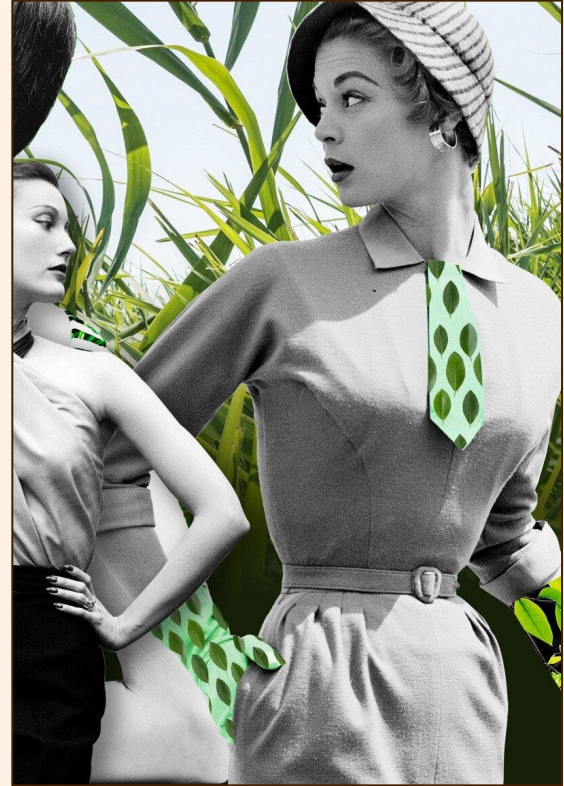


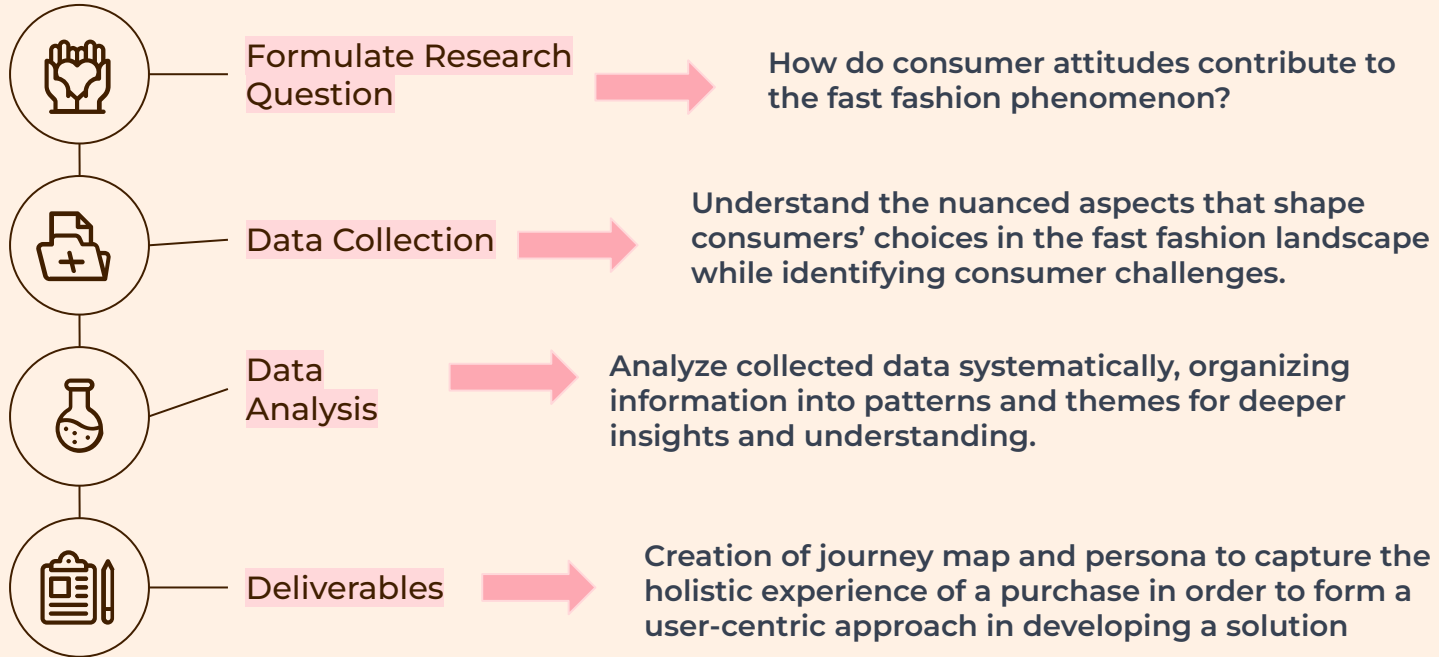
# *Ethical Fashion Consumption*

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SI 422 Portfolio: Fall 2023  
Shruti Swaminathan



# Research Process



# Research Question:

- ★ How do consumer attitudes contribute to overproduction and exacerbate fast fashion?
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# Background

# Fast Fashion Context

## What is Fast Fashion?

- ★ Describes the rapid production and quick turnover of inexpensive, trendy clothing in response to increasingly short trend cycles.
- ★ Retailers began adopting strategies to more efficiently produce and distribute affordable clothing that meet consumer demands.

