

Fashion X Analysis

Overview

Research shows that most consumers are no longer content to simply get their impulses through regular marketing channels, then go to the store and make a selection. An overwhelming majority of consumers do a significant amount of research on what they are looking for, before even visiting a store. This involves search engines, but also recommendations and referrals from friends and acquaintances online, making the entire shopping experience more connected and social. With a total of \$26 billion in clothing sales online (representing a 13% share of the domestic market), and with 72% of women looking for clothing online, fashion is driving this development and creates a critical triangle of integration between e-commerce, social media campaigns and mobile websites or apps. Mobile is, or will increasingly be, driving sales both on- and offline, with technology such as QR codes and geo-tagging bringing mobile technology into the stores.

Top fashion brands

Here are the top 5 fashion brands in social media and how they score on Facebook, Twitter and YouTube (as of 10/11/11):

BRAND	FACEBOOK FANS	TWITTER FOLLOWERS	YOUTUBE VIEWS
Victoria's Secret	15,390,321	187,336	28,735,119
H&M	8,412,093	518,665	8,275,069
Sephora	1,885,546	220,274	4,471,023
Nordstrom	969,390	144,391	1,628,467
Express	1,435,262	25,301	157,002
Fashion X	5,242,459	240,973	612,304

Other brands that are using social and mobile successfully are ASOS (online retailer), American Apparel, DKNY, TopShop, French Connection, Jimmy Choo, Diesel, Gap and Burberry (see below for examples).

Current best practices

With fashion brands, best practices for social/mobile/online mainly revolve around user generated content, as a natural way for brands to engage with the consumers. Consumption of fashion involves a certain degree of consumers flaunting their purchases, which translates well into social media, crowd-sourced content and viral marketing.

A common social media factor among big fashion brands is that they offer exclusive content, sneak peeks and inside looks into the inner workings of the fashion industry, and - most importantly - deals and discounts, or unique items offered exclusively through digital channels. Some brands even go as far as to run actual online stores on their Facebook Fan Pages, sometimes featuring products or discounts not seen anywhere else.

Reviews play a significant role. When Juicy Couture added sharing and review capabilities to their site in 2010, product purchase conversion rates jumped 160%. Many retailers express concerns that negative reviews may hurt sales, but statistics show that the worldwide average for product reviews is a 4.3 out of 5.0 and 80% of reviews on the site of a given retailer are written by the top 20% of their customers.

Many fashion brands are using social media to engage customers and talk about the industry, often using Twitter (such as DKNY), but also often incorporating photography, even crowd-sourced photography using apps like Instagram (such as American Apparel, TopShop and, of course, Fashion X). There are also examples of live streaming fashion shows, blogs featuring professional fashion writers and solutions that aggregate fashion content from the blogosphere as well as Twitter for instance.

Sweepstakes and photo contests are also popular and seemingly effective marketing vehicles. Many campaigns feature interactive solutions where users can generate their own images and share them with friends, often tied into contests and sweepstakes with attractive prizes.

A key factor is integration. Singular one-off efforts often flounder, whereas integrated cross-channel efforts create more of a lasting buzz - especially for brands that maintain a good frequency of consumer engagement. Only when there is a consistent buzz can brands expect to see significant viral effects, where the power of social media is harnessed to actually drive behavior and affect brand perceptions.

The "next thing"

Our research shows that 2010 represented a big jump for the fashion industry in terms of how social and mobile were leveraged, but that the majority of brands are still playing catch-up. Solutions across the board are so far very similar, based on a "follow the leader" mentality, which impacts brand position and share-of-mind negatively, yielding slowly fading results. The audience tends to have "seen it before", as the novelty wears off.

That leads to the inevitable question: *what is the next step?* How can Forever21 plan marketing initiatives that integrate traditional marketing, in-store activities, online, social media and mobile in fresh, innovative new ways that truly sets it apart from the competition and engages the consumers on an even higher level?

Looking at how consumers engage with fashion brands on a daily basis today, we wish to caution against an exaggerated emphasis on finding the "magic bullet" and blindly chasing "the next big thing". We believe that *persistence, consistence and platform agnosticism* will be more important than *innovation*. Fashion X's key target demographic does not typically consist of early adopters, even though they may be relatively technically savvy, and we feel there is to be gained in Fashion X being first out of the gate with new technology. Many brands experiment with different ways of engaging with consumers, but degree of experimentation represents a form of risk-taking that may be hard to tie to actual ROI. As Fashion X have experienced with their SCVNGR-campaign, not all cutting-edge tactics will succeed and it is therefore precarious to build a strategy on a trial-and-error approach to such measures (unless innovation in itself represents a key objective for the brand).

With *persistence* as a key objective, integrating multiple brand touchpoints across time, location and platform will be critical, and that puts a clear emphasis on mobile. However, the ship may have already sailed in regards to launching proprietary, brand-centric fashion apps and the market is quite fragmented already in that respect. We will most likely see a convergence trend where consumers abandon these apps in favor of more popular, public apps more tightly integrated with a general online presence and popular social networks. Therefore, it is our conclusion that a *truly responsive website* that renders well across platforms, features a broader set of social functionality and tighter integration with 3rd party apps like Instagram, and supports technology like QR-scanning will be a critical strategic objective.

