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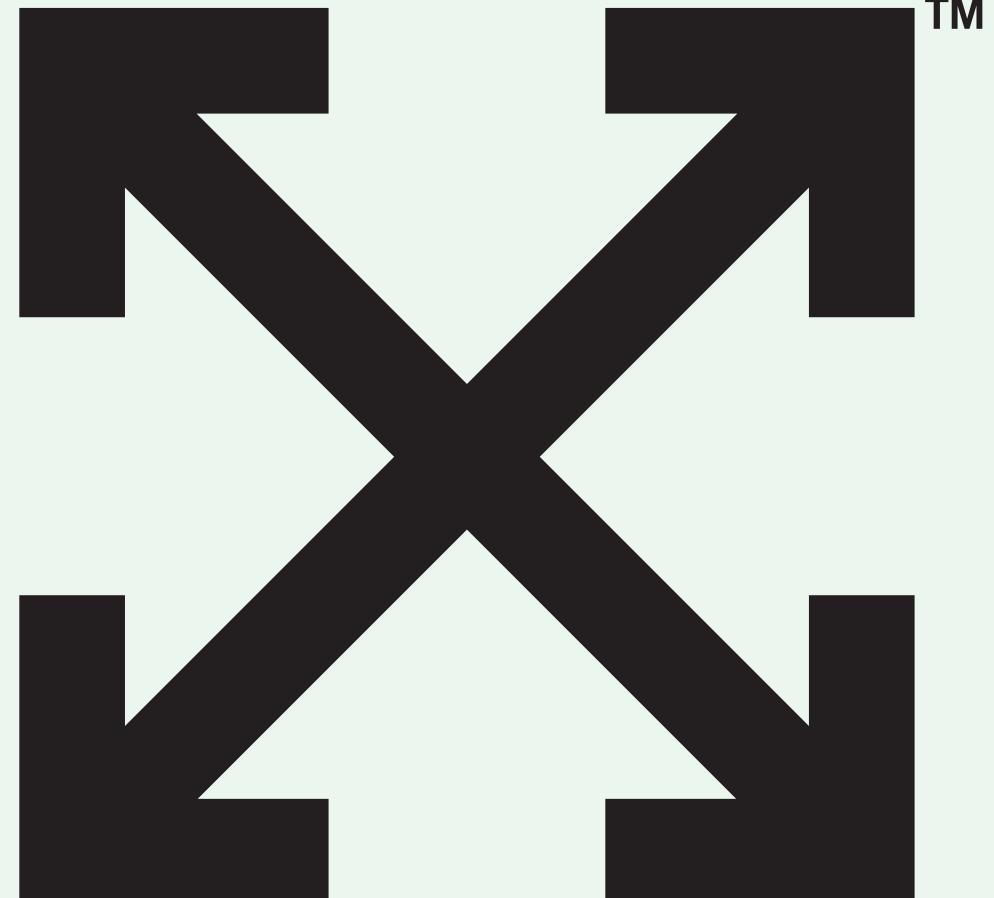


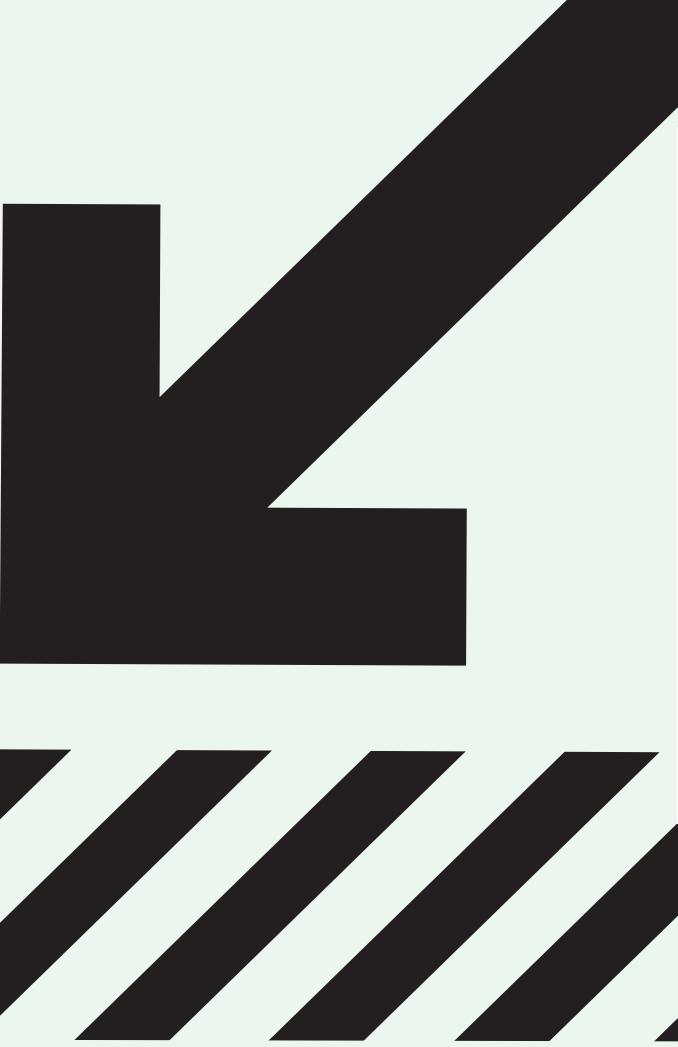
Off-White c/o VIRGIL ABLOH™  
Defining the grey area between black  
and white as the color Off-White™

