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**Brand Sustainability and Consumer Behaviour
in Luxury Fashion: Insights from the Golden
Goose Case Study**

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ABSTRACT:

In recent years, sustainability has emerged as a strategic measure in addressing various social and environmental challenges associated with the fashion industry. It is expected of brands to demonstrate ethical, environmentally responsible practices and total transparency in their communications. Despite the increased efforts of fashion companies to embrace sustainability values, these efforts remain undervalued, particularly in the luxury sector. The present thesis explores the influence of sustainability initiatives on consumer perception and purchase intention. The analysis is grounded in a qualitative approach, with a case study on Golden Goose, an Italian luxury fashion brand recognised and awarded for its craftsmanship and sustainable innovation. It is based on seven semi-structured interviews conducted with a sample of seven Italian consumers of the brand. The data were collected via video calls and then analysed using thematic analysis, with the aim of identifying patterns related to brand trust, brand value and purchase intention.

Theoretically, the research is grounded on a series of interdependent concepts including corporate sustainability, stakeholder theory, brand trust, perceived value, and greenwashing. Literature emphasizes that sustainability can make a brand image stronger and also promote customer loyalty; however, both benefits happen if actions are well explained and perceived as genuine. Transparency, credibility, and consistency are therefore crucial. The findings of this study agree with these points: although Golden Goose has launched significant sustainability actions—most notably the Yatay Model 1B and the Forward Store—buyer awareness of such activities was generally poor. This gap between the brand's strategic measures and consumer knowledge restricts the potential of such initiatives to induce a good effect on the intention to purchase, underlining the requirement for concentrated and consistent sustainability communication.

Three dimensions of trust have been identified. Firstly, the one based on direct experience with the brand, which arises from direct contact with the product/service. Secondly, there is the trust based on the brand's image and reputation, i.e. its positioning and the values associated with it. Finally, there is an evolving trust, characterised by an initial attitude of openness, which then either weakens or strengthens. The study also found that price and aesthetics play a significant role in influencing purchasing decisions, often prevailing over considerations related to sustainability.

In conclusion, this thesis demonstrates how sustainability initiatives can positively influence consumers' attitudes towards brands and build loyalty, but this is only possible if such strategies are reliable, transparent and emotionally engaging. This study makes a significant contribution to the academic understanding of sustainability, branding and consumer behaviour in the luxury fashion sector.

KEYWORDS: Sustainability, luxury fashion, brand perception, purchase intention, corporate sustainability, greenwashing, stakeholder theory, consumer behaviour

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1 Introduction

1.1 Background of the study

In the contemporary fashion industry, sustainability has emerged as a strategic tool employed to tackle environmental and social challenges. The fashion industry is a major global economic force, contributing significantly to employment, trade and GDP in many countries. This is reflected in the sales of LVMH, the only group present in all major sectors of the luxury industry, which reports sales of 86.2 billion euros in 2023 (LinkedIn, n.d.). Moreover, the fashion sector has witnessed a significant surge in investments directed towards digital transformation, with a pronounced emphasis on the development of omnichannel experiences and sustainability initiatives (Tamburrino, 2025).

In 2021, the value of the top 50 investments in technology related to fashion grew by more than 50 per cent compared to 2019, reaching \$16.2 billion, according to McKinsey's analysis of Crunchbase data (Bain & Sanchez Altable, 2022). This considerable increase in digital investments in fashion has the potential to enhance the economic competitiveness of the industry, while concurrently representing an opportunity to facilitate a rapid transition to sustainable models.

Among the industries that have faced increasing pressure to integrate sustainability into their business practices, fashion plays a very important role. This has had a significant impact on the environment, as evidenced by the 500,000 tonnes of plastic microfibres released into the ocean annually, the equivalent of 50 billion plastic bottles. If current trends continue, the fashion industry alone will account for 25% of the world's carbon budget by 2050. In 2018 alone, the fashion industry generated 2.1 billion tonnes of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. Moreover, it is a sector that continues to be associated with the exploitation of child labour, with an estimated 170 million children involved in its supply chain (Fashion Takes Action, n.d.).

A survey of global CEOs offers further insight into how industries, such as the fashion industry, are embracing sustainability as part of their business model. Accenture, in collaboration with the Global Compact, is also conducting a global survey. The objective of this survey is to ascertain the extent to which companies have evolved over time through the adoption of sustainability actions. The 2023 survey revealed that 61% of CEOs are integrating sustainability into their core business strategy, perceiving it as an integral component rather than a marginal concern. In contrast, 37% are adopting circular economy models to enhance resource reuse (United Nations Global Compact & Accenture, 2023).

Moreover, Marco Tronchetti Provera, Executive Vice President and CEO of Pirelli & C. S.p.A., emphasised that in the past, the focus of competition between companies was on the cost of products or their performance. However, in the current era, customers are attributing increasing importance to sustainability, considering it to be a pivotal element in the purchasing phase. Consequently, companies are required to demonstrate a consistent commitment to sustainability in order to meet the needs and expectations of today's consumers (United Nations Global Compact & Accenture, 2023). Therefore, as asserted by 68% of CEOs, customers emerge as the primary stakeholders influencing companies' sustainability strategies.

Despite the global commitment among CEOs and companies to sustainability, as evidenced by the findings of the Accenture study, a meticulous examination of the Italian market discloses a discrepancy between consumer expectations and the practices adopted by companies in this area. Perrone (2023) observes a discrepancy between the expectations of Italian consumers and the practices of companies in the field of sustainability. A survey of 400 SMEs and 400 consumers revealed that almost 80% of consumers expressed a desire to purchase from brands with sustainability policies, yet less than half of Italian companies have invested in that field.