To achieve a persistent presence across channels and ensure higher levels of customer engagement, we feel strongly that centralized content aggregator even crowd-sourcing - will be important. Particularly by leveraging features in popular existing 3rd party mobile apps, as opposed to developing a proprietary app. A proprietary app would most likely struggle in the long-term to keep up engagement, as other tools and platforms enter the mix and vie for the customer's time, so this is a battle that is very hard to win. Instead of fragmenting the media mix even further, we feel the focus should be *integrating* the channels already leveraged.

Fashion X Analysis

Looking at how Fashion X has harnessed the power of digital media in the past, we are pleasantly impressed and feel that there are relatively few omissions and flaws in the application of tactics, but that a longer and more cohesive perspective may have been missing to some degree. Indeed, we perceive that may perhaps be the very reason for Fashion X's RFP.

The Fashion X site contains a fair number of social features and works well on iPads. The mobile version of the site is also well executed. There have been a wide variety of social media campaigns launched, including one leveraging the popular photo sharing and greeting app Instagram, which is very forward-thinking. The Fashion X Facebook presence is fairly well built out and has gathered an impressive 5.2M "likes". The following on Twitter is also impressive, as are the number of views accumulated on the YouTube channel - a separate initiative that is also well carried-out.

However, on the negative side, social media activities may not always have translated that well into actual consumer engagement. Out of the 5.2M fans, only just over 42K users on Facebook are listed as "talking about this", meaning there is a great opportunity for Fashion X to leverage an existing interest to maximize that potential. Also, knowing that the conversion rate from social channels to online purchases is very low, it may be worth considering exploring the option of running a Fashion X store inside of Facebook, even though one must conclude that social outlets are clearly not where customers are looking for shopping opportunities.

The Fashion X site sports a user profile feature, but it is not really leveraged for social media engagement. Mostly, it is simply an account management tool for the online store. We believe that this represents an opportunity for significant improvement in how Fashion X engages with customers.

The Fashion X website recently underwent a redesign. While the site is well designed and robust, the redesign has not necessarily been a resounding success, judging from Fashion X's own poll (including just over 4,500 respondents). 25% of voters claim they haven't even noticed a change, and 34% are asking for the old site back. The new Fashion X site is not responsively designed, which limits its functionality across different platforms and makes it less adaptive. This also means that Fashion X are having to keep two web platforms updated - the regular site and a separate mobile one - which steals resources from other digital initiatives.

A deficiency that we find to be rather critical in the eCommerce section of the site is the lack of reviews. While we understand the caution in approaching unfiltered user generated input, given that the door would then also be open for bad reviews and comments, statistics show that most online reviews are positive, and that the majority of reviews are written by the most loyal customers. Allowing users to write reviews openly is a sign of confidence in the products and gives off an impression of credibility. Bad reviews would also present excellent pointers and opportunities for customer service engagements, acting in effect as an ongoing consumer polling program that narrow down useful improvements. Conversely, since consumers do their research online anyway, whether or not reviews are posted in tandem with products does not really matter, at least not if the purpose is to eliminate the risk for bad reviews. The absence of reviews may actually serve to create doubt in the quality of the products; doubt that would not necessarily have been there before and which could potentially have been staved off even with an average review rating.

Another issue to look into is video. Video content is rapidly becoming more and more prevalent as plug-in liberated HTML5 video players evolve, and offer excellent opportunities for a more engaging higher lifestyle brand profile online. Video content is one of the most shared types of content and engages the senses in a less conscious, filtered way, making it an inherently more emotional form of communication, which relates well to fashion. Fashion X are currently utilizing some video content as part of the blog "The Skinny", but we think this could stretch even further onto the main site.

Also, the Fashion X site is currently not leveraging much in terms of user-generated content, and this we believe is an opportunity missed. Not only is user-generated content a great way of interacting with consumers; it is also a natural way to make marketing viral and allow for greater saturation in terms of how a brand is perceived. Updates are more frequent, resulting in more frequent visits, and exposure to the brand is more widespread (with content having the potential to go viral), at significantly lower cost than curated content.

Signs point to an increasing convergence in terms of how social media is accessed, and mobile is naturally at the forefront of this convergence. Access to Facebook via mobile browsers grew 112% last year, and people who use Facebook on their mobile devices are twice as active as non-mobile users. Yet, the Fashion X mobile site has virtually no social features. We feel that this ought to be addressed - not necessarily by building out the feature set in the mobile version, but by making the regular Fashion X site truly responsive, so that it functions just as well on a mobile device as it does on a PC.

The Fashion X blog is a great way to offer consumers an inside look into Fashion X's fashion world and could be leveraged much more. It is currently only featured in the main nav on the site. However, we feel that the title "The Skinny", is a bit of a misstep, as it will almost certainly alienate the company's plus size customers. Here, as with the Fashion X Facebook page, the level of consumer engagement is relatively low.

Fashion X Strategy

Strategic Recommendations - "First Magnitude"

We wish to propose a comprehensive digital strategy for Fashion X, spread out over three years, encompassing a total of 21 tactical initiatives of varying scopes and sizes. We have decided to call our strategy "First Magnitude", since there are twenty-one magnitude one (brightness) stars on the night sky - twenty-one as in Fashion X. We aim to shoot for the sky, and we want Fashion X to shine like the brightest stars in it.

Implementing this strategy, we propose three roll-out phases for the first year (starting mid-2012), nine phases for 2013 and nine for 2014, bringing the total up to 21 phases. Each phase is referenced below by a code name matching the name of one of the magnitude one stars, with one suggested conceptual tactic attached.