### Consumer Adoption of Sustainable Fashion Choices:

Understanding how the fast fashion landscape influences consumers' choices, specifically in the context of sustainable and ethical fashion. I sought to identify factors that may encourage more individuals to adopt sustainable fashion practices through improved shopping experiences.



# Interviews

# Participant Recruitment

## Age Group

Participants were aged between 18-45 years to consider generational familiarity and perspectives with possible social media influences.

## Diversity

Participants came from diverse ethnic and socioeconomic backgrounds.

## Sustainability

Participants had varying degrees of interest in adopting sustainable fashion along with varying levels of awareness prior to the interviews.

## Frequency

Participants had to have made at least 3 online or in person fashion related purchases in the past 12 months to have a recent consumer history.

## Gender & Confidentiality

Participants were recruited anonymously across social media platforms to ensure diverse gender representation.

## Neutral Language

Making a conscious effort to use neutral language, I avoided leading participants toward specific answers and mitigated potential bias.

# Consumer Interviews

## Context

- After identifying the research question and formulating my interview protocol, I began conducting interviews.
- **Objective:** Identify challenges consumers face when attempting to make more sustainable fashion choices.
- **Method:** Performed affinity mapping to categorize key findings to inform the creation of representative user personas.



## Participant Quotes

P2: "It seems like most brands engage in 'fast-fashion' like practices, I'm sure most of my purchases consist of fast fashion."

P4: "I've bought from fast fashion brands for convenience, but I'm aware of the drawbacks. I'm drawn to the affordability and variety."

P5: "Whenever I have a special event, I tend to shop for new outfits. It's become a habit and it doesn't always align with sustainable choices."



# 50%

Expressed facing challenges when obtaining information on brands with sustainable and ethical practices indicating a lack of transparency and trust.

# 80%

Prioritized setting a budget before making fashion purchases, emphasizing financial consciousness.

# 80%

Expressed regret with life cycle of at least two clothing purchases in the past year.



# Key Themes

**01**

**Special occasions prompt purchases.**

**02**

**Consumers are unclear about the validity of information regarding sustainability practices of corporations.**

**03**

**Consumers associate sustainable brands with higher costs.**

**04**

**Shopping avenues and brands that have ties to fast fashion are still frequented due to their convenience.**

# Deliverables

# Persona Creation

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- ★ Objective: Humanize data collected during the research phase while providing a framework during the design and development process.
- ★ Built upon themes found in the interview phase.
- ★ Serves as foundation for user-centric design building upon needs and behaviors of actual target users.
- ★ Through the creation of the user persona, a tangible representation of the identified user needs, pain points and goals was generated.

# Persona: Eco-Conscious Emily

## Emily Smith (25)

*Social Media Influencer*



Emily is an environmental activist who is deeply committed to sustainable living. She actively seeks out eco-friendly products and advocates for responsible consumption. As a result, she is willing to invest in high-quality, sustainable fashion and educates others about the detrimental impact of fast-fashion on the environment. She values transparency and reliable information when making purchases and prefers brands that align with her eco-friendly values.

## Goals:

- Support sustainable and ethical fashion brands.
- Use influence to foster partnerships that will create a movement towards a more sustainable and responsible fashion industry.
- To raise awareness about environmental impact of fast fashion and promote importance of sustainable living among followers.

# Persona: Eco-Conscious Emily

## Frustrations:

- Difficulty finding reliable information about sustainability practices.
- Balancing passion for sustainability with budget constraints.
- Encouraging a wider audience to consider long term impact of fast fashion and prioritize sustainability.

## Social Media Influence:

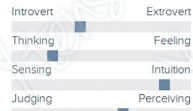
- Traditional Ads
- Online & Social Media
- Referrals
- Guerilla Efforts & PR

### Eco-Conscious Social Influencer Emily



"Every choice we make is an opportunity to create a better, more sustainable world."

Age: **25**  
Work: **Social Media Influencer**  
Location: **Los Angeles, CA**  
Character: **Single, no kids**



### Goals

- Support sustainable and ethical fashion brands.
- Raise awareness about the negative impact of fast fashion.
- Encourage others to make informed and conscious purchasing decisions.

### Frustrations

- Difficulty finding reliable information about the sustainability practices of different brands.
- Balancing her passion for sustainability with budget constraints.
- Encouraging a wider audience to prioritize sustainable fashion and consider its long-term impact.