The research also demonstrates that consumers are becoming increasingly attentive to certain aspects of sustainability, such as packaging (71.4% of preferences), as they want a clear reduction of waste in this area, and logistics (52.7% of preferences), as consumers prefer eco-friendly means of transport and also that companies are able to optimise deliveries in order to reduce environmental impact (Perrone, 2023).

Recent studies have revealed an increased interest among consumers in sustainable practices, which is not limited to e-commerce but also extends to other areas, such as fashion. Sustainable fashion has been positioned as a possible solution to issues such as pollution, fighting sweatshop labour, and energy conservation (Busalim et al., 2022).

1.2 Research question and objective of the study

The present study aims to examine firms' brand sustainability initiatives and their influence on consumers' perception and purchasing behaviour. Several factors highlight the relevance of this study, including the increasing emphasis on sustainability by the luxury fashion industry. It is vital for brands to understand how their initiatives influence consumers in order to align luxury with environmental responsibility. Furthermore, consumer purchasing behaviour is relevant in this context, as consumers are increasingly influenced by ethical and social factors when purchasing goods and services. Consequently, companies could learn how to improve their marketing to make their products more attractive.

A preliminary investigation into sustainability, brand perception, and consumer behaviour in different markets and segments has already been conducted (Dyllick & Hockerts, 2002; Grubor & Milovanov, 2017). This study makes an important contribution to the existing academic literature on the subject, as the results provide empirical evidence to support these theories when applied to the fashion industry, more specifically the luxury sector, where there has been a lack of research in this area. This lacuna in the extant

literature is of considerable significance, particularly in terms of its implications for companies seeking to formulate sustainability strategies that are congruent with the expectations and needs of consumers.

Accordingly, the main research question is:

How do brand sustainability initiatives influence consumers' brand perception and purchase intention?

To answer the above research question, a case study of Golden Goose will be applied. Golden Goose, an Italian luxury brand founded in 2000 in Marghera, Italy, has integrated sustainability into its values of uniqueness, craftsmanship and timelessness. This commitment is exemplified by the Yatay Lab project, for which the brand was honoured at the CNMI Sustainable Fashion Awards 2024 at La Scala Theatre in Milan on 22 September 2024. This award underscores the brand's dedication to mitigating its ecological footprint, thereby serving as a noteworthy case study for examining the nexus between sustainability and consumer perception (Golden Goose, 2025).

2 Literature review

2.1 Corporate sustainability

According to Falzarano (2020), a critical analysis of the United Nations' (UN) Agenda 2030 provides a comprehensive understanding of the concept of sustainable development. In 2015, the UN established the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), a global framework aimed at promoting economic, social and environmental development. The establishment of these goals followed a period of several decades during which UN developed sustainable plans. A notable example of this was the 1992 Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro, which resulted in the adoption of Agenda 21, an action plan designed to safeguard the environment and enhance human well-being: this established the basis for the incorporation of sustainability into a variety of global policies. Another significant development was the Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development and the Plan of Implementation, which was adopted in South Africa in 2002 with the aim of reaffirming the responsibility of humans to preserve the planet (United Nations, n.d.).

According to the definition established by the Brundtland Report (1987), sustainable development can be defined as "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs" (United Nations, n.d.). The 2030 Agenda and the SDGs are recognised as an advancement of this principle, translating it into quantifiable goals that can guide both governments and businesses. In particular, for companies, the SDGs are an essential strategy for defining their priorities, ensuring that they meet the expectations of both consumers and stakeholders.

This concept has given rise to numerous definitions in the literature. One important area of application is the corporate sector, where sustainability is framed as corporate sustainability. As articulated by Falzarano (2020), the concept of the interdependence of the various objectives is as follows:

The social, economic and environmental dimensions are intricately interconnected and interdependent, signifying that no development-related practices, measures, policies or initiatives are exclusively aligned with a single dimension. While there is no hierarchical relationship between them, the interdependence tilts the balance towards a human-needs-oriented ethical perspective, in which environmental protection is not so much an objective in itself, but rather a means to find ways of development that are both viable and sustainable. (p. 145)

For instance, Szekely & Knirsch (2005) described sustainability for business as a means by which sustainable economic growth can be fostered, thereby strengthening corporate reputation and ensuring a high quality of products and services. This implies both the adoption of ethical business practices and the commitment to create environmentally friendly jobs and to promote stakeholder welfare (Montiel & Delgado-Ceballos, 2014).

Furthermore, Porter & Kramer (2011) proposed the concept of shared value, which is based on company activities that enhance efficiency and the social and economic conditions of the societies in which it operates. This definition underscores the notion that economic value can be created through social improvement.

Conventionally, within a capitalist paradigm, corporate entities have exhibited a predominant focus on pursuit of profit growth, often neglecting the consideration that such practices may lead to adverse outcomes, including but not limited to unemployment and diminished competitiveness over time. By transcending this conventional capitalist perspective on profit and embracing a more comprehensive understanding of shared value, the so-called crisis can be effectively overcome. The concept of shared value underscores the symbiotic relationship between commercial enterprises and their respective communities. Businesses require a robust community foundation to facilitate growth, while

communities depend on businesses to ensure their economic vitality and employment prospects. In summary, shared value establishes a connection between business success and social progress, thereby creating new opportunities for innovation and addressing the ever-evolving needs of modern society (Porter & Kramer, 2011).