At the core of our strategy are three key strategic objectives: *Continuous - Persistent - Independent* (see chart below). These objectives are derived from a comprehensive analysis (above) and refer to how we wish to:

1. Plan Fashion X's social media engagements, to drive relationships *(Continuous)*
2. How we suggest Fashion X's brand perception be evolved *(Persistent)*
3. What we recommend in terms of the leveraging of technical platforms *(Independent)*

Continuous

We want to ensure the ability for Fashion X to foster customer relations continuously. This will result in more loyal customer base, and a viral spread of

consumer engagement that will generate new business.

Persistent

Oncall's ambition is for Fashion X:s brand to be truly persistent, and carry through all channels and places consistently. The result will be a stronger brand presence and higher share-of-mind, which in turn will drive sales.

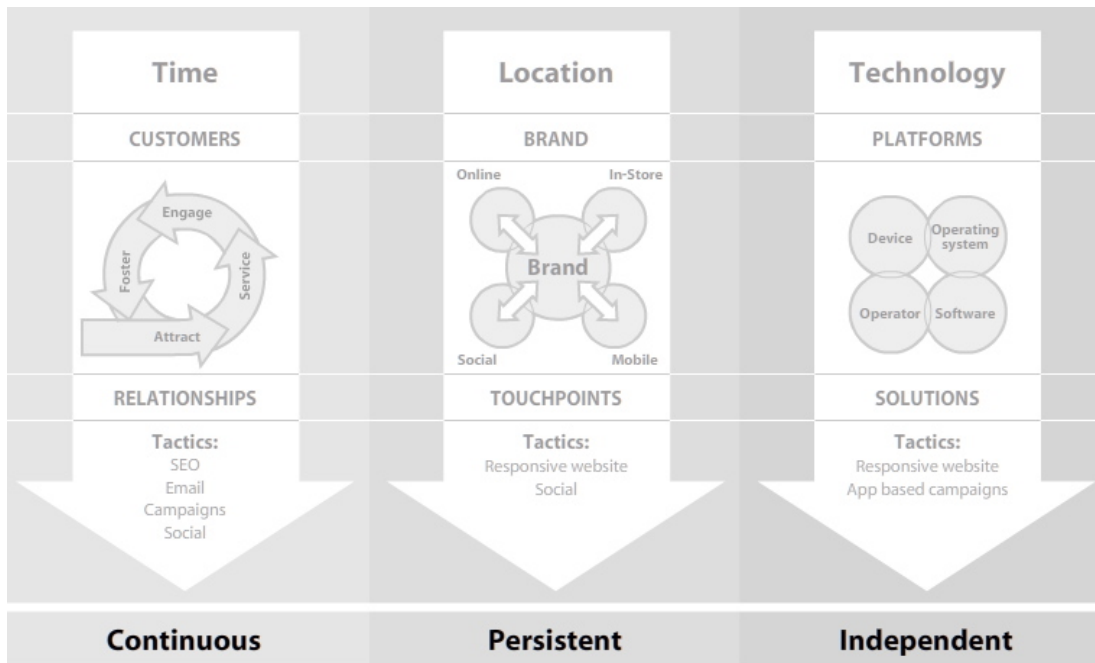
Independent

Our strategic goal is for Fashion X to become truly platform agnostic when it comes to digital communication, so engagements with customers can be achieved more effortlessly and independent of changes in technology. The result is, first of all, that the other two key strategic objectives will be easier to attain, but also that significant synergies can be leveraged and operating costs be driven down.

The key to achieving these three objectives is to leverage mobile better, and to do so by making the Fashion X website truly responsive, in effect becoming the hub for all communication from and with Fashion X. It is also to step up the engagement in social media (which should be integrated tighter with the website), to foster long-term relations with consumers.

At the heart of our "First Magnitude" strategy is therefore a mobile tactic that leverages a brand new mobile technology. Briefly, this is centered around the connection of the mobile keypad code ** ("star star") to a secondary customizable code, for instance "21". This enables a specific http call to be made, which could be directed to unlock exclusive mobile web content directly from the keypad of the phone. This call could also be geo-tagged, so that what content is served up depends on where the customer is located. We feel the name "StarStar 21" is also a good ongoing thematic campaign title for some of the integrated tactics suggested, from for instance an online loyalty program (a Fashion X Star) to in-store catwalk model talent shows ("Fashion X Runway Star"). Wherever the user is, and whatever the time is, if the user types **21 on their smartphone, they can access the current campaign tactic and associated deals and content, dep

ending on which phase the strategy has currently moved into. Hence, we will have achieved the core strategic objective **Continuous - Persistent - Independent.**



"Strategy Tagline"

Fashion X Tactics

Tactical Suggestions

Looking at Fashion X:s Facebook presence, and especially the metrics (5M+ "likes" but only 46K "talking about this"), it appears that while many subscribe the content offered does not appear to be engaging enough to warrant many comments. Therefore, we suggest that Fashion X dial up their fan engagement and make it more persistent.

We also need to ensure that Fashion X:s digital strategy pinpoints specific tactics throughout all seasons, with a relatively high frequency and clear cross-channel integration. This will be more important than the scope and innovation of any particular campaign. We are offering some suggestions on roll-out tactics and sequencing in this proposal.

