COMMUNICATION IDENTITY & DIGITAL CHALLENGE

Module 4

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M4 - Content

Communication Identity & Digital Challenge

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Introduction

Introduction

If the product incorporates the tangible dimension of fashion goods, it's through communication that companies create emotional associations, consumer benefits, and a lifestyle.

Communication is what transforms the product into a brand.

Fashion communication mainly focuses on the so called **dream factor.**

The message alludes to an exclusive world, the happy few, and celebrities. At the same time, though, communication must also share the dream, making the brand an object of desire in the eyes of the general public.

Communication has to balance the exclusivity of the message with the accessibility of the media.

Key Characteristics

Key Characteristics of Fashion Communication: Levels

Communication depends a lot on the brand's positioning and on the different objectives the company may have

There are different levels of communication:

> the **product**, that in fashion is the seasonal collection
> the **brand**, that is the personality, the essence that goes beyond the single collection and makes the company recognizable and identifiable
> the **company**, the corporate level

Key Characteristics

Key Characteristics of Fashion Communication: Objectives

Companies may have different objectives they want to pursue through communication.

Companies have to create:

> **Brand Awareness**, companies need to be well known among consumers. Consumers have to associate the company's name with the product they are selling.
To be known alone is necessary but not sufficient.

> **Brand Image**, companies have to build relevance. They have to speak to those that are able to understand and willing to share the lifestyle they propose. They have to communicate to trendsetters and to the pool of aspirational customers that can really understand the company's value proposition.

Key Characteristics

Key Characteristics of Fashion Communication: Objectives

> **Reputation**, companies have to communicate at a corporate level with all the stakeholders (employees, clients, suppliers, investors, banks, local community, etc…) to inform them of their corporate strategies, about the numbers and what they do for profit; but as well for the planet and the people.

In fashion and luxury especially, **Corporate Social Responsibility** is becoming more an more important

Communication is a complex set of activities:
> Different levels of communication required
> Different competencies and attitudes required

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Key Characteristics

Key Characteristics of Fashion Communication: Objectives & Tools

	Brand Awareness	Brand Image	Reputation
	Sell-in (wholesale) Sell-out (retail)	Image identity	Reputation
	> Advertising > Editorials > Fashion show & events > Videos about seasonal products > Catalogues > Pop material > Web site and social media	> Logo > Heritage > Designer/Entrepreneur Spokesperson > Celebrity marketing > Videos about craftsmanship, heritage, iconic products > Web site and social media	> Internal Communication > Investor Relations > Charity and foundations > Exhibitions > Web site and social media

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Key Characteristics

Key Characteristics of Fashion Communication

What makes fashion's communication different from any other industry's?

How has fashion able to build such a powerful language?

The key characteristics to be highlighted are:

> The importance of **images**, fashion communication is very **visual**.

> For designer brands images show only the seasonal products, the models and the logo, they don't have the pay-off.

> Thanks to the use of images fashion is a very direct and also universal language.

> The fashion **product** is a communication code in and of itself. Through the product the designer represents the evolution of brand style.

> Images let the customers interpret the communication and in turn give them the freedom to give their own personal interpretation.

Key Characteristics

Key Characteristics of Fashion Communication

> Fashion companies do not only want to be informative, they also want to be emotional and inspirational.

> Non-verbal communication is much more effective and memorable than verbal communication.

Communication in fashion is a very powerful language.

Key Characteristics

Communicating Fashion: Product & Logo

Fashion communication is very visual

Pictures show seasonal products and the company's logo



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Key Characteristics

Communicating Consumer Goods: Art and Copy

Pictures illustrate a logo with a pay-off, a headline, and a body copy and the visual of the singular product

Body Copy

Visual

Visual

Headline

Pay Off

Logo



Key Characteristics

Key Characteristics of Fashion Communication

> The role of the **designer** is fundamental for fashion communication. The designer is the ultimate decision maker because the product conveys his or her own name.

> **In-house control** over a number of activities, from developing the advertising campaign to shooting; from planning media to the press office and organizing events. Fashion companies prefer to work only with single external professionals such us art directors, stylists, and casting directors; rather than traditional advertising agencies

> Through direct control, fashion companies ensure **total consistency** of all the messages they convey and can guarantee the **attention to details** that makes all the difference.

> Companies sometimes need to be disruptive and innovate the "language" to **create the buzz**.

> **Celebrity connections** are key.

Communication in fashion is different than in other industries.

Key Characteristics

Fashion VS Consumer Goods Communication

Different approach: Branding vs. Marketing

	Fashion Brands	Consumer Goods Brands
Objective	Brand image	Brand awareness
Major Target	Opinion leaders	End users
Planning	Seasonal	Yearly
Focus	Product Emotional associations Visual	Story Attributes and benefits Copy
Tools	PR (editorials and word of mouth)	Promotions (trade discounts)
Adv Media	Printed magazines and videos	"Classic" media and interactive media
Events	Fashion shows	Sponsorships
Celebrities	Endorsement	Testimonials and product placement
Budgets	High as a relative percentage on sales	High as share of voice
Key Decision Makers	Designer, art director, press office	Marketing or brand manager
External Players	Free-lancers (photographers, stylists, fashion editors)	Advertising agencies, media and research centers
Measurements	Press return	GRP and sales

Communication Identity

The Communication Identity

Brand Image depends on the **message** and the **media**.

The **message** is based on the:

> **Concept**, what is the one thing we want to communicate?

> **Tone of voice**, how does the brand convey the message?

Given the importance of visual images, a particular importance is played on the **shooting** for the advertising campaign

Most common choices concern:

> Location

> Models

> Mood

Communication Identity

The Communication Identity

Media is key to "position" the message.
Fashion KPIs are focused on checking brand perception, target affinity, and qualitative features, such as special positions.

Fashion companies want to reach both the target of opinion leaders and the final customers. In order to do so they use a mix of tools:

> Fashion shows and events
> Glossy magazines and editorials
> Billboards
> Celebrities
> Windows installations
> In-store events
> Social media
> Bloggers
> E-magazines
> Videos
> User generated content