“BACK PAGE”



“MAGAZINE”



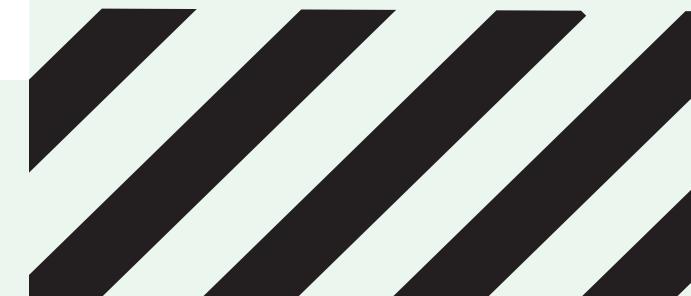
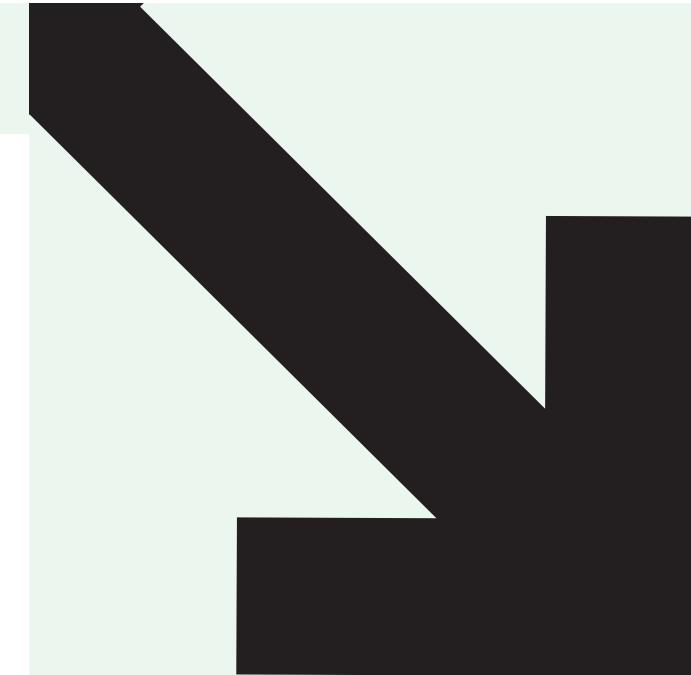


ments result in only a small percent-age of consumers being able to purchase the clothing. Opportunities for Off-White could involve collaborating with other luxury brands, to excel Off-Whites notoriety and expand the gateway into the luxury market.

