



UNIVERSIDADE CATÓLICA PORTUGUESA

Beatriz Bettencourt Womenswear Marketing Plan

A Fashion Brand Case Study

Beatriz Bettencourt

Católica Porto Business School
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por

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Resumo

A indústria de design de moda é caracterizada por várias propostas de marca, bem como diferentes abordagens para atender às exigências do mercado de moda. Por consequência, as marcas de moda têm vindo a implementar novas estratégias e táticas de marketing de modo a fortalecer o seu reconhecimento, impulsionar vendas e, consequentemente, aumentar o lucro.

Assim, a presente dissertação tem como principal objetivo fornecer as devidas diretrizes para o planeamento de marketing de uma marca de moda específica, de modo a que as estratégias mencionadas anteriormente sejam aplicadas de forma mais coerente e personalizada. De fato, esta tese compreende um estudo de caso prático da marca de moda feminina *Beatriz Bettencourt womenswear*, que será materializado pela marca em futuras operações de marketing no ano de 2020.

As principais contribuições deste estudo correspondem à identificação das ferramentas mais adequadas e eficazes para que esta marca de moda possa alcançar os seus objetivos de marketing desejados. O plano de marketing projetado neste estudo será efetivamente implementado e o seu desempenho será cuidadosamente gerido e monitorizado de modo a garantir o sucesso do mesmo.

Palavras-chave: Moda de Autor, Gestão de Marca, Marketing de Moda, Marketing de Redes Sociais, Marketing de Influência.

Abstract

The fashion design industry is characterized by several brand proposals as well as different approaches to meet the fashion market requirements. Therefore, fashion brands have been implementing new marketing strategies and tactics in order to improve brand awareness, boost sales and, consequently, increase profit.

Thus, this dissertation aims to provide effective guidelines of marketing planning for a specific fashion brand. The proposed marketing strategies are adapted to the particularities of the analyzed fashion brand and of its marketing environment. In fact, this study comprehends a practical case study of *Beatriz Bettencourt womenswear*, which will be materialized in the brand's marketing operations for the coming year of 2020.

The main contributions of this study correspond to the identification of the most adequate and effective tools for the fashion brand to achieve the defined marketing objectives. The brand will actually implement the developed marketing plan and the performance of its strategies will be carefully monitored and managed in order to insure the success of the proposed plan.

Key words: Premium Fashion, Brand Management, Fashion Marketing, Social Media Marketing, Influencer Marketing.

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1. Introduction

This Master's Final Dissertation is the corollary of an individual proposal related with the case study of a womenswear fashion designer brand.

The theme under study was proposed according to prior academic/professional experience, most of all due to a previous bachelor degree in fashion design, at ESAD – Escola Superior de Artes e Design. In this context of an undergraduate course, and after conquering some fashion awards, the author decided to create a womenswear fashion brand – *Beatriz Bettencourt* -, whose collections are presented at Portugal Fashion, in a particular platform – *Bloom* – designed for young fashion designers.

In fact, after accomplishing this project, and mostly due to the personal commitment it entailed, the author decided to do a Master in Marketing at Católica Porto Business School. Since the beginning, the main aim of this Master degree was to acquire the necessary knowledge and skills for the management of the brand *Beatriz Bettencourt womenswear*.

1.1 Study Objectives

Thus, the main objectives of this study are focused on:

- Establishing a new brand in the premium/designer fashion industry;
- Developing a marketing plan for *Beatriz Bettencourt womenswear*.

In this sense, this dissertation will reflect a case study of the brand *Beatriz Bettencourt womenswear*, having under consideration all the knowledge acquired in classes during the Master and also through an in-depth literature review and the analysis of the data collected during the development of the case study. This study should allow the identification of the most effective and efficient tools to manage the brand and improve its image in the fashion market.

1.2 Research Question

Thus, taking into account the main objectives of this Master's thesis, its main research question is the following:

- What is the most effective marketing plan for *Beatriz Bettencourt womenswear* brand, taking into consideration the actual fashion industry panorama and the new communication and consumption trends?

1.3 Study Delimitations

After analyzing and reflecting over the diversity of fashion brands' approaches within the fashion industry (Tungate, 2005), through a specialized literature review focused on fashion brands, in-store and online fashion consumer behavior, fashion brand management (brand identity, product, store and communication management) and fashion brand marketing plan, we will be able to propose an effective marketing plan for *Beatriz Bettencourt womenswear*.

The study of fashion brands will provide knowledge about different fashion brand categories, requirements and specifications, this will help to define *Beatriz Bettencourt's* brand category and its positioning in the fashion designer brands' market.

Additionally, due to the constant changes and innovations that occur in the fashion system, it will be necessary to study the challenges linked with the Internet (Duffy & Hund, 2015). Therefore, it is relevant to study e-commerce, as it provides strategies for channels optimization, specially in the place and promotion fields. In fact, due to the impact of the online store concept (Demangeot & Broderick, 2010), and taking into consideration the advantages it provides, the analysis of the development, control and maintenance of this new system is critical for the brand under study.

Moreover, it is essential to approach social media marketing since social media offer brands the possibility to personalize their communication, constantly create content, develop a close dialogue with customers/users, provide instant feedback, and to work with individuals that influence their communities, called digital influencers (Brogi, 2013). Thus, online presence in different platforms (websites, online store, Instagram,

Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest, etc.) is fundamental for a brand such as *Beatriz Bettencourt womenswear*.

This literature review will be relevant to identify the most appropriate strategies to create awareness for *Beatriz Bettencourt womenswear* (Lee, Leung & Zhang, 2000), as, given its newness in the market, the brand needs to generate acceptance and recall by its target audience. Furthermore, through the literature review it will also be possible to define the adequate model to compete nationally and internationally in the fashion sector, a sector characterized by an intensive competition and appealing profit margins (Gomez, Olhats & Pólo, 2011).

In addition, through a benchmarking of competing fashion brands, it will be possible to evaluate the marketing mix strategies and processes applied by these brands and identify good management practices. The in-depth analysis of the good practices of competing brands, will allow to understand how *Beatriz Bettencourt womenswear* can improve its management processes and what new strategies it should apply to improve its competitive advantage. In fact, this analysis will be critical to enhance the brand's performance (Moore & Birtwistle, 2005). The benchmarking will involve interviews with carefully selected fashion designers operating in the same brand category of *Beatriz Bettencourt womenswear* brand. This competitors' analysis will be essential to establish realistic sets and goals, and to provide an objective perspective of the marketing environment of *Beatriz Bettencourt womenswear*.

In summary, the *Beatriz Bettencourt womenswear* case study will contribute to the creation and development of a new fashion brand within the constant changing fashion design field, through the collection of fundamental tools required to improve brand's management processes, to build a strong brand image and ensure the success of future marketing strategies and tactics implementation (Krake, 2005).

2. Literature Review

As the main purpose of this dissertation is to develop a marketing plan for a fashion brand – *Beatriz Bettencourt womenswear* -, there are several concepts that need to be analyzed, such as fashion brands, fashion consumer behavior, online fashion, fashion brand management and fashion brand marketing planning. Thus, the primary concept to be approached in this literature review regards fashion brands, focusing on its definition and respective categories.

2.1 Fashion Brands

A brand is a complex system that embraces several forms of expression: linguistic, visual, sound, and others, which gives the product an identity and a set of values, identifying it and differentiating it from its competitors (Kapferer, 2009). It acts as an indicator of origin and quality, influencing the purchase decision (Okonkwo, 2009). In fact, Kotler & Armstrong (2012, p.111) stated that a brand is defined as a “name, term, sign, symbol (or a combination of these) that identifies the maker or seller of the product”. According to Mollerup (2003), brands arose from the need and desire for social identification of an individual or a group. Moreover, according to Chevalier & Mazzalovo (2007), there are several relevant facets a brand may assume: a brand is a personality, the way of communication provides a comparison of brand to a person; a brand is a cultural universe and the cultural feature is essential for the brand’s communications; a brand is a relationship; a brand is a reflection, since the brand always develops a reflection or an image of the buyer/ user; a brand is a statement, and a brand is customers’ internal mirror.

There is a diversity of brand proposals within the fashion design business (Christopher, Lawson & Peck, 2004). Everyone in the fashion industry wants to create its own brand so, consequently, the fashion industry is also characterized by many small brands that lack marketing skills and end up failing (Tungate, 2005).

Kapferer (2008) identified three types of brands in the fashion industry:

- *Haute couture houses*, which are defined as the major fashion houses of the world and their designers present collections at least twice a year with particular garments and premium prices to dress customers for specific shows or events.
- *Designer wear* directly linked with premium fashion brands, which are shown as ready-to-wear clothing. The designer shows its collections four times a year - Spring/Summer, Fall/Winter and two Resorts collections - and provides stylish designs and high-quality products to a wider audience.
- *Fast fashion* is an area that is designed for the mass market. New designs are found in street stores weekly, created according to fashion trends and designers' proposals (copies and imitations of the two top fashion brands categories mentioned before), providing a more standardized approach. Thus, what customers lose in exclusivity, one of the major characteristics of designer clothing, they can compensate in value for money (lower prices).

Besides these different types of fashion brands, today's paradigm relies on the fact that many customers do not purchase one single category (Truong, McColl & Kitchen, 2009). For example, women who buy *ready-to-wear* may occasionally purchase at an *haute couture house* for a special occasion (Kapferer, 2008). In addition, proven by the type of fashion that people observe in streets - *street style* -, customers are mixing their outfits with designer clothes and some fast fashion pieces (Kapferer, 2012). A woman, on the same date and at the same street, might buy a Prada jacket and several t-shirts at Zara. This latest example reinforces the complexity of the fashion business when dealing with consumers buying behavior.

Furthermore, according to the target groups within fashion, it is also possible to segment fashion brands into different typologies: menswear, womenswear and kidswear. Moreover, based on the product category and end-use it is possible to distinguish between sportswear, formalwear and jeanswear, for example (Atwal & Williams, 2009). In addition, each segment originated from these approaches is linked with a business model with well-defined key success factors: the ready-to-wear/designer segment, the diffusion segment, the bridge segment and the mass-market segment (Fionda & Moore, 2008).

Thus, regarding the information collected about fashion brands, we are able to declare that *Beatriz Bettencourt womenswear* is a designer/premium brand focused on feminine clothing – womenswear - and whose product category might be defined as ready-to-wear. Therefore, it is crucial for the brand to provide design and high-quality products for its customers through seasonal collections.

2.2 Fashion Consumer Behavior

Due to the intensive innovation that occurs within the fashion sector it is crucial for brands to analyze fashion consumption behavior to timely predict and adapt their strategy accordingly. Thus, taking into consideration the premium/designer fashion brand category of *Beatriz Bettencourt womenswear*, it is important to understand the reasons why consumers buy premium fashion, what they believe premium is, and how their perception of premium value affects their buying behavior. However, there is currently little agreement about the value dimensions of premium products as perceived by consumers. With regard to consumer buying motives, the motive “to impress others” is considered key for the marketing management of fashion brands (Dittmar, 1994).

In addition, since there is few literature regarding premium/designer brands, and once premium status is closely related to the concept of luxury, this study will take advantage of the existing literature on luxury fashion brands in order to establish a linkage to the new luxury concept of *premium*. According to Kapferer (1997), one of the most important authors that studied fashion brands, the word luxury “defines beauty; it is art applied to functional items. Like light, luxury is enlightening. Luxury items provide extra pleasure and flatter all senses at once” (p.253). Moreover, the simple use of these premium fashion products brings esteem, it enables consumers to satisfy psychological and functional needs. The psychological benefits are considered the main factor distinguishing premium from non-premium products (Nia & Zaichkowsky, 2000).

The consumption of premium products involves buying a product that represents value to both the individual and significant others. Therefore, in addition to the socially oriented fashion brand consumption, a personally oriented type of consumption should be considered in managing premium fashion brand marketing

(Kapferer, 2009). Moreover, consumers' premium value perception and motives for premium brand consumption are not simply tied to a set of social factors, that include displaying status, success, distinction, and the human desire to impress (Ko & Megehee, 2011), they also depend on the nature of the financial, functional, individual and social utilities of a brand (Wiedmann, Hennings & Siebels, 2007). The financial dimension of premium value addresses direct monetary aspects, such as price, resale cost, discount, and investment, and refers to the value of the product as expressed (Monroe & Krishnan, 1985). The functional dimension of premium value refers to such core product benefits and basic utilities as quality, uniqueness, usability, reliability, and durability (Sheth, Newman, & Gross, 1991). The individual dimension of premium value focuses on a customer's personal orientation toward fashion consumption and addresses personal matters, such as materialism (Richins & Dawson, 1992), hedonism and self-identity (Vigneron & Johnson, 2004). Finally, the social dimension of premium value refers to the perceived utility, since individuals acquire products that are somehow approved by their own social group(s), (Vigneron & Johnson, 2004). Although these value dimensions operate independently, they interact with each other and have various influences on individual premium value perceptions and behaviors that can be used to identify and segment different types of fashion consumers (Kapferer, 2009).

Thus, premium fashion brands and products often enclose prestigious values, social referencing and the construction of one's self as key determinants of its consumption. People's desire to possess these types of brands serves as a symbolic sign of group membership (Kapferer 2009). As a matter of fact, consumers are social creatures, which form groups and interact in relation to goals (Okonkwo, 2009). Reference groups can be positive, negative or aspirational (Ko & Megehee, 2011) and their influence is important not only for styles of fashion products, but also for endorsements and rejections of particular brands (Kapferer 2009).

Furthermore, since opinion leadership refers to the degree of influence exerted when a consumer is faced with a choice, it embraces several prospects for marketing strategies (Vigneron & Johnson, 2004). In fact, many people discuss clothing and fashion advertising as a normal part of social interaction (Husic & Cicic, 2009). Moreover, celebrity influence is a particular type of opinion leadership and evidence shows that it is most powerful when the celebrity selected has credibility, is attractive, is trustworthy and is likeable (Kapferer, 2009). If opinion leaders can be identified and targeted with

promotional efforts, then the message may be effectively distributed via word-of-mouth communications (Okonkwo, 2009). Therefore, for fashion brands it is crucial to target the innovators and the opinion leaders in society, who often influence the purchasing behavior of other consumers (Anderson & He, 1998).

2.2.1 Online Fashion Consumer Behavior

According to fashion consumption behavior and due to contemporary changes in the system of fashion, it is crucial to understand the transformations that occurred with the rise of Internet in consumer behavior towards fashion brands. Since the Internet became more mainstream as a distribution channel, it is also a compelling channel for fashion products (Beck, 2004), as it not only provides an excellent means for a fashion brand to display their most up-to-date lines via image, video and sound technology, but it also enables the use of websites to sell directly to brand's customers (Haussen, Seffen & Bulcão, 2016).

In recent times, more and more fashion brands have moved into this channel looking for greater profitability and, as a consequence, e-commerce has grown significantly at a rate that even outpaces traditional retail channels (Mohr, 2013). As a matter of fact, the fashion industry was slower than other sectors to adopt e-commerce, and one of the main reasons was the difficulty of translating the in-store experience to the online environment (Blázquez, 2014). Plus, clothing is considered to be a high-involvement product category, related to personal ego, and fashion products need to be seen, felt, touched, and tried on because of their difficulty to be evaluated (Rowley, 2009). In addition, e-commerce may seem challenging for fashion brands that wish to protect their image, considering that having a further channel to market may dilute such image (Haussen, Seffen & Bulcão, 2016). Moreover, given that typically fashion designers brands are international, they may not wish to commit the resources required in running an international online operation (Blázquez, 2014). Finally, they may perceive that the high level of customer service incurred in selling high-price fashion items would be difficult to replicate online (Mohr, 2013).

Moreover, the emergence of the virtual stores transformed the physical purchase and sale rates (Santos, Hamza & Nogami, 2015). One of the main differences was the

purchase and sales transaction that are carried out by the consumer, through a computer, tablet or cellphone, and that can be used anywhere at any time (Mohr, 2013). In fact, the growth of smartphone ownership and deeper mobile Internet penetration are two contributors to this change. Consumers now consider their own mobile devices as the most important form of in-store technology (Husic & Cicic, 2009). Additionally, social networks turned into an important challenge too, as they became a place to start the shopping process, mainly through people seeking advice on Facebook and Twitter, for example (Kim & Ko, 2012).

Thus, the Internet is one of the main facilitators of communication, information and exchange of experiences between people (Mohr, 2013). And due to all these transformations, and because many brands want to be present in the online environment, attention and care is needed in the way of selling fashion products, because the consumer cannot touch or try them (Blázquez, 2014). Information such as size, colors, fabrics, are fundamental for the best understanding of the pieces. Not only these details, but also the concern to send the purchase in the promised time and that it arrives exactly as requested by the consumer (Kim & Ko, 2012).

Fashion articles are products that can differ greatly according to price, quality, fit to the body and personal taste (Kapferer, 2009). Thus, consumers note higher quality variations of these products and perceive online shopping as riskier than buying offline for that category (Grewal et al., 2004). Therefore, Internet shopping may seem riskier than traditional shopping because of a lack of opportunity to physically examine the product (Goldsmith, 2002). In this way, fashion brands should consider the development of websites seeking deeper relationships based on interests, personal identities and personality (Goldsmith, 2002). In addition, according to Ha & Stoel (2012) website content and functionality, atmosphere and quality of the experience significantly influence satisfaction with online shopping. The purchase intent is influenced by privacy and security, and by customer service (Mohr, 2013).

Moreover, the importance of retail atmosphere extends to the online environment, and websites use atmospherics similarly to traditional retail stores (Rowley, 2009). Technological innovation makes it possible to translate variables such as color, music, and lights alongside others such as smell and touch. These atmospheric cues influence shopper responses during the website visit, increasing the level of

pleasure, generating a positive attitude toward fashion shopping, and directly influencing purchase intention (Blázquez, 2014).

In summary, it is clear that the Internet is changing the role technology plays in the shopping experience and its growth is reducing the time that consumers spend in store (Mohr, 2013). This has consequences for physical stores as well, because consumers expect an integrated experience between channels, and this implies presenting the products in a similar style in both channels and creating an overall consistent experience (Santos, Hamza & Nogami, 2015).