Therefore, the concept of corporate sustainability aims to achieve a balance between the needs of all stakeholders. This is demonstrated by the necessity of ensuring fair employment for people, providing quality products to customers and protecting the environment. This commitment is characterised by a dedication to environmental protection, the responsible utilisation of resources, and the promotion of a positive social impact. A review of the existing literature reveals a definition of corporate sustainability that is analogous to that of “sustainable development”:

Corporate sustainability can accordingly be defined as meeting the needs of a firm’s direct and indirect stakeholders (such as shareholders, employees, clients, pressure groups, communities etc), without compromising its ability to meet the needs of future stakeholders as well. (Dyllick & Hockerts, 2002, p. 131)

As is demonstrated by the definition of corporate sustainability, the primary element is the balancing of all stakeholder needs. The Stakeholder Theory provides a framework for understanding and managing stakeholder relations effectively. As Freudenreich et al. (2020) describe, the existence of synergy between all stakeholders is a prerequisite for the creation of value. “Value in the context of business models—understood as a portfolio or blend of different forms of value—is therefore created jointly by and exchanged between the focal business and its stakeholders” (Freudenreich et al., 2020, p. 8).

As Freudenreich et al. (2020) describe, in order to achieve both sustainable development and shared value, one can refer to the framework Business Models for Sustainability (BMfS), which identifies four principles:

I “All relevant stakeholders are engaged in identifying and solving sustainability issues as part of a business model for sustainability’s value creation processes.” (p. 11)

II “The joint purpose of a business model for sustainability is directed toward sustainable development and explicitly refers to stakeholder contributions to achieve this purpose.” (p. 12)

III “A business model for sustainability aligns stakeholder interests to contribute effectively to sustainable development, in particular by integrating the ecological, social, and economic value stakeholders receive.” (p. 12)

IV “Business models for sustainability embody an integrated perspective of ethical and business considerations in their value creation with and for stakeholders.” (p. 12)

It is therefore possible to combine these prepositions with the preceding statements, as the active involvement of stakeholders in the resolution of sustainability issues can be aligned with the concept of corporate sustainability as the satisfaction of all stakeholders, as posited by Dyllick & Hockerts. Consequently, Porter & Kramer's shared value is congruent with the 'common purpose' of BMfS, thereby facilitating both corporate success and social progress. It is also important to emphasise how more sustainable value is also created by aligning stakeholder interests (Freudenreich et al.) with different types of values, such as ecological, social and economic. Finally, Szekely & Knirsch's work on ethical business practices in sustainability among companies, which should also be added to by ethical engagement with stakeholders in order to achieve both economic and social sustainability, is also relevant.

In conclusion, the analysis of value streams within stakeholder relationships is crucial to measure the success of a sustainable business model, ensuring that it always succeeds in contributing to sustainable development.

Having examined theories and practices of corporate sustainability, attention now turns to a real-world example that highlights its implementation in the luxury fashion industry: Stella McCartney, a British brand founded in the early 2000s. The strategy of the brand will be broken down into key points, including sustainable materials, environmental impact reduction, ethics and responsibility.

The brand's use of sustainable materials, including MIRUM®, a vegan leather free of plastic, fossil fuel and water, and ECONYL, a nylon regenerated from oceanic plastic waste, is well-documented. In addition, Stella McCartney has initiated a regenerative agriculture project with the SÖKTAS farm in Turkey that produces certified regenerated cotton. In 2022, the brand launched its inaugural fully circular product: a mono material parka with Econyl, designed for disassembly if returned through Stella McCartney's take-back scheme.

The brand is implementing concrete measures to reduce its CO2 emissions and contribute to the global effort against climate change, adopting a transparent approach and setting targets in line with the Science Based Targets initiative (SBTi), with the objective of achieving net-zero emissions by 2040.

Finally, the brand demonstrates a commitment to gender equality, with women accounting for 80% of its workforce and women occupying 73% of managerial positions.

The brand in question has adopted a communicative approach with regard to its commitment to traceability and promotion of transparency. In collaboration with the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) and SÖKTAŞ, a project has been initiated with the objective of developing and applying blockchain technology across the supply chain in its entirety in order to provide support for the implementation of regenerative agricultural practices. Furthermore, an SMC Corporate Social Responsibility and Human Rights 2030 strategy was initiated in 2021, which focuses on four pillars: fair purchasing practices, transparency and traceability of brand supply chains, empowerment of people and finally positive social impact (Stella McCartney, 2023).

2.2 Brand sustainability strategy

In the contemporary era of geopolitical tensions and increasing focus on sustainability, companies are increasingly compelled to consider social and environmental factors in their strategic decision-making processes, in addition to the maximisation of profit. This has led to the development of brand sustainability strategies. Brand sustainability encompasses all economic, social and environmental factors that exert a substantial influence on brand image and consumer preferences. Contemporary brand consumers are acutely aware of, and therefore pay particular attention to, environmental and social issues, and are predisposed to patronise brands that engage in responsible business practices (Aripin et al., 2023).

The brand offers a unique value proposition to the consumer by advocating for issues that extend beyond the brand itself, thereby fostering a symbiotic relationship between the brand and the consumer. The brand's success is contingent on the consumer's enablement, and in turn, the brand exerts a significant influence on consumer behaviour (Grubor & Milovanov, 2017).

Branding has become "the story of belonging and pervasion", as it enables consumers to express their interests, attitudes, preferences and overall personality through brands they use. Moreover, they are trustworthy source of information and great mediator in education end occupation of large group of consumers which, when create community of a brand, can be very influential force in society. (Grubor & Milovanov, p. 80)

For brand influence to be effective, it is essential to build consumer trust, so they are more likely to support the brand. A concrete commitment to sustainability is one of the main ways of achieving this. A study by Deloitte conducted in March 2024 in Italy, titled "Il cittadino consapevole - Il valore del trust nelle scelte di consumo sostenibile" ("The aware citizen - The value of trust in sustainable consumption choices"), explores the growing perception of sustainability as a pivotal element in consumer trust and loyalty, thereby fostering the emergence of green trust. The study found that 90% of Italians believe that it is the responsibility of companies to contribute to the fight against climate change, while 60% have started working for companies that demonstrate strong social

and environmental sustainability. This indicates that the target population is highly attentive to sustainability.