Potential 'Threats' could include damage to the reputation of Off-White, due to high prices the target market (the youth), can't afford this clothing. This can be overcome with further success with their "For All" spin off collection with maybe a collaboration with a well known fast fashion brand to broaden their target market and



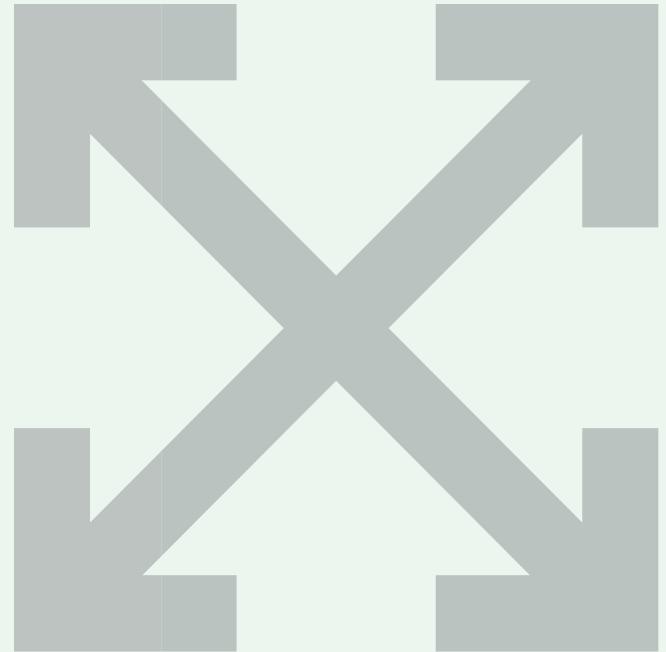
Brands use SWOT analysis to assess the internal and external environment in which they are situated, for example assessing the internal environment is when a brand evaluates which factors are its strengths and weaknesses in order to improve and also sustain success. Evaluating the external environment includes analysing conditions in the marketplace that could affect the way an organisation does business, these factors are uncontrollable. Strengths of Off-White include using high quality materials to make garments, innovative designs that are in trend, selling in stores located all over the world expanding their popularity, strong brand image that everyone recognises and a strong social media following which allows consumers to stay up to date with collections. 'Weaknesses' consist of pricing and limitation, the price of Off-White garments are high, resulting in only a certain market of wealthy individuals being able to buy their clothes. Also the limited stock of these garments



This report will research into Off-White's history, analyzing key focus points in which reviewing the brand's product portfolio to assess how their advertisements meet the needs of consumers. Furthermore, identifying their target market and how the brand plans to expand to meet the needs of emerging markets using research analysis. Finally, reflecting on the brand's strengths and weaknesses to provide recommendations for future growth.

### Black Brushed Diagonal Arrows Galaxy T-shirt

Long sleeve cotton fleece sweatshirt in black: Multicolor graphics printed throughout. Drawstring at hood. Logo printed in white at front. Signature graphics printed in white at front hem, sleeves, and back.



'Environmental' factors and sustainability are also important within the fashion industry, as a population we care about where our clothing is sourced and what material it's made from to reduce our carbon footprint. Most brands accommodate for this by using environment friendly products but in some cases the Corporate and Social Responsibility (CSR) of the brands are unclear. Looking at the transparency of brands can depict where they source fabric from and who works in their supply chain, as millennials we stand up and take action to help reduce abuse in the workplace and harmful emissions caused by processed materials by not buying them, up to 65% of consumers actively seek sustainable fashion (Pratap, 2017). Unfortunately many big fashion brands still don't disclose where they source their clothing from and there is no information of where Off-White sources its fabric, only that it is made in Milan ([off-white.com](http://off-white.com)).

All brands have to abide by the legal factors in the fashion industry, ethics and compliance are important focus points for brands. Environmental laws that are ever growing more difficult for brands to comply with must be followed such as a limit on how much pollution an organisation can emit, else fines are given and also a threat to shut down business. Laws for international trade also require compliance and following these laws are good for fashion brand's success and image (Pratap, 2017).

## 'THE M FACTORS'

There are many factors that affect the fashion industry and how brands sell their products, using research from the PESTEL framework, the location of these macro-environmental factors are clear. Political' factors can have the largest affect on business causing a level of "uncertainty" in the fashion industry, this instability of trust in the global economy is not only due to Brexit and terrorism. Political shifts in the UK and the US have also had an impact on the fashion industry, with the US elections being the biggest factor (Pratap, 2017).

While 'Economic' factors affect the retail industry world-wide, economic volatility can affect profit and sales. In 2016, volatility in the Chinese market had the biggest impact on the economic fluctuations since the recession. This affected economies in countries such as India and Russia. Since then, employment has grown globally resulting in consumers' spending power increasing (Pratap, 2017). This benefits Off-White as China and Russia are the brand's target markets as they have a lot of spending power.