One way of achieving these goals is to raise the stakes involved in the social media engagement. By tying so-called *gamification* tactics into the overall digital experience, we feel that a powerful modern loyalty program could be created, which would ensure a higher continuous level of engagement on the part of the consumers. Gamification - leveraging game-like goal-and-rewards mechanics in a consumer environment - is an especially suitable tool-kit when considering Fashion X's core demographic. It can even carry through to actual social gaming and/or tamagotchi-like features, which are incredibly popular on Facebook. Rewarding users for their activity through scoring and profile enhancement, encouraging users to stay connected and even boosting their self-worth through badges and virtual promotion items, ensures a strong and pervasive motivation that would drive long term engagement with Fashion X.

While the focus of this strategy overview is social and mobile, it has to be said that metrics do not indicate that social media has so far played a significant role in driving sales, particularly online sales. We certainly recommend Fashion X to consider social media as having a bit of an untapped potential in this respect but a tactical roll-out also needs to include integration with significant email marketing and search engine initiatives. This would revolve mainly around finding and converting new customers (search engine tactics), keeping existing customers active (through integrated email marketing and social media activities) and resurrecting past customers that haven't purchased in a while (through ongoing email marketing initiatives).

Considering a roll-out plan encompassing multiple seasons, and supported in parts by email marketing as well as print and possibly even TV for the larger campaigns, we wish to offer the following possible tactics:

1. Fashion X Polling Campaign
To initiate the 3-year strategic plan, we propose a general Fashion X polling campaign, to get a reading of how the brand is perceived and how attitudes towards the various Fashion X tactical engagements are represented across the entire target demographic. We propose to do this not in a typical survey format, but rather in a more entertaining way. One possibility is to turn this survey into a fictional hiring interview for the game SIM Fashion X (see below), that can serve as a sneak preview and later be leveraged to create player (and customer) profiles, useful both in the game and in the online loyalty program we wish to propose.
2. Fashion X Wish List
Fashion is always high on the wish lists of the core Fashion X demographic, yet they are a notoriously difficult group for whom to shop for clothes. Therefore, we propose creating an online and/or mobile Wish List creation tool, which would have two entry points: one for the person who would be wearing the clothes and would be given an opportunity to create a wish list based on the Fashion X catalog and various easy-to-pick seasonal looks, and to share this wish list with others. The other entry point would be for parents and grandparents, who would be given an interactive questionnaire that would help them describe the young relative they would be shopping for. This questionnaire would help them narrow down a "type" matching the relative, and would then give them a selection of looks that would be appropriate for that type. Their final selection would be output as a shopping list, with driving directions to the nearest Fashion X stores.
3. Fashion X Facebook Store
Rolling out a facebook-integrated Fashion X micro-store is a way to get better leverage from the 5.2M fans already accumulated. However, it is important to point out that Facebook (and other social media outlets) is not necessarily where users prefer to do their shopping. We want to recommend that a store initiative like this be used mainly for short-term promotions and perhaps offering unique items that might not be available in stores.
4. Fashion X Tweethearts
A writing contest to form the "Fashion X Tweethearts", a group of fashion forward fans in a Spice Girls vein that could write blog entries and/or tweets for Fashion X, and become sort of Fashion X insiders - rewarded, of course, with generous discounts and freebies. The tweets would have to be monitored and approved by Fashion X. The Tweethearts could also feature as characters on the website, and could be combined with *Fashion X Fashionista of the Week* (see below).
5. Fashion X DesignScene
Writing about fashion is a little bit like dancing about architecture. Imagery should be a central part of any fashion marketing effort. Therefore, as part of Forever21's online strategy, a web-based Forever21 version of the DesignScene iPad app could be an interesting way for consumers to explore fashion ideas, completely visually.
6. StarStar21 (Online Loyalty Program)
As the core of the Fashion X digital strategy, we propose an entire program based on a user profile layer added to the Fashion X website that would tie all customer activities together, including purchases and social media, using gamification tools that would drive behavior and engagement. The concept would also leverage emerging new mobile technology that would allow users to gain access to special Fashion X mobile content by typing **21 on their mobile phones. This could be tied into other campaigns as the 21 tag could be applied across concepts. The loyalty program would employ QR-codes given out with purchased merchandise that give access to unique insider fashion content when scanned. Purchases count toward points on the user profile at Forever21.com, as does online activity. Foursquare, Gowalla and Facebook check-ins in stores give discounts on fashion magazine subscriptions (through strategic partnerships), access to exclusive content or complimentary gifts. (needs to be fleshed out)
7. Fashion X Fashionista Of The Week
To keep up the frequency of consumer engagement, we suggest creating a marketing vehicle that is smaller in scope but higher in frequency. Picking a "Fashionista Of The Week" could be one such tactic, encouraging users to share their photos and content.
8. Fashion X + KodakGallery.com
Allowing users to develop their own physical look books, Fashion X could partner with KodakGallery.com to have photos selected and layouts made online, and then printed as physical books or booklets.
9. Fashion X Who Wore It Best?
A very popular feature in almost all fashion magazines is *Who Wore It Best?* It's typically a photographic comparison between celebrities wearing identical outfits at red carpet events, and where readers vote to determine which celeb looked the best wearing that particular outfit. We propose to create an online version of this feature, where Fashion X customers upload pictures of themselves wearing Forever 21 clothes, tagging each photo with exactly the outfit they're wearing. This tagged photographic content can then be leveraged in an ongoing online poll, where visitors to the Fashion X site and/or Facebook page get to vote and decide which person wins. The voting scores would be posted to each person's Facebook profile and the highest scores every week or month would win a prize.
10. Fashion X Mix-And-Don't-Match
In fashion, it is of great importance to wear something that speaks to your unique personality, and that is yours alone. Being caught wearing the same outfit as someone else is a mortifying prospect to most of the consumers in the Fashion X target demographic. We therefore propose a mobile solution where users can create profiles featuring their most prized fashion possessions, and then check them off the day they are wearing them. Leveraging geo-tagging technology, we can then compare users and their outfits and determine if and when there is a geographic proximity between them. On one hand, this can be used to connect people with the same taste, but it can also be used to warn users if they are about to enter a social situation where they are going to be wearing the same outfit as someone else. This tactic could easily become a permanent feature on a Fashion X customer profile (see "StarStar21" above).
11. Fashion X Facebook Profile Pic Generator
An interactive photo plaything that allows users to design their own fashionable avatars (wearing Fashion X clothes) and post them as Facebook profile pics.
12. SIM Fashion X