2.3 Fashion Brand Management

In order to achieve a greater impact of the desired *Beatriz Bettencourt womenswear* marketing plan, it is crucial to understand how a fashion brand should be managed and, moreover, understand the paradigms and concerns that are affecting the fashion system. Therefore, it is crucial to learn the best ways to manage fashion brands for profit, since there are several sources of brand equity: production, servicing, staffing, distributing, innovating, pricing and advertising, for example (Atwal & Williams, 2009). Thus, equity is “the set of associations and behavior on the part of a brand’s customers, channel members and parent corporation that permits the brand to earn greater volume or greater margins than it could without the brand name” (Leuthesser, 1988, p.78).

In fact, since brand equity is related to the brand’s value, this is directly linked with the domain of strategic brand management: how to create value with proper brand management (Kapferer, 2008). Therefore, brand management is customer-based and focuses exclusively on the relationship that customers have with the brand - from total indifference to attachment, loyalty, and willingness to buy and rebuy based on beliefs of superiority and evoked emotions (Choi, 2014). These beliefs and bonds are created over time in customers’ minds through the marketing strategies of the brand. Therefore, brands have financial value due to the assets that were created in the minds and hearts of customers, distributors, prescribers and opinion leaders (Kapferer, 2009). Moreover, brand management aims to produce quantitative measures in order to test and prove implemented strategies to achieve brand’s goals (Fionda & Moore, 2008).

As a matter of fact, managing a fashion brand requires three types of investment: investment in production, productivity and R&D; investment in research and marketing studies; investment in listing allowances, in merchandising, in trade marketing and, naturally, in communications, in order to promote the brand's uniqueness and to create awareness, perceived difference and esteem (Kapferer, 2008). In addition, since the brand under study consists on a designer brand, it requires a certain premium character in its management. Therefore, Jackson (2004, p.54) stated that premium brands are *"characterized by exclusivity, premium prices, image and status, which combine to make them desirable for reasons other than function"*. Thus, product design, marketing communications and retailing are fundamental to the competitive marketing strategies of premium fashion brands, but how they apply these parameters varies (Saviolo, 2009). In general, according to Kapferer (2008), there are ten key principles for the strategic management of a fashion company:

1. Capitalize on a few strategic brands, which all convey a big idea, a vision, and are driven by the desire to change the customer's life.
2. Nest all variants and sub-brands under these mega-brands, to nurture them.
3. Act as a leader and be passionate about increasing the standards of the category.
4. Sustain all brands by a constant flow of innovations (product, service and so on) in line with their positioning.
5. Create direct ties with your end customers to deepen the link and the attachment, especially in markets where the trade pushes its trade brands.
6. Deliver personalized services.
7. Reward customers' involvement to make them become active promoters of your brand, not simply loyalists. Word-of-mouth is indeed the real sign of success: it means customers become active ambassadors because they feel passionate about the brand, as a result of what it did to them and the community of values.
8. Encourage communities that share your values.
9. Quickly globalize the brand and its products.
10. Be ethical: big is not beautiful any more, and consumers have become cynical about size. Do not only adopt rapidly the perspective of individual

benefits, also take into account collective benefits (recyclable products, organic ingredients, ethical and sustainable trade, helping the poor, etc).

2.3.1 Fashion Brand Identity Management

In reality, the key concept of brand management is identity: identity means that the brand should respect its key values and defining attributes (Kapferer, 2008). In fact, a brand becomes contagious through the idea that it represents or the experience it provides, and that is supported by the brand's identity signs.

The brand concept and marketing-mix strategy (brand object), as well as the brand name, logo, colors, shapes and other visual elements of products, like packaging (brand identity signs) should be chosen in such way that the brand purpose is injected in all its tangible cues (Fionda & Moore, 2008). Choosing a name depends on the destiny that is assigned to the brand (Kapferer, 2008). For example, certain brands naturally convey the identity of their country of origin and others are totally international (Easey, 2009). The name, in fact, must serve to add extra meaning, to convey the spirit of the brand (Hines & Bruce, 2007). Moreover, a logo serves to symbolize brand mission and values through a visual figure other than the brand name (Gomez, Olhats & Pólo, 2011).

Consumers have the need to visualize the brand, hence the importance of packaging, labels, design, and everything that is seen at the "front office" (Saviolo, 2009). The brand's aim is not only to create internal coherence and order, but also to achieve a relevant differentiation from competition (Choi, 2014) and visual identity signs should help the brand to accomplish this. Furthermore, modern competition, calls for the development of an effective brand positioning (Kapferer, 2008). Positioning a brand means emphasizing the distinctive characteristics that make it different from its competitors and appealing to the public (Christopher, Lawson & Peck, 2004). The brand identity signs (i.e, name, logo, packaging design, slogan, etc.) should consistently convey the brand core values and desired positioning.

Certainly, a fashion brand should innovate while keeping its identity (Tongate, 2005). Thus, the role of modern fashion brands is to stimulate the consumer to have new experiences (Atwal & Williams, 2009). Brand management is thus a balance between preservation, renewal, extension and growth of products on the one hand, and on the

other hand the creation of new products to capture new circumstances of use and new customers, and to open new segments (Atwal & Williams, 2009).

2.3.2 Fashion Brand Product Management

In fact, today's brand management represents a very sophisticated business process, whose attention is usually focused on the finished products (clothing, accessories, etc.), but these are the result of a long chain of stages, activities and technologies whose interaction is largely responsible for the product's success on the market (Atwal & Williams, 2009). Therefore, a fundamental concept for analyzing the fashion system is the concept of "fashion pipeline". This implies the coordination and integration between the production stages of raw materials (agricultural or chemical) and the industrial (textile and clothing) and distributive stages (Christopher, Lawson & Peck, 2004). In addition, the production and supply of premium fashion products should be carefully managed and selective to control the accessibility of products to shoppers (Fionda, 2009).

Moreover, since fashion consumers expect innovation and constant change, premium fashion brands have shortened their products' life cycles and invested in innovation in order to meet the demands of the fast-changing fashion market (Kapferer, 2008). The increased penetration will firstly boost the product's premium status by making the brand visible and recognized, but then it might reach a limit in which premium status dilution occurs (Truong, McColl & Kitchen, 2009). Furthermore, brands which offer longer series and extended production, should launch regularly limited editions, which capture media attention and uphold desirability of the brand via "ephemeral rarity" (Kapferer, 2012).

2.3.3 Fashion Brand Store Management

Fashion brand management had to adapt to new markets, new customers, media and technological realities, and to the effects of globalization (Kapferer, 2008). It is

crucial for fashion marketers to understand the importance: the fashion shopper (Wiedmann, Hennings & Siebels, 2007). Thus, brands need to do business and provide significant enjoyment at the same time. The rise of the shopper is general: shopping is no longer a race, a chore, but a pleasure and entertainment (Kapferer, 2008). In fact, shops and brands websites became complete destinations for what is called “Retailtainment”, that is, the fusion of ‘retail’ and ‘entertainment’ (Husic & Cicic, 2009).

In this sense, fashion brands created flagship stores to show their products and in order to build strong relationships with customers, mostly based on their in-store experience and amusement (Wiedmann, Hennings & Siebels, 2007). The flagship store therefore serves as the physical manifestation of these intangible, yet vital brand characteristics (Saviolo, 2009). Moore et al. (2000) found that the flagship store was an important communication tool that attracted the attention of the media and other opinion formers, as well as current and potential customers. It should not be forgotten that the flagship store plays an important role in creating and maintaining customer loyalty (Husic & Cicic, 2009). Through initiatives as exclusive fashion shows, private shopping evenings and public relations events, the flagship serves as a place where the relationship between the brand and the key customers is established and enhanced (Kapferer, 2009).

Moreover, recently, a new store strategy has been implemented by fashion brands – the *temporary store* or the *pop up store* – that focus, as its name mentions, on temporariness. The duration of those stores usually ranges from several days to few months, and they are strategically located in high-traffic urban shopping areas (Surchi, 2010). In addition, the cost of operating a temporary store depends on the space available and the time of year, but rents tend to be charged on the basis of a one-week minimum and four-week maximum contract (Addis, 2007). There are of course, premium periods for which the price is higher than normal.

In fact, temporary stores are distinguished by their exclusivity, style and by word-of-mouth communication, which attract the curiosity of passers-by (Surchi, 2010). In its short lifetime, a temporary store is intended to take consumers by surprise, arouse an emotional response, stimulate reactions, and enrich the complex of brand values (Addis, 2007). As Di Sabato (2009) highlights, the temporary store represents a synthesis of communication and selling, perfectly reflecting the logic of entertainment, knowledge, and experience.

By opening a temporary store, generally, there are no ambitious sales objectives to be reached, simply the break-even point, since the real objective is to communicate the brand. As Surchi (2010) highlights, the promotional function of the temporary store will be to promote new collections and new lines, to direct attention towards specific products, to create “events”, and to have a special retail presence in parallel with fashion fairs and exhibitions. As a matter of fact, temporary stores can also be used exclusively as showrooms.

Temporary fashion stores are useful to test marketing in a specific location, before committing to the high capital costs of investment in a permanent flagship store (Surchi, 2010). The inherent advantages of this marketing strategy are that it only requires a modest investment, the rentals can often be recovered in single sales, and that it is an effective way of simultaneously communicating the brand and conducting market research (Di Sabato, 2009).

2.3.4 Fashion Brand Communication Management

A factor that is crucial is marketing communications (Atwal & Williams, 2009). Events, celebrity endorsements, and public relations are some of the marketing tools that brands use to set up a better brand image and to create awareness (Kapferer, 2009). Armani, for example, controls in a very precise way its communication campaigns, choosing models, locations, colors and merchandising (Saviolo, 2009).

Actually, communication builds virtual rarity. In respect to premium fashion brands, communications seeks to create a distance while simultaneously trying to communicate to the masses (Atwal & Williams, 2009). Similarly, designer brands now upload videos on YouTube and post image content on their social media sites (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and Pinterest) as means of communication, which enables them to reach a wider and more specific audience (Kim & Ko, 2012).

As a matter of fact, due to the Internet the whole world became more linked and connected without limits in space and time, therefore enabling a constant dialogue between consumers and brands, the development of online communities, instant feedback, ratings and reviews, among other relevant changes (Kim & Ko, 2012). Brands and customers are communicating with each other without any restrictions, so that one-

way communication changed to an interactive two-way direct communication (Brogi, 2013). Meanwhile, brands may now gain greater exposure and strengthen relationships with customers (Okonkwo, 2009).

Furthermore, social media marketing (SMM) appeared as a two-way communication, seeking empathy with users, enforcing familiar emotions, providing an opportunity to reduce misunderstanding and prejudice toward brands, and to elevate brand value by creating a platform to exchange ideas and information among people online (Kim & Ko, 2012). Nowadays, consumers can instantly access a wide variety of fashion products on the Internet and share brand experiences with other consumers. In this scenario, online brand communities (OBCs) allow fashion customers to communicate with each other. For this reason, fashion marketers see OBCs as powerful instruments to influence customers' purchasing behavior (Mohr, 2013). The common characteristic of these innovative marketing techniques is the exploitation of the word-of-mouth phenomenon in an online environment (Kim & Ko, 2012). Additionally, besides commercial messages and interactions with consumers partnered with media, events, entertainment, retailers and digital services, through social media it is possible to develop integrated marketing activities with much less effort and cost (Kapferer, 2008). As a result, many fashion brands created their accounts or pages and, simultaneously, many fashion enthusiasts made their own OBCs (Brogi, 2013).

Likewise, blogs are social platforms that offer consumers an almost unlimited space for self-expression on the Internet (Kozinets, 2006). Indeed, fashion blogs worldwide are updated regularly with new fashion trends and their engaging experience offers readers the opportunity to voice opinions and challenge fashion critics (Kapferer, 2008). As a matter of fact, new agencies in New York represent fashion and lifestyle bloggers, brokering endorsement deals with fashion labels, signing up advertisers and, in some cases, booking lucrative television commercials (Kim & Ko, 2012). Like most other social mediums, "the network of blogs is performing an important role in creating trends, sharing news and opinion, and spreading information via word-of-mouth" according to Ahn, Kim & Park (2010, p.35).

Furthermore, with the rise of SMM impact on consumers' behavior, another new marketing strategy – *Influencer marketing* – has gained relevance. As noticed, "consumers believe more in the product-related content or information by other consumers on social networking sites, multimedia sites, blogs and so on than producer

or company produced related content, despite being personally unknown or unrelated to the user” (Mir & Zaheer, 2012). So, this strategy focuses on cooperating with *digital influencers* in social networks like Instagram or Facebook. Wiedmann et al. (2010, p.67) even call these social influencers “the most powerful force in the fashion marketplace.” Keller and Berry (2003) point out that it is of major importance for a brand to find out who is influential in the online social networks. As a matter of fact, influencers are “people who possess greater than average potential to influence others due to such attributes as frequency of communication, personal persuasiveness or size of a social network” (Nonprofit Business Advisor, 2015). Uzunoglu and Misci Kip (2014, p.25) state, that “bloggers, as content creators, have become digital influencers who are skilled at connecting with users through social media networks”. Digital influencers or bloggers have a great online audience and traffic on their own publishing platform, their blogs. Having generated a follower base there, they easily manage to transfer this follower base to different social media platforms, such as Instagram, which is the main platform for brands to spread influencer campaigns. Moreover, fashion brands can avoid large investments by spending more time identifying influencers, those who are very interested in the products, and developing strong relationships with them (Sammis et al., 2015). Building relationships with influencers has been identified as a tool to help companies increase brand awareness, support product launches and improve the reputation of the brand (Uzunoglu & Misci Kip, 2014).

In conclusion, premium fashion brands must incorporate social media in their business model in order to build strong customer relationships, encourage loyalty, and interact with customers through new channels, formats, or revenue models (Kapferer, 2008). These mix of communication channels enable a more coherent and effective approach for fashion brands, especially if the different channels are all well integrated (Kim & Ko, 2012).

2.4 Fashion Brand Marketing Plan

Little literature has focused specifically on the development of a marketing plan for a fashion brand. Plus, taking into consideration previous analysis of marketing planning (McDonald & Wilson, 2016), it is possible to conclude that some stages at marketing planning process are not suitable for the fashion sector. Considering the insights of previous studies on fashion brand management, and particularly Kapferer's (2008), it is possible to highlight a few relevant aspects that should guide fashion-marketing planning:

1. Identification of a profitable segment or niche.
2. Focusing on this specific segment or niche.
3. Defining a strategy and creating an unique and valuable offer for this segment or niche.
4. Becoming an expert in serving this segment or niche.
5. Concentrating the brand efforts in key-customers.
6. Achieving high quality and design referrals.

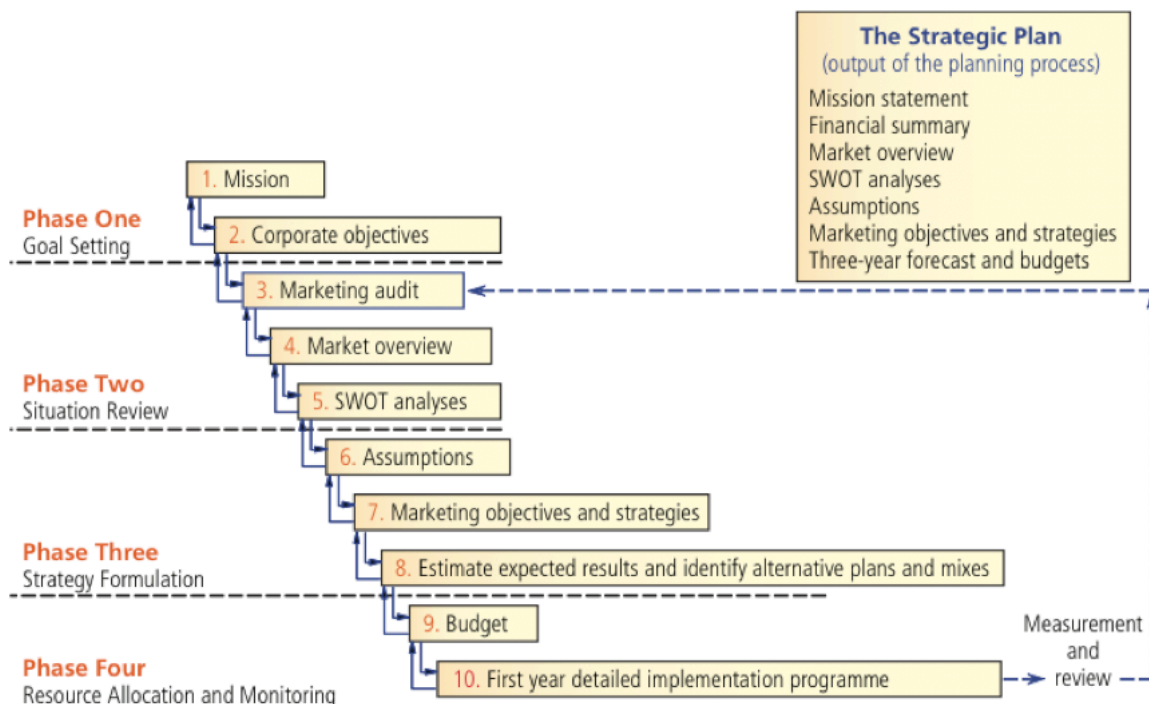


Figure 1 – The 10 steps of the strategic marketing planning process (McDonald & Wilson, 2016).

Moreover, it is also possible to identify the standard phases of a marketing plan according to the authors McDonald & Wilson (2016), represented in figure 1, that can be implemented by a fashion brand:

- Phase 1 regards “Goal Setting”. The brand needs to establish its strategy and understand its market and how it works, by doing a PESTEL analysis, and then to define its vision and mission and key corporate objectives.
- Phase 2 concerns “Situation Review”. The brand needs to perform a proper needs-segmentation on its market. It is essential to understand the brand’s strengths and weaknesses by doing a SWOT analysis, and also to analyse its portfolio of products.
- Phase 3 refers to “Strategy Formulation”. The brand has to identify assumptions and set realistic objectives and strategies to grow sales and profits. The brand needs to focus and act to succeed in few segments or niches. It is also fundamental to calculate whether these objectives and strategies will create value for all brand departments.
- Phase 4 regards “Resource Allocation and Monitoring”. The brand needs to justify the financial investments by setting its marketing budget. It is also crucial for the brand to be professional and ethical during the entire budget allocation processes, and finally, to implement the first-year marketing program.

