2021 Fashion Scholarship Fund Case Study

DESIGN

BACKGROUND:

In 2019 Gen Z surpassed Millennials in sheer numbers, approximating 61 million, or roughly 32% of the US population and Gen Z is beginning to take the spotlight from its more well-known predecessors, Millennials. Together, these cohorts represent around $350 billion of spending power in the US alone ($150 billion spent by Gen Z and $200 billion by Millennials) and Gen Z alone is projected to account for 40% of global consumers in 2020.

Members of Gen Z, people born between 1995 – 2010, are the first true digital natives. Growing up with the internet, social networks and mobile systems has produced a generation that is hypercognitive with easy access to information that they collect, cross-reference and integrate and they navigate a life lived online and offline. In fact, they spend 10.6 hours a day engaging with online content, and they are highly socially and environmentally engaged.

90% of these “always on,” mobile-focused, high-spending demographic believe companies have a responsibility to address environmental and social issues. Fair trade products, ethical business practices, and a strong mission statement have never been more essential. Gen Z cares about environmental issues (76% are concerned about humanity’s impact on the planet) as well as social causes such as racial, gender, and income inequality. Gen Z shop with brands they feel they can interact with and can contribute to. While they care most about product quality and availability, participation and engagement is what they really value in a long-term brand relationship.

And for Gen Z, consumption means having access to products or services, not necessarily owning them. As access becomes the new form of consumption, unlimited access to goods and services (such as car-riding services, video streaming, and subscriptions) creates value. Products become services, and services connect consumers.

OBJECTIVE:

In this case study, you will do further research into the psychographic profile and purchase drivers of the Gen Z consumer. You will focus on what you believe to be the key purchase drivers (i.e. sustainability, social causes, etc.) and develop a line of fashion products (apparel, accessories, footwear, beauty or home goods) that you believe will have the greatest opportunity to succeed. You will also identify the retailer and/or e-commerce platforms where you would launch your line.

FORMAT:

Design cases should be submitted as a 15-slide deck, either portrait or landscape orientation, with slides sized for on-screen show 4:3, 10” x 7.5” or 7.5” x 10”. Submission files can be created in any software of the applicants choosing (PowerPoint, Keynote, Adobe InDesign, Illustrator etc.), however all cases must be submitted in a flat PDF format without video or sound.
DESIGN INSTRUCTIONS:

Your objective is to design a branded apparel (men’s, women’s, kids, or gender neutral), accessories, footwear, home or beauty line that will resonate with the Gen Z consumer.

SLIDE 1: Include one title sentence to summarize the case and discipline of your case study. Outline how your deck is broken out (suggested slide assignment below is optional).

SLIDE 2: Write an executive summary, covering all components of your case study. This should not be a summary of your case background or an introduction. People reading your executive summary should get the essence of your case study without fine detail. The executive summary should be in paragraph format, no longer than 300 words. Be sure to briefly summarize why your chosen line will resonate with Gen Z consumers and benefit your chosen retailer and/or e-commerce platforms as well.

SLIDE 3-6: These slides should illustrate deeper research on the Gen Z consumer and pinpoint the purchase drivers you feel are most important to the success of your brand. Explain how your brand will satisfy this critical purchasing factor in order to become successful.

SLIDE 7-8: Create an inspiration board for your new line and show your design process (imagery, preliminary sketches from your process journal, ideas, research, etc.).

SLIDE 9-10: Create a Fabric/Color/Print/Pattern Fashion Board; (Or, for beauty products, create packaging/properties of ingredients/signage/etc.) include a photo with name and a content/quality description of each fabric or material chosen. Create a master color palette for your entire collection, as well as three original prints/patterns that match into the color palette. Briefly explain how your materials and color story ties into the inspiration for the line.

SLIDES 11-14: Create 8 to 10 front looks (any medium) for your product offering. Create technical front and back flat sketches for three of these products including design callouts to show construction details and specs. Illustrations may be done by hand or by CAD.

SLIDE 15: Describe how you would communicate the story via a marketing strategy behind your collection to the customer, inclusive of brand name and related collateral. Explain how it will be sold.

APPENDIX SLIDES 16-21: Use up to five slides to summarize any research you have done on what factors contribute to the success of fashion collections --apparel (men’s, women’s, kids, or gender neutral), accessories, footwear, home or beauty line-- based on targeted demographic/psychographic population cohorts. Use one additional slide for footnotes and a bibliography.
JUDGING CRITERIA:

Your case will be reviewed by industry professionals including the FSF Board of Governors, FSF Mentors, and FSF Alumni. Judges will use the following criteria to score your case:

CREATIVITY & FEASIBILITY (60%)
- Did the applicant present designs that are creative and address the objective of the case?
- Did the applicant present concepts that are well-thought-out, executable and commercially viable?

RESEARCH (20%)
- Did the applicant demonstrate that they conducted thorough research regarding the Gen Z consumer and the relevant purchase drivers of this generation?
- Does the applicant’s choice of retailer or e-commerce platform demonstrate that they conducted thorough research on their choice such that it supports their brand concept and findings regarding the Gen Z consumer?

CLARITY (15%)
- Did the applicant clearly complete each portion of their prompt?
- Does the applicant’s case follow logical development and a clear structure; is it easy to follow and summarize?

FORMAT (5%)
- Did the applicant use correct grammar and spelling?
- Did the applicant include a title page with one sentence to summarize the case? Was the applicant’s name and school kept anonymous?

REQUIRED DOCUMENTS FOR SUBMISSION:
1) Completed FSF Case Study
2) Cover Letter: Please prepare a 250-300 word maximum cover letter containing your response to the following questions:
   - Why are you interested in the fashion industry?
   - What are your current career aspirations?
   - Why have you decided to select your case study discipline?
3) Current Resume
4) Current Unofficial Transcription

DEADLINES AND ANNOUNCEMENT OF COMPETITION RESULTS:

September 30th, 2020 - Complete your Applicant Profile and take the Eligibility Quiz on Wizehive, the case study submission platform. Your FSF faculty member will provide you with the Wizehive link.

October 18th, 2020 - Submit all four of your required documents mentioned above on Wizehive BEFORE 11:59 PM Eastern Standard Time. Please be advised, the Wizehive portal will automatically close PROMPTLY at 12:00 AM EST on October 19th, 2020. Be sure to allow sufficient time to upload all four required documents.

Confirmation of Submission - Once submitted, you will receive confirmation on your Wizehive Homepage that your submission process is completed.

Announcement of Scholarship Results - The Scholarship competition results will be sent to the FSF faculty member at your school by the first week of December. Your FSF faculty member will share the results with you.