A significant proportion of the sample expressed heightened trust in companies that disclose their sustainability goals, underscoring the efficacy of transparency and communication in fostering brand loyalty. Notably, 48% of the sample spontaneously placed trust in brands, a sentiment that would require significant damage to be undermined. Conversely, 40% maintained that trust in a brand must be meticulously earned and cultivated over time. The data indicates that the majority of respondents, predominantly Gen Z and Millennials, recognise the existence of a trust bond with brands. However, this does not necessarily translate into increased purchasing behaviour.

It has been demonstrated that an organisation's position on Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) issues has the potential to engender a substantial increase in the level of trust experienced by consumers. In order to establish long-term and stable relationships with consumers, brands must inspire a sense of trust, and it is in this context that sustainability plays a pivotal role (Deloitte, 2024). Sustainability is becoming an increasingly important factor in the competitive landscape. An increasing number of consumers are expressing a keen interest in environmentally friendly alternatives, thereby effecting a transformation in their perception of brands.

Despite the growing interest in sustainability, research indicates a discrepancy between consumer attitudes and their purchasing behaviour. Conversely, sustainability is emerging as a pivotal brand differentiator, with companies leveraging this as a strategic advantage to gain competitive advantage. It is evident that businesses are increasingly recognising the importance of sustainability as a strategic advantage, not just a corporate responsibility. This shift in perspective is driven by the understanding that sustainability is not just a social responsibility but also a strategic advantage, allowing companies to differentiate themselves in a crowded market. Consequently, even at higher prices, environmentally conscious customers and other market segments are willing to purchase

the product, underscoring the value of sustainability in brand management (Grubor & Milovanov, 2017).

In order to maintain customer trust, it is essential that sustainability-based differentiation is supported by tangible actions and verifiable data. According to the results of the study conducted by Deloitte (2024), 28% of Italians consider the absence of accredited eco-sustainable certifications to be an obstacle to sustainable purchases. Furthermore, 40% of respondents indicated that they would be willing to consider switching their preferred brand if there was a lack of transparency in communication. Consequently, a pronounced dedication to sustainability enhances both its perception and long-term loyalty (Deloitte, 2024).

Consequently, the growing importance of sustainability in contemporary corporate strategies underscores the need for a dynamic approach to brand management that adapts to market shifts and evolving consumer expectations. Sustainability has evolved from an ancillary value to the foundation of modern corporate strategy, profoundly impacting both theoretical frameworks (e.g., brand management theories) and practical applications (e.g., marketing and operational decisions) (Grubor & Milovanov, 2017).

In order to emphasise the notion of sustainability as a component of corporate responsibility, the following citation is provided:

“Businesses can not succeed in societies that fail. (...) With liberty comes responsibility. Sustainable brands have the heritage, ability and drive to bring this alive.” (Grubor & Milovanov, p. 80)

However, there are companies that claim to be committed to sustainability by creating an ecological image, without actually changing their production processes. This phenomenon is known as “greenwashing”.

According to Jay Westerveld, the term “greenwashing” first appeared in 1986, when hotels started asking their guests to reuse towels, claiming that this technique would be necessary to save water. However, it was discovered that this technique had no significant environmental impact (Pearson, 2010). In contemporary society, characterised by the proliferation of green markets, there has been a disproportionate increase in cases of greenwashing, which has led to a trust deficit among consumers (Nyilasy et al., 2014).

It is imperative that the information presented on product packaging is verifiable by any interested party and certified, to avoid engendering distrust in the brand. This would potentially erode the trust relationship that has been established over time and adversely impact the company's performance (Deloitte, 2024). The capacity to verify claims pertaining to sustainability is of particular relevance to consumers. Indeed, the survey conducted by Deloitte (2024), revealed that 90% of Italian consumers expressed a desire for comprehensive information regarding the criteria that define a sustainable product, along with access to verifiable and tangible data.

The Italians interviewed identified the most egregious forms of greenwashing as the dissemination of false information (35%), the counterfeiting of certificates (35%), and the use of images or language intended to imply the existence of third-party certification (24%). Furthermore, it is noteworthy that the most prevalent cases of greenwashing, as perceived by Italians, are associated with the emphasis placed on a solitary, non-essential sustainable attribute of a product (26%) and the utilisation of informal language in product descriptions (24%). In aggregate, these observations suggest that Italians perceive greenwashing as a practice that may bear illegal consequences and ascribe this to two primary sectors: food (29%) and fashion (15%) (Deloitte, 2024).

It is evident that greenwashing has the potential to engender adverse externalities that could impede the green transition of the country as a whole. Indeed, the Deloitte’s (2024) survey revealed that 25% of Italians expressed a willingness to discontinue the purchase

of sustainable products and services from a specific brand that employs environmentalism as a facade. In light of the escalating prevalence of greenwashing, the European Parliament enacted the Directive (EU) 2024/825 in February 2024, thereby introducing a series of prohibitions and obligations pertaining to transparency in the domains of sustainability and environmentalism. This directive resulted in the integration of novel provisions within the Consumer Code, aiding the identification of misleading practices and contributing to the mitigation of greenwashing (European Union, 2024).