2.5 Literature Review Conclusions

Regarding the several concepts approached in literature review, it is possible to notice their relevance for the development of *Beatriz Bettencourt's* marketing plan. Literature of fashion brands, in-store and online fashion consumer behavior, fashion brand management (brand identity, product, store and communication management) and fashion brand marketing plan enhanced knowledge on aspects such as brand identity signs, brand positioning, online commerce, flagship and pop up stores, fashion shows and events, social media marketing and word-of-mouth communication, that will be considered for the brand's 2020 marketing plan.

Through the literature review it was possible to define *Beatriz Bettencourt's* brand category as a premium/designer fashion brand, allowing to better understand its marketing environment. Moreover, this also provided additional knowledge to understand customers' perceptions and motives for purchasing premium/designer clothing, mostly linked with emotional and sense of belonging motivations.

Literature review has contributed to the identification of the new challenges in online commerce. It also provided an analysis of online customers' requirements, risks perceptions and their impact over communities. In general, the high-involvement category of fashion requires physical examination of products, thus, customers seek for more and better information online, for advice and feedback of other customers and a virtual extension of the in-store atmosphere experience.

Moreover, literature has proven the importance of building a strong brand identity, focusing on the development of brand identity signs such as the brand's name, logo or packaging. In addition these signs are critical to evoke brand values and attributes. As a matter of fact, regarding the brand positioning of premium/designer fashion brand, it is fundamental to evoke exclusivity, newness and emotional attributes through the brand's marketing-mix and identity signs.

It was also clear that customer's experience, emotional connection with the brand and the in-store involvement and engagement are crucial to reinforce the fashion brand's image. In fact, flagship stores and pop up stores were pointed as ways of "retailment" and powerful marketing tools to build significant relationships with customers.

Furthermore, the literature review has shown the advantages of e-commerce and the relevance of a fashion brand's online presence through channels such as online stores, websites, social media networks or communities. As a matter of fact, social media marketing and influencer marketing, specially focused on Instagram, were mentioned as useful tools for fashion brands' marketing campaigns, since both create brand awareness and contribute to increase brand's sales and profits.

The fashion shows and events, in addition to celebrity endorsement and partnerships with opinion leaders and social influencers, were also highlighted by several authors as essential strategies for fashion brands' communications.

In conclusion, this literature review has confirmed the relevance of developing a comprehensive marketing plan for fashion brands, combining different distribution and communication channels.

3. Methodology

Considering the research questions, the study objectives and the literature review, we decided to use a qualitative methodology in this research, namely a case study strategy. Taking into consideration the brand *Beatriz Bettencourt womenswear*, and considering a case study as a qualitative research strategy appropriate for a situation lacking of structure (Meirinhos & Osório, 2010), it is possible to predict its relevance for the improvement of the brand's resources, as it will allow to understand the brand's "anatomy" and provide the required skills for future brand management.

In fact, a case study (Cesar, 1999) must describe the reality under study according to the nature of the object - in this case *Beatriz Bettencourt womenswear* current positioning within the fashion field - and the future/desired object - *Beatriz Bettencourt womenswear* desired positioning. Thus, the chosen methodology should provide a critical in-depth analysis of the brand and its environment that will contribute for the development of the future brand strategy.

The main advantages of this research methodology are related with the fact that it provides richer data with greater depth, which allows the adaptation of ideas and the production of new hypothesis (Cesar, 1999). Moreover, this type of methodology fits well with this study's main objective: the development of a marketing plan for *Beatriz Bettencourt womenswear*. Thus, through an explanatory case study (Meirinhos & Osório, 2010) of cause-effect relationships with a holistic research that reflects the unity of analysis (the brand) according to multiple sources of structured information, we will achieve a better understanding of the fashion brand's marketing environment.

Therefore, the qualitative research mentioned before will comprehend data collection through in-depth interviews with fashion designers, analysis of previous studies about the fashion sector and competing fashion brands, as well as the analysis of *Beatriz Bettencourt* brand's marketing strategy. In fact, these analysis of different data linked with the fashion designer brand's category, will contribute to final generalizations that will provide better decision-making for *Beatriz Bettencourt* brand. Moreover, assuming that the brand studied needs to invest in several promotion channels, the collection of data regarding fashion management knowledge and usage of e-commerce as well as fashion brands social media marketing and influencer marketing

strategies, will be extremely relevant to develop an effective marketing plan for *Beatriz Bettencourt womenswear*.

In conclusion, the methodology used in this study is based on the following study phases:

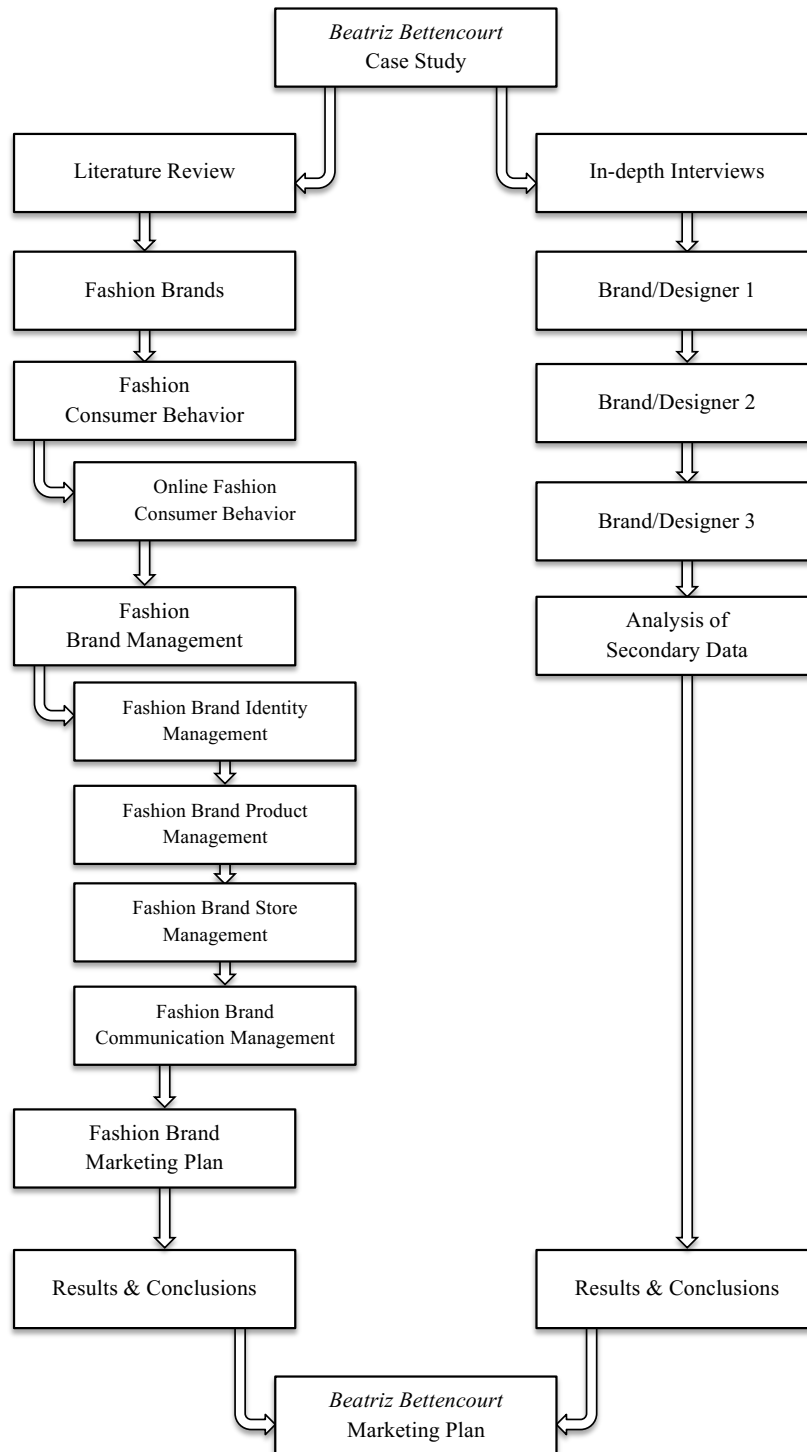


Figure 2 – *Beatriz Bettencourt womenswear* case study.

4. Interviews with Fashion Designers

Taking into consideration the need to develop a benchmarking, in-depth interviews were conducted to three Portuguese fashion designers: Katty Xiomara, Luís Buchinho and Nuno Baltazar. It is important to mention that the selected designers are linked with Portuguese fashion brands that act in the same market as *Beatriz Bettencourt womenswear* and are part of the same fashion brand category.

The conducted interviews focused on several interesting aspects regarding fashion brand management, brand identity and current fashion panorama. The interviews' script (Appendix 1) and the respective interviews' transcription (Appendix 2, 3 and 4) are attached in the appendix section. Following, we will highlight the main findings of the interviews.

4.1 Conclusions of Interviews

The interviews with the three Portuguese fashion designers – Katty Xiomara, Luís Buchinho and Nuno Baltazar – have provided some conclusions regarding the several concepts approached. These concepts concern notions such as: fashion brand image, personality and benefits, fashion brand management (production, pricing, distribution, communication and positioning) and fashion industry paradigms (globalization, technology, social media marketing and online commerce).

Departing from a more general analysis to the particular aspects of each brand, and focusing the study on effective fashion brand management, some relevant facts were pointed by the designers. The interviewed designers addressed the issue of the dimension and structure of their teams, all mentioned having small teams with no more than 4-6 elements working internally and directly with the designer. Moreover, the three brands do not have an entity/person responsible entirely for brand management, usually the head designers are in charge of this role. In fact, the designers are the creative directors and, in general, they have 1-2 assistants that support all the processes between finding ideas, developing those ideas and offering them to the consumers. This is, the designers are surrounded by very multifunctional and versatile people that are in

charge at the same time of several processes, such as stock management, social media management, customer service, and more. In addition, the teams are also composed by modelers and dressmakers that produce samples/prototypes and, when required, small productions. Usually, they work in an *atelier* that could be owned by the designers or by themselves. Externally, the fashion brands are working with other companies/factories that produce several types of garments but without any special linkage. Meaning that there is no contract between entities and they only cooperate when necessary, most of the times in order to produce simpler pieces and achieve better prices. As a matter of fact, concerning the production of collections, every designer is producing in Portugal, essentially in the north of the country. In fact, the country of origin effect was mentioned in the interviews, and the opinions were unanimous. The designers believe that the “made in Portugal” label brings positive connotations for foreign buyers or customers, because they find products with an original design and higher quality. Contrarily, Portuguese customers give more credibility to international than to national brands, and, thus, “made in Portugal” has a negative connotation for national customers.

Focusing more on fashion brand’s communication strategy, in regard to marketing campaigns, all brands highlighted the power of the fashion shows, in order to present their collections to a more specialized audience, and the outcomes they provide, such as special invitations, magazine publications, online *posts* and promotional material for own brand use. All interviewed brands have already been present in international fashion weeks, such as Paris and New York fashion week, besides national Oporto and Lisbon fashion weeks. In parallel, the designers always develop *lookbooks* and catalogs as promotional material for in-store displays or posters, and also for the online store and website content. Additionally, the brands’ websites and social media platforms, like Facebook, Instagram and Pinterest, are the channels most used for brand’s promotion and content release, in order to keep customers updated and for relationship development. On the other hand, the use of sales promotions as marketing communications tools is perceived as “dangerous”, and designers say it may negatively influence brand image, thus, they apply them carefully and in a very personalized way, mostly addressed to special and regular customers.

Concerning the presence of fashion brands in social media and brands’ cooperation with social influencers and bloggers in social networks, like Instagram and Facebook, the designers perceive these platforms as a showcase that provides major

exposure. Therefore, they highlighted that the content created for these platforms needs to be carefully developed and the influencers carefully chosen. Luís Buchinho mentioned having some negative results from the collaboration with social influencers and bloggers, and moreover, Nuno Baltazar even stated his displeasure with this new phenomenon: *“(...) for me the bloggers and social influencers need to be “clear”, they need to be honest and to convey credibility. So I do not want to work with this reality that does not pass trustworthiness”*. In fact, all brands noticed the lack of trust and reliability when dealing with this new form of approaching their niches. Katty Xiomara, for example, referred the added value the brand achieved by dressing celebrities and being represented in special fashion events, adding that *“we have already dressed Kat Graham and Zendaya in New York, we also dressed some actresses and Japanese pop stars”*. Thus, the fashion designers proved to rely more on celebrity endorsement than digital influencers, mainly due to the possibility of creating a stronger and more credible brand image by offering trustable and coherent content.

The questions linked with fashion brand management raised interesting insights and allowed to identify important steps and phases followed in the management of each fashion brand. Some designers noticed they follow an “always-learning process”, in which experience is everything. Others mentioned the importance of sales in order to have funds to strongly communicate and promote the brand’s concept. But in general, some common dilemmas when managing a fashion brand from its start were mentioned, such as finding reliable suppliers, sponsorships, having financial capacity, accounting and the initial lack of commercial and financial skills. Moreover, in respect to the online store management, all brands even mentioned some difficulties regarding stock management and control, the ability to transfer the physical store experience to a virtual world, and the fact that product pictures and videos are very costly due to the use of professional photographer. Furthermore, the fashion designers recognized the importance of a well-defined brand concept, a consistent brand strategy and the creation of a very personal and unique approach allied to talent, as basis for effective brand management. Luís Buchinho even emphasizes this commitment: *“We have to conquer customers by hook, we have to search for points of sale that are interested in our brand, to understand what differentiates our brand from the others, to strongly communicate and support the brand image, to develop promotional material to have in store and to promote effectively the collections on social media”*.

Furthermore, regarding new paradigms such as technology and globalization, and considering their impact on the fashion sector, brands pointed some negative and positive outcomes. Technology was perceived as a helpful tool for the production, by facilitating all processes, creating new challenges and providing added exposure. On the other hand, it empowered competition and increased the demand, which ended up complicating the way that fashion brands are keeping up with the pace of innovation. In general, the designers recognized the advantages and disadvantages of this new reality and tried to manage the circumstances by developing personal relationships with customers, investing in customer service and providing pleasant shopping experiences, both in physical and online stores.

These new paradigms in fashion opened the industry to a bigger and more demanding market. As a matter of fact, all the interviewed designers mentioned the increase of speed and intensity that are affecting the brands' image. Since consumers are more aware and well informed, it is more difficult to surprise them, they have a more "arrogant posture" and feel they have an increased ability to affect the fashion market and, consequently, the fashion brands. In accordance, consumers became critical and demanding, requiring more personalized features. Moreover, they are developing new trends on the streets, combining different pieces from particular designer brands and reinventing these same pieces. As Katty Xiomara mentioned, today's business is rather circular "*from the street to the catwalks and from the catwalks to the street*", and designers are balancing their ideas and proposals with consumers' needs and market requirements. In fact, fashion is sensed as a way of individual expression and a powerful tool for identity creation, as Nuno Baltazar said "*Fashion is seen as a mechanism for visual development of an individual identity, so it requires a great self-knowledge and a particular way of using this tool in order to create a unique personality that differentiates from the others*". Thus, most of the times the designers appreciate the way their pieces are mixed and coordinated in different looks/outfits, allowing consumers to tell a very complete and personalised story.

According to the perspectives of the three designers, each brand has its particular way of expression with distinctive characteristics, personalities and targets. Katty Xiomara, for example, designs for women and embraces their duality – sometimes romantic other times more austere -, focusing on their figure/shape. Luís Buchinho also targets women, but has a different point of view, designing for more confident,

uncompromising and conscious women. Nuno Baltazar has a menswear and womenswear brand, and hence, stated the need to distinguish the two segments: men as more elegant and discreet and women more active, professional and social. Moreover, the brands expressed a certain difficulty in limiting their consumers to an age range. In accordance, the standard age range was between 25-50 years old, but with very diversified and difficult to profile people. As Nuno Baltazar mentioned, *“My target audience is very diversified, different people in different age groups can purchase the same piece and coordinate it as they want”*.

Although there are few relevant differences between the brands studied, the designers perceive their brands as premium, affordable luxury, within the fashion designer brands category and somehow placed between the high-end fashion (luxury) business and fast-fashion. Nuno Baltazar even mentioned his brand as *couture-a-porter*, a more exclusive urban brand with functional attributes and extra care to details and finishes. On the other hand, since each brand is so unique, they developed very personal assets, such as versatility, comfort, safety and special care with materials, details and the piece’s fitting, in order to provide unique functional benefits. And emotion, involvement, mental connection and sensuality are highlighted as emotional benefits offered to consumers. In addition, all the designers mentioned the need of offering a particular product that consists in a signature or iconic piece, a special dress for Nuno Baltazar, culottes for Katty and outerwear for Buchinho.

In conclusion, the different designers focused on the approached concepts in a very particular way, but their insights contributes to an interesting overview of fashion brand management requirements.

5. *Beatriz Bettencourt* womenswear - Case Study

5.1 Brand Concept

The *Beatriz Bettencourt* womenswear brand was designed within an academic environment, while studying fashion design at ESAD – Escola Superior de Artes e Design. In this sense, the brand was first developed in 2015 with limited resources, but still promoting a strong purpose/message.

Since its beginning, the *Beatriz Bettencourt* brand was created to serve a specific market and to evoke a very particular vision of fashion itself. Therefore, the brand's first statement was "Womenswear fashion brand with a contemporary spirit. Focused on a positive and loose attitude. Designed for confident, dynamic and successful women".