Socio-cultural' factors play a big role in the success of the retail industry, social changes that have arisen in the last ten years have increased the demand for fashion products. This is affected by the millennial generation who are the main target for fashion marketers, their needs and wants are very different from previous consumers, they meticulously look for low prices and great quality (Pratap, 2017). This is one of the reasons why Off-White released the "F All" collection, to rope in a bigger audience of millennials

Technological developments played an important role in the 21st century growth of fashion retail, phones and internet have allowed shopping for fashion products to be more accessible by millennials who prefer to shop in this way make the experience more personal. Technology has allowed brands to expand globally reaching a greater number of markets, with ecommerce helping brands to excel in various



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## BRAND HISTORY

Despite being launched in 2013 founder of Off-White, Virgil Abloh released his first Autumn/Winter Collection titled "Then Youth Will Always Win" in 2014. Abloh innovatively experimented with diagonal lines overpassing minimalistic phrases such as "WHITE 13". With became a prolific trademark to the brand (Morency 016). Abloh gained inspiration from his short-lived brand "Pryex Vision" where bold phrases such as "-PYREX 23" were used. Abloh graduated with a master's

architecture in his hometown Illinois at the Institute of Technology where he recollects was "OMA's Rem Koolhaas had just finished his (McCormick Tribune Campus) student centre, which later, alongside his relationship with Miuccia Prada piqued my interest and opened my gateway into fashion." (Morency. 2016). In 2002, Abloh began to work alongside Kanye West as a creative consultant, overlooking album covers and merchandise designs whilst accompanying him

ELEGANT  
MODERN

HIGH PRICE

**BALENCIAGA**



LOUIS VUITTON



VALENTINO



D&G  
DOLCE & GABBANA



EDGY  
MODERN

**ALLSAINTS**  
**URBAN OUTFITTERS**

ZARA  
*H&M*

LOW PRICE

Also referring to the brand positioning map, the three brands fit into a category of 'Edgy Modern' clothing constantly coming up with new trends such as Balenciaga's 'Triple S' sneaker which was a shoe nothing like anyone had ever seen before; Off-White's collaboration with the Nike Blazer which was originally a shoe that had gone out of style and Givenchy's famous Tiotteweiher' T-shirt which shortly after graphic blow-up prints on T-shirts became a

trend. Further more the positioning of the brands on the map depict that Off-White's designs are more edgy than the other two brands, this is because as a luxury streetwear brand Virgil Abloh is able to merge styles together creating new unique style. Abloh supports this by stating that it's important to "mix and match your wardrobe to be interesting" later on announcing "interesting to me, is Saint Laurent and a Valentino bag with a Celine sneaker and an Off-White .

## STAYING AHEAD OF THE GAME

From a perspective, Off-White is in competition with some big designers in fashion, according to Morency, (2016), the unique selling point of the brand comes from their most popular categories such as track pants that are \$520, T-shirts \$350 and Sweatshirts that are \$580 making almost a staggering 50% of overall sales. With these price ranges Off-White fits into a category of high end fashion competing with names such as Givenchy and Balenciaga where sweatshirts range from \$660 to \$675, T-shirts \$335 to \$455 and track pants priced at \$660 to \$495. Although Off-White is a lot younger than Givenchy and Balenciaga, some of Virgil Abloh's creative designs and branding techniques are similar to the two fashion houses and have certainly set the bar for luxury clothing. Although Givenchy and Balenciaga are more expensive than Off-White by about \$100 on average, their product offer still has some relatable characteristics. While Givenchy and Balenciaga offer luxury fashion, Off-White offers luxury streetwear, almost taking inspiration from the two fashion houses and applying to a different style of clothing all together.



in an internship at Fendi Headquarters in 2009. Abloh is also referred to as 'Dj Flat White' as he mixes tracks for artists such as Drake and Rihanna (Clarke, 2017).

Off white is a colour that isn't quite pure. it can be made up of yellow or grey accents. Similarly Off-White isn't pure, the brand doesn't just make streetwear or high-end fashion: it always finds the in-between. According to Marx (2017), she states that Off-White "combines '90s inspired New York street styles with tailored menswear and is especially made for the emerging young clientele of Generation Y." which supports remarks he made on his brand such as "I want to reach the generation of the millennials. They have different needs and different cultural codes" (Marx, 2017). Originally, Abloh wanted to create a concept that is missed by designers. thus creating a whole new market. Abloh breaks down his goal to Style.com by stating "I want to give my point of view and merge street sensibilities in a proper fashion context. I think that if I can merge the two, it'll make something interesting." (Hall. n.d.).