In 2015, Good On You was developed as a smartphone application that collates and analyses data on fashion and beauty brands, with the objective of providing consumers with a comprehensive and accessible overview of brand sustainability. By leveraging the expertise of professionals from various fields, including activism, fashion, beauty, science, and development, Good On You aims to facilitate informed consumer choices and promote the adoption of sustainable practices within the fashion and beauty sector. This development in the fashion and beauty industry is spearheaded by activists, fashion and beauty professionals, scientists, writers and developers, united in their mission to effect change. The collective efforts of these professionals contribute to Goal 12 of the SDGs, “Ensure sustainable patterns of production and consumption”, thereby setting the foundation for an increasingly sustainable and fair fashion industry (Good On You, n.d.).

In this study, two cases of greenwashing in the fashion industry will be examined. The cases in question are those of fast fashion and accessible luxury, which have caused a stir among consumers in recent years. The first case is that of Coachtopia, a sub-brand of Coach that presents this very initiative as a way to accelerate the transition to a circular economy by claiming to produce upcycled leather products, i.e. waste from the production of leather bags. Tanner Leatherstein, a leather expert and content creator on the social media platform TikTok, has exposed the brand by analysing the Coachtopia Ergo shoulder bag. The leather expert discovered that the outer layer of the bag was made of plastic after applying acetone to the product. Furthermore, Leatherstein corroborates in

the video that both the nomenclature and the descriptions are highly misleading. Consequently, consumers are confronted not only with substandard merchandise, but also with a lack of transparency (Underwood, 2023). Consequently, Coach opted for a strategy of creating an illusion of transparency towards its customers, disseminating the notion that it prioritises profit over people. The Coachtopia example serves as a significant lesson for all companies aspiring to adopt an eco-friendly approach (Barberi & Fong, 2024).

In the context of fast fashion, Zara launched a limited-edition line of “sustainable fashion” in 2022, comprising garments manufactured from polyester created from captured carbon emissions. Rather than encouraging consumers to purchase fewer items, the brand is leveraging sustainability to mitigate consumer guilt. The collection, as claimed by the brand, captures and reuse carbon emissions from industrial processes, thereby reducing the direct release of these emissions into the atmosphere. This innovative technique is known as LanzaTech by Zara. However, it must be noted that the fibres utilised in the production of these garments are not exclusively derived from captured carbon. Indeed, the “sustainable” fibre constitutes a mere 20 per cent of the final polyester composition, with the remaining percentage being Purified Terephthalic Acid. This phenomenon can be interpreted as indicative of a culture that fosters clothing consumerism, thereby enabling Zara to perpetually produce substantial quantities of garments destined for a relatively brief period of utilisation. It should be noted, however, that the LanzaTech project does not entirely disregard the environmental impacts of Zara's production model. As Revolution's creative director asserts, there is a necessity to enhance the living conditions of the workers in the supply chain and to curtail excessive production. The project's approach is characterised by its superficiality and the creation of a misleading impression of progress, effectively deceiving well-intentioned consumers through a practice of “greenwashing” (Leach, 2022).

In contrast to the phenomenon of sustainability cover, many companies distinguish themselves by their genuine and concrete commitment to social and environmental

causes, a phenomenon known as brand activism (Sarkar & Kotler, 2018). This is defined as “the business efforts to promote, impede, or direct social, political, economic and/or environmental reform with the desire to improve society” (Sarkar & Kotler, 2018, p. 468). Brand activism can be situated between the realms of politics and marketing, as brands engage with sensitive issues (Klostermann et al., 2022). This phenomenon is perceived by brands as an opportunity to differentiate themselves from competitors by creating value for all stakeholders (Schmidt et al., 2022). However, the efficacy of brand activism as a strategic approach is not without contention. On the one side of the debate, stakeholders are increasingly demanding that companies make a greater societal contribution (Bhagwat et al., 2020). On the other side, there is the possibility that stakeholders may not respond positively to activism (Johnson et al., 2022). Brand activism is manifested through advertising, social media, public relations and other visible means (Korschun, 2021). It is a strategy characterised by elements of risk and uncertainty (Bhagwat et al., 2020). Therefore, if analysed and implemented poorly, it can easily generate negative effects on the company's reputation (Dodd & Supa, 2014).

A crucial factor in the success of any brand activism strategy is the ability to align brand communication with corporate practices (Ahmad et al., 2022).

The following case study, drawn from the fashion industry of 2017, aims to provide a clearer understanding of the concept. Since that year, feminism has become a prominent trend, even being emblazoned on t-shirts in bold lettering. Notably, Maria Grazia Chiuri, the inaugural female designer at the helm of the Maison Dior, made her debut on the catwalks donning a simple white t-shirt bearing the slogan “We should all be feminists”. This slogan is derived from a quote by the writer Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, a prominent figure in the struggle against sexism. The T-shirt, which was available in a limited edition for 550 euros, has been worn by numerous international celebrities, including Natalie Portman, Charlize Theron, Rihanna and Ariana Grande. From the outset, Dior's design faced significant criticism, failing to emerge as a genuine symbol of social equality. In response to this criticism, Dior announced that they would donate part of the proceeds from the sale of the T-shirts to Rihanna's charity foundation (Ignazzi, 2017).

Another notable campaign that exemplifies brand activism is the one initiated by Patagonia for Black Friday 2011. The campaign, titled 'Don't buy this jacket', involved the purchase of a full-page advertisement in the New York Times by the brand. The advertisement showcased one of Patagonia's most iconic jackets, accompanied by a poster and a set of instructions. The objective of this initiative was to raise awareness among consumers regarding the environmental impact of production, highlighting the significant quantities of water and CO2 emissions necessary for the creation of a single jacket. The campaign also sought to underscore the durability and quality of Patagonia's products, emphasising their longevity and resilience. The campaign was a resounding success, with sales doubling within a year and the company reaching an estimated value of \$3 billion. This remarkable achievement demonstrates the efficacy of combining sustainability with economic viability, setting a benchmark for other brands to emulate (ONEarth, 2024).

