 show in Miami at the end of 2019. It was predictable that they would have suddenly become the most desired pair of sneakers of 2020.

This announcement coincided with different events: it was the first time that the brand was presenting a runway show in the USA, it was the first time that it was participating at the Art Basel show but it also honored Jordan 1's 35th anniversary.

The collaboration was then confirmed months later with a whole capsule collection announcement with clothing and accessories. The main character of the campaign was the rapper Travis Scott, who had been one of the greatest Jordan ambassadors for years. The singer had also leaked a picture of the shoes in his Instagram Stories before the actual announcement (Exhibit 6), which contributed to increasing the hype around the expectations for this collaboration.



Exhibit 6: Travis Scott posting a preview of the Jordan x Dior shoe on his stories - Source: @travisscott on Instagram

For this particular pair of Jordans, the production was relocated to Italy after 30 years, instead of the usually selected destinations like Vietnam or China. The color used is of course Dior Grey, a code of the brand, which according to Christian Dior himself represents elegance and refinement. Martin Lotti, the Jordan Brand VP Designer eventually said that they wanted to pay homage to both brands' rich iconography and draw inspiration from their heritage.

The Dior brand also released a video on its website, in which it explores the production process and the configuration choices together with the designers Kim Jones and Martin Lotti. (Christian Dior, 2020) This is not new to the brand, which is very focused on communicating to its customers its authenticity and craftsmanship through video content on social media.

The AJ1 are the shoes that really started the sneaker culture pushing people to collect shoes and chasing all the different models. In fact, the keywords of the pricing and retail strategy of the product were hype and exclusiveness. The shoe was produced in a limited number of pieces: 8.500 for the high model and 4.700 for the low one. The pairs also present their own number of production on the ankle lining. (Sawyer Jonathan & HighSnobiety, 2020)

The retail price of the pair was established around 2000€ and Dior made it available to the public through a special microsite designed for the occasion. Users needed to subscribe to the website by inserting their personal data and specifying the model desired, the number, and the preferred location of pick-up. It was possible to register only once, and this would have not implied the right to actually buy a pair. In fact, this was only the subscription to a raffle where the winners only could participate to the actual selling in the Dior pop-ups and pop-ins that would have been on a first come first served basis until the end of stocks. The locations where it was possible to pick up the shoes were London's Selfridges, New York's Selfridges, Milan, Dusseldorf, Dubai Mall, Paris Saint-Honoré, the Nikki Marquardt Gallery in Paris and Hong Kong, the Tokio Ginza boutique, Moscow Tsum, Los Angeles, Seoul and Sydney. (Jing Daily, 2022)

The website received over 5 million subscriptions, 625 times the number of total pairs available, and the pairs were sold out in a matter of minutes on the same day of the release, marking possibly the fastest selling of a luxury collaboration in 2020. The London Selfridges luxury department store was rushed and the queue at 4 a.m. the morning of the release was already counting hundreds of people. (Jing Daily, 2022) This marked probably the biggest AJ1 release ever, a further demonstration of how Dior managed to commandeer all the traditional elements of the streetwear world like the usual sneaker drop by pushing them to their own extreme. (NSS Magazine, 2020)

This release cemented both Dior and Jordan's reputation as extremely luxury items and it may be that the success of this release was also implied by their previous status of excellence in their respective markets. The

Air Jordan 1 profile has grown considerably over the last four decades and it has almost wholly removed from the Michael Jordan personality and doesn't even need time to increase in value anymore. Its worth is apparent right off the bat, making it the perfect collaborative canvas for Dior to make its mark on the sneaker world.

In the luxury world, the value of a product is often valued also based on its ability to “resist” time passing and how its market value evolves. Also in this aspect, the case of the Air Dior was an extraordinary one, since only a week after its release the reselling price of the sneaker was already floating around €7,000/8,000. According to the valuation manager of sneakers and streetwear Amir Azarcon (Real Style, 2023), nowadays, three years later, you can still find sometimes a pair on StockX and the price can even reach €20,000 as shown in Exhibit 7, almost ten times its original price. (StockX, n.d.)

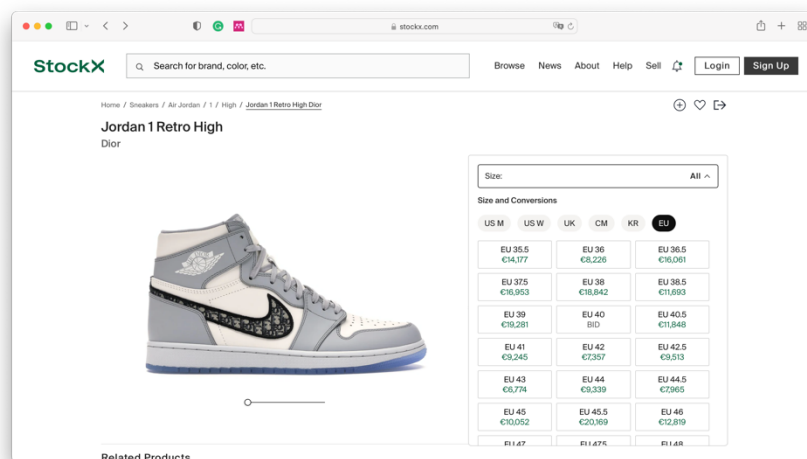


Exhibit 7: Jordan x Dior pairs on sale on StockX at the 10/11/2023 with relative prices - Source: StockX Website

This case study underlines how sometimes collaborations are crucial to the success of a product, since they allow to take advantage of the synergies of the two involved identities and how the brands' reputations can magnify each other.

Of course, the collaboration needs to be coherent with the brands' values and associations, but they can be used to enter another product category, reach a wider audience, or rejuvenate the image. Kim Jones can be defined one of the major spokespersons of this technique, and has implemented it several times since its arrival at Dior, to give the brand a fresher and more actual look. Extremely noteworthy are the collaborations between Dior and KAWS, Raymond Pettibon, Hajime Sorayama and Shawn Stüssy. (HighSnobiety, 2019)

It can also be said that, it was Kim Jones himself to start the “luxury streetwear” phenomenon when he launched the Supreme x Vuitton collection during his previous working experience. That was the first time that a streetwear brand was placing its foot on the Parisian runway.

Case study #4: Pont9 Bag Louis Vuitton

Louis Vuitton announced its new bag release in May 2020: the Pont9 Bag. The model is the embodiment of the polished, elegant, and timeless values of the brand. It is inspired to the Pont Neuf monument, the most antique and famous in Paris, which happens also to be near the headquarters of Louis Vuitton. The bag launch also gave birth to a new leather line with the same name.

For this new model, Nicolas Ghesquière reinterpreted the LV Circle logo that was used in the 30s, which reinforced once again the willingness to link this bag with time and elegance. (Louis Vuitton, 2020)

The photoshoot realized for the campaign was obviously shot on the Pont Neuf bridge with the models Signe Veiteberg, Caroline Reuter, and Londone Myers. The stylist created different looks using ready-to-wear pieces from the summer runway collection to communicate the versatility of the bag, thought for both daily and special occasions. (Fashion Gone Rogue, 2020)

Up to this point, it may look like an ordinary campaign, but Louis Vuitton decided to amaze its customers on the same day of the bag release. In fact, on the 29th of May, a huge number of influencers posted simultaneously a picture of themselves wearing the bag, using the hashtag #LVPont9. This action involved celebrities and influencers from all over the world like Chiara Ferragni, Brittany Xavier, Park So Dam, Leonnie Hanne, Blanca Miró Scrimieri, Negin Mirsalehi, Janice Man, and others (Exhibits 8 and 9). This takeover counted more than 1,000 posts and more than 80 influencers engaged.



Exhibit 8: From left to right Leonnie Hanne, Emma Roberts, Krystal Jung, and Jessica Jung posting a picture wearing the LV Pont 9 bag during the influencer activation campaign - Source: Instagram



Exhibit 9: Chiara Ferragni and Brittany Xavier's posts wearing the LV Pont 9 bag during the influencer activation campaign - Source: Instagram

Considering the usage people do of Instagram nowadays and the increasing popularity of fashion influencers, it was impossible not to see at least one post showing the bag.

In the following days, several celebrities like Sophie Turner, Emma Roberts, Zhong Chuxi, Laura Harrier, and Chloe Grace Moretz started wearing the bag around and shots from paparazzi were released (Exhibit 10), increasing once again the visibility of the brand and its launch. (Elle, 2020)



Exhibit 10: Paparazzi shots of Laura Harrier, Chloe Grace Moretz, Sophie Turner and Alicia Vikander wearing the LV Pont 9 bag – Source: British Vogue

The extreme success of this bag, which was immediately presented as the summer must-have, was also reflected by the overall Louis Vuitton financial performance of that same year. In fact, the fashion & leather goods division of LVMH was showing a decline in sales amounting to 24% with respect to the previous year. According to the LVMH reports the third and fourth quarter of 2020, instead, exhibited a double-digit organic revenue growth. Although the overall year performance of the group was not in line with the previous years

due to the Covid-19 pandemic, Louis Vuitton had been a pivotal figure in maintaining a good resilience. The strong commitment of the brand to maintain agility in the crisis was reflected in its exceptional creativity, where the launch of the Pont 9 bag and line are included, remarking the high quality and sustainable craftsmanship. (LVMH, 2020a, 2020b)

Case study #5: Prada Re-Edition 2005 Nylon Bag

The Prada Re-Nylon bags made it to the Lyst Index twice: the first time in 2021, when the 2005 Re-Edition was indexed among the most popular products of Q1. The second time was at the beginning of this year when the 2000 Re-Edition Mini Bag was announced handbag of the year in the 2022 Year in Fashion report.

After being worn by celebrities like Dua Lipa, Kendall Jenner, Bella Hadid and Kaia Gerber, embracing the Y2K trend and recreating some of the '90s aesthetics, the searches for this styles increased by 131% and the hashtag #pradanylonbag generated 4.2 million views. (Lyst, 2022)

In 2000 and 2005 Prada launched two Nylon bags that had an extreme success in the early 2000s. They are small everyday bags that can be worn with every outfit and are very durable.

In 2019 the late 90s and early 2000s fashion was making a comeback and becoming a trend called Y2K, so people started to wear nylon bags again and Prada seized the opportunity to launch its Re-Nylon project.

On its website, Prada states: “The iconic Prada nylon bags from 2000 and 2005 breathe new life through original details and materials. The Re-Edition designs mix shapes from the past with innovative fabrics such as sustainable Re-Nylon. A minimalistic feel blends with practicality in hobo silhouettes enriched by detachable straps and mini pouches.” (Prada Ecommerce, n.d.) (Exhibit 11)



*Exhibit 11: The Prada Re-Edition 2005 Nylon Bag –
Source: Prada e-commerce website*

Prada found its own way to recall historical and iconic models and re-edit them by using innovative and responsible materials and offering customers several new variations in terms of color, details, textures, and fabrics.

The brand, in fact, presented in 2019 a new sustainable material called ECONYL®, produced by the textile yarn producer Aquafil. This nylon is obtained through the recycling process and depolymerization of plastic waste collected from oceans, fishing nets, and textile fiber waste. The peculiarity is that it can be recycled infinitely without losing the level of quality.

Lorenzo Bertelli, Prada Group Head of Marketing and Communication stated that their ultimate goal was to convert all the Prada virgin nylon into Re-Nylon by the end of 2021, reinforcing the commitment toward a responsible and sustainable business of the brand. (Prada Group, 2019)

For every 10,000 tons of ECONYL produced, 70,000 barrels of petroleum are saved, environmental emissions of CO2 are reduced by 65,100 tons and the impact of petroleum-fueled nylon production on global warming is reduced by 90%. (Prada Group, 2023b)

Prada also partnered with National Geographic to create a mini documentary (Exhibit 12) composed of five hero videos where the process and supply chain behind this initiative is showcased. The series is called “What We Carry” and it features NG explorers and high profile eco-conscious ambassadors of the brand traveling across all the continents of the world. (Prada RE-NYLON | What We Carry, 2019) This strategy of transparency and involvement of the customer had an extreme success. The National Geographic website in fact reported 2.7 million views in just 5 months for the videos and an increase of site visits by 35%. The engagement level on Facebook as well was 97% higher than the industry average. (National Geographic, 2019)



Exhibit 12: Prada Re-Nylon cover for the documentary in collaboration with National Geographic – Source: Prada Re-Nylon website

This project is also very coherent and intertwined with Prada’s identity since nylon is now a component of the brand’s DNA and heritage. Its history dates back to the early years of Miuccia Prada’s career in the family business, when she decided to launch her first bag, the Vela backpack with this material that had never been used in the industry. This was also her way of provoking and questioning the femininity and beauty standards, as she is renowned to be a feminist. (The Vintage Bar, 2020)

The extreme success of this capsule collection of accessories brought Prada to expand the collection the following year with ready-to-wear pieces and footwear. (Prada, 2020) Moreover, from July 2023 1% of the proceeds of the Re-Nylon collection will be donated to SEA BEYOND, an education program in collaboration with UNESCO’s Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission that aims to raise awareness on sustainability and ocean preservation and funds scientific and humanitarian projects. (Sea Beyond, 2019)

According to Rebag, a luxury resale authority, the Re-Edition is worth more than its primary market value on the secondary market with an average retention value of 118%. (Rebag, 2022) According to a 2023 Vogue article with the help of some RealReal experts, the 2005 Re-edition bag has also been proclaimed one of the bags retaining the highest resale value. (Vogue, 2023)

In this case, it's not the product itself or the advertising campaign carried out to have earned the customers' attention, but the overall background. The Re-Edition 2005 bag is certainly iconic and Prada managed to ride the wave of the Y2K trend, inspiring other luxury brands to reintroduce staples of that scene in their collections. However, what really contributed to the success of this product is its contribution to the corporate's transparency and responsibility standards.

Sustainability in the fashion luxury has been a rising concern since 2019, as the McKinsey State of Fashion declares. Customers are becoming increasingly aware and interested in all the supply chain processes of fashion and are requesting higher engagement from brands in finding more eco-friendly alternatives. According to a McKinsey US cohort survey 66% of respondents consider sustainability when making a luxury purchase.

As shown in Exhibit 13, it is also evident that younger generations are more sensitive to these themes, and they are also willing to pay higher prices for products with a lower impact on the environment. (Business of Fashion & McKinsey&Company, 2020)

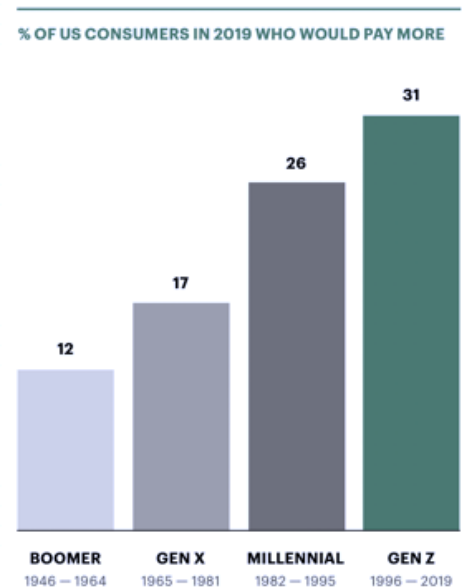


Exhibit 13: Consumers that are willing to pay more for sustainable fashion products – Source: McKinsey New Age of the Consumer Survey, 2019

Case study #6: Versace Medusa Aevitas platform pumps

In the Q3 report for the year 2021, the second place of the most successful women's product is occupied by the vertiginous Versace Medusa Aevitas platform pumps.