As the brand has evolved, Virgil's aspirations correlated to obligatory thoughts of not just buying it. but to analyse the layers that make up the brand and how they coincide to create a fashion show

(Gordon, 2016). Off-White has made a massive impact on the fashion industry even though only being on the scene for 5 years. From his first collection Abloh has followed up with a staggering 22 fashion shows ranging from 'Mens' and 'Women's' collections. from streetwear to luxury fashion.

Throughout his journey Abloh's product offering shifted. recent collections portray an objective towards a more isolated demographic. In September. Abloh's Spring/ Summer 2018 Collection titled "Natural Women- pays tribute to the 20th Anniversary of the death of Princess Diana. His brazen lineup consisted of her most popular eighties and nineties looks such as a cropped blazer with ruffled sleeves and the famous "revenge dress,- (Iredale. 2017). As brand extensions and collaborations go, Nike & Virgil single-handily was one of the biggest collaborations of a sportswear brand and designer since Kanye's 'Yeezy' for Adidas. Abloh broke down the profile of ten iconic Nike trainers. adding innovative designs such as quotations and zip-ties, recognisable in his brand Off-White. Also found that the reasoning for the success of this collection was each original shoe was currently already popular, adding Abloh's designs boosted sales and extended his target market through footwear.

## PERSONALITY & ESSENCE

Off White is renowned for their striped logo, Abloh branded his label distinctive-ly using his twitter feed. On his timeline Abloh retweets people who found IRL instantes of his striped logo (Wolf, 2016). Wolf also supports that this enhanced the brand's personality as people are surrounded by the logo; traffic signs, no parking areas and parking spots and continually encouraging people to find images boosts the brands value to the consumer as they gain a personal attachment. Furthermore this contributes to the brand's essence, Abloh's street-wear collections feature minimalistic captions and bold diagonal lines, without that, some of his original fans might not be as emotionally connected due to being die-hard supporters making a connection with Abloh's original designs.. This is supported by one of the four main perspectives of the Aaker's Model, 'Brand as a person' which finds that without a strong chemistry between consumer and brand the equity of the brand could be damaged.