2.3 Brand value

The concept of brand value is linked to consumer perception and trust, which are related to brand sustainability. As previously discussed in Chapter 2.2, the fostering of brand loyalty through genuine sustainability commitments has been demonstrated to engender consumer loyalty. Consequently, this loyalty becomes a pivotal component of the perceived brand value.

Consumer attitude is a pivotal factor in determining the value of a particular brand. Empirical studies have demonstrated a positive correlation between customer attitude and brand loyalty (Eren-Erdogmus & Budeyri-Turan, 2012). Conversely, a low attitude coupled with a low purchase frequency indicates an absence of loyalty (Lee & Back, 2009).

One of the fundamental elements that contributes to the definition of a brand's value is its perceived quality, which, according to Zeithaml (1988), is defined as the judgement a consumer makes on the excellence of a product, based on several indicators, such as extrinsic, intrinsic, appearance and performance. Intrinsic indicators refer to the physical qualities of the product, while extrinsic indicators refer to factors such as price, advertising and brand name. It is possible to distinguish between objective quality, which is based on the product's intrinsic characteristics, and subjective quality, which is based on the consumers' perceptions of the product's quality (Molina et al., 2009).

According to Zeithaml (1988), when consumers perceive a product to be of a high quality, they tend to develop a more positive attitude towards the brand, thereby increasing the value attributed to the brand and improving its image. Perceived value is defined as the evaluation that a consumer makes of a product or service, based on its characteristics and its ability to satisfy a need (Yu & Lee, 2019). In summary, consumers consider a product or service to be useful based on their perception of what they receive and what they give in return. Perceived value, therefore, depends on the comparison between the benefits received from a good and the effort required to obtain them.

It is widely acknowledged that consumers are willing to pay higher prices for products and services that offer a higher perceived value, as long as they believe that the benefits received will be commensurate with the effort invested (Yu & Lee, 2019). The perceived value of a brand is determined by factors such as perceived quality, customer loyalty, brand personality and brand prestige. The luxury sector is one in which perceived brand value is of particular importance, as it serves as a justification for the high price that consumers are willing to pay.

A notable illustration of this phenomenon is observed in the case of Birkin bags by Hermès, which, despite their price range of €10,000 to €100,000, continue to experience high demand. This phenomenon can be attributed to the high value attributed to the brand by consumers, largely attributable to specific factors. Primarily, this is attributable

to the meticulous craftsmanship that underpins the production of such goods, with artisans undergoing an extensive five-year training programme to master their craft. The exclusivity of the product is also a contributing factor, due to the limited production runs, which means that even the most regular customers of Hermès do not have the option of simply entering a boutique and selecting an item immediately. Finally, the Birkin bag is widely regarded as a status symbol within the fashion industry, frequently associated with prominent figures (Sotheby's, n.d.).

It has been demonstrated that consumers may hold divergent perceptions regarding the quality of similar products and services (Hyun & Kim, 2011). Consequently, these varying perceptions may result in the cultivation of disparate attitudes according to the perceived quality.

Another characteristic that contributes to brand value is its personality, defined as the way in which a brand takes on human characteristics and creates an emotional connection with customers, as brands become real symbols with a precise identity (Aaker, 1997). This phenomenon occurs because consumers do not merely purchase products or services, but also the experiences and meanings that the brand represents (Keegan et al., 1995; Aaker, 1997; Keller, 2001). Through the brand personality, whether it be sincerity, competence, or robustness, consumers are enabled to express themselves (Aaker, 1997).

Sirgy (1985) identifies two phenomena related to brand personality: real congruence and ideal congruence. Real congruence is defined as the manner in which the brand reflects the consumer's actual self-image, whereas ideal congruence refers to the identity to which the consumer aspires.

A good example is the luxury fashion brands Chanel and Off-White. Chanel embodies the image of women and men who identify with or aspire to a sophisticated, timeless, prestigious image. The brand's colour palette, predominantly featuring black and white, along with its emphasis on femininity, further reinforces its identity. Its personality is

elegantly and authoritatively refined and luxurious (ResearchProspect, n.d.). On the other hand, Off-White is aimed at young people who want to stand out and break the mould, often part of the streetwear culture. The brand's visual identity is characterised by bold graphics, direct messages and a strong visual impact. The Off-White brand is known for its rebellious, contemporary, ironic and provocative nature (Liu, 2023).

Prestige has been shown to play a pivotal role in determining the value that consumers ascribe to a brand. This value is reflected in the quality of the product or service, as well as its social status, and thus influences purchase choices. As Fuller et al. (2006) demonstrate, there is a correlation between prestige and consumers' motivation to obtain a positive social identity, and consequently, to acquire products that denote a certain status. This phenomenon is particularly evident in the luxury market, where the ownership of a product is primarily concerned with the impact it has on the consumer's social image.

Furthermore, Baek et al. (2010) studied the link between brand prestige and consumer purchase intention. This study posits that there is a close correlation between the two assumptions, on the grounds that the more prestigious a brand is considered to be, the more confident people feel in their choice, as they associate it with quality, exclusivity and status.

It is evident that brand value is determined by the interaction of several components, including perceived quality, brand personality, prestige and customer loyalty. These elements reinforce each other: for example, a high perceived quality can strengthen brand prestige, a strong brand personality can increase the emotional bond, encouraging loyalty. When these components are aligned and communicated in an effective manner, they contribute to the creation of a compelling image and an increase in the perceived value of the brand.

2.4 Summary of Literature Review

Table 1 provides an overview of the most relevant studies cited in Chapter 2, thus facilitating identification of the current knowledge and theories in the literature.

Table 1. Summary of Theoretical Contribution Cited in the Literature Review.