Presented during the Fall/Winter 2021 runway show as shown in Exhibit 14, these platform shoes have rapidly become the object of desire of many influencers and fashion addicts. (Versace, 2021b)

The design of the heels is very peculiar and presents a double platform, a chunky block heel and an ankle strap with stones and a golden Medusa charm. They recall the iconic and historic Mary Jane model from the house and are certainly an emblem of Versace's renowned values like power, elegance, and quality. They certainly don't go unnoticed.



Exhibit 14: Versace Medusa Aevitas platform pumps on the FW 21 runway – Source: Vogue Runway

After three years of lockdown and only wearing slippers and sneakers, high-statement heels were making a strong comeback in 2021 and this new style contributed to the rising of this trend. These shoes reminded people of parties and “good times” and had also a feel very close to the year 2000s style. They look very similar to the chunky Bratz’s boots and aligned a lot with the style of the famous dolls whose 20th anniversary was being celebrated the same year of the release of the Medusa Aevitas.

IBM even studied a tendency for heels to become higher, when challenging periods or economic crisis happen, forging a whole new theory. (Dazed, 2021)

The Versace source of popularity is quite unique since it revolves around the figure of Donatella, one of the founders of the brand, and her relationship with celebrities and leading figures of the fashion world. In 2021 and 2022 Versace experienced a resurgence and extreme success and its famous Medusa logo has been seen everywhere, from social media to events and billboards.

Versace managed to become as much a part of pop culture as the celebrities it dresses, and it is now part of the brand’s roots. Even under the lead of Gianni Versace, the brand has always generated publicity through scandalous events or by being part of the musical careers of several artists like Elton John, Madonna, or Jennifer Lopez. Donatella carried out her brother’s legacy and has become part of the brand’s DNA much more than other fashion designers. For example, she is often part of the advertising campaigns herself and she often attends the events alongside the celebrities she dressed. She embodies the values of the brand itself and she is the physical expression of it. (W Magazine, 2022)

Donatella is also very good at choosing the celebrities with which she associates. For example, these shoes were worn at the presentation runway by the Hadid sisters, two of the most influential top models of the recent years.

In 2021 Versace reputation was increased also thanks to the appearance of Zendaya at the BET awards with an astonishing yellow and purple vintage dress (Exhibit 15). This caused searches for the brand's dresses to spike 122% within 48 hours. The American Actress that same year had also been nominated Power Dresser of the Year by the Lyst Year in Fashion as she was starring in two of the most awaited movies of the year: Dune and Spiderman No Way Home. She was actively involved in the press tours and participated to many awards and her looks have always been flawless. (Lyst, 2021)

Donatella in the meantime was involved in the making of Fedez's outfits for his participation in the Sanremo Festival in Italy. She has collaborated with Chiara Ferragni several times, but for this occasion, the stylist designed two custom-made suits for both Federico and his son Leone (Exhibit 16) and made an appearance in the first season of The Ferragnez Series on Prime Video as well. In the episode, it is possible to perceive her personality and how approachable and easygoing she is around celebrities.



Exhibit 15: Zendaya wearing the iconic purple Versace vintage dress at the 2021 BET Awards – Source: Vogue



Exhibit 16: Fedez and his son Leone wearing matching Versace shirts for the 2021 Sanremo Festival – Source: Il Corriere Della Sera

Of course, creating this close relationship with celebrities has its benefits, especially in terms of visibility. In fact, as soon as the Medusa Aevitas platform pumps came out, celebrities started to wear them to events and to post pictures on social media. Some of the most-seen posts were from Beyoncé, Ariana Grande, and Dua Lipa. The latter was also chosen as the face of the Fall 2021 collection campaign as shown in Exhibit 17. (Versace, 2021a)

La Greca • [grè-ca] 1. A decorative pattern constructed from one continuous line. 2. An iconic code of the Versace brand. 3. A new Versace print and accessories line worn by Dua Lipa.



Exhibit 17: Dua Lipa as the face of the FW21 Versace collection, La Greca - Source: Versace's Website

The style of the shoe was in line with the Y2K aesthetics already mentioned, which was taking foot in that period, and pairing it with one of the most successful pop singers of the moment was a winning strategy. Dua Lipa had chosen Versace for her appearance at the Met Gala in 2019 and also wore it at the 2021 Grammys. According to the Lyst yearly report, her Grammys look caused a 245% spike in pageviews for the brand, and her starring in its F/W '21 campaign, made searches jump 94% in 24 hours. (Lyst, 2021) She is perfect to impersonate the values of femininity, audacity and empowerment the brand wants to convey.

Another iconic appearance of these shoes was at the most awaited wedding of the year: the one between Brooklyn Beckham and Nicola Peltz. The bride, in fact, decided to wear a custom-made white pair of Medusa Aevitas to walk down the aisle. According to the Lyst Report, right after Vogue posted photos of the event, the item reached 1.8 million views on TikTok, with a 71% increase.

The launch of this pair of shoes has been extremely successful and, in fact, the heels have remained almost always sold out on the Versace's website and on the luxury retailers. In the following months, this style has also been imitated by hundreds of brands both affordable and luxurious. (Valley, 2021) The following year brands like Prada, Casadei, and Valentino released platform heels obviously inspired by the trend set by Versace.

Case study #7: Miu Miu Miniskirt

The first quarter of 2022 Lyst Index presented as one of the most successful women's products the Miu Miu miniskirt.

The impact of this piece of clothing on the fashion industry is indirectly proportional to its length. The skirt debuted on the Miu Miu Spring 2022 runway, where the whole collection by Miuccia Prada proposed some

bold and provocative alternatives to the usual work uniforms. The mini skirt, in particular, has a cut and shredded end and it is so short that it is possible to reveal the pockets underneath. The campaign of the collection starred Hailey Bieber, one of the most talked about celebrities and models of the latest years. (HighSnobiety, 2022a) The campaign, in fact, registered an engagement rate 8.3% higher with respect to the previous year as reported in the Prada Group FY 2021 report.

The skirt was immediately associated to the Britney Spears' "Baby One More Time" video clip look, bringing back once again the 2000s aesthetic. Other fashion brands did not take long to jump on the trend, and many cropped items and skirts were proposed on the Fall 2022 runways.

Lyst data confirmed the success of the skirt and the extreme interest in it. The item was, in fact, almost immediately out of stock in all the New York shops and on the Miu Miu website.

According to the platform, at the beginning of 2023, the demand amounted to almost 1,000 daily searches. This was also extremely enhanced by the use of the item on magazine covers. One release that caused particular hype was the Paloma Elsesser's i-D number of February which caused searches for the brand to jump by 127% on the platform.

The skirt was also seen on Nicole Kidman on the cover of Vanity Fair's 28th annual Hollywood issue (HighSnobiety, 2022b) and Zendaya wore it for the December 2021 Interview issue (Interview Magazine, 2021). Many celebrities like Chiara Ferragni (Exhibit 18), Hunter Schafer, Saweetie (Exhibit 19), and others, decided to post the outfit on Instagram, and fan accounts for the set were even created to repost all the different looks created. (@miumiuset, n.d.)



Exhibit 18: Chiara Ferragni posting a picture wearing the Miu Miu miniskirt - Source: @chiaraferragni on Instagram

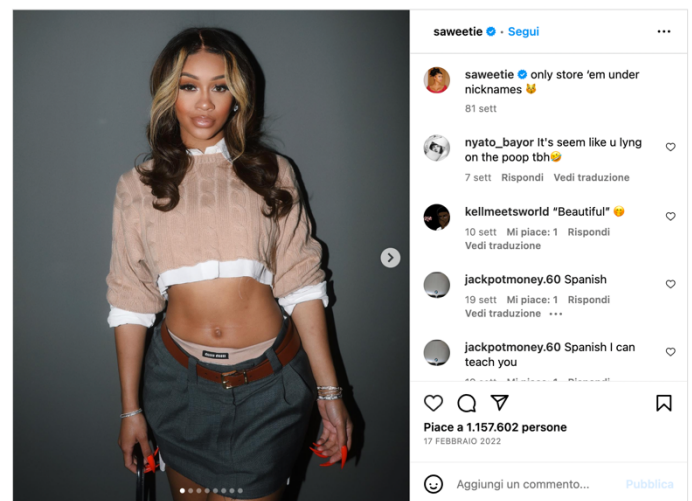


Exhibit 19: Saweetie posting a picture wearing the Miu Miu miniskirt - Source: @saweetie on Instagram

This item nowadays has been adopted as the means for battles about body positivity, beauty standards and freedom of wearing whatever you like regardless of your age. This brings back also the provocative and radical nature of its original version of the 1960s when it was associated with feminist movements.

Miu Miu was also elected as “Brand of the Year” in 2022 by Lyst in its yearly report. Thanks to its numerous successful products, the brand managed to reach Gen-Z generations and has managed to own the ballet core trend rising in the past couple of years. Its runway shows were some of the most watched, also thanks to lives on Tik Tok, and researches for the brand has increased 34% with respect to the previous year.

In addition to following the trends and the usual contribution from celebrities on social media, Miu Miu has been quite involved in the TV series market lately. In fact, the brand makes an appearance between the outfits of the HBO TV series Euphoria, very famous among the Gen Z. Since the beginning of the second season at the start of 2022, the show has been the most mentioned one of the last 10 years on Twitter.

During the season, the character Lexi Howard is seen multiple times wearing Miu Miu. In the first season, Lexi is more of a side character and her style is considered more conservative and polished than her friends’. In the second season, her attire remains consistent including preppy and tailored dresses and cardigans, by the choice of the Miu Miu brand brings an elevation to it concurrently with the development of her own voice and confidence. The brand fully represents her intellectuality and femininity. Interestingly, many fashion magazines observe the parallelism between Lexi’s empowerment and growth and the going viral of Miu Miu’s mini-skirts. (FASHION Magazine, 2022)

Moreover, Miu Miu decided to star Sydney Sweeney, interpreting Cassie in the TV series, as the face of the Wander campaign in 2022 (Exhibit 20), officializing also her role as brand ambassador.



Exhibit 20: Sydney Sweeney as the face of the Wander campaign – Source: Prada Group website

Sydney was also nominated by Lyst as rising star of the year in 2022, thanks to her impeccable outfits for red carpets and events. (Lyst, 2022)

Product placement in tv series is a strategy often used by luxury brands to reach younger generations and influence their purchases. It is commonly known how much impact Euphoria has had on the younger generations, especially in their way of dressing and their make-up. On TikTok, the “Euphoria High” trend became suddenly popular, where people showed their outfits as if they were part of the high school students in the show.

Another longstanding ambassador of the brand is Emma Corrin, who is starring as Princess Diana in the series “The Crown” much discussed for its fashion choices, as well. The actress decided to wear Miu Miu for her Golden Globes award ceremony in 2021 (Exhibit 21), which according to Lyst caused the searches for the brand to increase 112% in the following 48 hours. After her appearances on the tv series, Emma’s social media mentions have grown by 347% and her average monthly Google searches have escalated by 987%. (Lyst, 2021)

Miu Miu success is indisputable, and it is also confirmed by its financial performance, showcasing a retail sales amount of €347 million in 2021 and €432 million in 2022, maintaining a constant 20% growth year on year. (Prada Group, 2022, 2023a)



Exhibit 21: Emma Corrin wearing Miu Miu at the 2021 Golden Globes Awards – Source: Harper's Bazaar

Case study #8: Jacquemus Le Bambino bag

This product did not actually appear in the Lyst Index charts but has certainly received a lot of hype and success lately, thanks to the astonishing marketing strategy adopted by the brand, that it needed to be cited in the present dissertation.

The brand's marketing strategy, especially on social media, has been very peculiar since its launch in 2010. In fact, the Instagram profile of Jacquemus is a hybrid between a brand-lead and a personal profile of Simon Porte, the founder and fashion designer. Many posts are very simple photos shot with a smartphone picturing his private life and not even including products. The brand’s positioning is, in fact, very precise with 360° transparency and a clear storytelling about a lifestyle rather than its products. This implies a very strong visual image and an easier connection with its audience.

The bag was actually released during the Fall Winter 2020 runway show, but last year new colors and a new padded version were released reawakening customers’ interaction. The collection where the bag appeared for

the first time was called “L’Année 97” and it was a tribute to the 90s aesthetics and Simon’s mum. In the Instagram pictures, gaming consoles, Nokia mobiles, a CD player, and a vending machine appeared (Exhibit 22). The latter was just the anticipation of a future marketing campaign.



Exhibit 22: Photos from the Jacquemus “L’Année 97” marketing campaign – Source: NSS Magazine

In December 2021, the brand released the “Le Bambino Long” in the bright pink shade and for this specific occasion, they created a boutique in Paris inspired by vending machines. The pop-up was called “Jacquemus 24/24” and it stayed open for 3 days. (@jacquemus on Instagram, 2021) The shop had no queues and no sales assistants and included some other items from the Jacquemus holiday collection “Pink 2”. People just had to pay with their cards and then they would receive the number of a locker and a code to open it to collect their bag. This shop also wanted to launch a message to its customers: “The meaning of this project is the opposite. The idea of it is to break the boundaries in the luxury world. We want you to feel welcome and have a great experience whatever you are going to do. This is what Jacquemus is about.” said Simon Porte on its Instagram account. The pop-up had so much success that a couple of months afterward Jacquemus proposed the same solution in Milan for another bag launch. (@jacquemus on Instagram, 2022)

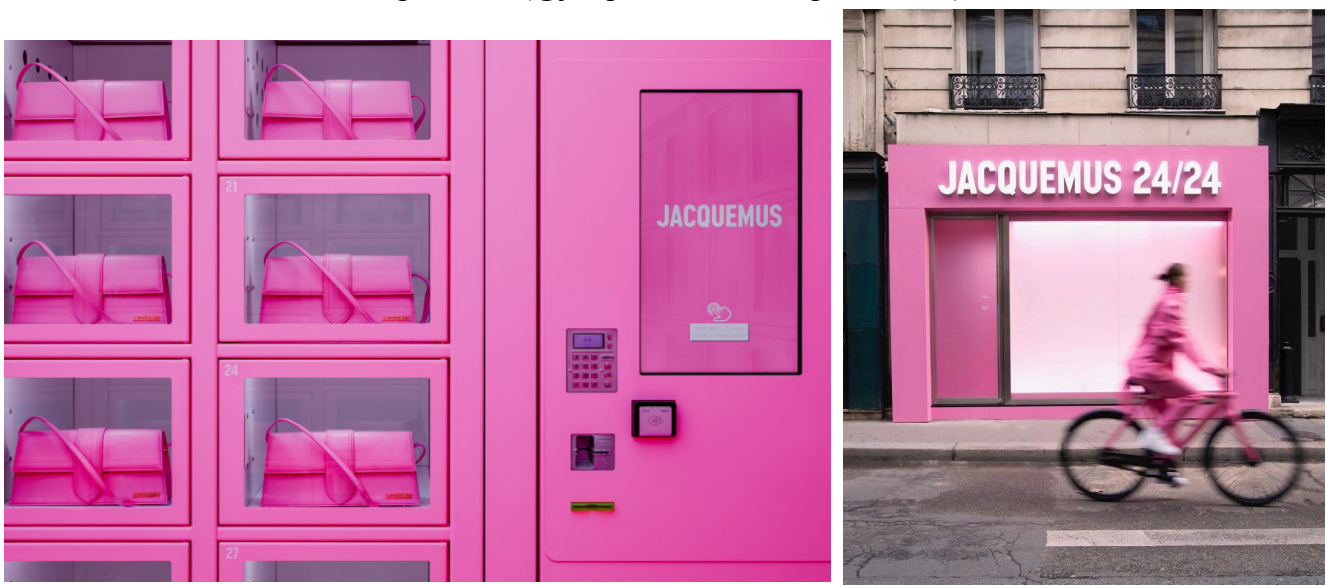


Exhibit 23: The “Jacquemus 24/24” pop-up store in Paris – Source: @jacquemus on Instagram

The bag quickly became one of the brand’s best-sellers and in 2023, on the occasion of the Paris Fashion Week, the brand installed a pop-up inside the Galeries Lafayette where one of the main installations was a gigantic Bambino containing all the different models available at the shop. The brand had dropped off the PFW Calendar, presenting its latest collection in December, of the previous year, but on February 2023 it sent all its guests an invitation to the pop-up in the form of a toast with butter. Once again, this aesthetic and peculiar initiative caused thousands of interactions on social media, and it contributed to increasing the curiosity and enthusiasm about the new shop. (@jacquemus on Instagram, 2023) Simon Port took the opportunity to tell more about Jacquemus’ history and to represent in the Galeries’ windows some of his visual obsessions through pop references to everyday items. This made the customers’ experience extremely immersive and fun. As shown in Exhibit 24, other installations were a toaster ejecting branded slices of bread, a washing machine turned into a photo booth, a flower store, a coffee shop, and personalized windows inspired by the previous collections of the brand like “Le Raphia”, “Le Coup de soleil” or “L’Amour”. (Galeries Lafayette Paris Haussmann, 2023)



Exhibit 24: A collection of the installations of the Jacquemus pop-up store inside the Galeries Lafayette installed in 2023 – Source: @jacquemus on Instagram

Right after the closing of the shop, the “Le Bambino” bag was the subject of an original and astonishing strategy, that became suddenly viral on social media. The brand on the 5th of April 2023 posted on its Instagram profile a video where autobuses were speeding across the streets of Paris (Exhibit 25), except they had the exact aspect of the latest brand’s bags. The attention to detail is outstanding and even the street signals present the brand and bag’s name. This can be interpreted as the evolution of the usual billboard ads put on buses in the past. Of course, it was the result of a 3D rendering, even if many people were looking forward to hopping on the “Jacquemus Express”. The reaction of the audience has been very positive, with millions of views, and some people were even suggesting a promotion for the marketing team.