Taking into consideration this initial description of the brand, and after attending a marketing course, it is possible to reformulate it by giving additional and relevant information. Thus, complementing the statement above, *Beatriz Bettencourt* is a womenswear brand designed for active, confident and dynamic women, offering functional yet personalized clothing. The brand has its focus in women with a strong attitude and character that enjoy mixing different fits/shapes, patterns and colours. It evokes a positive and loose mood by offering garments following the very personal perspective of the designer. *Beatriz Bettencourt* womenswear philosophy recalls the enjoyment of life, by offering an interpretation of the contemporary quotidian spirit and city style rhythms.

5.1.1 Target Audience

The brand's target audience is women between 20-45 years old, characterized by their positive attitude, confidence and empowerment. Thus, the brand has its focus on elegant, joyful, active and dynamic women.

5.1.2 Brand Positioning

Beatriz Bettencourt womenswear is a designer brand, therefore evoking a status of a premium/new luxury brand. It may compare its functional and emotional benefits to fashion houses such as Dior, Prada, Balenciaga or even Chanel, which are among the brand's desired competitive framework. However, the positioning achieved by the brand is closer to the one of Portuguese designer brands, like Alexandra Moura, Nuno Baltazar, Katty Xiomara and Luís Buchinho.

Thus, like other premium fashion designers brands, *Beatriz Bettencourt womenswear* provides unique, high-quality and stylish designs at premium prices to a medium selected and exclusive audience.

5.2. Brand Marketing-Mix Strategy

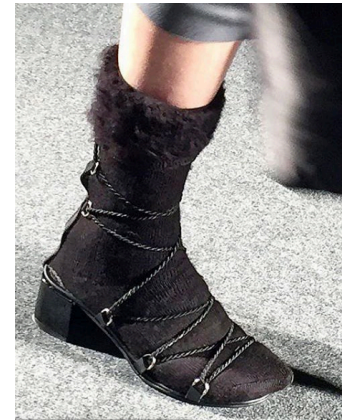
5.2.1 Product



Figures 3, 4, 5 and 6 – SS18 collection product lines.

The brand offers several product categories within women clothing, designed according to each collection's theme. Thus, taking into consideration the concept of the collection, the designer develops several womenswear product lines (figures 3, 4 5 e 6), such as outerwear (coats, jackets and vests), dresses, overalls, skirts, shirts and blouses, t-shirts and tops, corsets, jeans, several trousers fits and shorts; women accessories

(figures 7, 8 and 9), like bags and purses, and women footwear (figure 10). In addition, it is important to mention that in each collection it is possible to have product line extensions (figures 11 and 12), for example the same model but in a different color or fabric, and some product complements (figures 13 and 14), such as belts, incorporated bags, two products that are sold together, and among other examples.



Figures 7, 8 and 9 – Accessories of different collections.

Figure 10 – FW17 footwear.



Figures 11 and 12 – SS17 dress line extension.

Figures 13 and 14 – SS18 complementary products.

Moreover, due to brand's limited capacity and reach, it started with unique pieces that were designed for specific collections that were shown at Portugal Fashion. When ordered, the garments were produced to specific clients and under small quantities. At the moment, the designer aims to increase the brand's production, by producing several items of each collection product lines, leaving more stock for future sales, that will be boosted by the 2020 marketing plan. Therefore, ending the limited production of single items in order to be promptly prepared to respond to future market needs and requirements.

5.2.2 Price

The brand's pricing strategy was influenced by internal and external factors. The brand produces unique pieces, under specific orders and in small quantities. The garments are produced in an *atelier* by a seamstress, which requires more caution and detail during the whole production processes. This special attention dedicated to each piece is reflected in the price, the final value of the items. Besides being influenced by cost, the pricing strategy is also influenced by the brand's positioning of a premium/new luxury fashion brand.

Moreover prices are influenced by the customers' value perception of this premium/designer clothing brand, namely the subjective values linked with the unique identity and exclusivity of the offering, and other emotional and mental connections, and objective values related with the attention to finishes and details, the high quality of the products' materials and production, as well as the rarity of the products. Prices are also influenced by competition, and, as there are few premium/designer clothing brands in the Portuguese market, the national and more direct competition is perceived as limited when compared to the international competition of designer brands. Therefore, the prices are set according to the brand's Portuguese direct competitors, following approximately the same price range, and they are lower than the prices practiced by international fashion brands, in order to maintain Portuguese customers and attract foreign ones.

Taking into consideration these different factors, prices range from 60€ to 600€, according to the different product lines and collections' requirements.

5.2.3 Place

At this stage the brand does not have a store, nor physical neither online, but it is present in a multi-brand store – “Scar-Id” -, in Oporto, that sells the items in-store and through its online store. And, in addition, its online presence is also achieved through a multi-brand online channel called “Impius”. As a matter of fact, these two distribution channels were selected according to their image, marketing strategy and markets

served, and also to guarantee a physical and virtual presence. Each retailer has its pros and cons, although both channels seemed suitable for the brand's initial proposal. Scar-Id only sells premium/designer products (clothing, jewelry and accessories) at its physical store in Rua do Rosário in Oporto, which is a well-known street with a lot of people passing by and near central tourist attractions, and through its personal website and online store "<https://scar-id.com>". This multi-brand store works with an 100% commission over each item sold, which means that *Beatriz Bettencourt womenswear* needs to double its prices in order to keep its defined margin. It is Scar-Id that is in charge of product photography, sales and respective deliveries, returns and other customer services. On the other hand, Impius only operates online through its website and online store "<https://www.impius.pt>", selling fashion, design, art and other related products. Regarding the product portfolio, this retailer only sells premium clothing, jewelry and accessories. Impius is also in charge of all product sales and delivery, applying a commission of 30% over each sold item, which means that *Beatriz Bettencourt womenswear* has to add that percentage to its initial prices in order to ensure that its margin is not compromised.

To pay high commissions to these two retailers, is not the ideal situation for *Beatriz Bettencourt womenswear*, but since the brand does not own a physical or an online store, this was considered the most appropriate option. However, in the future, the brand aims to be present in other retail outlets, mainly in pop-up stores, and to develop its personal online store, in order to attract more national and international customers.

5.2.4 Promotion

Beatriz Bettencourt womenswear shows its collections at the Bloom platform of Portugal Fashion (Oporto Fashion Week) addressed to young fashion designers. Through its presence in Bloom, the brand is exposed to a broad audience and increases the impact of its communications, since fashion media and the target audience are present. In this sense, the brand is able to generate posts on fashion blogs and online magazines, backstage images, audience references, critics and fashion magazines publications, like Vogue and Elle, among other relevant outcomes. Furthermore, the brand has recently created a page in social networks like Facebook, Instagram and

Pinterest, and it has also created a website on WIX, which provides predefined layouts and does not require a financial investment, since it is not effectively owned by *Beatriz Bettencourt womenswear* - <http://beatrizbettencourt.wixsite.com/womenswear>.

Thus, regarding future communication plans, Beatriz Bettencourt womenswear wants to continue its presence in Portugal Fashion and desires to show its collections at European fashion capitals, such as Paris, London or Milan fashion weeks. Additionally, it desires to create its own professional website, a dedicated platform with the brand's collections, new product developments, a blog, a news section (to announce and promote its presence in showrooms, fairs, celebrity endorsement and other events) and a tab for its own online store with all products and collections.

Regarding social media channels, the brand needs to develop a well thought strategy to approach them, in order to take advantage of their reach and impact, and to invest in customized advertisement. Moreover, the brand aspires to work with bloggers and digital influencers, so that its message could be spread more efficiently and effectively, and that it is able to generate direct sales.

5.3 Brand Identity Signs

Considering the relevance of building a strong brand image and identity, it is important to analyse the brand identity signs such as: the brand's name, logo, lettering, colors and other visual figures.

Regarding the name, and since the brand is a fashion designer brand, it has embraced the author's name in order to convey an exclusive identity and a unique set of values - *Beatriz Bettencourt womenswear*.



Figure 15 - Beatriz Bettencourt womenswear's logo.

The brand logo (figure 15) is composed by several elements: lettering, a specific figure and two colours. The lettering uses the typography “Lineal Simples ST” and is applied in capital letters. The visual figure is related with the concept of the two caps of the designer’s name – “BB” – that were designed in a very specific way, creating a drawing of a clover with three leafs. This concept of an imperfect clover, without the four leafs, conveys the notion of constant development and a spirit of constant evolution. In fact, that is one of the main messages that the brand aims to communicate, the fact that it is constantly refreshing and updating its offering with stylish designs. Moreover, the colours of black and white evoke a clean, minimalistic, sophisticated and elegant brand image.

As a matter of fact, the brand logo is composed by the three-leaf clover figure and the author’s name, but it was created in a way that makes it possible to use the figure or the name separately. The logo can be regarded as the brand’s signature, as it is always present in retailer’s promotional material, in shows/events and social media content. Moreover, the logo is used in prints, embroideries, details and accessories in the design of the brand’s products.

6. *Beatriz Bettencourt womenswear* - 2020 Marketing Plan

Following the recommendations of the literature, the analysis of the benchmarking study, and taking into consideration the brand concept and the marketing strategies previously analysed, we aim to develop an effective marketing plan for *Beatriz Bettencourt womenswear*. Regarding the several marketing planning steps approached in the literature, we will conduct an internal and external (macro and micro environments) analysis, as well as a SWOT analysis, define the brand's marketing objectives, settle marketing strategies, detail the marketing budget and its allocation, schedule the marketing strategies, and finally, define a control and contingency plan.

The marketing plan will be developed for the year of 2020, according to the main brand objectives of creating awareness and increasing sales and profits, and considering the conclusions of the analysis of its marketing environment.

6.1 Internal Analysis

6.1.1 Vision

Beatriz Bettencourt womenswear aspires to:

- Become an indisputable leader in premium fashion;
- Contribute with exclusive, refined and exceptional designs;
- Assure constant sales dynamics through different collection's themes.

6.1.2 Mission

Beatriz Bettencourt womenswear wants to “dress people with emotions, pleasing its customers with fresh, stylish and exceptional designs”.

6.1.3 Values

- Passion and Motivation: faithful to its purpose and concept;
- Integrity: driven by environmental sustainability;
- Innovation: providing fresh and new ideas to its customers;
- Excellence: providing extra quality on its fashion products.

6.2 External Analysis

6.2.1 Macro Environment

In order to develop a coherent marketing plan, it is crucial to analyse the external environment that surrounds *Beatriz Bettencourt womenswear*, and therefore to study the macro environment, by conducting a PESTLE and a Market Trends analysis.

6.2.1.1 PESTEL

In this PESTEL analysis we will concentrate on the main political, economic, social, technological, environmental and legal factors that are affecting the global fashion industry in accordance with the Business of Fashion (BoF) and McKinsey & Company' reports for 2018 and 2019 regarding the fashion industry panorama:

- Political factors: Geopolitical instability, worldwide terrorism attacks, Brexit, political shifts in US, UK and other countries, and stalled trade deals have increased a pervasive sense of uncertainty and volatility in the global economy. The economy is also intervened by the laws and policies issued by the government, laws like recycling of waste, policies regarding import, export and trade have a major impact on fashion industry. The industry is also affected by the rules and regulation regarding taxation and the fact that these rules change country-by-country, affecting economic growth.
- Economic factors: The volatility in the Chinese market, the economic fluctuations in Russia and the demonetization in India are some of the global factors affecting the entire fashion industry. In addition, the situation of employment has grown better globally, and therefore, consumers' buying power has increased. Moreover, the level of competition in the fashion industry has also affected individual

brands and their sales and profits. The inflation rate and exchange rate have always affected this industry, since the economic growth of fashion industry is perceived when interest rate is low, and therefore the sales become massive and large profits occur.

- Social factors: Major social changes have occurred in the last ten years that have affected the demand for fashion products. The millennial generation is now the main target of the fashion marketers and its preferences (quality at lower prices) are very different from previous generations. Moreover, mainly due to e-commerce, there are some significant changes in how people shop regarding both online and in-store experiences, how they make their purchase decisions through online communities, evaluating customers' feedback, ratings and reviews, or in terms of brand preferences with more detailed information available online. The demographic changes in the population, such as less fortunate middle class and more prosperous luxury class, multigenerational households on the rise, sheltering in place, more young adults and less young kids, more single adults than married, and more working men than women, have also affected the marketing paradigm, bringing new challenges to marketers. Furthermore, the fashion industry has felt the growth of fast fashion that has brought design, style and affordable but good quality fashion to customers; the shorten lead times of fast-fashion have created new challenges for high-end fashion brands that struggle to keep up with the pace. Premium fashion is no longer a privilege of high-income consumers, due to the affordable use of technology; consumers are more informed and make decisions based on information acquired from several resources, relying more on feedback than on advertising or marketing campaigns. Moreover, cultural differences and attitudes towards fashion affect the whole fashion industry, for example, the cost of labor and the rules against child labor depend on each culture, and affect the brand image, costs and sales.

- Technological factors: Globalization, IT, Internet and increased use of mobile devices for shopping are affecting sales, marketing and consumer choices. Consumers are more powerful, making better choices after searching for information, discussing choices with others, sharing their views, rating and reviewing all buying experiences. Nowadays, consumers prefer to shop online and enjoy a more personalized experience in terms of shopping and customer service. Besides improving production and supply chain by speeding the processes but increasing costs, technology has also brought greater effectiveness to the sales and marketing of fashion products. It has also allowed fashion brands to expand their markets, since e-commerce has helped them to cross borders and sell to a larger market. Moreover, Artificial Intelligence has also provided the substitution of human labor in several fashion production and delivery stages.
- Environmental factors: Environment and sustainability are important terms in the fashion industry. Fashion brands are concerned about their carbon footprint and are marketing themselves as more environmentally friendly, using environment friendly raw materials, packaging and operations. According to the Business of Fashion (BoF) and McKinsey & Company's 2018 report, fashion brands have prioritized sustainable fashion and they are working to transform product design and manufacturing, in the direction of maximization of productivity and minimization of carbon emissions. The report also highlights that sustainability has become a key influencer of consumers' purchasing decisions.
- Legal factors: Ethics and compliance are important focus areas for the fashion brands. The fashion industry is a large employer and, apart from labor laws, there are other common laws that are applicable.

Besides the laws related to international trades, the environmental laws have recently grown. Moreover, the issue of child labor is a common worldwide concern and many legal activities are being held in this sense.

6.2.1.2 Market Trends Analysis

The Business of Fashion (BoF) and McKinsey & Company's reports about the fashion industry in 2018 and 2019 have approached three major trends: Global Economy, Consumer Shifts and The Fashion System. These three trends are expected to change and challenge fashion brands, requiring them to develop extra efforts in all supply chain processes in order to hold their competitive advantage and ensure their strategies' success.

The Global Economy focuses on the fact that economic growth is shifting from mature markets in the West to emerging markets in the South and in the East. The rapidly growing cities in emerging markets are considered important growth centers for the fashion industry. Furthermore, the adoption of disruptive technologies, such as robotics, mobile Internet, advanced analytics, virtual and augmented reality and artificial intelligence is increasing with the potential to disrupt the fashion industry. With this increased digital commerce without borders, it becomes harder for local brands to compete with global champions. But it is possible to take advantage of the new opportunities to enter new markets and to access worldwide customers through owned or third party platforms. It is possible for fashion brands to enter new markets without establishing a physical presence. Moreover, the last decade was characterized by economic and political uncertainty. Significant world events became frequent, from terrorist attacks to geopolitical turmoil, such as Qatar's, and the tension between North Korea and the United States of America. In addition, the number of natural disasters worldwide has risen. So, it is not surprising that fashion brands continue to face uncertainty and major challenges when promoting business. Successful brands will need to become more agile, work faster and in a feasible manner, always keeping customer needs in their focus. Fashion brands need to build flexible supply chains and delivery models that can respond quickly to environmental changes.

Consumer Shifts concerns the digital adoption by the mainstream consumer. The shopper's convenience through digital channels and content has changed the customer journey from a linear model to a more complex journey, and consumers expect a consistent brand experience at all online and offline touch-points. Many consumers expect perfect functionality and immediate support, becoming used to quick delivery times. Moreover, customer attention is focused on new communications channels, like social networks. This has a huge impact on fashion, since most purchase decisions are influenced by social media, peer reviews and influencer marketing. With an easy and fast access to information, consumers are able to compare everything, becoming less brand loyal and more price sensitive. But they are also basing their purchasing decisions on brand's practices and by analyzing if the brand's mission is aligned with their values. They have higher expectations on what a brand should be able to deliver, like convenience, quality, newness and price. Furthermore, consumers are requiring more personalization and fashion brands are delivering it in many forms, such as, more customized products, recommendations, communications and storytelling that connects to customers as individuals. In fact, there is a growing desire among consumers to use fashion to express a particular style, their self-image and values, and social media play an important role at this respect. Consumers trust others for information and perceive the lifestyle and recommendations of the influencers as more authentic than traditional communication efforts, which have led to more influencer endorsements, in addition to product reviews and referrals from peers.

The Fashion System regards the online movement that led many fashion brands to face a sharp decline in in-store traffic. They are looking for ways to reduce store-operating costs and innovate in in-store experience to attract customers. Fashion brands are working to deliver an integrated shopping journey across all touch-points and these omnichannel efforts do not usually deliver profit in the short run. On the other hand, innovative business models are challenging the fashion industry due to the proliferation of big data. The use of this rich, in-depth data and customer insights offer several opportunities across the fashion value chain. However, new challenges also appeared linked with customer data protection and privacy. Moreover, the fast pace of the industry is influencing the fashion system. In order to keep up, fashion brands are accelerating the time from design to store, and this necessity of speed is mostly driven by social media, bringing fashion trends to wider markets at a faster pace. But speed and

flexibility challenges fashion, since shortening lead times requires major changes in traditional business models and in the supply chain's structure that should develop into a customer-centric model, in which the customer is the main driver of design, production and communication. Furthermore, the possibilities provided by Artificial Intelligence (AI) - computer systems that perform tasks usually requiring human intelligence – as a result of larger and more diverse data, advancement in algorithms, and exceptional levels of mathematical computing power, recall the delivery of significant speed, cost and flexibility improvements across all fashion supply chain. Such improvements will please consumers with better product availability, faster and more accurate deliveries. On the other hand, sustainability will be at the center of innovation, and fashion brands are moving to a circular economy, closing the loop of the product lifecycle by recycling and regenerating. Sustainability, empowered by advancements in technology across materials, products and processes, can be perceived as a real source of differentiation. Since consumer attention on sustainability increased, fashion brands can use their advantage to promote revenue growth. But besides sustainability, fashion brands are realizing that survival requires constant innovation.