A mobile version of The Sims where the user creates his/her own game avatar that pursues a career in the fashion industry, either as a Fashion Designer, a Runway Model, a Fashion Editor or a Photographer. Users win awards based on their interactions which can be used in-store for actual purchases, and real purchases are also reflected on the avatar. The goal is to score a cover on the fictional fashion mag Fashion X (which user can then design and get printed and framed as a reward). The game should feature tasks or "missions" that involve physical activities. For instance, a player going for the Fashion Editor goal could be asked to write an editorial piece about a new piece of Fashion X clothing, and a player going for the Runway Model goal could be asked to go to a store and try out that same piece of clothing and post a picture of it. This way, the game does not only engage customers, it also acts as a continuous generator of content.

13. SIM Fashion X interactive story banners
To promote the SIM Fashion X game, we suggest story driven interactive banners in suitable channels, that will draw users in with a compelling storyline and enticing interactive features.
14. Fashion X Fashion Mag With You On The Cover
An interactive tool allowing the user to design the cover of the fictional fashion mag Fashion X and then have it printed as a high quality print, suitable for framing.
15. StarStar21 On Tour
Travelling micro-format talent fashion show à la America's Got Talent which tours around Fashion X stores, promoted heavily on the Fashion X Facebook page. Local wannabe fashion models sign up online and are invited to walk the catwalk in Fashion X clothes. Winners become official Fashion X online fashion models for the upcoming season, tweet and blog about their experiences.
16. Fashion X Geo-Check-In Visitors to Fashion X stores are given the opportunity to "check in" using geo-tagging, which unlocks special deals and rewards.
17. Fashion X uDesignIt
Individuality is a key facet of fashion and customers wear their clothes to express their identity, particularly those shopping at Fashion X. uDesignIt is a suggested customization campaign tailored to this need, where certain elements on some types of merchandise can be customized using an online design tool, and the customized piece can be added to the purchased garment in the store.
18. Fashion X Mirror-Mirror-On-The-Wall
A special combined fitting room mirror/photo booth is erected in select stores, possibly based on iPads as substitutes for information kiosks, where consumers can pose with their new clothes and have a picture snapped that they can then share on Facebook. Pictures could also be used as streaming visual content - a photo wall - on the Fashion X website.
19. Fashion X Streaming Runway
A campaign featuring live user-generated fashion shows using Ustream, a free online streaming service.
20. Fashion X Polling Campaign
To wrap up the 3-year strategic plan, we propose another Fashion X polling campaign, to establish if the strategy has been successful in achieving a higher level of customer engagement. Again, this survey should be executed in an engaging and entertaining way, perhaps in the style of a personality test so common in fashion and lifestyle magazines.
21. Fashion X Donation Drive
Many young women change clothes sizes quite often and, hence, have a lot of clothes in their wardrobe that don't fit them anymore. We propose that Fashion X run an online donation drive to collect all these clothes, rewarding donors appropriately for their generosity with Facebook and/or profile badges and points which could be used to gain access to unique items and content etc.

Tactical Roll-Out Plan- From "Regulus" to "Sirius"

Our proposed roll-out plan for digital tactics initiatives is split over three years, starting (tentatively) in August 2012. Phases are named after the 21 bright stars on the night sky, and each have one suggested tactic attached. Underlined phases represent major initiatives, while others are smaller in scope.

YEAR ONE - Harmonization and Integration

- **Strategic initiation date:** September 1st 2012 (tentative)
- **Phase 1 - Regulus.** Period: October 2012. Suggested tactic: "*Fashion X Polling Campaign*"
- **Phase 2 - Deneb.** Period: November 2012. Suggested tactic: "*Fashion X Wish List*"
- **Phase 3 - Beta Crucis.** Period: December 2012. Suggested tactic: "*Fashion X Facebook Store*"

