



Chapter 13

Zara Joins the Trends: Analysis of Its Content Creation Within the Framework of Its Business Strategy


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ABSTRACT

Brands are the universal symbols of the modern era, comprising a set of values with which the consumer identifies. To activate a brand is to make its promise tangible through different marketing and advertising tools. The fashion film is established in the retail sector as a form of brand communication, which can encompass fashion, photography, film, advertising, music, and art, becoming heir to different and varied artistic disciplines: a format that allows interaction with customers by breaking traditional boundaries through transmediality. The aim of this chapter is to analyse the series of three fashion films, “Zara Scenes,” launched in 2019, in the context of the communication of changes in the brand’s business strategy. With this purpose, the different chapters are analysed from the fashion film perspective as social media content and a brand communication tool.

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ZARA'S BACKGROUND

To study Zara is to delve into the growth of a small company that, in a quarter of a century, has become one of the largest fashion distribution companies in the world, thanks to the business vision of its founder, Amancio Ortega. In twenty-five years, the company has experienced significant growth and international expansion, which we summarise below, taking key moments in its history as a reference.

The business began in 1963 in a modest workshop - Confecciones GOA - in A Coruña, Spain. In this Galician city the firm opened its first shop, Zara, in 1975. In 1977 they established their headquarters in Arteixo with the construction of two factories: GOA and Samlor. 1983 was a year of expansion for the company nationwide. In 1984 it opened its first logistics centre with a heavy investment in state-of-the-art facilities and a surface area of 10,000 square metres. In 1985 Inditex was founded: the Group's holding company brought together under its umbrella the different brands that make up the Group. This laid the foundations for a distribution system in line with the demands of the market and with the capacity to adapt to a very rapid growth rate. In 1988, with the opening of the first shop in Oporto, Zara began its international expansion, arriving on Lexington Avenue (Manhattan, New York) in 1989. In 1990 it set up in France, on Rue Halévy in Paris. During the years that followed, Zara began to operate, for the first time, in numerous countries, opening its shops in the most emblematic areas of major cities. In 2000 they opened new offices in Arteixo. In 2001 the brand was listed on the stock exchange for the first time. In 2003 Zara Home was born, focused on the sale of household goods. In 2005, Pablo Isla was appointed Deputy Chairman and CEO of Inditex. In 2006, the Group presented its Strategic Environmental Plan, with the aim of to ensure that all its operations are environmentally sustainable. The first chain of the holding company to sell online is Zara Home. This was introduced in e-commerce in 2007, while Zara did not take the step until 2010. In 2011, Pablo Isla was appointed chairman of Inditex, by which time all the Group's brands were already operating online. In the course of 2013, the holding's brands implemented their new image in their flagship shops. Larger than the previous ones, they were also located in premium shopping areas. 2014 saw the opening of a new logistics center in Cabanillas, Guadalajara, Spain. 2016 brings Inditex international recognition in terms of sustainability. 2019 brings the boost of the digital and sustainable transformation of the company, a strategic challenge that had been set during the previous years, which entailed the almost complete renovation of the commercial area, and the incorporation of advanced technology in all of its aspects. The digital transformation strategy launched in 2012 through the integrated platform of shops and online will experience strong growth in 2020, a key year in the transformation of the company, during which the global environment is marked by the pandemic (Inditex, n.d.).

Amancio Ortega envisioned fashion as an industry whose *raison d'être* is novelty, turning the "just in time" formula into a hallmark of business identity and a new business model (O'Shea, 2008). The JIT strategy is based on three concepts: the first is product rotation: products do not remain on the website or in the physical shops for long, so that a new collection is launched every 10-15 days to ensure that there is always something new. In this way, the articles sell out quickly and generate trends. The second concept is to offer the customer a unique experience through its physical shops; Zara's stores are among the best in each city, giving the consumer immediate satisfaction. Finally, there is technological innovation and its incorporation in the development of new products - such as personalised items - making production faster and more efficient.

Ever since 2011, Zara has been among the five most valuable Spanish brands (Pérez, 2020; de Lemus, 2021), occupying the forty-fifth position worldwide in 2021 (Interbrand, 2021). Its model of integration

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