Exhibit 25: Screenshots of the reel depicting the 3D Rendering of the Bambino Bags autobuses in Paris – Source: @jacquemus on Instagram

The following month, the bag was instead transformed into a boat sailing the Lake Como (Exhibit 26), to announce the opening of the new Italian pop-up store of the brand and the launch of the new capsule collection “Été in Como”.

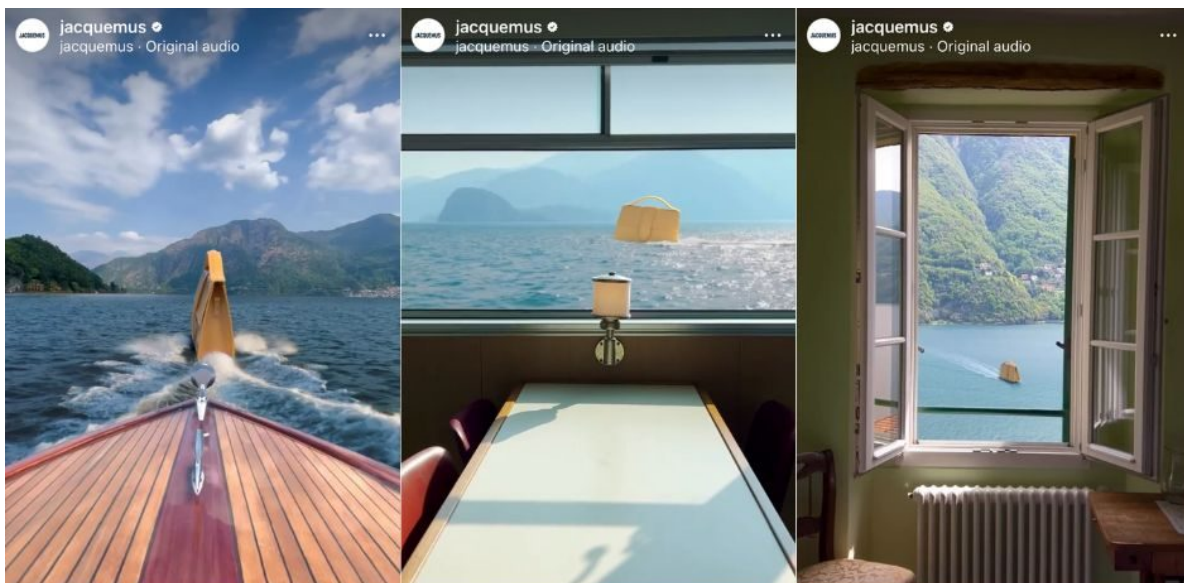


Exhibit 26: Screenshots of the stories depicting the 3D Rendering of the Bambino Bags boat on Lake Como – Source: @jacquemus on Instagram

The item also appears in other videos, being transformed into an ice cream truck or into some trees' fruit. Every idea is very original and always linked to the strategic future choices of the brand.

The story of the Jacquemus brand is very inspiring, from his rapid success without an actual fashion education or experience to the continuous impact it leaves on social media. Simon Port always stated, "It's not about the clothes, it's about the storytelling" and he has been able to communicate this through every single collection, show, and campaign which are extremely personal and carefully conceived.

The retail strategy of the brand is unique as well. Its only permanent shop is the "La Boutique Montaigne" in Paris, all the other stores opened at the moment are pop-ups. This allows the brand to have lower costs over the year, but also to be flexible and conform the retail strategy to its storytelling. It is a very bold choice, but with a marketing approach this communicative and able to always be stuck in the customers' minds, it is successful for Jacquemus. Sure enough, this is why Jacquemus is the only independent label in the Top 20 in the Lyst Index and is still on the rise.

Chapter 3: A Manual for Successful Product Launches in the Fashion Industry

Taking into consideration the case studies previously analyzed, it is possible to detect further variables that may or may not have affected the success of the launch. As a consequence, this research wants to further conduct a quantitative analysis, in order to assert the qualitative discoveries of the previous chapter.

This thesis will then focus on two main detailed studies:

- The first verifying if the factors influencing product launch success derived from the past literature are applicable also in the fashion industry;
- The second aim is to find evidence that the factors detected in the case studies actually influence the success of these product launches.

A survey was then designed and spread between potential fashion customers to gather analyzable data.

3.1. The survey

3.1.1. Research Question

The main purpose of this paper is to discover which factors or procedures that are frequently verified during the launch process of a product in the fashion industry, actually have an impact on its success. First of all, a definition of success needs to be provided. In particular, the past literature explores two different spheres of performance of a brand: the **financial** one, concerning market share and profitability, and the **strategic** one, related to customer satisfaction and market extension. (Lee et al., 2011)

Most of the past studies, indeed, utilize a weighted indicator containing financial success, market success, and forecasts. Consequently, a product is considered successful when it is profitable for the brand, when it achieves a high amount of sold pieces or a high market share, and also when it contributes to increasing the awareness of both the item itself and the brand.

Based on the analysis of the previous chapters two main research questions are defined. The first study wants to confirm the empirical discoveries of the previous literature, so it takes into account the variables already been proven as impactful on the success of launches and verify that they are applicable also in the fashion industry. Thereafter the question is:

RQ1: “Does a higher investment from the brand to master the launch practices affect its success for a product in the fashion industry?”

The investment is considered a measurable proxy of the company’s employment of these variables.

In this case, the variables inspected are namely:

- **Product benefits and innovativeness:** this variable indicates that the product presents unique characteristics with respect to competitors and is able to satisfy different needs.
- **Pricing strategy:** it does not necessarily imply the lowest price possible, but one that is coherent with the product offering and the brand's positioning.
- **Launch timing:** it indicates the time during which the product is launched on the market. Sometimes it may coincide with special events or festivities of a specific country.
- **Skills of salesmen:** this factor entails clerks' personality, knowledge, and ability in physical stores. It is strictly correlated to the customer's experience at the selling point.
- **Placement in stores:** in this case, it is intended how the new product is displayed in stores, both physical and online. For example, if there is a dedicated shelf for the new product, or if a banner is immediately shown on the landing page.
- **Communication on the brand's channels:** it is the totality of the brand's tone of voice and marketing strategies used by the brand in order to announce new products or initiatives on different channels (social media, websites, billboards, stores...).

The second part of the research aims at validating the procedures and strategies applied in the fashion industry that have been deduced by the examination of the case studies in the second chapter. In this case, the research question regards the customers' likability of buying the product and how much it changes in the case in which the company applies these strategies and when it does not.

The question poses:

RQ2: "Given a certain product launch in the fashion industry, will the presence/happening of a specific tactic influence the purchase intention of customers?"

In this case, the wish to buy or not the product is a proxy for its launch's success, which as already seen can also be represented by the number of sales verified.

The eleven variables investigated in this second part are the following:

- Famous people use the product in their daily life;
- The product has gone viral on social media;
- The product is from a collaboration between two famous brands;
- Influencers sponsor the product on their social media;
- The product commits to sustainable standards and initiatives;
- A short documentary on how the product was conceived is presented;
- The brand's creative director has a strong personality and image (e.g. Donatella Versace);

- Celebrities recently wore a brand's product at important events (Met Gala, Grammys...);
- The product is placed in TV series or movies;
- The brand has a strong storytelling on social media (e.g. Jacquemus);
- The brand used AI to generate impactful images and videos posted on social media.

3.1.2. Hypothesis

As previously mentioned, the present dissertation focuses mainly on two different research questions and for each one it is necessary to hypothesize the result that will be obtained.

In particular, in the case of the first research question, it has been proven by the literature analysed in the first chapter that the variables considered have a positive impact on the success of the launch of the product. It is assumed that the same will happen also for the fashion industry since the variables inquired are quite universal for different types of products.

Hence the first hypothesis will be:

H1: “A higher investment from the brand to master the launch practices positively affects the success of a product in the fashion industry”

For what concerns the second part of the study, the subjects of the interview are posed under two different scenarios, at different times. The aim of this thesis is to verify if the presence of the treatment affects positively the likability of buying the product just launched.

To do so, a *t-test* is conducted and the dependent variable, that is the set of responses to the two subsequent questions, is analyzed before and after the treatment. To define if the treatment has an impact on the customers' purchasing intention, the means of the two paired groups will be examined to assess if they are equal or not. Following the reasoning the second hypothesis will be:

$$\mathbf{H2: } H_0: \mu_{factor} \leq \mu_{NOfactor}$$

$$H_1: \mu_{factor} > \mu_{NOfactor}$$

A significance level of 5% will be taken into consideration.

3.1.3 Methodology

To gather the data useful to develop the quantitative analysis, a survey was created and administered to a group of participants of different ages and mixed genders.

The data-gathering method results in a Simple Random Sampling frame, which is a probability sample that ensures representativeness for the research. In the sample, every element of the population has the same probability of being selected, which can be calculated through the ratio between the sample size and the population size after assigning to each person in the sample a random number. In this case, in order to have an

acceptable sample for quantitative research, observations need to be greater than 100, which is easily achievable, to have a reliable and reputable population portion.

The survey will be delivered through emails, phone messages, and the internet, to reach an audience as large as possible. This is also useful to collect mainly Primary Data, that are usually more precise with respect to the aim of the research.

This gathering data method is usually more time and effort consuming, but it allows a higher level of control and completeness of the information. Additionally, it is certain that the responses are not outdated, which is fundamental regarding the fashion industry, being it a very dynamic and evolving environment.

It is intended to collect data from both male and female customers to have a representative sample of the overall population. Moreover, the lifestyle of the different customers is not so relevant for the purpose of the research, so they can be both students, workers, or unemployed people.

3.1.4 Survey design

The survey is developed through the Qualtrics platform, which allows a variety of question configurations and is easily shareable with other people through the creation of a personal link.

The survey is designed into four main sections and has a total of 27 questions.

Being the number of questions a little high, their format has been kept quite simple comprehending multiple choices or sliders, avoiding text insertions. The goal is to keep the survey short, to encourage individuals to answer honestly, and to reduce the survey abandonment rate. Indeed, the total compilation time is estimated to be around 7 minutes.

The beginning of the questionnaire is aimed at gathering the demographic characteristics of the participants (gender, age, and country of origin) in order to better define the sample. Some questions also regarding the occupation of the participants and the field of work or study is posed, since it could be regarded as interesting or impactful for the purpose of the study.

The second part of the survey has as its main purpose that of collecting data about purchasing habits and interest in the fashion field of the respondents. This is fundamental for the scope of the study since the opinions should be provided by potential customers of fashion brands to be meaningful.

The third and fourth parts of the survey are, instead, focused on the inquiry of the variables that should have an impact on the success of the launch. The first is based on the literature previously scrutinized and it intends to find confirmation that the aspects evaluated as significant in the other industries are applicable also in the

fashion context. In this case, a Likert Scale was used to evaluate how much the potential customers evaluated that a higher investment in the six variables spotted beforehand would increase the success of the launch.

The following part instead poses two different scenarios in front of the respondents:

- The first one considers the presence of the variable examined or the happening of a certain event;
- The second one, instead, its absence.

The likability of the participants of buying the product in the two circumstances is investigated through a Likert scale also in this case.

3.1.5 Data Gathering and Data Cleaning

The total number of observations gathered amounts to 114. The data cleaning process was applied first by deleting entries that contained fake answers, unreal numbers, and not 100% progress status.

Some entries regarding the country of origin were also translated in English.

Sometimes, in the case in which answers presented the total progress status but still had some empty voices, the values have been substituted with a 0 value, which was the lowest possible in the questions considering a scale as possible response.

The final sample came out to be very fragmented in terms of geographic dispersion. Thus, for the analysis and results to be representative and coherent, only participants' responses from Italy were kept.

After all the adjustments, the final sample resulted in 86 observations, which is still considered large enough to ensure internal validity and reliability.

3.1.6. Data analysis

As previously mentioned, this study will propose two different types of data analysis.

In order to respond to the first research question, the intention was to compute a linear regression that would have evaluated the level of significance of the different variables gathered from the literature review to evaluate if they actually had an impact on the success of the product launch. However, the lack of data concerning the levels of investments of companies in such variables and the quantities of products sold made this analysis impossible.

As a consequence, the interviewees were posed in front of the assumption of the highest possible level of investment from companies in such features as a means to master these practices and they were asked to evaluate how much they thought this would have affected the success of the product.

Afterwards, a simple quantitative evaluation of the results will be realized, taking into consideration also **measures of central tendency** and **dispersion**. The first one is useful for understanding the representative values of distribution by analyzing the *mean*, the *median*, and the *mode* of each variable. These three values will also be compared to evaluate their similarity since that is an indication of their dispersion. This second

measure is useful to understand the distribution of the variables and check if they are similar or not to the central values. In this case, it will be useful to check also the *range*, *variance*, and *standard deviation*.

The second part of the analysis, concerning the second research question, requires instead a t-test analysis in order to interpret the results of the experiment. This type of study is used to compare the participants' different responses depending on the two different scenarios in which the variables are present or not in the launch of a product. So the presence or the happening of certain characteristics/events are defined as the treatments of the analysis in econometrics.

In particular, the **independent variable** of the following research will be the presence/absence of the variables in the launch procedure of a fashion product and it will be represented by a dummy variable. This will allow to understand, based on the participants' responses, if they actually have an effect on the success of the product. This will also allow to better detect on what the companies should invest when defining the launch strategy of their products in the fashion industry.