## BRAND VALUES

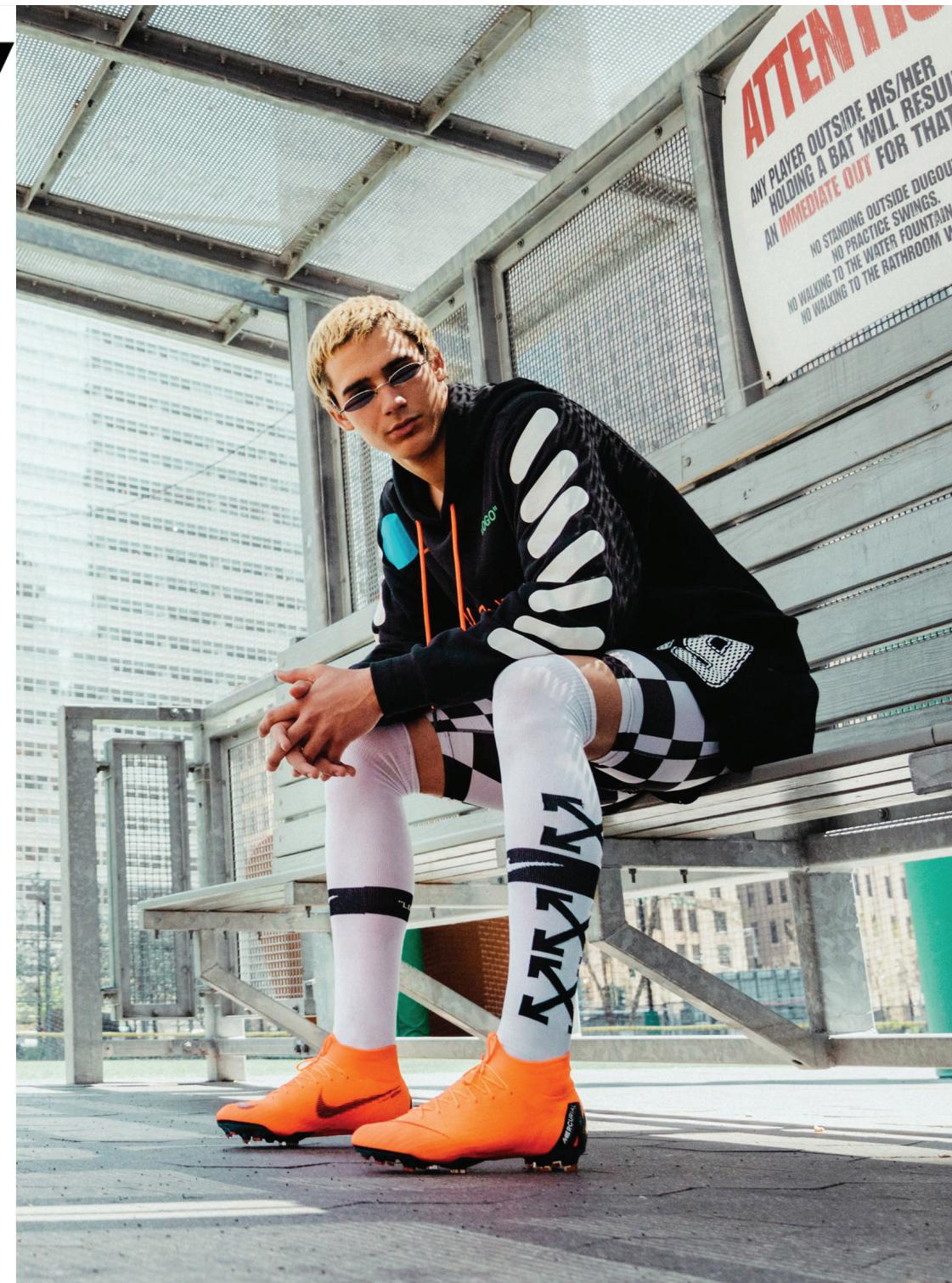
For Off-White, Virgil Abloh values sourc-ing the best available materials and using specific opinions when discussing fab-rication, fit and fabric (Off-White, n.d.). Therefore the garments produced are high quality. According the Aaker's Mod-  
el, this segment would fall under 'Brand as a product', which explains how if a product being advertised is higher qual-  
ity than its competitors this can make the difference in whether the consumer actu-ally purchases the product.



## HYBEASTS

Hybeasts are a type of con-sum-er that buy Off-White and other expensive designer clothing. Their main goal is to buy and collect products in trend for the core purpose of showing off to impress others (Anwar, 2015). 'Environmental' factors and sustainability are also important within the fashion industry, as a population we care about where.

# 'T-SHIRT'



## BRAND NAME & IDENTITY

The brand name “Off-White” is derived from Abloh’s efforts to distinguish the “grey area” between white and black (Off-White, n.d.), meaning his goal is to make clothing that is fashion forward and trendy while also being unique in its own way. According to Cardenas, (2017), Off-White is an example of how effective imagery and logos can establish brand identity. When the brand’s name is covered on the product, can people still tell it’s Off-white. Yes they can, the use of diagonal lines, simple citations and a limited colour scheme all form the brand’s specific trademark. With research on the Aaker’s Model, this topic would fit into the category ‘Brand as a symbol’, which supports that if a brand has a strong visual presence, consumers find it easy to follow the brand and connect with future collections.

## PACKAGING AND DISPLAY & THE ENVIRONMENT OF SALE

A unique feature of Off-White is its packaging, when purchasing a garment from the brand you get an industrial looking see-through bag with printed diagonal lines. You also receive a tag on the garment which consists of a zip-tie and a transparent gel tag with the brand’s trademark on it. This makes the item feel very personal to the consumer, as it shows that a lot of thought and time has gone into the appearance of the packaging. This stands out from the other brands, for instance Virgil Abloh doesn’t have to put the brand’s name on the packaging, you just know it’s Off-White. Whereas big competitors such as Gucci and Louis Vuitton have to put their name as a seal on their products. In the ruthless environment that we call the fashion industry, Virgil’s innovation for packaging puts him on a platform to be able to com



## EMERGING MARKETS

Off-White has recently just opened a new, cheaper collection of T-shirts and sweatshirts titled “For All” with prices that range from \$95 to \$170 compared to the brand’s normal price of \$300 to \$800, Abloh’s idea has worked very well as this makes his clothing more accessible to fans who might not be able to afford the clothing without making the clothing too cheap that it dilutes the brand’s exclusivity. As a result, this expands Off-White’s target market and rejuvenates the diffusion line for streetwear (Milnes, 2018).