Theory/Concept	Author(s)	Main idea
Sustainable Development	Brundtland Report (1987)	“Development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.”
Agenda 2030 and SDGs	United Nations (2015)	A global framework aimed at promoting economic, social and environmental development through 17 interconnected goals.
Interdependence of Dimensions	Falzarano (2020)	Social, economic and environmental goals are interdependent.
Ethical Business Practices	Szekely & Knirsch (2005); Montiel & Delgado-Ceballos (2014)	Sustainability for businesses involves the adoption of ethical practices, the creation of environmentally friendly jobs and the promotion of stakeholder welfare.
Shared Value	Porter & Kramer (2011)	Companies can create economic value while improving the social and economic conditions of the society in which they operate.
Corporate Sustainability	Dyllick & Hockerts (2002)	Meeting the needs of all stakeholders, without compromising the future ones.
Stakeholder Theory	Freudenreich et al. (2020)	Creating value for the business through the synergy of all stakeholders.
Business Models for Sustainability (BMFS)	Freudenreich et al. (2020)	A practical framework that aligns all stakeholder needs and values.
Brand Sustainability Strategy	Aripin et al. (2023)	Companies pay attention not only to economic factors, but also environmental and social ones, because customers are increasingly choosing brands that care of these issues.

Brand as relationship builder	Grubor & Milovanov (2017)	Brands can act as social agents, influencing buyer behaviour and building trust.
Brand as identity and belonging	Grubor & Milovanov (2017)	Brands allow customers to express themselves and feel part of a community.
Green trust	Deloitte (2024)	Trust in brands increases when they declare their sustainability in a transparent and certified manner.
Strategic sustainability positioning	Grubor & Milovanov (2017)	Companies also see sustainability as a competitive advantage to differentiate themselves in the marketplace.
Perceived quality	Zeithaml (1988)	It's the judgement a consumer makes on the excellence of a product, based on several indicators, such as extrinsic, intrinsic, appearance and performance.
Perceived value	Yu & Lee (2019)	It's the evaluation that a consumer makes of a product or service, based on its characteristics and its ability to satisfy a need.
Brand personality	Aaker (1997)	It's the way in which a brand takes on human characteristics and creates an emotional connection with customers, as brands become real symbols with a precise identity.
Real vs. ideal congruence	Sirgy (1985)	Real congruence is indicative of the consumer's authentic identity, whereas ideal congruence is reflective of the identity that the consumer aspires to possess.
Prestige and status	Fuller et al. (2006); Baek et al. (2010)	The association between a prestigious brand and elevated social status signifies the utilisation of such brands as instruments for the assertion of one's social identity.

3 Research Methodology

3.1 Research Design

This study explores consumers' perceptions in the context of sustainability initiatives. Due to the complexity of quantitatively analysing people's reactions to specific initiatives, a qualitative approach was adopted for this thesis. This methodological decision enabled a comprehensive investigation into consumers' experiences, facilitating a deep understanding of their perceptions. Moreover, given the complexity of sustainability brand development initiatives, a case study approach was adopted to systematically collect and analyse data, a strategy that is widely regarded as a cornerstone for studies that require a thorough examination of a particular phenomenon (Saunders et al., 2023).

As defined by Taylor et al. (2015), researchers in qualitative methodology adopt a holistic perspective, encompassing a comprehensive understanding of individuals and their environments from multiple perspectives. This approach precludes the reduction of individuals to mere variables. The process of translating people's words, experiences and actions into statistical equations can, according to Taylor et al. (2015), result in the loss of sight of the human aspect. Conversely, the utilisation of a qualitative method facilitates the acquisition of knowledge regarding individuals' inner worlds, their suffering and their loves.

In order to achieve an authentic understanding of people's behaviour and everyday life, researchers adopt parallel strategies that mirror people's everyday lives, encouraging natural and unobtrusive interactions (Rallis & Rossmann, 2012). Moreover, no elements of social life are considered irrelevant for the purposes of study, as each context and individual offers a unique combination of characteristics worthy of investigation. Indeed, individuals possess a dual nature, simultaneously reflecting general social dynamics on

one hand and possessing particularities that differentiate them from each other and provide excellent research insights on the other (Taylor et al., 2015).

The Case Study can be used to identify what is happening in the real world and why, in order to better understand the impact and implications of the situation being explored, using both qualitative and quantitative data (Saunders et al., 2023).

This research strategy is often subject to criticism, primarily regarding the utilisation of small samples and the employment of qualitative research methods. However, this criticism is gradually diminishing as the field of qualitative research gains greater recognition (Saunders et al., 2023).

The present thesis employs an interpretivist approach, focusing on the comprehension of participants' perceptions (Saunders et al., 2023). This philosophy underscores the notion that humans differ from physical phenomena in their capacity to create meanings: "Interpretivists argue that human beings and their social worlds cannot be studied in the same way as physical phenomena, and that therefore social sciences research needs to be different from natural sciences research rather than trying to emulate the latter." (Saunders et al., 2023, p. 150)

In the context of research in management, interpretivism is a philosophy that involves analysing organisations from the perspective of different groups of people. The fundamental objective of this approach is to immerse the researcher in the world of the subjects being examined, thereby facilitating a comprehensive understanding of their perspectives and experiences (Saunders et al., 2023).

3.2 Data Collection Method

In the present study, semi-structured interviews were selected as the optimal method for data collection, given their capacity to elicit open-ended responses from participants.

This approach facilitates the articulation of personal opinions in a profound manner, enabling subjects to convey their experiences in a genuine and authentic manner, employing their own language (Karatsareas, 2022).