The **dependent variable** of the research is, instead, the intention of buying a general fashion product measured through a Likert Scale going from 0 (very unlikely) to 5 (very likely). This variable is considered a proxy for the number of sales of a product. In fact, the success of a product launch has been previously defined as reached when it is profitable for the brand as it achieves a high amount of sold pieces. As a consequence, a higher purchase intention of costumers is considered as a higher potential number of sales.

The aim is, once again, to detect if the likability of buying the product is increased in the scenarios in which the variable of observance is present or not.

3.2. Results of the survey

3.2.1. Sample Description

As previously mentioned, the purpose of the first part of the survey was to gather demographical information to be able to describe the sample of the research.

First of all, it is necessary to point out that the entire sample is from Italy. This is due to the lack of a representative number of responses from different countries, in comparison to those regarding the Italian country. For this reason, it was chosen to keep only this portion of the sample, as to avoid biases in the analysis.

For what concerns age representation (Exhibit 27 and 28), the sample is composed of 62% of people between 18 and 25 years, 27% between 25 and 35 years, 7% of people between 35 and 50, and only 3% of the population is above 50. This may be considered quite representative for the study that wants to be conducted since usually younger generations are the first adopters of new product launches and are the more attentive to trends and novelties in the industry.

		Age			
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	18-25	53	61.6	61.6	61.6
	25-35	23	26.7	26.7	88.4
	35-50	7	8.1	8.1	96.5
	Above 50	3	3.5	3.5	100.0
Total		86	100.0	100.0	

Exhibit 27: Frequency table regarding age of the sample - Source: Author

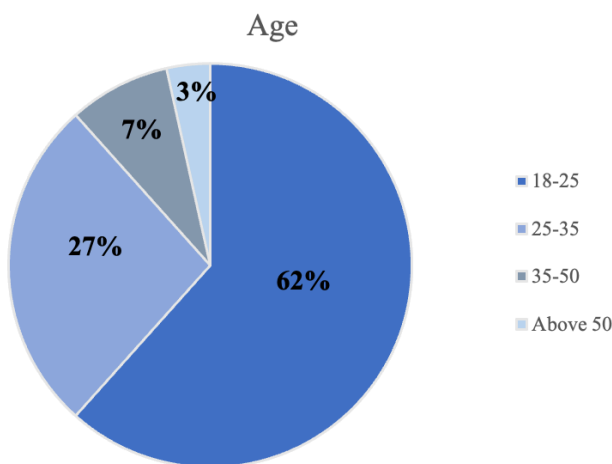


Exhibit 28: Pie chart representing age of the sample - Source: Author

The sample is also composed by 63% of female respondents and 37% are males. Regarding gender the distribution is quite proportionate, however a higher rate of male respondents could be preferable.

		Gender			
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Female	54	62.8	62.8	62.8
	Male	32	37.2	37.2	100.0
Total		86	100.0	100.0	

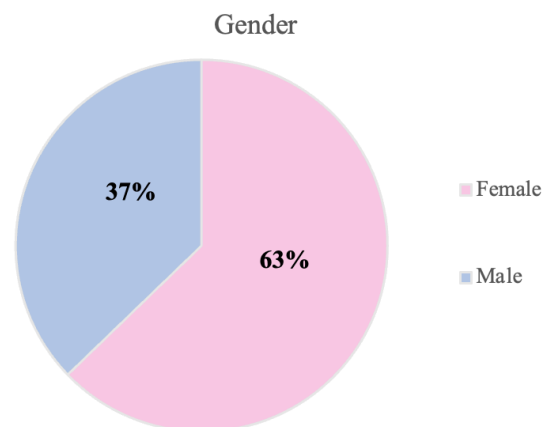


Exhibit 29: Frequency table regarding gender of the sample - Source: Author

Exhibit 30: Pie chart representing gender of the sample - Source: Author

The level of education of the participants was also investigated and it showed that the majority (37%) of them has obtained at least a bachelor’s degree. It was surprising to see that another very big portion of the population, amounting to 36% has accomplished a master’s degree or an equivalent qualification. In addition, 24% of the participants received a high school diploma or an equivalent certification, only 1% completed a doctorate or a PhD, and finally, just 1% of the population terminated their studies very early receiving only a middle school diploma.

Which is you level of education?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Bachelor Degree or equivalent	32	37.2	37.2	37.2
	Doctorate / PhD	1	1.2	1.2	38.4
	High school diploma or equivalent	21	24.4	24.4	62.8
	Master's Degree or equivalent	31	36.0	36.0	98.8
	Middle school diploma	1	1.2	1.2	100.0
	Total	86	100.0	100.0	

Exhibit 31: Frequency table regarding the level of education of the sample - Source: Author

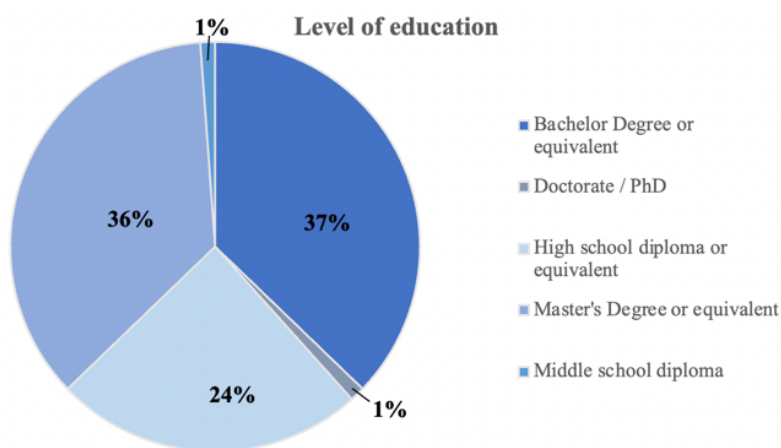


Exhibit 32: Pie chart representing the level of education of the sample – Source: Author

Concerning the level of occupation of the sample, it showed that a big portion (31%) is still studying, but 34% of the population is employed or freelance. 10% of the sample is also completing an internship or apprenticeship and just 11% of the total is not employed yet.

What is your current occupation?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Employed of freelance	34	39.5	39.5	39.5
	Intern / Apprentice	10	11.6	11.6	51.2
	Not employed / in search of employment	11	12.8	12.8	64.0
	Student	31	36.0	36.0	100.0
	Total	86	100.0	100.0	

Exhibit 33: Frequency table regarding the level of occupation of the sample - Source: Author

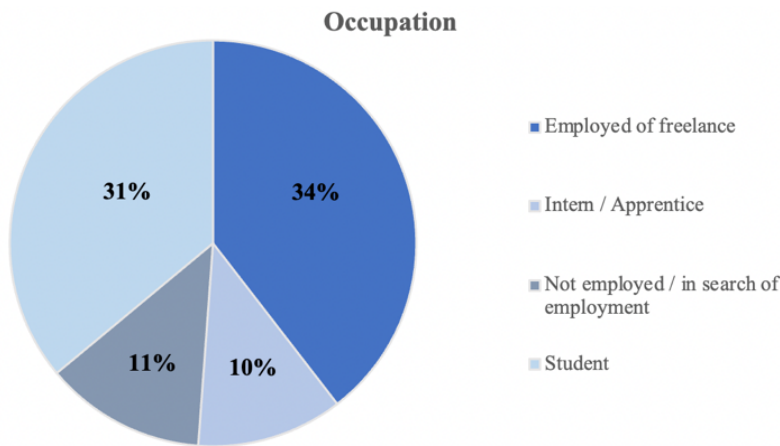


Exhibit 34: Pie chart representing the level of occupation of the sample – Source: Author

In order to increase the reliability of the sample, the survey also enquired the field of study or work of the participants. This information could be interesting, since it could provide a higher knowledge about practices or variables regarding a product launch on the market that will be explored in the final part of the study.

In particular, it emerged that 12% of the population has conducted its studies or is working in the fashion industry and 6% in the luxury industry. Moreover, 21% of the sample is working or has a background knowledge in the marketing and communication field. 8% of the total of people is also working in consulting and 3% in product development or design industries.

As a consequence, it is assumed that the population interviewed has a level of awareness and knowledge that implies reasonable and fulfilling answers.

In which field did you carry out your studies or are you currently working? – Selected Choice

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Consulting	7	8.1	8.1	8.1
	Fashion Industry	10	11.6	11.6	19.8
	Luxury Industry	5	5.8	5.8	25.6
	Marketing / Communication	18	20.9	20.9	46.5
	Other	43	50.0	50.0	96.5
	Product development / Design	3	3.5	3.5	100.0
	Total	86	100.0	100.0	

Exhibit 35: Frequency table regarding the field of studies or occupation of the sample - Source: Author

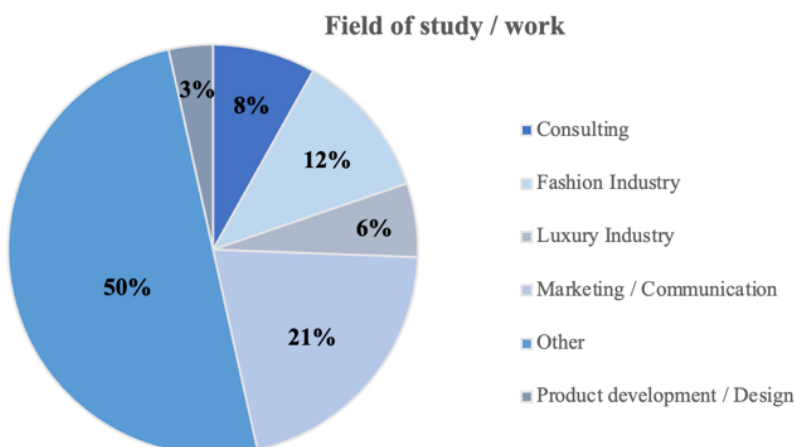


Exhibit 36: Pie chart representing the field of studies or occupation of the sample – Source: Author

The second section of the survey was focused on the purchasing habits of the participants and on their interest in the fashion industry. This is mainly due to the fact that it is important to consider the opinion of potential fashion costumers being the success of new products the main subject of the research.

In particular, it was highlighted that only 7% of the interviewees is not interested in fashion. On the other hand, 17% of the population is extremely interested, 17% as well is very interested and 38% is moderately interested. 20%, however, is slightly interested.

The percentages are surely quite proportionated and consequently, the sample is quite representative of different opinions, however, higher portions of the slices of interested people would be preferable.

How interested are you in fashion?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Extremely interested	15	17.4	17.4	17.4
	Moderately interested	33	38.4	38.4	55.8
	Not at all interested	6	7.0	7.0	62.8
	Slightly interested	17	19.8	19.8	82.6
	Very interested	15	17.4	17.4	100.0
	Total	86	100.0	100.0	

Exhibit 37: Frequency table regarding the interest in fashion of the sample - Source: Author

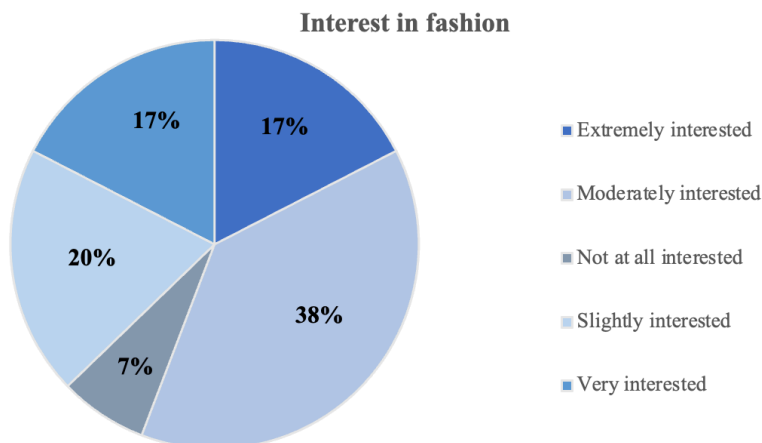


Exhibit 38: Pie chart representing the interest in fashion of the sample – Source: Author

The second question posed, regarded the frequency of purchase of fashion items. The results showed that 15% of the population buys more frequently than once a month, whereas 31% purchases once a month. Moreover, 29% of participants buy clothing once every three months, and 19% once every semester. Only 5% of the sample purchase once a year and 1% less frequently than that.

This represents that the population interviewed regularly enters in contact with fashion brands and their products, so they are able to make up their minds about qualities or variables that affect their success.

How often do you buy clothing items?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Less than once a year	1	1.2	1.2	1.2
	More than once a month	13	15.1	15.1	16.3
	Once a month	27	31.4	31.4	47.7
	Once a year	4	4.7	4.7	52.3
	Once every semester	16	18.6	18.6	70.9
	Once every three months	25	29.1	29.1	100.0
	Total	86	100.0	100.0	

Exhibit 39: Frequency table regarding the frequency of purchase of the sample - Source: Author

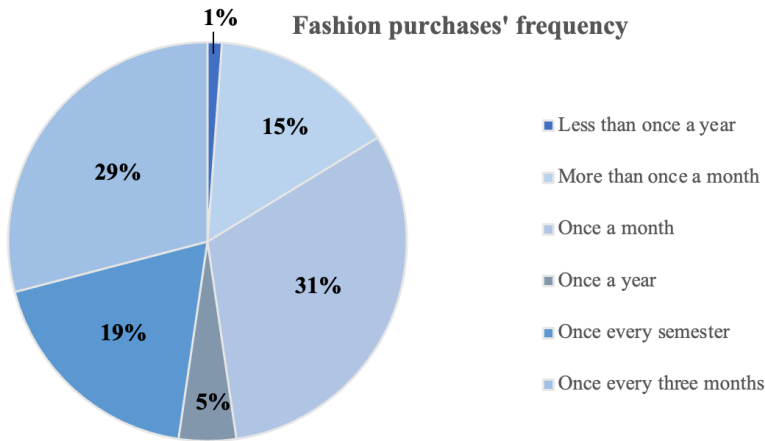


Exhibit 40: Pie chart representing the frequency of purchase of the sample – Source: Author

To further explore the purchasing attitudes of the respondents, a question about the channels where they usually buy was posed. It showed that the majority of the population, amounting to 44%, utilizes a mixture of both online and in-store shopping. However, 40% of the interviewees still go to physical stores, notwithstanding the development of e-commerce and other channels in the latest years. In fact, a small portion of people buy fashion items from online marketplaces like Zalando, Amazon, Farfetch, and so on. Only 5% of people purchase directly from the brands' websites.

Where do you usually buy fashion items?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	A mix of online and physical shopping	38	44.2	44.2	44.2
	Brand website	4	4.7	4.7	48.8
	Online marketplaces (Zalando, Amazon, Farfetch...)	10	11.6	11.6	60.5
	Physical stores	34	39.5	39.5	100.0
	Total	86	100.0	100.0	

Exhibit 41: Frequency table regarding the purchasing channels of the sample - Source: Author

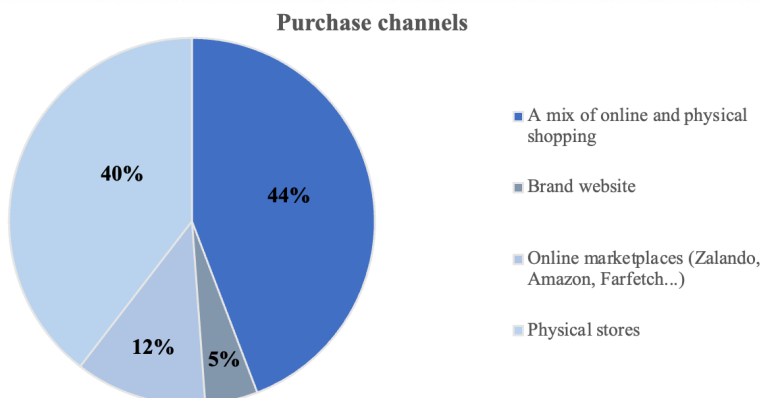


Exhibit 42: Pie chart representing the purchasing channels of the sample – Source: Author

Moreover, since the majority of study cases analysed in the previous chapter are from fashion luxury brands, knowledge and attitude towards this niche of the market has been investigated. From the responses, it can be gathered that the majority of the sample (47%) has bought a fashion luxury item at least once.