6.2.2 Micro Environment

In order to develop an effective and detailed marketing plan, it is important to analyse the microenvironment that surrounds *Beatriz Bettencourt womenswear*. Therefore, there is the need to study the brand's customers, competitors and suppliers, and conduct a five forces of Porter analysis.

6.2.2.1 Customers

Beatriz Bettencourt womenswear targets women between 20-45 years old who are looking for quality, comfort and style in their fashion designs. The brand focus on elegant, joyful, active and dynamic women that enjoy playing with colours, prints and patterns, and mixing different materials, shapes and textures.

Considering the short period of time in which the brand is established in the market, it is crucial to mention that it does not have a large and regular customer base or loyal customers. Thus, one of the main brand's objectives with the development of this marketing plan is to attract and retain new customers. In fact, this should be possible to achieve through the different strategies applied in the coming year of 2020.

6.2.2.2 Competitors

In order to identify *Beatriz Bettencourt womenswear* main competitors, we need to consider the brand's positioning as a premium designer brand, and consider its operations in a particular market segment, within the Portuguese market. Therefore, other Portuguese designer brands, like Alexandra Moura, Nuno Baltazar, Katty Xiomara and Luís Buchinho are perceived as the brand's direct competition. Moreover, besides the national competitors, international designer brands such as Tory Burch, MaxMara, Fendi or Balenciaga, for example, are considered sources of competition. Since *Beatriz Bettencourt womenswear* wants to operate internationally, it cannot restrain its competition from designer brands across all countries of the world.

Moreover, it is possible to identify some competitive advantages of Portuguese designer brands when compared to *Beatriz Bettencourt womenswear*, regarding their greater experience and awareness within the national fashion market. These brands are established in Portugal for several years, which have provided them the opportunity to achieve more credibility and awareness, as well as to build stronger networks. In fact, brands like Nuno Baltazar and Luís Buchinho have more opportunities than other recent Portuguese brands, due to their exclusive brand image, customer database and available partnerships with other companies (knits, fabrics, accessories, and more) and entities (endorsements, collaborations, among others). Their uniqueness is one of their main strengths, since each Portuguese designer brand aims to evoke a personal identity reflected in a particular approach to the fashion market. In addition,

these brands achieve better price deals with the suppliers, which consequently provide them better profit margins. It is difficult for new-born brands to compete with other brands that are already operating in the same market with a greater scale, since these brands produce larger quantities of pieces, therefore achieving more competing prices.

On the other hand, besides the mentioned difficulties that *Beatriz Bettencourt womenswear* may face when competing directly with Portuguese designer brands, the brand will take a step forward by investing on its online presence and on digital marketing strategies. As referred in the interviews, these brands are not devoting the required attention to the new digital and social platforms that are challenging the fashion industry. We believe that the future digital marketing strategies, implemented in 2020, will help *Beatriz Bettencourt womenswear* achieving its desired positioning, gaining a competitive advantage.

Furthermore, it is possible to identify common characteristics among the Portuguese competitor brands when compared to the international ones. In Portugal, fashion designer brands face a different reality, as they are considered smaller in size and scope, operating with fewer resources, facing more limited opportunities, mainly due to Portuguese traditions and mind-sets related to the country-of-origin effects, as well as national, political and economic factors.

Thus, *Beatriz Bettencourt womenswear* faces these same national paradigms, which intensifies national competition and adds difficulty when managing international operations. In fact, Portuguese fashion houses do not seem to have the adequate structure to compete directly with international designer brands, but in recent years they have been working hard in this regard.

6.2.2.3 Suppliers

It is essential to mention that the brand's suppliers vary according to product lines, as well as the collection's theme. Thus, depending on the circumstances, the brand cooperates with yarn producers, leather manufacturers, knit and fabric industries, accessories, embroideries, dying and stamping

companies, as well as, different factories in order to produce its designs. In this sense, *Beatriz Bettencourt womenswear* does not have predefined or established suppliers, they vary in conformity with the brand's products or collections requirements, with the supplier's quantities, prices and quality.

Besides the constraints associated with the brand's supplier selection, it usually works with knit and fabric companies like Armaco, Savior, LMA, LEMAR, Riopole, Lurdes Sampaio, Troficolor, among other entities. These companies are located in the north of the country, in cities such as Trofa, Famalicão, Braga and Guimarães.

6.2.2.4 Five Forces Analysis

The five forces analysis takes into consideration the impact of new entrants, buyers/customers, suppliers, substitutes and rivalry among existing players within a specific business or industry. Thus, regarding the premium fashion industry, it is possible to evaluate and score the impact of such forces over *Beatriz Bettencourt womenswear*:

- Threat of New Entrants (6/10): The threat of new entrants is perceived as a medium/high force affecting the premium fashion industry. The consumers' requirements of quality, exclusive and stylish designs make them more loyal to major brands. However, fashion brands have limited switching costs among consumers, who can search for better deals and compare prices through physical and online channels anywhere and anytime. Moreover, running a premium designer brand requires high capital investments and fixed costs, as well as, facing the difficulty of accessing several resources and distribution channels. It requires dealing with different countries and cultural restrictions, legislations and entry protections. And, in addition, dealing with different product categories and ensuring their quality and design, also affects the impact of new entrants that commonly need more time to conquer and satisfy the requirements of

their target market. In this sense, balancing these main entry barriers with the actual purchasing power of consumers, the threat of new entrants comprehends a more neutral force for *Beatriz Bettencourt womenswear*.

- Power of Customers (7/10): The power of customers is considered relatively high, since customers can easily have access to the proposals of several fashion brands and achieve better deals in terms of design, quality and price levels. Customers can simply switch to another identic fashion product to meet their need of self-gratitude, luxury and exhibitionism. Moreover, designer brands approach market segments of medium/high income, and consequently, the number of customers is more concentrated and less price sensitive. However, with the emergence of fast fashion, substitute products have increased, allowing consumers to purchase designer models at lower prices. Thus, taking into consideration these main factors, *Beatriz Bettencourt womenswear* is highly affected by customers' power.

- Power of Suppliers (3/10): The power of suppliers within the premium fashion industry is perceived as low since there is a large number of available suppliers in the market, providing better quality deals at lower prices. In fact, it is easy for a brand like *Beatriz Bettencourt womenswear* to switch for better and cheaper suppliers. Moreover, there are several substitute products available in the marketplace, and the switching costs for brands are low, therefore reducing the impact of suppliers over this fashion brands category.

- Threat of Substitutes (8/10): The threat of substitutes is extremely high in the fashion industry. If on the one hand customers require more different, unique and exclusive designs, on the other hand they easily contact with cheaper substitute products. As mentioned before, with fast-fashion, consumer's switching costs have lowered. Products able to substitute designer pieces are regularly found in mass-fashion brands like Zara or H&M, for example. These brands usually replicate premium designs

at lower prices and with relatively good quality, being able to equal the designer products' performance. Since consumer's switching costs are low, and there are constant changes in fashion fads and trends, substitute products have a huge impact over brands like *Beatriz Bettencourt womenswear*.

- Competitive Rivalry (9/10): The competitive rivalry among premium fashion players is intense. There are many fashion brands with fairly the same size and structure, and hence there is no dominant brand and the discrepancy between brands is low. Moreover, the level of differentiation between competitor's products' quality and performance is low. On the other hand, there are a lot of differences regarding the style and design of competing fashion products. In addition, the fashion industry is considered a mature industry with a low and slow growth, the fixed costs are high, customers switching costs are low and brands are strategically diverse, meaning that they are positioned differently from competing brands. All these factors explain the high and intense force of rivalry between designer brands, affecting the marketing strategies of *Beatriz Bettencourt womenswear*.

6.3 SWOT analysis

The SWOT analysis, as a strategic planning technique, will help *Beatriz Bettencourt womenswear* identify its main strengths, weaknesses, as well as the major opportunities and threats. Thus, it comprehends an analysis of the internal and external factors that may help or limit the achievement of the brand's objectives and the development of its competitive advantage. The strengths and weaknesses related with internal resources and competencies, while opportunities and threats are linked with the external environment.

Strengths

- Strong brand proposal and values
- Exclusive design
- High quality products
- Products differentiation
- Style & comfort
- Diversity in product portfolio
- Development of new trends
- Special product lines, line extensions and complementary products
- Know-how of the fashion industry

Weaknesses

- Limited resources to invest in brand management
- Low brand awareness
- Limited availability of products and sizes
- Lack of points of sale (physical and online stores)
- Lack of customer service
- Premium price range

Opportunities

- Target new segments: menswear, kidswear, etc.
- Association with social influencers
- Celebrity endorsements
- International expansion through digital channels
- Collaboration with other designers, companies and entities (knit and fabric companies, social influencers, celebrities, among other examples)
 - Sponsorships (shows and events)
 - New product lines and extensions: accessories, footwear, perfumes, etc.
 - Endless fashion: constant changing trends and fads
 - Changes in lifestyle: formalwear, activewear, etc.

Threats

- Several substitute products
- Low cost fast-fashion's replicas
- Intensive competition between premium fashion brands
- Laws, policies and taxes (environment, labor, export and import)
- Digital commerce (transfer the physical examination of garments to the brand's online store)
 - Agility of supply chain (achieve the required speed and flexibility)
 - Customer power (brands do not control online communities and customer interactions on social networks)
 - Omnichannel presence (guarantee a strong and coherent image across all distribution and communication channels)

6.4 Marketing Objectives

We will now identify the main objectives that *Beatriz Bettencourt womenswear* aims to achieve. These objectives will provide a guideline for marketing procedures that will be implemented in 2020. The main objectives are linked with the need to create brand recognition, customer-brand engagement and increase trade deals. Therefore, we may state that *Beatriz Bettencourt's* marketing plan objectives focus on the growth of this small and recent designer brand.

- Awareness: the brand needs to build awareness and gain credibility, in order to attract and retain customers in national and international markets. It is crucial to increase the brand recall and recognition through multiple strategies linked with the stimulation of word-of-mouth communication, mostly on social media channels. The creation of brand awareness is a necessary step for the building of a differentiated brand image, but also to generate more sales.
- Sales: considering the low level of brand sales mostly due to insufficient distribution channels, the brand expects that with the new marketing strategies, it will increase sales by 50%. That means generating an extra amount of 30.000€ in sales during the twelve months of the year. It is important to mention that if the expected value is not met in the middle of the year (May and June of 2020), then necessary adjustments should be made in order to guarantee that the sales targets will be addressed by the end of the year.
- Profit: since brand sales are related to brand profit, then it is also expected that the brand will increase its profit by 50% with the 2020 marketing plan. Thus, considering the extra values in terms of sales and the relative margin applied by *Beatriz Bettencourt womenswear*, the brand expects to achieve a profit of 15.000€. On the other hand, it is important to mention that sometimes a rise in sales does not mean an equivalent rise in profit, but in

this specific case we assure this will happen. The brand will control if the expected value is being accomplished and it will implement additional programs if the desired target in terms of profits is not met in the middle of the year.

Furthermore, in order to promote the desired growth in respect to brand awareness, sales and profit, *Beatriz Bettencourt womenswear* plans to be physically present in stores, develop a personal website and online store, create fashion shows and events, mark its presence in fashion magazines and take advantage of the benefits provided by social media and influencer marketing.

6.5 Marketing Plan Strategies

In order to achieve the desired objectives, several strategies were formulated for the 2020 marketing plan. These strategies are not only related with the brand purpose and the necessary requirements to take advantage of its physical and online distribution and promotion channels, but also linked with the information collected through the literature review and in-depth interviews with Portuguese fashion designers.

In summary, the strategies regard the brand's presence in pop-up stores, the development of a website and online store, the promotion through fashion shows and events, publications in fashion magazines and advertisement in social media channels, like Facebook and Instagram through in-app advertisement and influencer marketing (bloggers and digital influencers). All these strategies are further explained below.

In order to ensure the accomplishment of the objectives previously presented, during the one-year plan, there will be three key months for the review and possible adjustments in the marketing strategies - February, April and June of 2020- in which the performance of the different channels will be analysed in order to ensure they are delivering the expected results. In case the results are not being met, then the brand needs to do the necessary adaptations, increase productivity and/or cancel operations on corresponding distribution and communication channels.

6.5.1 Pop-up Stores

In regard to the brand's marketing-mix strategy and the requirement of being physically present in stores, the brand will allocate an amount of 2200€ to rent pop-up stores. In this sense, the brand will focus its presence in key European locations, starting in Portugal, with Lisbon and then travelling to Barcelona, London, Paris and Milan.

Since the concept of pop-up stores is linked with temporal flexibility, its opening period could be from a single day up to several months. In addition, regarding the small amount considered for this strategy, a careful management of pop-up stores' duration in each city is required. Moreover, we are aware that rental fees may vary according to locations within cities, but it is a brand's fundamental purpose to be physically represented in European fashion capitals. In addition, *Beatriz Bettencourt* could do a partnership with other national or international fashion designer(s) in order to split the expenses and take greater advantage of foreign buyers/customers sales.

In fact, in order to take advantage of this marketing instrument, it is key to choose the perfect location, space and time frame, based on available resources. Being present in pop-up stores will also provide the brand the possibility of creating special events, promote the brand's concept, engage customers and develop emotional experiences. Moreover, each presence in pop-up stores will be communicated and promoted in the brand's social media channels – Facebook and Instagram – and website.

Furthermore, since the main goals of this strategic marketing plan consist in increasing sales and creating brand awareness, it is crucial to offer customers the possibility to have physical contact with the brand's products and to develop personal relationships with them.

In this sense, *Beatriz Bettencourt womenswear* plans to be present in:

- Oporto, at Avenida dos Aliados for a period of 2 days in April - 60€ p/day
- Lisbon, at Avenida da Liberdade for a period of 2 days in May - 60€ p/day
- Barcelona, in Gracia area for a period of 4 days in June - 110€ p/day
- Paris, in Montmartre area for a period of 4 days in September - 140€ p/day
- Milan, in Navigli area for 4 days in November - 120€ p/day
- London, in Soho for 4 days in December – 120€ p/day

Please note that the mentioned costs are the maximum expected renting costs per each city based on previous simulations in *www.whataspace.com* and *www.gopopup.com*. If possible and preferably, the brand will pay lower values for each rented space due to sponsorships or investments of Portuguese entities, like *Portugal 2020* or ANJE– Associação Nacional de Jovens Empresários -, partnerships with other designers, brands and artists or even by invitation of fashion talents’ companies. Moreover, it is important to mention that additional travelling expenses are not associated to this calculation.

6.5.2 Website and Online store

In order to help the brand to achieve its desired objectives, it is also crucial to develop a professional website with an online store section. For this strategy, the brand will allocate 1600€. As mentioned, the website will include the following content:

- *Lookbooks* and fashion editorials with the respective descriptions of each collection theme and concept behind it;
- New product developments;
- Blog, in which customers can follow all supply chain processes, from product design, and production to actual distribution, and get to know the designer as an individual;
- News sections, communicating all brand presences, shows and events;
- Online store with all products divided by collections and their respective composition, which can be sorted by: product category, such as coats and jackets, shirts, jeans, shorts, skirts, and others; colour, fabric, size and price.
- About the brand, a section addressed to promote the brand concept, vision, mission and values, as well as the designer’s biography.

Moreover, the website will have a minimalistic design with an accessible and intuitive navigation across all devices (computer, smartphone and tablet). It will comprehend a search and help tool in order to facilitate customers’ exploration, returns and devolutions, payment, delivery and privacy policies, as well as purchase conditions. In addition, it will have Facebook, Instagram and Pinterest icons in order to redirect customers to the brand’s social media pages.

Given all the content planned for the brand's website and online store, the required costs refer to:

- Website and store development (content design, *Shopify* online store platform, payment gateway, etc.) - 660€
- Annual ".com" website fee – 30€
- Annual e-mail service fee – 50€
- *Shopify* monthly fee (12 fees p/ year) – 360€
- Product photography of developed collections - 500€

The listed costs are based on a required budget of a website expertise, but the brand will have additional costs with the sales transactions, deliveries, national and international payment commissions and more that will not be countable for the annual marketing plan budget allocation.

6.5.3 Shows and Events

Beatriz Bettencourt womenswear will be present in Oporto's fashion week at the *Bloom* space of Portugal Fashion twice – in March and in October of 2020, presenting its Spring/Summer and Fall/Winter collections. Since the brand was invited, there are no inherent costs with this presence. That is, the brand only has to produce its collections and the space for its shows is provided free of charge.

The brand aims to be present in fashion shows of European fashion capitals, such as Paris, London and Milan, but due to the great costs involved, and considering the priority investment in pop-up stores across Europe, this will not be feasible for the upcoming year. However, the brand plans to conquer foreign buyers/customers' interest in the pop-up stores, through the website and other tools, and, thus to generate profit to invest in future international fashion shows or to get invitations for these shows. The choice to be represented in concept spaces of physical stores instead of fashion weeks shows is related with the brand's available resources and the possibility to create special events/shows in these key locations by taking advantage of the stores' space.

In summary, the brand will be present in total of eight shows/events or stores in 2020, two shows in Portugal fashion and six events in each pop-up store (Oporto, Lisbon, Barcelona, Paris, Milan and London).

6.5.4 Fashion Magazines

Nowadays, the interest that fashion magazines have on fashion brands is based on their fashion shows/events, online publications, social media posts and references, critics and worldwide presences, therefore it does not seem wise for *Beatriz Bettencourt womenswear* to invest its resources directly in fashion magazines. Thus, the brand will not develop press kits or even pay to be present in fashion magazines. These magazines will become interested in generating content about the brand, based on the brand's awareness, image and the success of the marketing strategies implemented. Thus, the brand expects that in the future, fashion magazines, such as ELLE and Vogue, will promote its products/collections without the need to allocate financial resources this promotional strategy. However, in order to accomplish this, the brand will also need to develop close relationships with the targeted fashion magazines.