YEAR TWO - Ramp-up of social engagement

- **Phase 4 - Fomalhaut.** Period: January 2013. Suggested tactic: "*Fashion X Tweethearts*"
- **Phase 5 - Pollux.** Period: February 2013. Suggested tactic: "*Fashion X Design Scene*"
- **Phase 6 - Antares.** Period: March-April 2013. Suggested tactic: "*StarStar21*"
- **Phase 7 - Spica.** Period: May 2013. Suggested tactic: "*Fashion X Fashionista Of The Week*"
- **Phase 8 - Aldebaran.** Period: June 2013. Suggested tactic: "*Fashion X + KodakGallery.com*"
- **Phase 9 - Acrux.** Period: July-August 2013. Suggested tactic: "*Fashion X Who Wore It Best?*"
- **Phase 10 - Altair.** Period: September 2013. Suggested tactic: "*Fashion X Mix-And-Don't-Match*"
- **Phase 11 - Agena.** Period: October 2013. Suggested tactic: "*Fashion X Streaming Runway*"
- **Phase 12 - Betelgeuse.** Period: November -December 2013. Suggested tactic: "*SIM Fashion X*"

YEAR THREE - Integrated events, social and in-store campaigns

- **Phase 13 - Achernar.** Period: January 2014. Suggested tactic: "*SIM Fashion X interactive story banners*"
- **Phase 14 - Procyon.** Period: February 2014. Suggested tactic: "*Fashion X Fashion Mag With You On The Cover*"
- **Phase 15 - Rigel.** Period: March-April 2014. Suggested tactic: "*StarStar21 On Tour*"
- **Phase 16 - Capella.** Period: May 2014. Suggested tactic: "*Fashion X Geo-Check-In*"
- **Phase 17 - Vega.** Period: June 2014. Suggested tactic: "*Fashion X uDesignIt*"
- **Phase 18 - Acturus.** Period: July-August 2014. Suggested tactic: "*Fashion X Mirror-Mirror-On-The-Wall*"
- **Phase 19 - Alpha Centauri.** Period: September 2014. Suggested tactic: "*Fashion X Streaming Runway*"
- **Phase 20 - Canopus.** Period: October 2014. Suggested tactic: "*Fashion X Polling Campaign*"

- **Phase 21** - Sirius. Period: November-December 2014. Suggested Tactic: "Fashion X Donation Drive"

Fashion X Competitors

Price

- H&M
- Wet Seal
- Charlotte Russe
- Old Navy
- Target
- WalMart

Demographics

- H&M
- American Eagle
- Hollister
- Urban Outfitters
- Free People
- Victoria's Secret Pink
- TopShop
- American Apparel
- Zara

Marketing

- H&M
- TopShop
- ASOS
- Uniqulo

Possible other candidates

- Abercrombie & Fitch
- Papaya
- Hot Topic
- Aeropostale

Fashion X Benchmark List

Brand/Campaign	Web	Social	Mobile	In-store	Event	Comments
1 JC Penney "Who's Your Santa"		•	•	•		+ QR codes
2 H&M Augmented Reality App		•	•	•		+ Sweepstakes
3 H&M 70s Chic campaign	•	•		•		+ interactive clothes browser
4 H&M Designer Collaboration Promo		•				+ Voting contest
5 H&M My Town campaign			•	•		+ game
6 H&M Fashion Studio	•	•				
7 Diesel "Like" campaign		•	•	•		+ QR codes
8 Glamour Friends & Fans app	•	•	•			+ print/magazine integration
9 Wet Seal website	•	•	•	•	•	Social/mobile/interactive integration
10 Old Navy Shazam campaign	•		•			
11 TopShop "Wish You Were Here"		•		•		
12 Zara website	•	•				(very limited social)

13 Lucky Brand website	•	•				(very limited social)
14 BlueFly website	•	•	•	•	•	
15 Free People website						
16 TopShop website						
17 DKNY Twitter + Facebook						+ persona "DKNY PR Girl"
18 American Apparel Instagram						
19 ASOS Life						Brand online community
20 American Apparel LookBook						Partnership with fashion community
21 French Connection YouTube store						
22 Jimmy Choo FourSquare						
23 Stella & Dot website						
24 Diesel Viral video campaign						
25 GAP Groupon						
26 Burberry Art of the Trench						
27 Macy's Backstage Pass						+ QR codes

Fashion X Benchmark Case Descriptions

1 JC Penney "Who's Your Santa" Christmas Ads

- **Link:** <http://mediadecoder.blogs.nytimes.com/2011/11/08/for-christmas-jc-penney-ads-emphasize-fun-and-frugality/?ref=media>
- **Description:** Multi-channel campaign combining QR codes, in-store activities and televised messaging.
- **Web/Social/Mobile/In-store integration:** Facebook game. QR-codes created in-store, scanned on mobile.
- **Best Practices:** Shoppers attach QR codes to presents. When scanned, a voice message is played.

2 H&M Augmented Reality App

- **Link:** <http://fashionablymarketing.me/2010/11/hm-creates-augmented-reality-app/>
- **Description:** Virtual fashion show app that allows users to view, interact with and take pictures of virtual H&M apparel in front of any of 10 Manhattan locations. Results can be used to create virtual fashion shows which can be entered into a sweepstakes.
- **Web/Social/Mobile/In-store integration:** App results can be shared on Facebook. Proof of use of the app gives a 10% discount in any store.
- **Best Practices:** App to check out clothes before buying and to project fashionability to circle of friends.

3 H&M 70s Chic Campaign

- **Link:** <http://createthigroup.tumblr.com/post/10594740072/following-our-h-m-social-media-campaign-my-70s>
- **Description:** Social media campaign launched through a Facebook app, inviting users to explore a new collection of clothes and accessories using an interactive solution where clothes are presented in different environments
- **Web/Social/Mobile/In-store integration:** Facebook + interactive web campaign; also, users upload stylish photos of themselves and tweak the photos and can post them to Facebook as well as enter a sweepstakes.
- **Best Practices:** Allowing users to explore an entire collection online; encouraging users to dress up and flaunt their fashion sense.