Moreover, 2% of the interviewees acquire a new fashion luxury product once every three months, 10% once every semester, and 21% once a year.

Have you ever bought a fashion luxury item?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	No	39	45.3	45.3	45.3
	Yes	47	54.7	54.7	100.0
	Total	86	100.0	100.0	

Exhibit 43: Frequency table regarding the purchasing of fashion luxury items of the sample - Source: Author

How often do you buy fashion luxury items?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Less than once a year	57	66.3	66.3	66.3
	Once a year	18	20.9	20.9	87.2
	Once every semester	9	10.5	10.5	97.7
	Once every three months	2	2.3	2.3	100.0
	Total	86	100.0	100.0	

Exhibit 44: Frequency table regarding the frequency of fashion luxury items purchases of the sample - Source: Author

Fashion luxury purchases' frequency

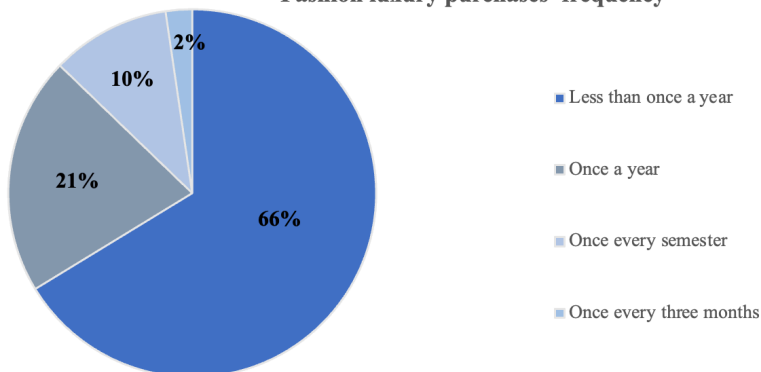


Exhibit 45: Pie chart representing the frequency of fashion luxury items purchases of the sample - Source: Author

In the final part of this second section, the habits regarding the gathering of information about fashion brands and new product launches was inspected. In particular, participants were asked if they follow the brands on social media and it turned out that 48% of the population replied positively. However, it should be stressed that 19% of the sample don't follow the brands' accounts, but they sometimes search for them in order to see new posts and novelties. At the same time, 10% of people don't follow the accounts but get recommendations in the "For You" section on social media about their posts, showing that they are still on target for this content. Only 23% responded that they don't either follow fashion accounts, search for them or get recommendations on social media.

Do you follow any fashion brand on its social media?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	I don't follow the accounts, but I get recommendations of fashion brands' posts	9	10.5	10.5	10.5
	I don't follow the accounts, but sometimes I search for brand's profiles	16	18.6	18.6	29.1
	No	20	23.3	23.3	52.3
	Yes	41	47.7	47.7	100.0
	Total	86	100.0	100.0	

Exhibit 46: Frequency table regarding social media habits of the sample - Source: Author

Gather information about new products

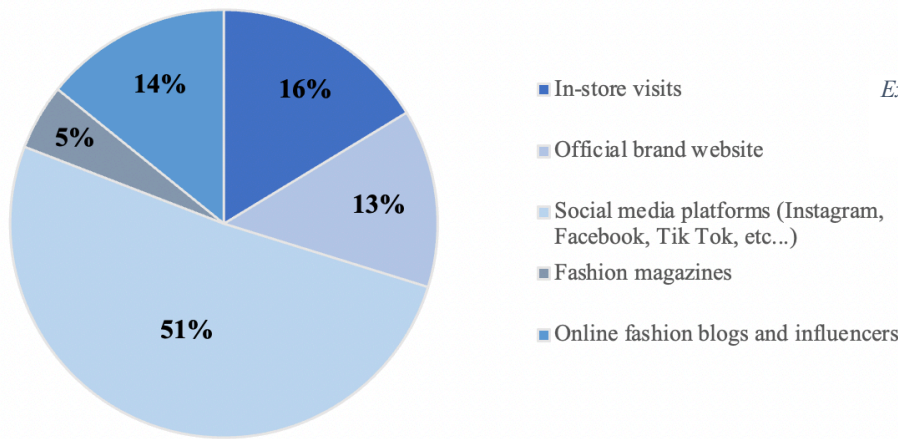


Exhibit 47: Pie chart representing social media habits of the sample – Source: Author

Finally, interviewees were inquired about the platforms or methods through which they usually discover about new fashion product launches. This could be useful also for companies, in order to understand which channels could have a higher potential of reaching customer and would then require more attention or inclusion in the planning.

As expected, 51% of the responses picked social media platforms as the main touchpoint. However, 16% of the population still gathers information from in-store visits and 14% from online fashion blogs or influencers' articles. 13% of respondents still visit the brand's website to discover about new products and only 5% still read about it in magazines. This last portion is probably composed of very passionate people about fashion.

Brands on social media

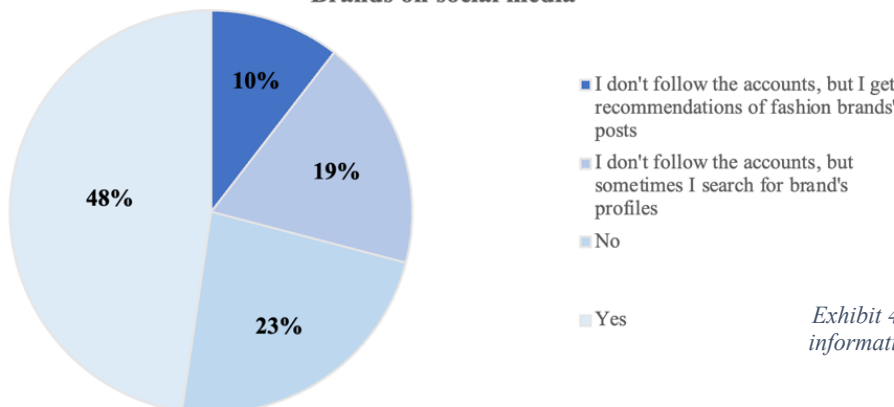


Exhibit 48: Pie chart representing gathering of information about new products of the sample – Source: Author

3.2.2. Analysis conducted

As previously mentioned, the last two portions of the survey, presented a study of the factors that could potentially have an impact on the success of the product launch.

To respond to the first research question, the interviewees were asked to evaluate how much they thought an investment in the practices or characteristics of the product launch would have affected the success of the product. A simple quantitative evaluation of the results was realized, taking into consideration measures of central tendency, and dispersion. The aim in this case is to see which is the general opinion of potential customers.

The second part of the study, instead, posed the interviewees in front of two different scenarios considering different variables or tactics that brands could implement during the launch procedure of a product. They were asked to evaluate the likability of purchasing the product in the cases in which this factor was present and in the case in which it was not.

The best method to understand the results is to conduct a *t-test analysis with a paired sample*. In this case, the subject of the interview is the same and it is posed under two different *treatments*, which correspond to the scenarios, at different times, so a *within-subject* design of the test is considered. In particular, as previously mentioned in the hypothesis portion of the research, the aim is to verify if the presence of the treatment affects positively the purchase intention of the interviewees and in particular if:

$$H_0: \mu_{factor} \leq \mu_{NOfactor}$$

$$H_1: \mu_{factor} > \mu_{NOfactor}$$

In order to do so, the means of the two paired groups need to be investigated and check if they are equal or not, taking into consideration a significance level of 5%.

3.2.3. Results

The first hypothesis that needs to be verified is that all the factors that have been proven to have an impact on the product launch success in the previous literature, are also applicable to the fashion industry. For this purpose, through the survey the interviewees were told to assume that the company would invest the highest amount possible in order to master these practices and they were asked to express on a scale from 0 to 5, how much the employment in the launch of a product would have affected its success.

The best solution to evaluate these data, would have been through a linear regression that would have allowed to evaluate the significance of the several variables to prove if there really was an impact on the success

variable. However, due to the lack of data regarding the investments level of the companies or the number of sales or profit of the products made this type of analysis.

A quantitative study has been, instead, conducted evaluating the different responses of the interviewees and the measures of distribution and dispersion of the several variables defined.

1. Product benefits and innovativeness

The first variable concerns the actual product characteristics and their level of innovativeness. In fact, according to the literature it is crucial that the product presents unique characteristics with respect to the competitors and can satisfy different customers' needs in order to be successful. (Rijsdijk et al., 2011)

The present study demonstrates that this specific variable, according to the majority of the interviewees (49%), affects the success of the product launch in the fashion industry. The Exhibit below also shows that only 1% of the population of the survey does not believe that this factor has an influence on the success. On the other hand, 16% believe that it extremely affects and 20% that it somehow affects the success of the launch. Lastly, 14% of them expressed that the variable may have an effect of the success of the products.

This result confirms the hypothesis that had been previously posed and, hence, fashion brands should focus and invest in their products' benefits, studying their portfolio history and those of competitors, and ensure to always bring innovation to the market.

Product benefits and innovativeness

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 1	1	1.2	1.2	1.2
2	12	14.0	14.0	15.1
3	17	19.8	19.8	34.9
4	42	48.8	48.8	83.7
5	14	16.3	16.3	100.0
Total	86	100.0	100.0	

Exhibit 49: Frequency table of the responses for the variable "product benefits and innovativeness" - Source: Author

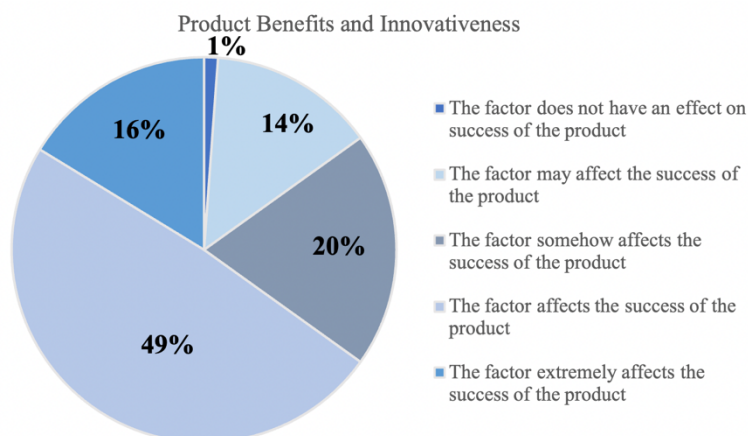


Exhibit 50: Pie chart representing the responses for the variable "product benefits and innovativeness" – Source: Author

2. Pricing Strategy

This second variable analyzed is one of the main factors contributing to the final customer decision of purchase. In particular, it was pointed out to interviewees that the best strategy, in this case, does not necessarily imply the lowest price possible, but one that is coherent with the product offering and the brand's positioning. (Calantone & Benedetto, 2007; Lee et al., 2011)

As can be seen from the Exhibit below, the opinions regarding this other factor are more fragmented. However, the majority of the participants still believe that the success of the launch is affected by this strategy. In fact, 27% consider that the factor extremely affects the success of the product, 29% think that there is an effect and 30% evaluate that the variable somehow affects the launch success. Only 5% of the respondents expressed that in their opinion the factor does not impact the success of the launch.

Also in this case the results of the research confirm the suppositions previously made. Consequently, it is crucial for companies in the fashion industry to focus on the pricing strategy and making sure that it is coherent with their offering.

Pricing strategy

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	4	4.7	4.7	4.7
	2	8	9.3	9.3	14.0
	3	26	30.2	30.2	44.2
	4	25	29.1	29.1	73.3
	5	23	26.7	26.7	100.0
	Total	86	100.0	100.0	

Exhibit 51: Frequency table of the responses for the variable "pricing strategy" - Source: Author

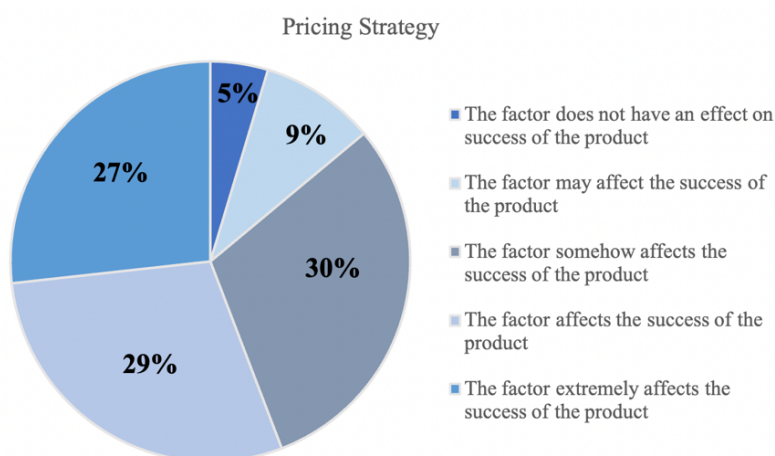


Exhibit 52: Pie chart representing the responses for the variable "pricing strategy" – Source: Author

3. Launch Timing

The next factor inquired indicates the time during which the product is launched on the market. It is well known that in the case of fashion brands, the timing of collection launches is established by the “**Camera Nazionale della Moda Italiana**” and the “**Fédération de la Haute Couture ed de la Mode**”. However, a new tendency to release capsule collections in correspondence with special events or festivities of a specific country has emerged lately. This variable may be impactful also in terms of forerunning competitors or being on time with trends.

The present dissertation and its results (Exhibits 53 and 54) demonstrate that there is not a precise opinion regarding this variable. In fact, the majority of the responses concentrate on the middle tier and 28% of the respondents believe that launch timing somehow affects the success of the launch. However, there is still a portion of the participants amounting to 24% that believe that there is an effect on the success of the product and 12% think that it is extremely impacted. This variable is the one with the highest number of responses (15%) concerning the lack of effect on the success due to the employment of the variable.

It is possible to state that, once again, the hypothesis has been confirmed by the results of the study. However, further investigation may be useful, involving also experts of the industry, to have a more defined verdict.

Launch timing

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 0	3	3.5	3.5	3.5
1	13	15.1	15.1	18.6
2	15	17.4	17.4	36.0
3	24	27.9	27.9	64.0
4	21	24.4	24.4	88.4
5	10	11.6	11.6	100.0
Total	86	100.0	100.0	

Exhibit 53: Frequency table of the responses for the variable “launch timing” - Source: Author

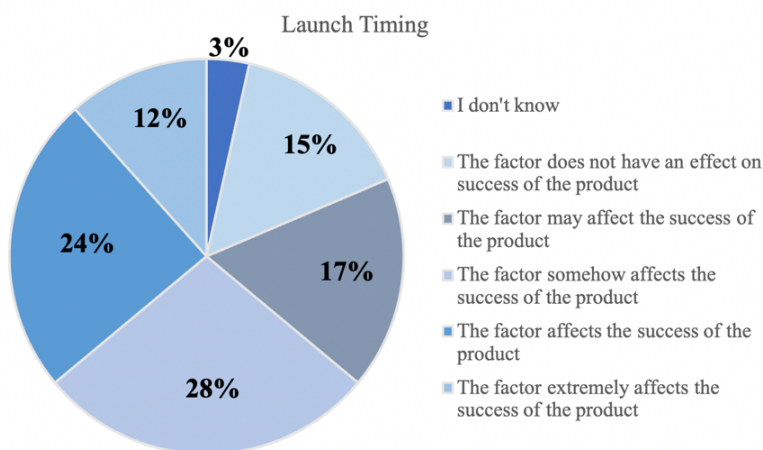


Exhibit 54: Pie chart representing the responses for the variable “launch timing” – Source: Author

4. Salesmen's skills

The literature from Salmen found evidence that also the personality of salesmen influences the final decision of customers as well as their knowledge, and skills in physical stores. (Salmen, 2021) This is a crucial part of the customer's experience at the selling points of the brand, and it was considered important to explore it.