### Bio

Emily is a 25-year-old environmental activist who is deeply committed to sustainable living. She actively seeks out eco-friendly products and advocates for responsible consumption. She prioritizes ethical and transparent business practices, and she is willing to invest in high-quality, sustainable fashion. Emily actively engages in community initiatives promoting sustainable fashion and educates others about the detrimental impact of fast fashion on the environment. She values transparency and reliable information when making purchasing decisions and prefers brands that align with her eco-friendly values.

### Motivation

- Emily is motivated to inspire her followers to make sustainable choices in their fashion and lifestyle.
- Aims to use her influence to foster meaningful partnerships that drive collective action and create a larger, more impactful movement towards a more sustainable and responsible fashion industry.
- Emily is motivated to raise awareness about the environmental impact of fast fashion and the importance of sustainable living.

### Liked Brands



### Preferred Channels



# Journey Map

- ★ Provides a visual representation of key touchpoints and interactions with fashion retailers and consumer journey from initial awareness to post-purchase.
- ★ Pinpoints pain points in the shopping process and areas for improvement.
- ★ Helps researchers understand the context in which consumer decisions are made.
- ★ Serves as a tool to align design decisions with consumer needs and demands.



# CUSTOMER JOURNEY MAP

## SHOPPING SUSTAINABLY



### Eco Conscious Emily

Eco-Conscious Emily is a passionate advocate for sustainable fashion and ethical living. Emily actively promotes transparent and eco-friendly fashion choices within her community and online platforms. Through her journey towards embracing sustainable fashion practices, Emily aims to inspire others to make conscious and mindful decisions, fostering a more sustainable and ethical future for the fashion industry and the planet.

### EXPECTATIONS

- Ability to make well-informed and ethical purchasing decisions.
- Hopes to find sustainable fashion options that prioritize both ethical production and high-quality design.
- Aims to foster a community of like-minded individuals who share her passion for conscious and responsible consumerism.

#### AWARENESS

Emotions: Curiosity, concern, eager to learn

1. Emily becomes aware of environmental impact of fast fashion.
2. Starts to research sustainable fashion initiatives.

"I realize the importance of making sustainable fashion choices."

"Fast fashion can lead to environmental consequences."

#### RESEARCH

3. Seeks information about sustainable brands and their ethical practices, exploring various online resources and social media platforms.
4. Frustration with limited information, excitement when discovering transparent brands.

"Amidst the sea of information, discovering genuinely sustainable brands feels like finding gems that align with my values and beliefs."

#### PURCHASE

5. Considers price, brand transparency, eco-friendly materials.
6. Concerned about affordability and satisfaction with more sustainable options.

"Opting for sustainable fashion isn't just a purchase; it's a conscious investment in a more sustainable and compassionate future for both people and the planet"

#### POST PURCHASE

7. Evaluates her satisfaction with the purchased product, assessing its quality, comfort, and adherence to sustainable standards.
8. Sees if purchased item lasts with increasing wear.

"Each sustainable purchase is a reaffirmation of my commitment to ethical living, bringing a sense of pride and fulfillment with every eco-friendly choice."

#### ADVOCACY

9. Shares sustainable fashion journey on social media
10. Advocates for ethical consumption
11. Encourages her followers to make conscious fashion choices.

"Using my voice to advocate for sustainable fashion isn't just about trends; it's a meaningful journey towards building a more conscientious and sustainable fashion community."



# Key Takeaways

## Design Recommendations

- Misalignment between consumer expectations and reality of fast fashion purchases.
  - ◆ Design interventions to bridge gap.
- Implement intuitive interfaces with easily accessible information on sustainable and ethical fashion.
- Include clear labels and filters to help users identify brands with eco-friendly practices.

## Incentivize Sustainability

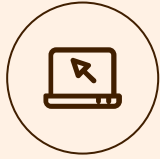
- Introduce features such as discounts or rewards to encourage users to make sustainable purchases.
- Utilize machine learning to understand user behaviors and tailor suggestions accordingly.
- Collaborate with influencers or experts to create engaging content that promotes sustainable fashion choices.

## Lessons Learned

- Refinement of interview techniques and avoidance of loaded language helped foster an open and honest dialogue about fast fashion attitudes.
- Next Steps: Conduct observation of participants in a shopping setting to address bias present in the reliance of self-perceived attitudes of participants.

# Generative AI

# Generative AI



## Usage:

I chose not to use generative AI in the creation of my portfolio. I wanted to reflect on my own experiences throughout the course and understand how each assignment shaped the course of addressing my research question. In order to do this I wanted to spend time reviewing the themes and concepts that came to light with each progressive assignment in order to develop a deeper understanding of the iterative process. I felt that the usage of generative AI would make it difficult to incorporate key insights I had gathered from my research methods that were not textually captured. As a result, I chose to rely primarily on methods that did not use generative AI in order to create my portfolio.