4 H&M Designer Collaboration Promotion

- **Link:** <http://lewispulse.com/blog/tag/blogging/>
- **Description:** To capitalize on the interest generated by H&M's designer collaborations, the next featured designer was revealed in secretive sneak previews on YouTube that kept people guessing, releasing clues in the comments section, engaging users in a detective game of sorts.
- **Web/Social/Mobile/In-store integration:** Facebook-launched contest where users were voting for fashion blogs, the winner getting to post a world exclusive video from the new H&M collection on their blog.
- **Best Practices:** Using teaser videos to spark interest; offering unique content; aligning the brand with fashion bloggers.

5 H&M My Town

- **Link:** http://socialtimes.com/hm-offers-virtual-goods-within-location-based-game-mytown_b7260
- **Description:** Location-service-based game where users "check in" at real-life stores to gain virtual clothing items and points.
- **Web/Social/Mobile/In-store integration:** IRL geo-tagging using smartphones
- **Best Practices:** Use of a mobile app to drive traffic to real-life stores.

6 H&M Fashion Studio

- **Link:** http://www.whm.com/ca/fashionstudio__fashionstudio.nhtml
- **Description:** Interactive solution where users put together their own look virtually.
- **Web/Social/Mobile/In-store integration:** Looks can be shares on Facebook or Twitter.
- **Best Practices:** Interactive clothes browser.

7 Diesel "Like" Campaign

- **Link:** <http://fashionablymarketing.me/2011/06/diesel-like-campaign/>
- **Description:** Jeans brand Diesel have tested out a pilot project in Madrid where visitors to their stores can share and "Like" clothes on Facebook scanning QR codes in the store. Scanning a QR code also allows the user to use their cellphone to search for similar items, acting as a virtual shopping assistant.
- **Web/Social/Mobile/In-store integration:** In-store QR codes enable sharing on Facebook.
- **Best Practices:** Taking the "Like" function into the real world.

8 Glamour Friends & Fans app

- **Link:** <http://technology.inc.com/2011/08/12/glamour-goes-snaptag/>
- **Description:** Fashion magazine Glamour created an iPhone and Android app that allowed users to scan unique proprietary barcodes on pages (ad ads), which linked them to either the Glamour Facebook page, or the respective advertiser's online presence, to get discounts, or gain access to exclusive content, or win prizes.
- **Web/Social/Mobile/In-store integration:** Integrating printed media with mobile and social through a barcode-scanning app.
- **Best Practices:** Owning and integrating both the app, the printed channel and the online channel allows for a consistent brand experience.

9 Wet Seal website

- **Link:** <http://apparel.edgl.com/news/Social-Media,-Mobile-Payoff-Continues-for-Wet-Seal-72047>
- **Description:** The Wet Seal website offers a well-rounded set of social and interactive features. "Shop With Friends" is a community-based feature where users can chat, share and shop online in real time. Clothes can be browsed not just as individual items but as "outfits" that can also be rated and sorted by rating. "The Hotspot" is a bulletin board collecting numerous interactive features and marketing efforts, such as contests, sweepstakes and events. It also links to the proprietary iRunway iPhone app, which allows for easy browsing, searching for matching outfits, scanning barcodes, rating and viewing most popular outfits, sharing outfits through social media and locating stores and checking opening hours. A "trending now" feature shows the most popular items. There is also a "WS Radio" web radio where users can preview and buy songs that are played in the store. All features are also integrated with in-store kiosks, where any item can be viewed together with other items combined by of customers. Wet Seal are also to partner with fashion mag Teen Vogue to launch a Facebook game, "Chic Boutique", where players run their own virtual WS store. WS has also been active on Facebook since 2008, creating a Fashion Community where people can build their own virtual closet and share looks.
- **Web/Social/Mobile/In-store integration:** See above.
- **Best Practices:** Integrating the web presence with social and mobile on every level. The strategy is to be not just "cross-channel" but "omni channel".

10 Old Navy Shazam campaign

- **Link:** <http://www.mediapost.com/publications/article/145262/>
- **Description:** Old Navy connect their television ads with mobile advertising by leveraging the mobile app Shazam, allowing users to tag and identify songs in the commercials while also linking to a virtual store where they can buy and download the music, as well as view the outfits from the ad spots. Tied into this experience is also a sweepstakes.
- **Web/Social/Mobile/In-store integration:** Television spots integrated with web content by utilizing an existing mobile app.
- **Best Practices:** Partnering with an existing app to bridge the gap from advertising to online.

11 TopShop "Wish You Were Here"

- **Link:** <http://socialnowpr.wordpress.com/2011/06/09/wish-you-were-here-topshops-new-interactive-campaign/>
- **Description:** TopShop is using a reverse model where they first attract consumers to their stores by promising them make-overs, and then enabling sharing of the results in social media.
- **Web/Social/Mobile/In-store integration:** Popular postcard iPhone app Instagram leveraged to share the results of the makeover.
- **Best Practices:** Extending the store visit into social channels by creating a shareable moment.