6.5.5 Google Advertisement

Beatriz Bettencourt womenswear plans to invest in *Google Ads* since they function as search advertisement in Google, but also as a banner with images or multimedia content, video ads on *YouTube* and in apps. This type of advertisement could have a local or global reach and Google Ads provide mechanisms to test, adjust and control the ads performance, as well as, ways to control the brand's budget. It also enables segmentation, showing the ads to a targeted audience with specific demographic data, background, key words, behaviour and interests.

Concerning its reach, on the web and in applications across all devices (desktop, smartphones, tablets, and more), Google Ads displays the advertisement on more than

two million websites and over 650,000 apps, so it can be communicated directly to customers without any limitations in terms of time or space.

Therefore, according to *Beatriz Bettencourt womenswear*' marketing objectives, Google Ads will include an image retrieved from the lookbook of the brand's latest collection with its logo, which will link the ad to the brand's website and online store. As mentioned, the advertising will appear on several websites as a banner, as well as, in apps according to the defined target audience: women in the age range of 20-50 years old with medium/high income, from cultural big cities and western Europe countries like Portugal, Spain, Italy, France, Germany, UK, Netherlands, and in other key locations such as USA, Brazil, China and Japan. Their interests will be related to fashion, style, brands, design, apparel, accessories, travelling, cinema, museums, theatre, music, shows and events, etc. according to the brand's purpose and target audience. In fact, *Beatriz Bettencourt womenswear* does not plan to invest directly in SEO (Search Engine Optimization) specifically in Google, since it recognizes that ads are more appropriated to its goals.

Moreover, with Google Ads it is possible for the brand to start and stop the campaign anytime without extra payment or cancellation fee, according to the results obtained, which can be controlled in real time. Google charges per click, impression or conversion, thus, considering the brand's objective to create awareness and to promote its website and online store by increasing their traffic, paying per click seems to be the most suitable strategy. The brand can define the price that it is willing to pay for a person's click based on its budget. Therefore, regarding the collected information and previous simulation in *www.ads.google.com*, the brand plans to invest a total amount of 1000€ in this marketing strategy during the 2020 campaign. *Beatriz Bettencourt womenswear* will run a Google Ads test campaign in January and it will analyse its results in February in order to take greater advantage of this platform features and review the defined budget for the remaining ten months.

6.5.6 Social Media Marketing

As explained in the literature review, social media marketing (SMM) is a key strategy for fashion brands. In fact, SMM can boost word-of-mouth communication, increase brand awareness, sales transactions and, consequently, brand's profit.

Thus, considering all the possible advantages of SMM, such as conducting targeted promotion, constant control and monitoring of performance and results, on time feedback, proximity with customers/users, on-going adjustments of communication, the brand plans to invest 1000€ in advertisement on each social media platform in which it has a page, namely Facebook and Instagram, investing a total of 2000€ in advertisement on social media.

Moreover, the brand will invest an amount of 2400€ on influencer marketing by working with bloggers and digital influencers through online publications on their Instagram profiles and blog accounts.

6.5.6.1 Facebook Ads

Regarding the communication objectives of Facebook ads, they enable brands to do promotions, increase brand reach and interaction with users or future customers, and generate traffic to the brand's website and online store. Thus, with the investment in advertisement on Facebook, the brand expects to meet its marketing objectives more effectively.

Moreover, Facebook provides a more targeted and specific type of advertising since it provides segmentation, profiling the audience the brand desires to reach. Therefore, *Beatriz Bettencourt* can target users in certain locations (cities, communities or countries), and according to demographics based on users' personal data (age, gender, background, marital status, job title, and more), but also to their interests and hobbies, behavioural aspects (device usage and other activities) and connections (contacts, events and groups). In addition, it is possible to choose the placement of the ads by showing the content on people's feeds, stories, marketplace or other Facebook page sections.

Regarding the payment methods, Facebook provides results for every type of budget, because brands can control their activity and pay per impressions (CPM) or per click (CPC). The cost per impression is made according to the frequency that the ad is showed on targeted audience's screens: CPM measures the total amount spent on an ad campaign divided by impressions, multiplied by 1000. On the other hand, the CPC is calculated as the total amount spent divided by the clicks on the ad, so it is possible to link the ad to other experiences, pages, websites, and more. Also, the brand can define a certain amount to spend in the entire campaign.

The brand can advertise using images, videos, stories, messenger or collection formats, for example. In addition, Facebook grants constant monitoring and measurement of the campaign results, providing ways to test and optimize ads and to personalize the advertising strategy.

As a result, *Beatriz Bettencourt womenswear* aims to post an ad as a collection format, since collection ads allow people to discover, search, and purchase available products and people can click on an ad to learn more about a specific product, all in a fast-loading experience. This type of advertising will also boost the traffic to the brand's website and online store while providing users interactions - more views, likes and followers - on brand's Facebook page. The ad will appear in the news feed on the computer (for people accessing the Facebook site on laptops or computers) and on the news feed on mobile devices (for people who use the Facebook mobile app or access the Facebook site via a mobile browser). It will target women from 20 to 50 years old, located in big cities or even capitals, preferably in western Europe: Portugal, Spain, Italy, France, Germany, UK, Netherlands, and specific countries like USA, Brazil, China and Japan. These women will also have medium/high income and interests in fashion, design, clothing, beauty, accessories, fashion brands, designer brands, as well as hobbies such as shopping, travelling, going to the cinema, theatre and other cultural habits.

Furthermore, the brand established a budget of 1000€ to be spent in the entire campaign for a period of one year. Once considering the cost of 2,70€ per day on Facebook ads, the brand expects to reach between 1.075 to 6.480 people daily and, therefore, reach a maximum number of between 392.375 to 2.365.200 people during the whole 365 days, with the annual campaign. These predicted values were calculated according to information and statistics provided by Facebook (retrieved from www.facebook.com/business/ads).

6.5.6.2 Instagram Ads

In respect to advertisement on Instagram, the platform provides image, video, carousel, stories and collection type of ads. Like Facebook, it enables a selection of a specific segment of audience to be reached based on location, demographic data, interests and behaviour. Brands can also personalize or define an automatic audience, as well as, reach a public similar to current brand's customers. In addition, Instagram provides mechanisms for brand promotion, that allow to define the reach and frequency of ads, the number of clicks to redirect the users to a particular website or page, and offers the possibility to create dynamic and informational content, to increase page views, the number of followers, likes, and consequently, to increase brand's sales.

In order to advertise on Instagram, brands need to have an account on Facebook, which will be linked to a professional account on Instagram. Then, they will be able to define the type of ad, specify the budget and monitor the results. In fact, the budget can be settled daily or for the entire campaign, so it is possible to define the limit of the amount invested in the campaign.

Thus, *Beatriz Bettencourt womenswear* will develop a carousel ad, which consists of an ad that gives another level of depth to campaigns, where people can swipe to see additional photos or videos in a single ad. This ad will comprehend different images of the brand products, and by clicking on the pictures the user will be redirected to the brand's website and online store. Furthermore, the brand's Instagram page will conquer more followers, views, ratings and reviews, which will certainly turn into word-of-mouth communication and, consequently, increment brand's sales.

The brand plans to invest 1000€ on Instagram ads for the whole one-year campaign. The possibility of having constant performance monitoring will enable effective adjustments during the entire implementation, based on the ads results.

According to the data presented by Instagram, the brand expects to reach between 8.100 to 21.330 people by investing around 2,70€ in Instagram ads per day, during 365 days. Thus, this will give the brand the possibility to reach between 2.956.500 to 7.785.450 people with the entire annual campaign.

6.5.6.3 Bloggers and Digital influencers

Beatriz Bettencourt womenswear recognized the positive outcomes of working with bloggers and digital influencers, based on recent studies of authors, such as Mir and Zaheer (2012), that mentioned the word-of-mouth phenomenon and the greater customer involvement and engagement as advantages achievable through the collaboration with these people that embrace a brand's concept and attitude.

Thus, considering the brand's requirements and the advantages of this marketing approach, 13 digital influencers were selected in order to develop personal relationships and future collaborations. It is important to mention that not all the influencers will receive the same type of investment. In fact, the brand plans to invest deeper in seven key digital influencers, paying an extra amount for a specific type of post/publication about the brand. The brand will focus its work with digital influencers by choosing a single social media channel: Instagram.

In this sense, below are listed the 13 targeted influencers:

- Double Trouble (Blogger and Digital influencer) – around 70k followers
- Anita da Costa (Blogger and Digital influencer) – around 190k followers
- Vanessa Martins (Blogger) – around 500k followers
- Raquel Strada (Blogger) – around 350k followers
- Kelly Bailey (Portuguese actress) – around 700k followers
- Maria Frubies (Digital influencer) – around 400k followers
- Pernille Teisbaek (Blogger and Digital influencer) – around 600k followers
- Janni Déler (Blogger and Digital influencer) – around 1,500M followers
- Camila Coelho (Blogger and Digital influencer) – around 7,500M followers
- Aimee Song (Blogger and Digital influencer) – around 5M followers
- Camille Charrière (Blogger and Digital influencer) – around 700k followers
- Double3xposure (Blogger and Digital influencer) – around 200k followers
- Sara Sampaio (Model) – around 7M followers

These targeted influencers were selected according to their personal characteristics. Double Trouble is a Portuguese influencer based in Oporto, she has been conquering the national market due to her work credibility and by building strong

networks in other European markets. Anita da Costa is also based in Oporto, she has created an exceptional image among other Portuguese influencers and developed interesting collaborations with international fashion brands. Moreover, Vanessa Martins is a national blogger established in Lisbon, she has a particular manner to engage with the Portuguese market and she is very trustworthy in her collaborations. Raquel Strada, as a national fashion blogger, possesses greater knowledge to give reliable impressions about fashion brands; she represents Portugal in several European fashion weeks, which has been helping her achieving a wider reach. Kelly Bailey is targeted by *Beatriz Bettencourt womenswear* mostly due to her impact within the young adults age range, since she has been part of several Portuguese soap operas and is very active in her social media accounts. Maria Frubies, on the other hand, is a Spanish influencer based in Madrid who was selected due to her exceptional work with strong international brands. Pernille Teisbaek established in Denmark, is a notable stylist that collaborates with major designer brands like Prada, Balenciaga, Chanel and others. Janni Déler, a Sweden influencer based in Monaco, has been conquering the attention of dominant fashion brands as a result of active publications on her blog, with interesting image and video content. Camila Coelho is a Brazilian digital influencer that has been collaborating with major luxury fashion houses like Dior, Armani, Gucci, and more, so her selection was made in accordance with her global presence. Aimee Song is an American blogger based in Los Angeles and, like Camila Coelho, she is targeted by famous international designer brands. Camille Charrière is a Parisian influencer with great credibility among fashion brands, who is targeted by *Beatriz Bettencourt womenswear* in order to conquer the French market. Double3xposure, a 22 year-old American digital influencer, was addressed in order to establish strong relationships with the American young adults fashion market. Sara Sampaio is a Portuguese Victoria's Secret model who has powerful interventions on her social media accounts, so the brand aims to take advantage of her strong global reach.

The 13 digital influencers will receive two brand products in 2020, one per collection – Spring/Summer and Fall/Winter -, without any other extra payment. That is, the only financial investment required concerns the products' production and delivery, by mail. Thus, *Beatriz Bettencourt womenswear* plans to invest a total amount of 2000€ with these 13 influencers, considering the already mentioned products' production and respective shipment.

Besides this strategy, the brand will pay an additional value to the influencers: Vanessa Martins, Raquel Strada, Janni Déler, Camila Coelho, Aimee Song, Pernille Teisbaek and Camille Charrière to promote a post on their Instagram account and/or a blog publication reserved to *Beatriz Bettencourt womenswear*. The selection of these seven digital influencers was focused on their strategic locations across the globe and their fit with the brand image and personality. Moreover, the extra amount paid was planned according to the number of followers, as well as, their reach, activeness and impact on social media. Therefore, the brand is planning to invest a total of 2200€ on these seven key digital influencers, splitting the budget accordingly:

- Vanessa Martins – 200€
- Raquel Strada – 200€
- Janni Déler – 400€
- Camila Coelho – 500€
- Aimee Song – 500€
- Pernille Teisbaek – 200€
- Camille Charrière – 200€

6.6 Marketing Budget

Taking into account the one-year marketing plan implementation and regarding *Beatriz Bettencourt* brand's size and scale, the marketing budget consists in 11.000€. This amount will be split between several communication channels in order to ensure that the brand's marketing objectives are met. In addition, the marketing budget allocation (see table 1) will respect the brand's needs and marketing requirements.

MARKETING PLAN	SPECIFICATIONS	INVESTMENT
Pop-up stores	6 rents/1 year	2 200 €
Website + Online store	∞ duration	1 600 €
Fashion shows + Events	8 events/1 year	0 expected costs
Fashion magazines	2 publications/1year	0 expected costs
Google Adwords	1 year	1 000 €
Fabebook ads	1 year	1 000 €
Instagram ads	1 year	1 000 €
13 Digital influencers	2 pieces + mail/1 year	2 000 €
Vanessa Martins	1 post/1 year	200 €
Raquel Strada	1 post/1 year	200 €
Janni Déler	1 post/1 year	400 €
Camila Coelho	1 post/1 year	500 €
Aimee Song	1 post/1 year	500 €
Pernille Teisbaek	1 post/1 year	200 €
Camille Charrière	1 post/1 year	200 €
TOTAL	1 year	11 000 €

Table 1 – *Beatriz Bettencourt womenswear* marketing strategies budget allocation.

The table previously presented summarizes the different strategies that will be implemented in *Beatriz Bettencourt* 2020 marketing plan. Moreover, it is crucial to mention that during the whole process all strategies will be carefully controlled and monitored, in order to ensure there correctly implemented and to achieve the expected results. Therefore, all comments, messages, ratings, reviews and customers' interactions through the brand's physical and online channels will be rigorously considered, evaluated and analysed to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the marketing programs.

In fact, to guarantee the success of the marketing plan *Beatriz Bettencourt* needs to focus its attention on examining the results of each strategy in order to make the necessary and on-time adjustments, assuring that the brand is able to create and increase brand awareness, sales and profit increase.

6.7 Marketing Plan Implementation

6.7.1 Marketing Plan Calendar – 2020

The following table (see table 2) represents the schedule of each marketing strategy that will be implemented in the 2020 marketing plan. As noticed, months like March, April, September and October have several addressed activities mostly due to the brand’s presentation of Spring/Summer and Fall/Winter collections. Of course, during the whole year different marketing programs will be occasionally applied, except for the brand’s website, online store and the advertisements in Google, Facebook and Instagram, which will be extended throughout the campaign. It is also visible that January, February, July and August are months with less planned activities, the first two due to the required initial preparation of brand’s strategies and the other two, due to the holiday time period. Moreover, it is important to mention that all programs will be carefully monitored and controlled during the entire marketing plan agenda, in order to ensure their desired success.

STRATEGIES	JAN.	FEB.	MAR.	APR.	MAY.	JUN.	JUL.	AUG.	SEP.	OCT.	NOV.	DEC.
Pop-up stores				X	X	X			X		X	X
Website + Online store	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Fashion shows + Events			X	X	X	X			X	X	X	X
Fashion magazines			X	X					X	X		
Google Adwords	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Fabebook ads	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Instagram ads	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
13 Digital influencers			X							X		
Vanessa Martins				X								
Raquel Strada					X							
Janni Déler						X						
Camila Coelho									X			
Aimee Song										X		
Pernille Teisbaek											X	
Camille Charrière												X

Table 2 – *Beatriz Bettencourt* womenswear 2020 marketing plan timetable.

6.7.2 Marketing Plan Control

In order to ensure the desired performance of the defined marketing programs, months like February, April and June are essential to review and analyse the results achieved in each implemented strategy (see table 3). In case the results are not being met, the brand needs to do the necessary adjustments, increase productivity and/or cancel operations on corresponding channels, so that the desired marketing objectives are accomplished.

FEBRUARY 2020	APRIL 2020	JUNE 2020
Check website operations and number of visits	Review of online sales	Review of online sales
Review of online sales	Analysis of fashion shows critics	Review of pop-up stores sales
Analysis of Google ads performance	Collect posts and publications in fashion magazines	Check social influencers' contributions
Analysis of Facebook ads performance	Review Facebook content, comments, rates, likes, messages and followers	Implement the contingency plan if necessary
Analysis of Instagram ads performance	Review Instagram content, comments, likes, followers and messages	
	Check social influencers' posts and publications	

Table 3 – *Beatriz Bettencourt womenswear* 2020 marketing plan control.

6.7.3 Marketing Contingency Plan

If the measures previously proposed do not allow the brand to achieve the desired objectives, a contingency plan with additional measures will be developed. Following, we will present these additional activities.

- Increment advertisement on Social Media: in this contingency plan the brand will have to focus on incrementing social media advertisement, which means evaluating the amount of investment made and increasing it by 50% in order to generate more frequency, reach, awareness and therefore, sales and profit.
- Act on distribution channels: if the desired target in terms of sales is not achieved the brand will have to do adjustments in its distribution channels, by analysing the sales' results in its online store and the progresses made with pop-up stores, and by applying the most suitable measures. The brand will have to search for a physical space to rent in order to develop its own flagship store and to act closer and more directly in its market. The flagship store will provide ways for more effective brand communication, contribute for its physical evidence, customer service and relationship management.
- Fashion weeks and Fashion fairs: another possible strategy to boost brand awareness, sales and profit is through the brand's presence in international fashion weeks, such as Paris, London, New York and Milan, or fashion fairs and showrooms, like Premiere Vision in Paris, Pulse in London, Pitti in Florence or Milano Moda Donna. If the main brand objectives are not being met, then the investment that is being made proves to be erroneous, so it will be better for *Beatriz Bettencourt womenswear* to translate that investment for strategies that will, in fact, generate sales and profit. On the other hand, presence in fashion fairs and fashion weeks requires a huge investment when compared with the pop-up stores', however, it will

certainly allow the brand to reach a wider target audience, which will be reflected in higher brand awareness and sales. Therefore, *Beatriz Bettencourt womenswear* will have to establish partnerships or collaborations with entities like Portugal 2020 and ANJE – Associação Nacional de Jovens Empresários - in order to obtain the required amount to invest in these international marketing operations.