The results of the analysis demonstrated that the two bigger slices of the graph in the Exhibit below refer to the beliefs that the factor somehow affects (31%) and affects (28%) the success of the launch.

16% of the population also believes that this variable has an extreme impact on success. However, there is quite an important segment of the interviewees (13%) that think that salesmen's skills do not influence the success of the product.

In conclusion, the present results still demonstrate that the initial hypothesis can be confirmed and that the salesmen's contribution to the success of a product launch is noticeable.

It is important, then, for companies to invest in their training and to ensure a positive environment in which they can work, both in terms of personal connections and remuneration systems.

Skills of salesmen

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	11	12.8	12.8	12.8
	2	10	11.6	11.6	24.4
	3	27	31.4	31.4	55.8
	4	24	27.9	27.9	83.7
	5	14	16.3	16.3	100.0
	Total	86	100.0	100.0	

Exhibit 55: Frequency table of the responses for the variable "salesmen's skills" - Source: Author

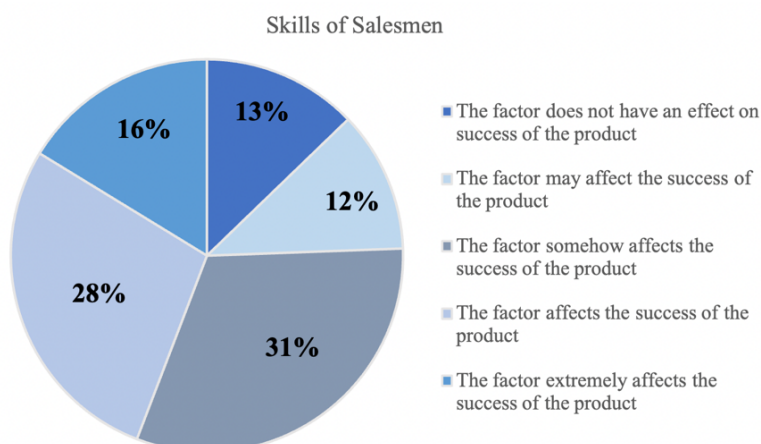


Exhibit 56: Pie chart representing the responses for the variable "salesmen's skills" – Source: Author

5. Placement in stores

The following feature of the launch enquired is the placement of the new product in stores, both physical and online. For example, sometimes a brand can establish a dedicated shelf for the new product, or a banner may immediately appear on the landing page. This surely influences the visibility of the new product to customers and has proven to be effective in contributing to its success (Salmen, 2021).

The results related to this factor in Exhibits 57 and 58, show that 31% of the population affirms that this variable affects the success of the launch and 33% that it somehow does. 7% presume that the product’s success is extremely affected by this factor, as well, and only 9% of the population believe that it is not impacted at all.

One more time, it is evident that the majority of the population is in favor of the hypothesis of this dissertation and that the placement in stores definitely has an impact on the success of the product launch also in the fashion industry. Hence, this variable should be considered and well-thought by companies when drafting their retail strategy.

Placement in stores

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 0	1	1.2	1.2	1.2
1	8	9.3	9.3	10.5
2	16	18.6	18.6	29.1
3	28	32.6	32.6	61.6
4	27	31.4	31.4	93.0
5	6	7.0	7.0	100.0
Total	86	100.0	100.0	

Exhibit 57: Frequency table of the responses for the variable “placement in store” - Source: Author

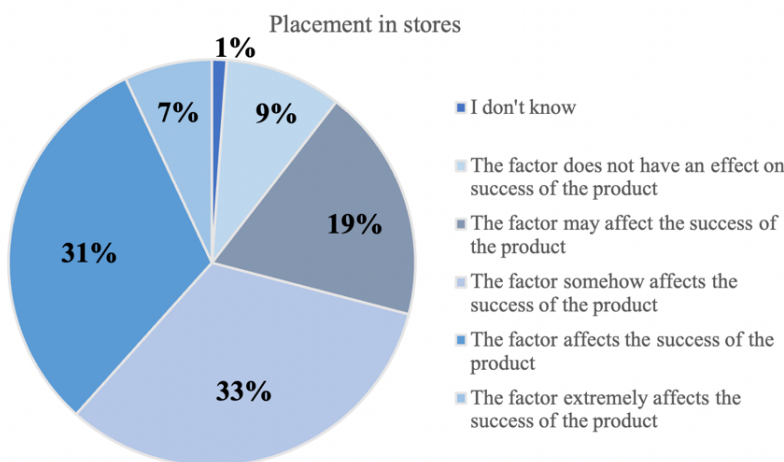


Exhibit 58: Pie chart representing the responses for the variable “placement in store” – Source: Author

6. Communication on the brand's channel

The marketing plan is a part of the launch process of a product and it involves the brand's tone of voice or the strategies employed to announce new products or initiatives on different channels like social media, websites, billboards, and in stores. The communication and establishment of a relationship with customers are fundamental for brands and require a huge amount of capital.

The present variable resulted to be the one with the highest number of people thinking that it extremely affects the launch of a product, amounting to almost half of the population (49%). 28% of the interviewees also think that this part of the strategy affects the success of a new product, and only 2% assume that it does not have an impact.

Also in this final case, the precedent hypothesis can be confirmed and state that the communication on the brand's channel has a very impactful influence on the success of the launch. As a consequence, fashion brands should find innovative ways of communicating their values and presenting their product to their audiences, and they should commit to engaging their customer base on social media.

Communication on the brand's channels

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 1	2	2.3	2.3	2.3
2	7	8.1	8.1	10.5
3	11	12.8	12.8	23.3
4	24	27.9	27.9	51.2
5	42	48.8	48.8	100.0
Total	86	100.0	100.0	

Exhibit 60: Pie chart representing the responses for the variable "communication on the brand's channels" – Source: Author

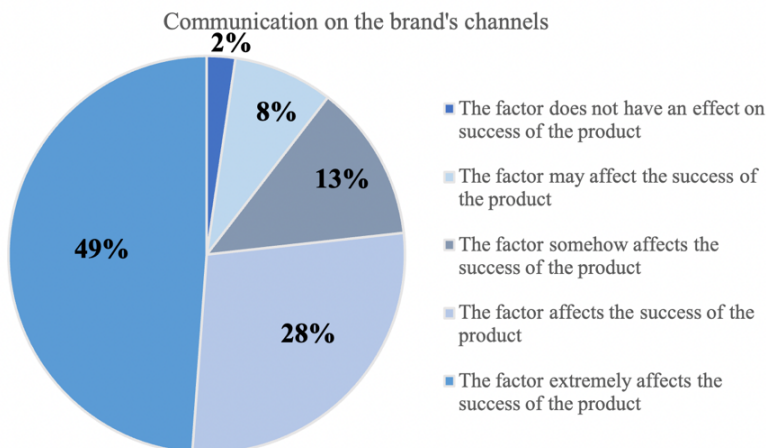


Exhibit 59: Frequency table of the responses for the variable "communication on the brand's channels" - Source: Author

Finally, in order to get an overview of the variables analyzed and their impact the descriptive statistics were summarized through the SPSS software.

As already mentioned, *measures of central tendency*, and *dispersion* are useful to further investigate the data gathered. Before dissecting the results it is important to recall that the range of the Likert Scale utilized as measurement for the survey's responses was from 0 to 5.

To understand the representative values of the distribution mean, median, and mode for each factor are taken into account. Concerning the first variable shown in Exhibit 61, the mean amounts to 3.65 and the median and mode to 4. These three measures are considered to be quite similar and consequently, there is a lower dispersion with respect to the responses' values for this factor. The same can be stated also for all the other variables. The only one with a slightly higher spreading is the "communication on the brand's channels" variable, since its mean amounts to 4.13, the median is 4, but the mode in this case is 5.

For what concerns the measure of dispersion, the standard deviation and variance are computed for each variable to understand how similar the values are to the central values. Both these values are quite low for all the variables examined, which was to be expected given the narrow range implied in the responses. This means that the scores' deviation from the mean is small.

Finally, by looking at the different means of the variables, it is possible to assume that the ones presenting the higher values are also the ones having a bigger effect on the success of the product launch. Hence, in this case, the communication strategy, the products benefits and their innovativeness and the pricing strategy can be defined as the more impactful.

		Statistics					
		Product benefits and innovativeness	Pricing strategy	Launch timing	Skills of salesmen	Placement in stores	Communication on the brand's channels
N	Valid	86	86	86	86	86	86
	Missing	0	0	0	0	0	0
Mean		3.65	3.64	2.90	3.23	3.05	4.13
Median		4.00	4.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	4.00
Mode		4	3	3	3	3	5
Std. Deviation		.955	1.116	1.346	1.234	1.126	1.072
Variance		.912	1.245	1.812	1.522	1.268	1.148

Exhibit 61: Table summarizing all the descriptive variables for the factors analyzed previously – Source: Author

Thanks to the survey's results all the variables gathered from the previous literature were demonstrated to have an impact on the success of the launch of products also in the fashion industry.

For the second part of the study, a *t-test with a paired sample* was computed considering eleven different variables or scenarios.

1. Famous people use the product in their daily life

Just like it happened with the Bottega Veneta Cassette Bag, sometimes when celebrities are seen wearing a specific product its research and sales skyrocket.

This can be proven also by the results of the study shown in Exhibit 62. Indeed, the p-value of the t-test for this variable is lower than 1%, indicating that it is possible to reject H_0 and instead accept H_1 .

So it is feasible to state that when celebrities wear fashion products, the likability of purchase of customers is increased.

This can be useful to know for brands since they could involve celebrities in the launch planning procedure both on social media and at events. In any case, this is somehow already happening in the fashion industry since many celebrities are ambassadors or promoters of the most luxurious brands.

	Paired Samples Test									
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Paired Differences			t	df	Significance		
			Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				One-Sided p	Two-Sided p	
			Lower	Upper						
The product IS used by famous people in their daily life - The product IS NOT used by famous people in their daily life	.558	1.539	.166	.228	.888	3.364	85	<.001	.001	

Exhibit 62: T-test analysis results for the scenario “famous people use the product in their daily life” – Source: Author

2. The product has gone viral on social media

The peculiar case of the JW Anderson cardigan has shown how much impact social media and their communities can have on the awareness and success of a product.

In this case, as well, the present research can empirically prove that this impact can be generalized. Once again, the p-value is shown to be lower than 1% in the Exhibit below, which means that also in this case H_0 is rejected and H_1 is accepted. As a consequence, when content about a product has gone viral on social media, the customers’ likability of purchasing it is increased.

Unfortunately, this event is not totally in control of fashion companies, but they can focus on creating content that has the prerequisites to become viral on social media. For example, they can study what their community usually appreciates and replicate that type of post, or they can create engaging content like challenges or trends that the audience can duplicate and share, which will increase the posts’ visibility and engagement rates.

	Paired Samples Test								
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Paired Differences			t	df	Significance	
			Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				One-Sided p	Two-Sided p
			Lower	Upper					
The product has gone viral on social media – The product has NOT gone viral on social media	.767	1.706	.184	.402	1.133	4.172	85	<.001	<.001

Exhibit 63: T-test analysis results for the scenario “the product has gone viral on social media” – Source: Author

3. The product is from a collaboration between two famous brands

Just like what happened with the collaboration between Jordan and Dior or the one between Fendi and Versace, it is evident that they are able to create a very high level of hype.

However, from what can be gathered from this research, it seems that this is not an essential characteristic for the product to be successful at its launch. In fact, the p-value in this case is higher than 5% and consequently, H_0 cannot be rejected.

This means that products from a collaboration between two famous brands do not increase the purchase intention of customers. This result is also probably due to the fact that this approach is usually realized by higher tier brands.

Nevertheless, the case study analysis has shown that collaborations are a very effective way to increase the awareness and media exposure of the brand.

	Paired Samples Test								
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Paired Differences			t	df	Significance	
			Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				One-Sided p	Two-Sided p
			Lower	Upper					
The product is from a collaboration between two famous fashion brands (e.g. Jordan x Dior) – The product is NOT from a collaboration between two famous fashion brands (e.g. Jordan x Dior)	.070	1.651	.178	-.284	.424	.392	85	.348	.696

Exhibit 64: T-test analysis results for the scenario “the product is from a collaboration between two famous brands” – Source: Author

4. Influencers sponsor the product on their social media

In recent years, one of the marketing initiatives most employed by brands has been the promotion on social media through influencers. They suggest styling options for the fashion pieces, they give their own reviews and opinions and people are trusting them more and more.

This is confirmed in this study, since as can be seen in Exhibit 65, the p-value for this variable is lower than 1%. For this reason, H_0 is rejected and H_1 is accepted.

Hence, it can be stated that the promotion of products from influencers during the launching phase has a positive effect on the customers' likability of purchase.

	Paired Samples Test									
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Paired Differences			t	df	Significance		
			Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				One-Sided p	Two-Sided p	
				Lower	Upper					
Influencers sponsor the new product on social media – Influencers DO NOT sponsor the new product on social media	.767	1.956	.211	.348	1.187	3.638	85	<.001	<.001	

Exhibit 65: T-test analysis results for the scenario “influencers sponsor the new product on social media” – Source: Author

5. The product commits to sustainable standards and initiatives

Sustainability has been one of the growing trends in both 2022 and 2023 and the fashion audiences are becoming more and more demanding for what concerns sustainable standards.

Fashion brands are, in fact, releasing more collections based on new eco-friendly materials or favoring vintage solutions.

The present analysis confirms that products committing to sustainable standards and initiatives have a higher level of purchase probability when launched. Indeed, in this case, likewise, presents a p-value lower than 1%, so it is possible to reject H_0 and accept H_1 .

This result may also be linked to the fact that the majority of the population is between 18 and 25 years old, which are the generations that are giving more value to this product characteristic.

	Paired Samples Test									
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Paired Differences			t	df	Significance		
			Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				One-Sided p	Two-Sided p	
				Lower	Upper					
The product commits to sustainable standards and initiatives – The product DO NOT commit to sustainable standards and initiatives	2.035	1.537	.166	1.705	2.364	12.275	85	<.001	<.001	

Exhibit 66: T-test analysis results for the scenario “the product commits to sustainable standards” – Source: Author

6. A short documentary on how the product was conceived is presented

This new storytelling practice has been increasingly adopted by fashion brands over the latest years, probably in connection with the higher customer awareness developed regarding sustainability initiatives. Brands are producing more content on behind-the-scenes processes and the realization of the products, which are published on their social media or their websites.

This new tactic of engagement seems to be quite triumphant, and as a matter of fact, this study shows that the intention of purchasing a new product increases when a brand releases this short documentary in combination with its launch.

Once again, the p-value of the variable inquired is lower than 1%, and as a result H_0 is rejected and H_1 accepted, confirming the significance of the documentary employment.