## CONSUMER SEGMENTATION

Virgil Abloh uses mass marketing and mass customisation when designing his products by using quotations on his products, this makes the garment feel personalised to the consumer even though they're mass marketed to everyone. The idea that it is personal comes from the advertising on social media of Abloh making limited edition quotations on shoes for celebrities such as "NAST AWGE" for the rapper ASAP Nast (Boykins, 2017) and "KIPCHOGE 2:03:32" for marathon runner Eliud Kipchoge who won the Berlin marathon with that time (Gilbert, 2017). Aware that for the success of Off-White the youth play an im-

portant role, giving him determination to incorporate his styles with high end fashion silhouettes. Abloh uses behavioural segmentation with applications such as Instagram and Twitter to target the youth, as he knows that the youth are heavily inspired by social media. Additionally his target market is stretched by using fashion shows to inspire a slightly older consumer. Using Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, it is clear that people buy Off-White for 'Esteem' as a result of frequent use of celebrity which the public look up to as martyrs to seek hot new trends and 'Self Actualisation' due to the high price of the products, making the consumer feel special and unique when purchasing.



## MIXING IT UP

Also referred to as the “Four P’s”, The “Marketing Mix” has four interdependent categories, manufacturing the best “Product” in the right “Place”, whilst efficiently “Pricing” and “Promoting” at the ideal time (marketingmix.co.uk., n.d.). Virgil Abloh applies this to Off-White by sourcing the best fabrics to make the highest quality clothing. He sells the garments in Milan, New York, Sydney, London and Hong Kong which are considered the top fashion capitals of the world at a high price due to limited stock and the highest quality materials. Followed by the most important step, after you have all of them categories covered “Promotion”. Using the AIDA Model you can consider the affect of how you advertise your product, the model is split into four specific stages that appeal to consumers who are contemplating on buying a product or service (The Formula, n.d.). Abloh creates “Awareness” through new visual collections, celebrity endorsement and models such as Ian Connor who began promoting Off-White on social media. Abloh then created “interest” by using his signature “stripes” on the garments to engage his fans, also experimenting with different concepts that may start a trend for example the two-tone denim for the “Off-White x Levi’s collaboration which was very popular with fans. These new concepts make the consumer start to “Desire” the clothing, at this stage Abloh thinks about the

aspiration to be unique and edgy within the fashion world which makes the consumer believe that they will be benefiting from buying the clothing. At this stage, also known as the “Behaviour Stage”, the need shifts to a want, which is the last stage of transitioning consumers through the “Purchasing funnel”. The consumers urge to buy the product becomes irresistible, resulting in “Action” being taken to buy the product.



## PRODUCT PORTFOLIO

Using research from the Boston Consulting Group (BCG) Growth-Share Matrix, Analysis of Off-White's product portfolio helps to categorise their products into four main categories: Stars, Cash Cows, Question marks and Dogs. Off-White's “Star” products consist of exciting new product with high market growth and market share. For example, new collections such as Men's Spring/Summer 2018 collection “Temperature” used lots of advertising on social media and vast collection images and videos of the runway which created attention for fans and the public to follow. Some of the products from this collection reference Abloh's old collection with as a result them pieces will eventually fall into the “Cash Cow” category. The “Cash Cow” category includes Off-White's popular

products which don't need excessive advertising as a result to being popular. For example, their original collection layed the foundation for Off-White which means die-hard fans look for resemblance in new collections. The “Question Mark” category requires a large investment for potential success in the future. For Off-White this includes products such as the women's “For Walking” boots which have been promoted all over social media and fashion week to create hype for their recent drop. These have now converted to a “Star” product due to heavy investment. The “Dog” category, is a section that may be suffering slightly with sales and eating into profit. For example accessories such as phone cases and the original collection of shoes aren't as popular as other products that are released, they aren't promoted as much but have sentimental value.