7. Conclusion

Regarding the main objective of this dissertation of developing a marketing plan for *Beatriz Bettencourt womenswear* to be implemented in the year of 2020, and after a literature review and data collection through interviews with Portuguese fashion designers and the analysis of secondary data, essential marketing strategies were programmed in order to achieve the brand's desired marketing objectives of creating awareness and generating sales and profit.

In fact, the marketing plan proposed comprehends several strategies that seem to be the most appropriate for a fashion designer brand like *Beatriz Bettencourt womenswear*, according to the literature and to the fashion designers' experience. The strategies proposed, with a special focus on the distribution and promotion channels, namely the development of a professional website and online store, the presence in pop-up stores in several European cities, the use of digital marketing, namely SMM in Facebook and Instagram, and influencer marketing, through the collaboration with bloggers and digital influencers, should allow the brand to achieve recognition among national and international fashion markets, as well as to establish a strong brand image and develop crucial relationships with key-customers.

This study provided significant conclusions for future practices, starting with the brand's case study, which allowed an in-depth understanding of the brand's concept, target audience, positioning, marketing-mix and identity signs. Moreover, the internal analysis of the brand's vision, mission and values and the external analysis of its macro and micro environments, allowed to identify the brand's main strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats.

After defining the brand's marketing objectives, the one-year marketing campaign was planned to be in accordance with all its particularities and to provide useful and strategic guidelines for the brand management. Considering the premium positioning of *Beatriz Bettencourt womenswear* and its recent entry in the fashion market, the available brand resources were evaluated so that the brand's future viability would not be compromised. Moreover, the available marketing budget was defined within bounds to take greater advantage of the most suitable marketing programs.

7.1 Study Implications

The conducted study represents a crucial support for the fashion brand *Beatriz Bettencourt womenswear*, since it provides important information for the brand management and, specially, for the brand marketing procedures. It contributes for better decision-making and better business proposals, ensuring that the brand's image and concept are not diluted.

Literature review provided a coherent overview of all fashion marketing approaches, stating the different perspectives of several renowned authors and creating a useful guideline for a premium fashion brand. Therefore, it contributed for the development of the brand's proposal, reflected in its 2020 marketing plan.

Through a benchmarking, the brand was able to understand its parity and differentiation points, as well as to define strategic marketing programs to ensure its competitive advantage. The benchmarking also enabled *Beatriz Bettencourt womenswear* to define viable and relevant objectives for each specific marketing strategy.

7.2 Research Limitations

This study has faced some limitations regarding the few literature available about premium/designer fashion brands, so we needed to take advantage of the more generic literature on fashion marketing and fashion brand management, and to use case studies of fashion brands. The literature on marketing planning, consumer behaviour, social media marketing and e-commerce was also fundamental.

Moreover, we had some difficulties in reaching fashion designers and the benchmarking study relies only on three Portuguese fashion designer brands, which is not substantial for future generalizations about premium fashion brand practices.

Despite these limitations, this study represents an important source of knowledge for other premium fashion brands that are recent in the market and operate with a structure similar to *Beatriz Bettencourt womenswear*. In fact, we believe that the marketing plan developed is the most suitable for this brand category.

7.3 Future Research

In this specific case, future research should involve a more in-depth analysis of other fashion designer brands and their marketing practices. Moreover, through a performance review of *Beatriz Bettencourt womenswear*, it will be possible to understand if the expected positive outcomes of the 2020 marketing plan were achieved, and therefore to include important adjustments in future marketing plans that will be implemented in upcoming years.

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9. Appendix Section

9.1 Appendix 1 - Interviews' script

1. How would you describe your brand?
2. What product do you consider as your brand's "signature" product?
3. How do you characterize your brand in terms of personality?
4. What functional benefits does your brand provide?
5. What emotional benefits does your brand provide?
6. What is your brand desired positioning?
7. How do you describe the fashion industry in terms of competition?
8. Who are your competitors?
9. Do you have a person in your company who responsible for the management of your brand?
10. Describe the structure of your current team. What are their roles?
11. What type of marketing campaigns does your brand make?
12. Which communication channels does your brand use?
13. In which fashion weeks have you participated?
14. Which distribution channels does your brand use?
15. What are the processes that occur until the product is delivered to your customer?
16. Where are your products produced?
17. Have you ever significantly changed your brand's pricing strategy? Why?
18. Do you regularly use promotions?
19. Do you always have a ROI of your collections? How do you ensure that ROI?
20. How do you stay updated on the latest tools and trends regarding fashion branding?
21. What where the main lessons that you have learned regarding the management of fashion brands since you have created your brand?
22. What were the major difficulties that you felt when you started/when you launched your brand?

23. In your opinion, what are the most relevant steps that should be followed to build a strong fashion brand?
24. In which sense does the country of origin affect consumer brand perceptions?
25. How would you describe your target customers?
26. What are the major difficulties that a designer faces to keep customers satisfied?
27. In your opinion, the fashion designer creates in order to serve customer needs/wants or does he/she designs according to his/her idea and the customers end up adopting it?
28. How is your brand dealing with digital marketing? How much did e-commerce,
29. mobile commerce or the increasing use of social media (such as Instagram) helped your brand to grow, appeal to a broader market?
30. Is your brand present in social media? Are you working with bloggers and social influencers? If yes, what are the bloggers/influencers with whom you work and why?
31. What mechanisms or incentives do you use in order to encourage your customers to repurchase?
32. Do you have an online store? And do you use e-commerce platforms (besides your own website)?
33. If yes, what are the difficulties linked with managing an online store?
34. Do you invest in Search Engine Optimization?
35. In which sense do you think technology affects positively and negatively your brand?
36. Due to the globalization process that affected fashion, do you think that nowadays customers are more powerful than before? Why?
37. In your opinion, nowadays is the designer that settles the trends for each season or is it the customers that develop new trends on the “streets”?

9.2 Appendix 2 - Katty Xiomara's Interview

B.B - How would you describe your brand?

K.X – The brand is designed according to a very personal vision; its concept is a way of seeing and facing fashion. It is a womenswear brand and its focus is on the woman figure. It focus on the dualities of the women universe, women as human beings, serene and emotional, and as explosive... We can be as simple as complex and sensual, all in one package!

These characteristics are reflected in the collections that evoke some romanticism, but also a strong urban and elegant attitude. And they do it through clean shapes, but with a peculiar mix of patterns, materials and small details that surprise. Our collections offer a different interpretation of clothing without overcoming the boundaries of a piece of art.

B.B - What product do you consider as your brand's "signature" product?

K.X – Our signature piece are culottes that we call them "The Tulips," which have been passing from collection to collection by adapting it to the collection's theme. However, there are other pieces too, which by a commercial force are more solicited, but they are also adapted to different themes of the collections. On the other hand, we have our signature details such as the use of collars with lace, embroidery, prints or jacquard applications on shirts and dresses.

B.B - How do you characterize your brand in terms of personality?

K.X – It is not very different from what I explained in the first question. The brand is built with a feminine character, with all its hormonal fluctuations. It is ironic, fun, critical, elegant, relaxed, romantic, pragmatic and aims to be useful, not just being seen and exposed.

B.B - What functional benefits does your brand provide?

K.X – We usually have pieces with some versatility. As "The Tulips" in one collection have already been reversible and many coats and skirts are made for this purpose. There are also pieces that are sold separately or in sets made of overlays, for example: small

over-apes and vests used above coats, transparent dresses with detachable linings or coats that transform into dresses.

B.B - What emotional benefits does your brand provide?

K.X – Emotion is strictly attached to liking or disliking; We have a niche market that likes and wears our brand and for them our brand offers some kind of emotion, a kind of behavioral boost!

B.B - What is your brand desired positioning?

K.X – The brand is in a segment of affordable luxury and we want to maintain this segment with more prominence and consistency in terms of sales. We try to offer the customer a price that suits our small size/scale in terms of production, so that our intention is not going mass, in this field customers have several offers. Our idea is to create consumption's conscience in our customers (at least in our store that is our closest reality) by encouraging them to bring their old Katty Xiomara's pieces to reconstruct them. We do not want to offer more than what the customer is able to use in order to avoid absurd waste.

B.B - How do you describe the fashion industry in terms of competition?

K.X - Uneven, we have brands supported by major investors and others, such as the great majority of brands of national designers, who do not have the financial capacity to fight for a place in the international scene.

B.B - Who are your competitors?

K.X – In terms of promotional and financial capacity, our competitors are the national designers. But according to brands' categories there are a lot. In the past there was a kind of buying pattern in which the same brands were always purchased. Nowadays it does not happen anymore, now it is not so, the market has become more volatile.

B.B - Do you have a person in your company who responsible for the management of your brand?

K.X – No, unfortunately. We are a small, yet multifunctional, team.

B.B - Describe the structure of your current team. What are their roles?

K.X – The team consists on four designers (myself included) and a production expert. We already have this team for a while so there is dynamism between the members. They are all very multifunctional. More precisely we are divided as follows:

One of the following is dedicated to pattern making and sample tracking process; Another person is in charge of quality control of pieces that are not made “within our doors” and she is also my personal assistant; The production expert makes the samples, arrangements and, in some cases, small productions; The graphic designer who helps me in the creative process and in the company; And I end up traveling through all these areas, but essentially more on the creative process; And of course, we also have an accountant, which restricts only to its area of function.

B.B - What type of marketing campaigns does your brand make?

K.X – Our promotion consists mainly on social media and fashion shows. On a small scale we work with a PR boutique in Tokyo and Milan that sign us in the international dissemination. We feel, in fact, that in this area we need more dynamism, but we do not have a person or company dedicated to it at 100%, which would make all the difference.

B.B – Which communication channels does your brand use?

K.X – Instagram, Pinterest, Facebook and Twitter.

B.B - In which fashion weeks have you participated?

K.X - Paris and New York.

B.B – Which distribution channels does your brand use?

K.X – Online, through our store and other aggregators. Physical, through our store and small multi-brand stores.

B.B – What are the processes that occur until the product is delivered to your customer?

K.X – It depends, if it is online in many cases the piece is in stock and is delivered immediately. If you go to a multi-brand store, which is the usual, we depend on the sales period. After closing all the orders, we rectify the consumptions initially made in the preparation of the sample, we revise molds and special specifications that the

customer may have required, such as lengths, we make the scales, we order the materials and we deliver it to produce according to a technical file and the sample. Then we do the quality control and we correct what is necessary, then we pack and send the piece.

B.B - Where are your products produced?

K.X – In small companies and *ateliers* in the North of the country.

B.B - Have you ever significantly changed your brand's pricing strategy? Why?

K.X - Yes, working with different markets force us to adjust prices. We recommend a margin of 2.5, but there are markets for which this margin is not valid (due to taxes and even living conditions). As we have online store, we try to create some homogeneity in prices, but in fact is not easy because our reality is very different, so we chose to assume the differences.

B.B - Do you regularly use promotions?

K.X – I consider promotions a dangerous and vicious method of exaggerated consumption, but I cannot ignore the need to apply them. We always have a large surplus of pieces because of the collection samples made for the different agents, most of them are returned in perfect condition, but long after the sales period. For this reason, we have to sell them at a considerable price in order to be able to sell the item. Of course, we've saved a few pieces to archive! Few by collection.

B.B - Do you always have a ROI of your collections? How do you ensure that ROI?

K.X – No, not always. Collections are extremely costly, we cannot guarantee this return, but the *samples sales* help to mitigate these costs and minimize the waste of having stored and accumulated pieces.

B.B – How do you stay updated on the latest tools and trends regarding fashion branding?

K.X – I think I really need to do one course or another to refresh myself, but when we are heads of our own business it is very difficult to devote ourselves this time. However, I try to keep an eye on the news, subscribe reference sites and design magazines, and I'm

still a big fan of (physical) books. On the other hand, I teach, and this keeps me in touch with another reality.

B.B - What were the main lessons that you have learned regarding the management of fashion brands since you have created your brand?

K.X – I realized that we never stopped learning. The way fashion works today is quite distinct, and it will still go through major changes. Although we speak of fashion, this medium has remained somewhat conservative in its way of functioning for a long time. Today these parameters seem, in some cases, to be diluted and, in others, to accentuate with the concentration of brands in large groups, leaving a vague space for the so-called "independent brands".

B.B – What were the major difficulties that you felt when you started/when you launched your brand?

K.X – When I started my course, I did not have any knowledge on how to create a brand and at that time the information was not within reach of a click.

Difficulties in finding reliable suppliers, having the financial capacity to pay for collections, asking for sponsorships in material and perceiving how to sell, where and in what way, even how to label the pieces within legality... Not to mention the difficulties of managing a company with organized accounting, purchase of materials, stock management, contact with customers, etc.

B.B - In your opinion, what are the most relevant steps that should be followed to build a strong fashion brand?

K.X – Finding the path first, defining your brand concept... There can always be an experimental period by which the designer needs to get to know himself better and realize what his space is in the market. But more important than formulating a strategy is finding a character and an identity.

B.B - In which sense does the country of origin affect consumer brand perceptions?

K.X – Overall, positively. But Portugal is still seen only as a country of skilled labor and not as a country with creative capabilities. In this field we still have a lot of work to do!

B.B - How would you describe your target customers?

K.X – Our market is essentially in the age group between 25 and 50 years. Active women interested in an artistic universe and without bias or fear of mixing colors and patterns.

B.B - What are the major difficulties that a designer faces to keep customers satisfied?

K.X - In our case it is the quantity of supply, we try to create a balance in order to control our stock to not generate waste, but still manage to offer some diversity of product, color and sizes... but it is not easy.

B.B - In your opinion, the fashion designer creates in order to serve customer needs/wants or does he/she designs according to his/her idea and the customers end up adopting it?

K.X – In my opinion both have to be well balanced, we have to be attentive to the needs of the client, but we have to captivate them and make them wishful for what we do. We cannot simply dance to the "sound of the music that the customer plays", so we run the risk of misrepresenting our concept and falling into the boring "more of the same"!

B.B - How is your brand dealing with digital marketing? How much did e-commerce, mobile commerce or the increasing use of social media (such as Instagram) helped your brand to grow, appeal to a broader market?

K.X – Yes, on the one hand they help, it is a "showcase", but we must not forget that it is a gigantic showcase... and getting into the first row of this showcase is not easy.

B.B - Is your brand present in social media? Are you working with bloggers and social influencers? If yes, what are the bloggers/influencers with whom you work and why?

K.X – We do not work directly with anybody in specific, but sporadically we dress some actresses and national and foreign influencers. We already dressed Kat Graham and Zendaya in New York, we also dressed some actresses and Japanese pop stars. In Portugal, we have already dressed Joana Ribeiro, Martinha Ferreira, Ana Moura, Anabela Moreira, Daniela Melchior, Sonia Balacó, Raquel Strada and Diana Pereira, among others.

B.B - What mechanisms or incentives do you use in order to encourage your customers to repurchase?

K.X – Our most efficient mechanism is actually an old method: good in-store service.

B.B - Does your brand have an online store? If so, what are the main difficulties associated with the management of an online store?

K.X – We have our online store for recent time so we still have little experience. For the moment, the main difficulty is to control the stock, but we have notion that in the future may also be the returns.

B.B - What e-commerce platforms do you use (other than your own website)?

K.X - Minty, Impius and The Fanatics.

B.B - Do you invest in Search Engine Optimization?

K.X – We made a small investment in SEO when we started developing the website and the online store. Working continuously and systematically with these tools requires specialized staff and some financial capacity.

B.B - In which sense do you think technology affects positively and negatively your brand?

K.X - Negatively, in competitive terms because we have few resources, for example, to bet on the control of algorithms. Positively, because the technology is also applicable in other areas, such as in the production area and in this case may be a plus.

B.B - Due to the globalization process that affected fashion, do you think that nowadays customers are more powerful than before? Why?

K.X – In part, yes, because it is much easier to express an opinion and to affect an entire market, justly or unfairly reaching a brand.

B.B - In your opinion, nowadays is the designer that settles the trends for each season or is it the customers that develop new trends on the “streets”?

K.X - Clients have always developed trends on the street, but the process is rather circular reflecting on both sides; from the street to the catwalks and from the catwalks to the street.

9.3 Appendix 3 - Luís Buchinho's Interview

B.B - How would you describe your brand?

L.B – My brand is a womenswear brand and its target audience age range is a bit extended, because I think that my pieces, according to the way they are mixed with other pieces, can serve different people in different ages. My customers perceive the brand as a “friend” in their closet for a long time period; it means that my pieces have a timeless character, they are classic but at the same time very modern and contemporary. I always try to manage a product that is new and simultaneously I try that this product breaks the barrier of time.

B.B - What product do you consider as your brand's “signature” product?

L.B – Mostly my outerwear: the winter coats and dressed: the casual and the formal that sometimes merge with one another.

B.B - How do you characterize your brand in terms of personality?

L.B – If the brand were a person, it would be a person that is confident, that does not follow rules and trends. It is a very conscious person that knows what fits her better and that chooses what will benefit her.

B.B - What functional benefits does your brand provide?

L.B – It offers safety, the product will fit her well regardless of the piece's typology (it could be a dress, a t-shirt and so on). Each piece is developed according to the woman's silhouette, of course each woman has different shapes but the main characteristics are taking under consideration: the breast, waist, hips... The collection is design in order to boost women' silhouettes.

B.B - What emotional benefits does your brand provide?

L.B – It also embraces a certain sensuality, or even sexuality, that it is not obvious... It is something that is discovered after wearing the piece. It has a subliminal message.

B.B - What is your brand desired positioning?

L.B – I actually think that the brand's prices are low for what the brand offers, but they are settled according to what we expect from an "intermediary brand". That is where my brand is positioned. Nowadays we have to opposite sides: the high-end luxury brands and the fast fashion brands and we have plenty of brands in the middle, which means different designer brands with medium/high prices. And it is an unfair stage... I would like my brand's positioning to be higher, but it would require an investment that it is not what I currently have.