	Paired Samples Test									
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Paired Differences			t	df	Significance		
			Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				One-Sided p	Two-Sided p	
			Lower	Upper						
A short documentary on how the product was conceived is released – A short documentary on how the product was conceived is NOT released	1.000	1.381	.149	.704	1.296	6.717	85	<.001	<.001	

Exhibit 67: T-test analysis results for the scenario “a short documentary on how the product was conceived is released” – Source: Author

7. The brand's creative director has a strong personality and image

Brands’ creative directors are a fundamental figure for product development, and nowadays they are considered in effect one of the brand’s codes. They are very important both for the identification and style of the brands, but also for their communication.

One of the most remarkable examples is Donatella Versace, who is always present at events and sometimes is also the face of communication campaigns.

This study wants to investigate this variable and by conducting a t-test the p-value results lower than 1%, showing that also in this case H_0 can be rejected and H_1 accepted.

As a consequence, the personality of the creative director and its involvement in the launching campaigns positively affect the purchase intention of customers. This is probably linked to an easier recognition of the products’ brand and a higher level of visibility given by the creative directors’ activities on social media or at public events and their relationships with celebrities.

	Paired Samples Test									
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Paired Differences			t	df	Significance		
			Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				One-Sided p	Two-Sided p	
			Lower	Upper						
The brand's creative director has a strong personality and image (e. g. Donatella Versace) – The brand's creative director has NOT a strong personality and image (e. g. Donatella Versace)	1.093	1.712	.185	.726	1.460	5.919	85	<.001	<.001	

Exhibit 68: T-test analysis results for the scenario “the brand’s creative director has a strong personality” – Source: Author

8. Celebrities recently wore a brand's product at important events

It is commonly known that big events like the Met Gala, the Grammys or Sanremo, in the case of Italy, are followed by fashion connoisseurs who will comment on the celebrities' looks.

This is another great showcase for brands and their products, especially considering fashion luxury. Online research about the brands and their latest collections usually escalates right after these events, so there is also a higher probability that people are influenced to buy the latest product from that specific brand.

This hypothesis is one more time confirmed by the following investigation.

As shown in the Exhibit below, this variable presents a p-value smaller than 1%, indicating that celebrities wearing a brand's product at important events has a positive influence on the likability of purchasing a new product. As previously mentioned, this is probably linked to an increase in awareness and interest around that same brand subsequent to the occasion.

	Paired Samples Test									
	Paired Differences					t	df	Significance		
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				One-Sided p	Two-Sided p	
			Lower	Upper						
Celebrities recently wore a brand's product at important events (Met Gala, Grammys...) – Celebrities DID NOT recently wore a brand's product at important events (Met Gala, Grammys...)	.663	1.154	.124	.415	.910	5.326	85	<.001	<.001	

Exhibit 69: T-test analysis results for the scenario “celebrities recently wore a brand’s product at important events” – Source: Author

9. The product is placed in TV series or movies

Talking about showcase occasions for brands, movies have always been known for brands' placements of all kinds. However, in recent years, the increase in popularity of TV series has been a welcome opportunity for fashion brands. Many of them have also established a real trend, like the Euphoria college style or the comeback of vintage corsets similar to the Bridgerton ones.

Yet again, this strategy was inspected in the study and the p-value resulted to be lower than 1%, rejecting H_0 . Finally, the placement of products in TV series and movies has a positive influence on the success of new products.

	Paired Samples Test									
	Paired Differences					t	df	Significance		
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				One-Sided p	Two-Sided p	
			Lower	Upper						
The product is placed in tv series or movies – The product is NOT placed in tv series or movies	1.198	1.379	.149	.902	1.493	8.054	85	<.001	<.001	

Exhibit 70: T-test analysis results for the scenario “the product is placed in TV series or movies” – Source: Author

10. The brand has a strong storytelling on social media

Communication on social media is one of the most straightforward ways that brands have to reach their audience. At the same time, these platforms are flooded with content and different profiles, so brands need to find a way to distinguish their storytelling. A noteworthy case is the Jacquemus account, which found the perfect balance between entertaining and aesthetic content about the brand and its products and an engaging storytelling about the founder’s personal life.

Once again, the research investigated on this strategy and discovered that having a strong narrative on social media is very impactful for the success of product launches.

Also in this case the p-value is lower than 1% and H_1 can be accepted.

	Paired Samples Test									
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Paired Differences			t	df	Significance		
			Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				One-Sided p	Two-Sided p	
				Lower	Upper					
The brand has a strong storytelling on social media (e.g. Jacquemus) – The brand has NOT a strong storytelling on social media (e.g. Jacquemus)	1.349	1.461	.158	1.036	1.662	8.559	85	<.001	<.001	

Exhibit 71: T-test analysis results for the scenario “the brand has a strong storytelling on social media” – Source: Author

11. The brand used AI to generate impactful images and videos posted on social media.

The last variable questioned was the use of AI in generating content to post on brands’ social media. This is one of the latest trends regarding technological advancements in the fashion industry.

However, in this case, the analysis conducted did not present a p-value smaller than 1% meaning that H_0 cannot be rejected. This means that the usage of AI on social media does not have an impact on the likability of purchasing new products launched.

	Paired Samples Test									
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Paired Differences			t	df	Significance		
			Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				One-Sided p	Two-Sided p	
				Lower	Upper					
The brand used AI to generate impactful images and videos posted on social media – The brand DID NOT use AI to generate impactful images and videos posted on social media	.174	2.110	.228	-.278	.627	.767	85	.223	.445	

Exhibit 72: T-test analysis results for the scenario “the brand used AI to generate impactful images and videos poster on social media” – Source: Author

To get a final overview of the variables inquired and compare them, the descriptive statistics of the ones that resulted to be significant in the impact of a product launch success were calculated through the software. In particular, by looking at the means of all the different variables, it can be stated that the practices that have the higher impact on the success of the product launch are the fact that the *product commits to sustainable standards*, which presents a mean of 3.74, and *a strong storytelling on social media*, that has a mean of 3.43. These two variables are also the only ones presenting a median value equal to 4.

		Statistics								
		The product is used by famous people in their daily life	The product has gone viral on social media	Influencers sponsor the new product on social media	The product commits to sustainable standards and initiatives	A short documentary on how the product was conceived is released	The brand's creative director has a strong personality and image	Celebrities recently wore a brand's product at important events	The product is placed in tv series or movies	The brand has a strong storytelling on social media
N	Valid	86	86	86	86	86	86	86	86	86
	Missing	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Mean		2.85	3.23	3.03	3.74	3.10	3.13	2.72	3.23	3.43
Median		3.00	3.00	3.00	4.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	4.00
Mode		3	4	3	4	3	3	4	3	4
Std. Deviation		1.402	1.386	1.410	.972	1.179	1.437	1.386	1.326	1.377
Variance		1.965	1.922	1.987	.946	1.389	2.066	1.921	1.757	1.895

Exhibit 73: Table summarizing all the descriptive variables for the factors analyzed previously – Source: Author

Discussion and Conclusion

The study conducted aims to establish a collection of factors and strategies that fashion brands can look at when planning their new product launch. As already mentioned, this process is very time- and capital-intensive, and its success is critical for companies that have invested that much in the development and strategy creation.

The previous literature also reflected on the benefit of having an overview of all questions around new product launches that can be used like a manual, applicable for all kinds of goods, markets, businesses, and companies. (Salmen, 2021)

The launch plan should take into consideration several variables such as the company's objectives and identity or similar products launched by competitors and it is very hard to establish a universal strategy, but some features resulted to have a bigger effect on the success or failure of the product.

Moreover, the product launch strategy in the fashion industry results in being even more complex since it coincides with the development of collections and entails the engagement of several departments and industry-specific figures like the merchandiser or the creative director.

Several studies were carried out in the past in order to define the variables contributing to the success of product launches, but the literature disclosed a lack of evidence regarding the process in the clothing industry.

Thanks to the analysis carried out and the data gathered through the distribution of a survey, some conclusions were reached. The research questions posed at the beginning of the dissertation wanted to explore the applicability of success factors previously verified in the literature to the fashion field and scrutinize in a quantitative way the strategies or features previously detected through the case study investigation. Almost all the hypotheses formulated during the study were confirmed.

The study's results can be encapsulated in a manual that illustrates all the best practices that managers can employ to reduce failure rates and increase the success probabilities of a product launch in the fashion industry.

The best practices can be divided into five main categories:

1. Product

Previous literature and this study demonstrated that the *features* of the product and their *innovativeness* have an impact on the success of the product. In fact, it is important for companies to comprehend which are the customer needs to be satisfied and what their competitors are proposing to solve those issues. According to 65% of the population of the survey of this study, companies should invest in the product's features since they have an impact on the success of its launch.

One of the features that resulted to be impactful on the success of the product is the *commitment to sustainable standards*. Fashion brands are actually requested to invest more and more in eco-friendly materials or to

implement sustainable regulations. Additionally, new technologies can also allow the tracking of the production supply chain and disclose it to buyers.

Moreover, in order to present the new product to the audience during its launch brands are recommended to *produce a documentary* on the development of the idea and the samples. This creates a deeper level of participation in the launch for customers and, in fact, it results in being impactful in the success of the new product.

2. Retail

In addition to the selection of stores and the corresponding quantities in which to sell the new products, according to the results of the present dissertation, the success of a new launch is also impacted by the in-store customers' experience. This, in particular, involves the *relationship with salesmen* who should be well-trained and provide a pleasant encounter to the client. This may be enhanced by training programs, a defined manual of what they should know and tell about the brand and its product, and an adequate remuneration system provided by the company. Indeed, according to 44% of the interviewees, these clerks have the power to influence the final purchasing decision.

Another variable that requires particular attention and accurate planning concerning the in-store experience is the *placement of the new product in the store*. In fact, sometimes brands should evaluate a higher investment in order to create ad hoc shelves or exhibition places to expose the new launch. This is possible also for online channels, where banners displaying it may pop up during the navigation or a designated page with the description and some images may be created.

Another strategy that may be implemented by brands during the launch of the product is the creation of pop-up or pop-in stores. This is the case especially for luxurious brands, that sometimes open a specific store dedicated to the new product.

Seeing that these strategic decisions have an impact on the success of the launch according to 64% of the sample, companies should evaluate investing in them, both in terms of time and capital.

3. Launch strategy

Several decisions regarding the formulation of the strategy demonstrated to have an effect on its success in the present inquiry. In particular, the *timing of the launch* proved to be extremely important in the fashion industry. This is mainly related to the duration of trends that are becoming more and more fleeting and the ability to forerun competitors in terms of novelties. Moreover, it is commonly known that fashion brands take advantage of festivities and special events to release specific collections.

The other variable on which companies should focus in depth is the *pricing* of the new product. In fact, the majority of interviewees agreed that a figure that is coherent with the brands' offering and positioning

extremely affects the final success of the product. Hence, companies should invest their money to be able to execute extensive research on the competitors' prices, customers' expectations, and previous collections' prices in order to set the final price. This part of the strategy is very important also to position the brand in terms of exclusivity and accessibility.

4. Communication

The establishment of a relationship with customers is fundamental for brands of all kinds. Nowadays, communication has been more straightforward and thanks to social media it is easier for brands to involve them in the creation of products or disclose their campaigns. This activity is always backed up by a marketing plan that defines the tone of voice, the content to be published, the channels of communication, and so on. This process requires a lot of time, and it is usually one of the operations in which the highest amount of capital is invested, but this study demonstrated that it is all worth it since it is the variable that gathered the highest quantity of positive responses regarding its effect on the success of a product launch.

A common practice employed by fashion brands is that of *involving celebrities and influencers* in their communication, both as ambassadors and through endorsement. This allows a quicker and wider spread of the knowledge of the product, and it sometimes helps to attract VIP supporters. They incarnate the values and positioning of the fashion houses as well. This has shown to be a successful strategy for the launch of new products in the fashion industry, especially when these collaborations result also on social media.

Another great showcase occasion for fashion brands involving celebrities is *special events* like the Grammy Awards, the Met Gala, or the Sanremo Festival. Also in this case, companies take advantage of a wide audience that will follow the event and their favorite superstars to increase product or brand awareness.

However, behind every successful social media strategy there is a *strong storytelling* both visually and content-wise. Because of the rise of this new channel of communication, customers are also assailed with lots of different profiles and content of all kinds. Consequently, fashion brands should find a way to distinguish their posts from those of competitors. This dissertation has shown that this is also a key to the success of a product launch, hence companies should invest in order to create a team with the right expertise and skills to manage their social media profiles.

Along the lines of this last requirement, audiences on social media are extremely influenced by *content going viral*, which has been confirmed to be impactful on the success of a launch through this study. Although companies don't have control over this happening, they can invest in order to create engaging content that will incentivize customers to share it. An example could be creating some challenges regarding clothing to style to which people can participate and share their own version.

Lastly, another opportunity that showed to be significant when impacting the success of a product is the *appearance in TV series and movies*. This may be considered an upstage of the previous magazine and

newspaper editorials and the fashion industry has benefited from its use for decades, but with the rising of on-demand platforms it is going to the next level and the audience is becoming gigantic. Some players are also starting to create a collection related to the TV series directly available from the streaming platform.

Once again, the aim of this method is to achieve prominent audience exposure, brand visibility, and brand awareness, but also increase consumer memory and recall, testing instant brand recognition and fostering brand loyalty. The investments required in order to implement it are very big, but according to the present study with the right timing, this practice has an impact on the success of a product launch.

5. Brand

A brand name is more than the label employed to differentiate among the manufacturers of a product, the brand is a living business asset itself. It is the first way of communication with customers thanks to the associations built over time. Delivering a distinctive brand identity and providing the consumer with distinctive tangible variables that he is able to identify and relate to, will provide growing brand awareness and enhance visibility. This will also help build an idea and a story in their minds that will help them distinguish the brand from its competitors and attribute different values and preferences.

One of the associations that has become more intrinsic to the brand's DNA is the one with the *creative director*. In fact, during recent years, their figure has drawn more attention from customers, and they started to participate also at events and communication campaigns. They probably facilitate once again the recognition of the brand and are now becoming a new type of celebrity, which can contribute to increasing the brand visibility. In fact, the present dissertation has demonstrated that a strong personality and image of the brand's creative direction is extremely impactful on the success of the product.

However, focusing on the survey responses and the analysis previously conducted, it is possible to detect that the variables that absolutely have the biggest impact on the success and on which companies should extremely focus are:

- The product's commitment to sustainable standards and initiatives
- A strong and distinguished storytelling on social media

It is evident, that these two variables reflect the increasing trends of the industry. According to the 2024 State of Fashion, in fact, 12 percent of fashion companies identify sustainability as their biggest challenge and opportunity in the year ahead, placing it at the top of the C-suite agenda. (McKinsey & Business of Fashion, 2024)

For what concerns brands' storytelling and content strategy on social media, in 2022 engagement rates have fallen by roughly 30%, especially on Instagram. This reflects the need to develop surprising and innovative campaigns that resonate with followers and reach new audiences, pushing boundaries when creating content.

“Actionable entertainment” is also recommended in order to hold customers’ attention and gather greater reach thanks to the platforms’ algorithms. (McKinsey & Business of Fashion, 2024)

All in all, the present dissertation may be very useful to fashion brands’ managers and their collaborators since it provides them with information that can be used to make decisions regarding which aspects of the strategy or of the product are better investing in. Moreover, this background knowledge may also be useful to reduce the timing of the plan drafting, since they establish topics that need to be touched upon and may constitute a starting point of discussion.

Limitations of the study and further study proposals

Unfortunately, there are several limitations to the present study, especially being the first one focusing on this particular industry. However, they are also the starting point to incentivize further study proposals to be conducted on the topic in the future.