12 Zara website

- **Link:** <http://www.zara.com/webapp/wcs/stores/servlet/home/us/en/zara-us-W2011>
- **Description:** The Zara website features an iPad app prominently. That is the only really overt mobile or social component; other features are integrated less conspicuously on the site. A section named "People!" is a social feature where users are encouraged to sign up and upload photos of themselves wearing Zara apparel, for the chance of winning \$300. The site also leverages a feature called LookBook (not to be confused with the online fashion community LookBook.nu), which is essentially an interactive catalog where entire looks can be browsed visually and selected. While visually very stylish and well executed, it is far from a social component, although it does work seamlessly on mobile. In fact, the entire site renders reasonably well on mobile - there is no mobile site - even if it is not responsively designed. Social features are minimal and there are no reviews. Zara's Facebook presence is reasonably well curated but offers very little in terms of content that is not already available on the website.
- **Web/Social/Mobile/In-store integration:** Aside from the fact that the same content is leveraged everywhere, there are no integration points.
- **Best Practices:** iPad app, photo-based recurring contest.

13 Lucky Brand website

- **Link:** <http://www.luckybrand.com/>
- **Description:** The Lucky Brand website is very similar to the Zara site in that it offers very little in the form of social functionality. There are no reviews and only very limited sharing features. The site does work fairly well on mobile though - there is no separate mobile version. Lucky Brand's Facebook presence is also somewhat underwhelming; only just over 280K followers and a rather low level of engagement, with no special features.
- **Web/Social/Mobile/In-store integration:** None
- **Best Practices:** None, at least as far as social and mobile goes.

14 BlueFly website

- **Link:** <http://www.bluefly.com/>
- **Description:** BlueFly sport a fairly accomplished website from a social perspective. The site gathers an array of social and consumer profile features in a handy floating palette titled "My Fly": "My Designers", "My Closet", "My Wish Lists", "My Account", "Refer Friends" and "Shopping Bag". The tab is visible to all but requires an account. This approach could very well be one to emulate by Fashion X, especially considering a built-out user profile feature. BlueFly also manage a blog similar to "The Skinny" called "Fly And Mighty", but it is integrated into an online community called "Society" where users can sign up to become bloggers. The content is mostly curated but goes further and features a series of named editors/bloggers, putting faces on BlueFly's online presence, which we also wish to recommend for Fashion X. "Fly And Mighty" has its own Facebook presence, but the level of engagement there is very low, even though BlueFly are very active on it. Returning to the BlueFly site, there are an events section where users can sign up for exclusive access to "Designer Events", which we think is a very good concept that would be worth considering for Fashion X. The site also has its own integrated YouTube-like channel called "BlueTube" which features a lot of exclusive content. There are both iPad and iPhone apps available for download, but the BlueFly mobile website is rather limited in its functionality. It does, however, feature a decent set of social features.
- **Web/Social/Mobile/In-store integration:** Very good, but the site is not responsive and refers mobile users to a separate, stripped-down mobile version.
- **Best Practices:** "My Fly" user profile contained in floating/persistent palette. Well curated blog with a personal editorial presence, community-like features and user-generated content. Integrated video channel with exclusive fashion insider content. Exclusive in-store events promoted on the site.

15 Free People website

- **Link:** <http://www.freepeople.com/>
- **Description:** The Free People website features what appears to be a permanent sweepstakes called "Win Your Wishlist" on the main page, which is a nice touch that Fashion X might want to consider. Social media links are located in the bottom but are fairly generous. Collections are presented according to styles and presented in a moodboard-like fashion, which is compelling. Products are well presented and include good features such as a "Q&A" form, but there are no reviews. The site features a blog called "Bldg25" that is quite personal and features a good portion of exclusive, fashion insider content and some video, with good Facebook integration. Social media is expanded further here and includes both Tumblr and Flickr as well as the usual suspects, meaning visual content is important to this brand, which we want to concur with. The site is responsive and links to a separate mobile version which is pretty well executed however. There is a useful feature that allows users to add the mobile site to their home screens.
- **Web/Social/Mobile/In-store integration:** No in-store features but very well leveraged social media functionality, including reviews.
- **Best Practices:** Permanent sweepstakes, social media implementation, blog execution. Reviews and prominent social features in product presentations.

Fashion X Strategy Factoids

- **The buying decision journey has changed**
- **American households now spend as much time online as they do watching TV**
- **What was once a message is now a conversation** Shoppers today find and share their own information about products, in their own way, on their own time.
- **Word of mouth is stronger than ever** For the first time in human history, word of mouth is a digitally archived medium.
- **The average shopper used 10.4 sources of information to make a decision in 2014** from 5.3 sources in 2010
- **70% of Americans look at product reviews before making a purchase**
- **The worldwide average for product reviews is a 4.3 out of 5.0**
- **80% of reviews on the site of a given retailer are written by the top 20% of their customers**
- **79% of consumers use a smart-phone to help with shopping**
- **83% of moms do online research after seeing TV commercials for products that interest them**
- **54% comparison-shop for products online**
- **64% of car buyers look for price online, 44% say vehicle performance and 37% say styling**
- **62% of shoppers say they search for deals online before at least half of their shopping trips**
- **82% in soft goods categories occurred after the consumers had engaged in some interactive marketing tactic before their purchase.**
- **60% of soft goods transactions came to retail websites directly from email and search.**
- **Less than 2% of online orders were the result of shoppers coming from a social network** Facebook is simply not where people expect or want to be buying things from retailers.
- **Social media outreach is somewhat effective for distributing news about short-term deals** 6% to 7% of purchases are influenced by social media activity

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