B.B - How do you describe the fashion industry in terms of competition?

L.B – The competition in the fashion industry has never been so present, in fact we are facing a terrible phase. I think that nowadays we have a savage offer from all brands... Everyone is evilly producing and launching trends and consumers cannot keep up with this pace. They are being bombed with plenty of information that they cannot filter... Consumers are more and more devaluing fashion. Fashion should calm down, because we are living absurdly the ephemeral.

B.B - Who are your competitors?

L.B – I do not have direct competition in Portugal, in fact we do not have many multi-brand stores with Portuguese designers' brands. My competitors are mostly Italian brands that design for a medium/high market in the same way that I do.

B.B - Do you have a person in your company who responsible for the management of your brand?

L.B – No, I do not have.

B.B - Describe the structure of your current team. What are their roles?

L.B – We are a small team, we are four people: I am the creative director and the manager (in a certain way), then I have two personal assistants – Anabela and Vanessa – that are very multifunctional and help me developing the collections, producing, photo

shooting, making the technical files, and so on. Then we have Telma, the store manager that manage the stock of products (store and online) and is in charge of the social media platforms. I also have two agents, one that deals with the national and the other with the international market. The last is in charge of the online store due to its global market. And then we have several producers and suppliers that are outsourced and contacted when necessary.

B.B - What type of marketing campaigns does your brand make?

L.B – We do it mostly online, but we have the fashion shows in Paris and Oporto too. There we collect lots of images from the shows, backstage and from the audience. The fashion shows are a very complete package for visual animation of the collections' story. In parallel, we also develop a campaign in which we photograph the collections to promote on social media when the items are actually in store.

B.B - Which communication channels does your brand use?

L.B – We use social media, the fashion events and our own website.

B.B - In which fashion weeks have you participated?

L.B – Significantly we participated in Paris and Oporto fashion week. Occasionally I did New York and São Paulo.

B.B - Which distribution channels does your brand use?

L.B – The physical store in Oporto, the online store and we are present national and internationally in multi-brand stores.

B.B - What are the processes that occur until the product is delivered to your customer?

L.B – First the product it design according to the collection's theme, then we model it on paper and produce a very rough prototype to analyse the silhouette and if we like it we make the adjustments for the final model. In parallel, there is a search of materials or fabrics transformations. Then we deliver the prototype with the actual fabrics to the producers, where we split the collection to several ones since it is so big. After we collect it and we do some changes when necessary. Then we photograph it and make a technical file of all we produce and start to build the showroom, where the buyers come

to see and order the collection for the next six months. During these six months the collection is presented in fashion shows, and we order the fabrics, accessories and materials that are necessary to produce the items for the timing the buyer asked.

B.B - Where are your products produced?

L.B – Everything is made in Portugal, in several factories and *ateliers* mostly in the north of the country.

B.B - Have you ever significantly changed your brand's pricing strategy? Why?

L.B – Yes, I have, because usually people think that prices should be lower, especially in the national market. And it is a hard work, because we work with small quantities and a very delicate production (it is not made in series of hundreds of pieces), so it is very difficult for us to have even more accessible prices than those we currently have.

B.B - Do you regularly use promotions?

L.B – No, usually I do the “black Friday” and “valentines day” promotions... But I respect people that pay the entire price. We do not have those extreme sales of “50% off” after Christmas... I find it absurd. I use small promotions in specific items and I use higher promotions in pieces that really need to be sold in that season.

B.B - Do you always have a ROI of your collections? How do you ensure that ROI?

L.B – Yes, I do. The ROI is measured in sales and invoicing, it occurs in a very spontaneous way. If it does not happen the brand cannot continue.

B.B - How do you stay updated on the latest tools and trends regarding fashion?

L.B – Before starting a collection I always make a search in order to understand what is new, new fabric developments and techniques for example. If there is not something new we continue to use the techniques we have already developed, always doing a twist by changing materials, shapes and colours according to each collection theme.

B.B - What were the main lessons that you have learned regarding the management of fashion brands since you have created your brand?

L.B – Selling is essential, everyone needs to have this in mind. If not, you do not have the funds to invest and you have a brand that does not communicate. It is “in house” and does not make sense.

B.B - What were the major difficulties that you felt when you started/when you launched your brand?

L.B – It was the lack of the commercial part.

B.B - In your opinion, what are the most relevant steps that should be followed to build a strong fashion brand?

L.B – We have to conquer customers by hook, we have to search for points of sale that are interested in our brand, to understand what differentiates our brand from the others, to strongly communicate and support the brand image, to develop promotional material to have in store and to promote effectively the collections on social media.

B.B - In which sense does the country of origin affect consumer brand perceptions?

L.B – Internationally it is very good, because it is a certificate of quality. And nationally we do not have that conscious, it is something rooted that “what in foreign is better”. But I think that next generations will change that and will mitigate that feeling of resistance.

B.B - How would you describe your target customers?

L.B – It is difficult, because they are very diversified. It is difficult to find a profile.

B.B - What are the major difficulties that a designer faces to keep customers satisfied?

L.B – The major difficulty is to evoke surprise with the collections, but keeping the same notion. The brand is somewhat fixed and not floating, so it has to satisfy a specific segment or niche.

B.B - In your opinion, the fashion designer creates in order to serve customer needs/wants or does he/she designs according to his/her idea and the customers end up adopting it?

L.B – The designer creates according to his/hers ideas but always taking into consideration that those ideas have to serve a client.

B.B - How is your brand dealing with digital marketing? How much did e-commerce, mobile commerce or the increasing use of social media (such as Instagram) helped your brand to grow, appeal to a broader market?

L.B – I am not sure. Honestly, most of the times I think they are more “show off” than anything else. Of course we have to continue with them, because everyone is using them so we are very active users. We always post images, stories, etc. on my personal and on the brand’s profiles, so there is always a rotation of information. The brand’s name is always being listened.

B.B - Is your brand present in social media? Are you working with bloggers and social influencers? If yes, what are the bloggers/influencers with whom you work and why?

L.B – Yes, we are on Facebook and Instagram. Now we are not working with bloggers and social influencers, but we have already done and the results were not positive.

B.B - What mechanisms or incentives do you use in order to encourage your buyers to repurchase?

L.B – The main incentive is if they have sold the collections. Sometimes it does not happen due to weather, customers or other factors, so the buyer will not repurchase if he is having negative outcomes by working with the brand.

B.B - Do you have an online store? And do you use e-commerce platforms (besides your own website)?

L.B – Yes, we have. No, we do not.

B.B - If yes, what are the difficulties linked with managing an online store?

L.B – The main difficulty is managing the stock and the most costly part is the product photography. Because this type of photography needs to be done by a professional and it requires an expensive investment when you have a big collection.

B.B - Do you invest in Search Engine Optimization?

L.B- No, we do not.

B.B - In which sense do you think technology affects positively and negatively your brand?

L.B- Technology is opening new challenges and it is helping brands. The worst part is that I think that some brands would not be able to keep that pace.

B.B - Due to the globalization process that affected fashion, do you think that nowadays customers are more powerful than before? Why?

L.B – Yes, sure. Customers have too much power nowadays, they are treated in a way that they can do whatever they want because brands have to serve them anyways. They became somewhat arrogant, aggressively demanding and returning pieces just to experience them.

B.B - In your opinion, nowadays is the designer that settles the trends for each season or is it the customers that develop new trends on the “streets”?

L.B – Nowadays mostly the customers on the streets and designers have to keep up with their trends.

9.4 Appendix 4 - Nuno Baltazar’s Interview

B.B - How would you describe your brand?

N.B – My brand has several layers, it is not just one thing, but it is obviously a designer brand with an urban and sophisticated character.

B.B - What product do you consider as your brand’s “signature” product?

N.B – It is a special dress.

B.B - How do you characterize your brand in terms of personality?

N.B – If the brand were a person it would probably be the Portuguese poet Florbela Espanca due to her personal layers. But the brand is designed for men and women, so it has this ambivalence and the approaches are very different for each gender, besides

being designed by the same person. Talking about the men, they are elegant and discreet... they are looking for a good coordination of materials and colours without being extravagant. Regarding women, the brand evokes several phases of a woman's daily basis. Women have different sides and they can see those reflexes in our brand. They are active, professional, most of the times they are mothers with an active social life. It floats between a romantic and a more severe kind of person, because I think that women have a more creative personality. Men are always more stable than women.

B.B - What functional benefits does your brand provide?

N.B – We have an extra care with the fitting and with the selection of the fabrics and materials. We want our pieces to value the body shape of men and women in all circumstances of life. We pay extra attention to the details and we want to create comfortable and practical pieces.

B.B - What emotional benefits does your brand provide?

N.B – The emotional benefits depends if the person wants to receive them, because it depends on the involvement that the client has with our products. Some clients have it, and they care about the concept of each collections and so on, but others simply do not care about it.

B.B - What is your brand desired positioning?

N.B – I do not try to characterize the brand in this sense, this characterization is somewhat reductive. For me the brand is *couture-a-porter*, because we want to offer a cared assortment of products with good finishes that could be used daily. We offer some sophistication, but without reaching prices of *haute-couture* houses. The brand is urban with *couture* details, produced in small quantities that provide some exclusivity.

B.B - How do you describe the fashion industry in terms of competition?

N.B – There are two different situations, the national paradigm of designer brands and the international one. Regarding fashion designer brands in Portugal, they are small businesses, even familiar, they are micro companies. Portuguese designers are the owners of the brand, which sometimes do not occur abroad, and for me they are heroes.

B.B - Who are your competitors?

N.B – In Portugal I do not think we have direct competitors, because since we are designer brands and each designer has its point of view, everything is different and each approach should not be compare in this sense.

B.B - Do you have a person in your company who responsible for the management of your brand?

N.B – No, we do not have. We work all together in that way and we have an outsourced press office that works with us by linking the brand with the audience.

B.B - Describe the structure of your current team. What are their roles?

N.B – We have a small team with six people and then we have other firms that collaborate with us. I am the creative director and de brand's designer; Catarina is my assistant; Pedro is the store assistant and coordinates the commercial part with other firms; and then we have another office in the next building with our *atelier*, where we produce samples and small productions, there we have a pattern-making person and two seamstresses; then regarding accessories or other pieces we produce in outsourced factories, but they are not part of the actual team.

B.B - What type of marketing campaigns does your brand make?

N.B – We do not have it. We are only present in fashion shows.

B.B - Which communication channels does your brand use?

N.B – We use our website, social media and the fashion shows. But I think that social media platforms are means of measurement that are not that credible. There is a false illusion that this major exposure in social media will promote and communicate the brand. People want to follow the designers and not the brands.

B.B - In which fashion weeks have you participated?

N.B – More precisely, in Paris, Lisbon and Oporto. But we have been occasionally in Angola, Ireland and Marsella.

B.B - Which distribution channels does your brand use?

N.B – Our physical store and online store. Multi-brand stores are being studied right now, but it is not my focus.

B.B - What are the processes that occur until the product is delivered to your customer?

N.B – The customer always look for the product, online or physically. Of course the brand should create this desire to customers... The processes depend on the typology of the piece... First we have to design it, model it, make a sample, correct the sample, and then we scale it in several sizes and produce it to finally be delivered. We also have a service of adjustments in store, so sometimes people require a specific garment in another colour, fabric or even in a size that is not available. So this proximity with the customers is one of our main goals.

B.B - Where are your products produced?

N.B – They are all produced in Portugal, in *atelier* and in some factories.

B.B - Have you ever significantly changed your brand's pricing strategy? Why?

N.B – The price strategy is different according to the piece typology, of course when we have limited editions or iconic products we can manage their prices more flexibly and more competitively because the production is faster and automatic. The more personalised a garment is, the higher is the price. But we try to always develop a fair price to every product.

B.B - Do you regularly use promotions?

N.B – Yes, with an extra care. We try to make them not that visible, and sometimes they are directed to our well-known clients so they are more personalised.

B.B - Do you always have a ROI of your collections? How do you ensure that ROI?

N.B – This ROI sometimes is not that tangible. A fashion show is a way of positioning the brand and the designer and this dilutes for the six months after and sometimes for the brand's lifetime. So we have been invited to several contests and in my opinion that is a privilege... I think that is difficult to measure from which source the return came. We present collections, we work with celebrities and national television, so this exposure is difficult to analyse. Trying to manage the financial investment and the

financial return is easier, because the brand needs to be sustainable and that can be quantified.

B.B - How do you stay updated on the latest tools and trends regarding fashion?

N.B – I do not pay attention to that. I have double jobs, so I am also a consultant in a company and there I have access to a lot of sources of fashion information. But information is that it is, we can understand the directions that fashion is taking, but the trends are valuable for magazines, sites and blogs, not properly for fashion designer. The designers should tell their own story, in a very personal way.

B.B - What were the major difficulties that you felt when you started/when you launched your brand?

N.B – I did not have difficulties when starting the brand... I was even lucky. Mostly due to the timing, because at the time there was several young designer contests and those contests had greater visibility than nowadays. The lack of information at that time was a privilege, because everyone was watching television, reading journal and magazines. Today this does not happen, there are several sources of information that customers end up spread and confused.

B.B - In your opinion, what are the most relevant steps that should be followed to build a strong fashion brand?

N.B – There are several steps that do not depend on talent, or even on the professionalism of the designer. Of course you need funds, yours or from other partners that want to cooperate with you in the initial phase. In sum, you have to have talent and a very personal statement, because that is what will differentiate your proposal from the others in the market. In my opinion it is important to know other brands work, other artists, it is important to read, going to the theatre or the cinema, to travel, etc... in order to create a rich and unique personal universe.

B.B - In which sense does the country of origin affect consumer brand perceptions?

N.B – I think it has negative connotations, because I think Portuguese people have this habit to value more what are foreign, global brands for example. But in fact, international brands want to produce in Portugal because of our quality and specialized

labour that adds extra value. Our country does not know, unfortunately, how to export brands.

B.B - How would you describe your target customers?

N.B – My target audience is very diversified, different people in different age groups can purchase the same piece and coordinate it as they want. So our brand comprehends an extended age range that interprets our “story” in different ways. But I would say that our main target is between 25-45 years old.

B.B - What are the major difficulties that a designer faces to keep customers satisfied?

N.B – The worst part is making them loyal, because we compete directly with brands that have other structure, power and investment that are totally different from ours. Here the difficulties are a lot... The major difficulty is to find a unique way to communicate in the market. We have to add value to the market, working with affinity, professionalism and quality.

B.B - In your opinion, the fashion designer creates in order to serve customer needs/wants or does he/she designs according to his/her idea and the customers end up adopting it?

N.B – Both, of course. There needs to have a challenge and at the same time an identity. The designer needs to know its audience in order to direct the brand. A brand is always on time to change and to re-brand itself when needed... We need to be clever.

B.B - How is your brand dealing with digital marketing? How much did e-commerce, mobile commerce or the increasing use of social media (such as Instagram) helped your brand to grow, appeal to a broader market?

N.B – We are recently online present. Yes, I think so. I know that we are not the most active brand in online platforms, but we are working on that. I assume this risk of doing everything step by step. We need to be conscious in every step we take, so we have to set priorities.

B.B - Is your brand present in social media? Are you working with bloggers and social influencers? If yes, what are the bloggers/influencers with whom you work and why?

N.B – Yes, recently we are. No, we are not. This may seem a bit arrogant, but for me the bloggers and social influencers need to be “clear”, they need to be honest and to convey credibility. So I do not want to work with this reality that does not pass trustworthiness. For me an influencer influences due to his/hers knowledge, because they are an example for the society, but what happens is that they are paid and materially encouraged to make that posts... So I do not trust them. In my opinion the most trustable is Raquel Strada and I like to work with her because I know her work and I perceive her value for the society.

B.B - What mechanisms or incentives do you use in order to encourage your buyers to repurchase?

N.B – We always try to develop a personal relationship with our clients and we have an extra care in the way we invite them for our shows, in a very personalised approach. We try to make customers to feel special... Most of the time what brings customers to repurchase is not our communication or promotion, it is the way people experience the brand: since the in-store service until the actual moment of wearing the piece. We want people to be happy and satisfied with our products.

B.B - Do you have an online store? And do you use e-commerce platforms (besides your own website)?

N.B – We are launching our online store this month. No, we do not use but I would like to be present in Farfetch. Unfortunately it is not possible due to its business model.

B.B - If yes, what are the difficulties linked with managing an online store?

N.B – The major difficulty will be to transfer the experience in-store to the online paradigm. Customer expect that the buying experience to be fantastic... the packaging is an experience for example. For us, as a small brand, is very difficult to achieve this level of structure in order to ensure the same experience in both channels. Everything is more complex online, in my opinion we just should move to the online business if we are getting response from our customers.

B.B - Do you invest in Search Engine Optimization?

N.B- No, we do not.

B.B - In which sense do you think technology affects positively and negatively your brand?

N.B – Negatively only because it empowers competition and it ends up favouring brands with more capital to invest, which is not our case. Positively, with the increase of tourism in Portugal we get greater feedback from foreign customers. So the country should invest in more space for Portuguese brands and not for global brands, as it is occurring. We should have regulations that would protect our culture in order to ensure our differences from the whole world.

B.B - Due to the globalization process that affected fashion, do you think that nowadays customers are more powerful than before? Why?

N.B – No, I do not think so. What happens is that globalization functions for both sides, the market is bigger so the requirements are greater too, but people are also more aware and informed of everything. That is not bad, this can actually help brands understanding their customers.

B.B - In your opinion, nowadays is the designer that settles the trends for each season or is it the customers that develop new trends on the “streets”?

N.B – Yes, both. The way people interpret and coordinate pieces is very interesting... Fashion is seen as a mechanism for visual development of an individual identity, so it presuppose a great self-knowledge and a particular way of using this tool in order to create a unique personality that differentiates from the others... and this is so personal that does not turn into a trend. I actually love seeing how people combine and mix my pieces with other designers' pieces and how they reinvent pieces from older collections!