First of all, it is necessary to point out that the purchasing decision expressed by the interviewees in the interview is a subjective opinion and it is sometimes also hard to quantify. In addition, the sample of the survey is quite small with respect to the actual customers of the fashion industry.

As a consequence, the author of this dissertation proposes to conduct further studies in the future with wider batches of respondents and it could be useful to distribute the survey to an already pre-selected audience that can demonstrate to be an actual customer of fashion or luxury brands. This would allow to discard a priori some possible respondents that are not in the focus of the research.

Moreover, as already mentioned in the sample description, this research focuses only on Italian customers but, since fashion trends and purchasing habits may vary significantly between different countries and cultures, the results gathered could not be applicable internationally. The past literature remarks that general success factors of the launch can be applied also in the international context, but it may be necessary to study the individual aspects of the target markets and industries such as cultural and technological backgrounds. (Salmen, 2021) Therefore, a study involving international participants could be essential to guarantee that it is possible to generalize these findings or understand if product launch success factors and best practices may differ from country to country.

Additionally, the fashion industry is commonly recognized as an evolving environment, in which innovations and technological advancements are frequently involved. Digitalization could also cause a cultural change in customers' behaviors, tastes, distribution channels, and communication practices. (Salmen, 2021)

Accordingly, this study should be repeated within some years time to check if the variables still have a significant impact or if new strategies or product features may be introduced in the best practices.

In addition, the fashion industry has seen the implementation of AI in recent years concerning virtual store experiences, patents certifying intellectual property, digitization of the supply chain process, and so on.

In the future, the study of this thesis could be repeated simulating different product launches, with the help of an AI system, with different planning tactics, features, or communication strategies. Customers will be then posed in front of these simulations and their opinions would be evaluated to measure different reactions and viewpoints with respect to the different simulated launches. This approach could be helpful in measuring the interviewees' purchasing intentions since these launches could come across as more material and credible. It would be then easier for them to quantify their likability of buying it, rather than with theoretical questions.

Another limitation of the study is the difficulty of defining the success measurement. According to previous studies as well, using only one indicator would "probably be an oversimplification for most firms". (Calantone & Benedetto, 2007) Most of the time the success variable definition and measurement are related to the final goal of a product launch, and it is hard to generalize them. In the present dissertation, it has been defined as a weighted average of several indicators such as market share, profitability, customer satisfaction, and brand awareness.

Consequently, another proposal for future studies would be to conduct and investigate the different customers' perceptions of the different declensions of success. For example, a specific study may be focused on the factors affecting the number of sales or the profit and another parallel analysis may evaluate how much those variables impact the increase of awareness of the product itself or the brand in general. This would allow to gather specific results depending on the chosen measurement and avoid insinuations.

Finally, as already mentioned in the data analysis portion, there were some impossibilities in conducting a linear regression due to the lack of specific information regarding the profits of the products launched or investments made by companies. This is a common problem in these types of studies due to brands' non-disclosure policies related to these data. It would be advisable to compute a similar study by taking actual performance figures.

Bibliography and Sitography

- Asana. (2023). 9 Steps to Craft a Go-to-Market Strategy. *Caeleigh MacNeil*. <https://asana.com/resources/go-to-market-gtm-strategy>
- BoF Education. (n.d.). *Capsule Collection | Fashion A-Z*. Retrieved January 12, 2024, from <https://www.businessoffashion.com/education/fashion-az/capsule-collections>
- British Vogue. (2022). Bottega Veneta's Padded Cassette Bag: The Bag That Unites Jacob Elordi And Rihanna | British Vogue. *Cary Alice*. <https://www.vogue.co.uk/fashion/article/bottega-veneta-cassette-bag-celebrities>
- Bruce, M., Daly, L., & Kahn, K. B. (2007). Delineating design factors that influence the global product launch process. *Journal of Product Innovation Management*, 24(5), 456–470. <https://doi.org/10.1111/J.1540-5885.2007.00263.X>
- Business of Fashion, & McKinsey & Company. (2020). *The State of Fashion 2020*.
- Calantone, R. J., & Benedetto, C. A. (2007). Clustering product launches by price and launch strategy. *Journal of Business & Industrial Marketing*, 22(1), 4–19. <https://doi.org/10.1108/08858620710722789>
- Christian Dior. (2020). *Air Dior Limited-edition Sneakers and Capsule Collection - YouTube*. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3Lf3bbYcNd4&t=4s>
- Cooper, R. G., Edgett, S. J., & Kleinschmidt, E. J. (2004). Benchmarking best NPD practices-II. *Research Technology Management*, 47(3), 50–59. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08956308.2004.11671630>
- Dazed. (2021). *How the sky-high heels of AW21 reflect the shitshow economy*. <https://www.dazeddigital.com/fashion/article/52762/1/platform-high-heels-versace-rick-owens-valentino-aw21-economic-crisis-covid-19>
- Di Benedetto, C. A. (1999). Identifying the key success factors in new product launch. *Journal of Product Innovation Management*, 16(6), 530–544. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0737-6782\(99\)00014-4](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0737-6782(99)00014-4)
- Elle. (2020). Meet The Instantly Timeless LV Pont 9, Louis Vuitton's Latest Handbag. *Hanan Haddad*. <https://elle.com.sg/2020/06/30/lv-pont-9-louis-vuitton-latest-handbag/>
- Fashion Gone Rogue. (2020, June). Louis Vuitton LV Pont 9 Handbag Campaign. *Joanna Elizabeth*. <https://www.fashiongonerogue.com/louis-vuitton-lv-pont-9-campaign/>
- FASHION Magazine. (2022, February 22). Euphoria Season Two: Lexi Howard's Underestimated Sense of Style. *Natalie Michie*. <https://fashionmagazine.com/style/euphoria-lexi-howard-style-analysis/>
- Galleries Lafayette Paris Haussmann. (2023, April). *JACQUEMUS TAKES OVER GALERIES LAFAYETTE*. <https://haussmann.gallerieslafayette.com/en/jacquemus-takes-over-galleries-lafayette-and-share-its-obsessions/>
- HighSnobiety. (n.d.). *Bottega Veneta Padded Cassette Campaign by Andy Warhol*. Retrieved September 2, 2023, from <https://www.highsnobiety.com/p/bottega-veneta-padded-cassette-bag-andy-warhol/>
- HighSnobiety. (2019). *A Look Back at Kim Jones' Dior Collaborations*. <https://www.highsnobiety.com/p/dior-collaborations-timeline/>
- HighSnobiety. (2022a). Miu Miu's Skirt Set Has a Chokehold on Fashion. *Alexandra Pauly*. <https://www.highsnobiety.com/p/miu-miu-mini-skirt-set-ss22/>
- HighSnobiety. (2022b). Nicole Kidman's Vanity Fair Cover Is the Ultimate Vibe Shift. *Alexandra Pauly*. <https://www.highsnobiety.com/p/nicole-kidman-cover-miu-miu-interview/>
- Interview Magazine. (2021, December 7). *Zendaya! Our Winter 2021 cover star*. https://www.instagram.com/p/CXMduhPu0KG/?img_index=1
- @jacquemus on Instagram. (2021, December 2). « *JACQUEMUS 24/24* ». https://www.instagram.com/p/CW_NyfsMhCR/
- @jacquemus on Instagram. (2022, February 15). "*JACQUEMUS 24/24*" Milan. <https://www.instagram.com/p/CaAUXIAMKjm/>
- @jacquemus on Instagram. (2023, February 27). *THE INVITATION! JACQUEMUS AT @gallerieslafayette*. <https://www.instagram.com/p/CpLFSuRMZ-6/>
- Jing Daily. (2022). *Why Dior Chose the Air Jordan 1*. <https://jingdaily.com/dior-air-jordan-1-luxury-streetwear-collaboration->

timeline/#:~:text=After%20months%20of%20anticipation%20and,was%20originally%20slated%20to%20release.

- JW Anderson. (2020). *Colour Block Patchwork Cardigan official tutorial*.
<https://www.jwanderson.com/it/cardigan-pattern>
- Kim, N., Shin, S., & Min, S. (2016). Strategic marketing capability: Mobilizing technological resources for new product advantage. *Journal of Business Research*, 69(12), 5644–5652.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/J.JBUSRES.2016.03.072>
- Kou, T. C., & Lee, B. C. Y. (2015). The influence of supply chain architecture on new product launch and performance in the high-tech industry. *Journal of Business and Industrial Marketing*, 30(5), 677–687.
<https://doi.org/10.1108/JBIM-08-2013-0176>
- Kuhn, J. (2007). Markteinführung neuer Produkte. *Markteinführung Neuer Produkte, 1st Edition*(Mannheim: DUV Deutscher Universitäts-Verlag.). <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-8350-9643-1>
- Ledwith, A., & O’Dwyer, M. (2008). Product launch, product advantage and market orientation in SMEs. *Journal of Small Business and Enterprise Development*, 15(1), 96–110.
<https://doi.org/10.1108/14626000810850865>
- Lee, Y., Lin, B. W., Wong, Y. Y., & Calantone, R. J. (2011). Understanding and managing international product launch: A comparison between developed and emerging markets. *Journal of Product Innovation Management*, 28(SUPPL. 1), 104–120. <https://doi.org/10.1111/J.1540-5885.2011.00864.X>
- Louis Vuitton. (2020). *LV Pont 9, la nuova borsa di Louis Vuitton*. <https://it.louisvuitton.com/ita-it/magazine/articoli/lvpont9-2020#>
- LVMH. (2020a). *2020 Annual Results*.
- LVMH. (2020b). *Q3 2020 REVENUE*.
- Lyst. (2021). *The Year in Fashion 2021*. <https://www.lyst.com/year-in-fashion-2021/>
- Lyst. (2022). *The Year in Fashion 2022*. <https://www.lyst.com/data/year-in-fashion-2022/>
- Lyst Website. (n.d.).
- McKinsey & Company. (2018). *Measuring the fashion world - Taking stock of product design, development, and delivery*.
- McKinsey, & Business of Fashion. (2024). *The State of Fashion 2024 report*.
[https://www.mckinsey.com/industries/retail/our-insights/state-of-fashion#/#](https://www.mckinsey.com/industries/retail/our-insights/state-of-fashion#/)
- Mira, N., & Fashion Network. (2020). *Bottega Veneta resurgent in 2019*.
<https://ww.fashionnetwork.com/news/Bottega-veneta-resurgent-in-2019,1186312.html#burberry>
- @miumiuset. (n.d.). *Miu Miu Set on Instagram*. Retrieved September 15, 2023, from
<https://www.instagram.com/miumiuset/>
- National Geographic. (2019). *Re-Nylon Project | What we carry: Telling the story behind the products*.
- NSS Magazine. (2020). *Jordan 1 x Dior: the end of luxury streetwear?*
<https://www.nssmag.com/en/fashion/22889/air-dior-end-luxury-streetwear>
- Prada. (2020). *Prada Re-Nylon 2020*. <https://www.prada.com/ww/en/pradasphere/special-projects/2020/prada-re-nylon.html>
- Prada Ecommerce. (n.d.). *Women’s Prada Re-Edition*. Retrieved September 9, 2023, from
<https://www.prada.com/it/en/womens/essentials/prada-re-edition/c/10103EU>
- Prada Group. (2019). *Prada presents the Re-Nylon project*. <https://www.pradagroup.com/en/news-media/news-section/re-nylon-project.html>
- Prada Group. (2022). *FY-2021 RESULTS PRESENTATION*.
- Prada Group. (2023a). *FY-2022 RESULTS PRESENTATION*.
- Prada Group. (2023b). *Prada Re-Nylon - Sustainability Report*.
<https://www.pradagroup.com/en/sustainability/environment-csr/prada-re-nylon.html#:~:text=The%20Prada%20Re%2DNylon%20project,fund%20the%20SEA%20BEYOND%20project.>
- Prada RE-NYLON | What We Carry (2019). <https://www.pradagroup.com/en/perspectives/stories/sezione-progetti-speciali/prada-re-nylon-collection.html>

- Real Style. (2023). *Air Dior Jordan 1 Sneakers: How To Spot The Real Deal*.
<https://realstyle.therealreal.com/air-dior-jordans-real-authentic/>
- Rebag. (2022). *5 Prada Bags Worth the Investment - The Vault*. <https://www.rebag.com/thevault/5-prada-bags-worth-the-investment/>
- Rijsdijk, S. A., Langerak, F., & Jan Hultink, E. (2011). Understanding a two-sided coin: Antecedents and consequences of a decomposed product advantage. *Journal of Product Innovation Management*, 28(1), 33–47. <https://doi.org/10.1111/J.1540-5885.2010.00779.X>
- Salmen, A. (2021). *NEW PRODUCT LAUNCH SUCCESS: A LITERATURE REVIEW*. 69(1), 26.
<https://doi.org/10.11118/actaun.2021.008>
- Sawyer Jonathan, & HighSnobiety. (2020). *Dior x Nike Air Jordan 1: Official Release Information & Images*. <https://www.highsnobiety.com/p/dior-nike-air-jordan-1/>
- Schneider, J., & Hall, J. (2011). Why Most Product Launches Fail. *Harvard Business Review*.
<https://hbr.org/2011/04/why-most-product-launches-fail>
- Sea Beyond (2019). <https://www.pradagroup.com/en/sustainability/cultural-csr/sea-beyond.html>
- Song, L. Z., Song, M., & Benedetto, C. A. Di. (2011). Resources, supplier investment, product launch advantages, and first product performance. *Journal of Operations Management*, 29(1–2), 86–104.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/J.JOM.2010.07.003>
- StockX. (n.d.). *Jordan 1 Retro High Dior Men's*. Retrieved September 7, 2023, from <https://stockx.com/air-jordan-1-retro-high-dior>
- The Fashion Awards. (2019). *2019 Winners*. <https://fashionawards.com/2019-Winners>
- The Lyst Index. (n.d.). *Fashion's Hottest Brands and Products*. Retrieved September 2, 2023, from <https://www.lyst.com/data/the-lyst-index/>
- The Vintage Bar. (2020). *Prada 2000 and 2005 Re-Editions | The Archive*. <https://thevintagebar.com/the-archive/please-welcome-back-prada-s-2000-and-2005-re-editions>
- Valley. (2021, November 18). Trend Alert: Versace Medusa Aevitas Platform Pumps. *Simone Skinner*.
<http://www.valleymagazinepsu.com/trend-alert-versace-medusa-aevitas-platform-pumps/>
- Versace. (2021a). *Dua Lipa for Versace Fall-Winter 2021 Campaign*.
<https://www.versace.com/dk/en/stories/advertising-campaigns/versace-fw-2021.html>
- Versace. (2021b). *Versace Fall Winter 2021 Fashion Show*. <https://www.versace.com/dk/en/stories/fashion-shows/fw-2021-men-women.html>
- Vogue. (2019). Bottega Veneta Fall 2019 Ready-to-Wear Collection. *Nicole Phelps*.
<https://www.vogue.com/fashion-shows/fall-2019-ready-to-wear/bottega-veneta>
- Vogue. (2020). *How a JW Anderson Cardigan Worn by Harry Styles Went Viral on TikTok*.
<https://www.vogue.com/article/jw-anderson-harry-styles-cardigan-tiktok>
- Vogue. (2023, January 7). A Fashionable Investment: These 19 Handbags Have the Highest Resale Values | *Vogue*. *Megan O'Sullivan*. <https://www.vogue.com/article/bags-with-the-best-resale-value>
- W Magazine. (2022, April). *Why Is Versace Having Such A Moment?* Maxine Wally.
<https://www.wmagazine.com/fashion/versace-resurgence-popularity-celebrity-dressing-vintage-archival-fashion-shopping>