The data of this thesis (N=7) was collected in March and April 2025 with video call interviews, ensuring the participation of individuals residing in distant geographical locations. Each interview is conducted in accordance with a structured format, thereby facilitating a systematic exploration of the key issues under investigation. Each session lasted approximately 30 minutes, during which the participants elaborated on their ideas. With the explicit authorisation of the interviewee, the interviews were documented through audio recording.

To ensure the anonymity of the participants, the transcripts were anonymised. All the participants are Italian consumers who have purchased Golden Goose products, across a range of age demographics, 29% of respondents were men and 71% women. Age of respondents ranged from 21 to 38, the mean age was 25.

Table 1 provides a comprehensive overview of information concerning the participants, including details pertaining to their age, gender, status and the respective languages in which the interviews were conducted.

Table 2. Interview Participants.

Participant n.	Age	Gender	Status	Interview Language
Participant 1	23	Female	Worker and student	Italian
Participant 2	22	Female	Worker	Italian
Participant 3	21	Male	Unemployed	Italian
Participant 4	24	Female	Worker	Italian
Participant 5	22	Female	Student	Italian
Participant 6	38	Female	Worker	Italian
Participant 7	25	Male	Worker	Italian

3.3 Data analysis

A qualitative approach was adopted for the analysis of the data, with the subsequent interpretation of the data being conducted through the utilisation of thematic analysis. The interviews were transcribed in full, with the personal information of the interviewees anonymised.

The most suitable method for such research is considered to be inductive, with thematic analysis, through which it was possible to identify patterns and meanings in the textual data.

Initially, a familiarisation phase was undertaken, during which trends and emerging sentiments were identified. Codes were then assigned to significant parts of the text using Excel and Word in order to identify the main themes that emerged. Finally, the data were interpreted and linked to relevant literature.

3.4 Case description

This case study focuses on Golden Goose, an Italian brand founded in 2000 in Marghera, near Venice, with the aim of combining craftsmanship, authenticity and timeless style. The brand has, by virtue of its 25-year existence, become a true benchmark in contemporary luxury, especially known for its iconic sneakers, such as the Super-Star, which express the idea of "lived-in", i.e. an imperfect and authentic aesthetic (see in Figure 1).



Figure 1. Super-Star model (Golden Goose, n.d.).

The company's international expansion currently extends to 85 countries, with a network of 191 mono-brand boutiques and a global team operating in Italy, the US, Asia and Europe. In 2024, Golden Goose achieved sales of €654.6 million, representing a 13% increase from Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, with 77% of sales derived from Direct-To-Consumer (DTC) channels, encompassing monobrand shops and the company's website. The regions of Europe, the Middle East and Africa (EMEA) and the Americas were also reconfirmed as the top-performing geographical areas (Golden Goose, 2025).

In recent years, the brand has based its philosophy on four main sustainable pillars, which it calls the Forward Agenda:

- We Innovate: the focus should be on research and the development of new technologies for the creation of new circular materials;
- We Craft: the enhancement of Italian craftsmanship;
- We Care: It is important to always consider people and the environment;
- We Share: there is a strong commitment to community and inclusiveness.

The flagship project is the Yatay Model 1B, which is Golden Goose's inaugural trainer to be manufactured entirely from sustainable materials (see Figure 2). It was manufactured using bio-based and recycled materials, with the use of no petroleum derivatives. Each shoe is accompanied by a QR code, enabling consumers to participate in a tree-planting

initiative through the Treadom application. The production of this shoe is undertaken in the Yatay Lab, a strategic laboratory equipped with state-of-the-art technology to produce sustainable materials of the highest quality. Within this laboratory, a multitude of experiments are conducted, and a substantial collection of customer reviews is also gathered after the various tests.



Figure 2. Yatay Model 1B (Golden Goose, n.d.)

A further initiative is the Forward Store, an innovative retail concept that promotes sustainability through four services:

- Repair: repairs and customises products;
- Remake: allows customers to design their own unique items, as well as customise their products;
- Resell: physical resale platform of used Golden Goose shoes and selected clothing items;
- Recycle: collecting old items for recycling.

The aim of this initiative is precisely to extend the life cycle of products and to engage consumers in a unique sustainable experience.

The present case study was selected on account of its distinctive approach to sustainable fashion, making it an exemplary case for investigating possible correlations between sustainability initiatives and consumer trust, purchase intention and perceived brand value.

4 Findings

The results of this study provide insight into how consumers perceive the sustainability initiatives of luxury brands, particularly those of Golden Goose. This section therefore represents the insights gained from the opinions and feelings of selected consumers when exposed to Golden Goose's sustainability initiatives. During the interviews, participants were first asked about their general views on sustainability in the luxury sector and their awareness of Golden Goose's initiatives. They were then presented with two specific initiatives — the Yatay model and the Forward Store — to gather their evaluations and perceptions in this regard.

4.1 Awareness of sustainability Initiatives

One of the major themes that come out from the interviews is the limited awareness of consumers regarding Golden Goose's sustainability strategies. This means that there is a gap between the brand's investments in new sustainability strategies and the consumers' recognition of these efforts, as many consumers do not perceive the value of these efforts or are not even aware of them. Consequently, the brand's attempts to engage the consumer are unsuccessful. Specifically, the two initiatives referenced in the interview, the Forward Store and the Yatay 1B model, were not well known by the interviewees. This issue can be traced back to a significant absence of communication, and this is evident from the following statement provided by Participant 1:

“I went to the store in Milan and I got to see these things inside, and in my opinion they are indeed very identifiable. But I'll tell you the truth, although I had been there, I hadn't had such a detailed description as you have, which I think is a great pity, because if they had told me inside the shop I would have been much more interested in it. No salesperson explained to me that there were all these services inside the store.”

Participant 3 also provided the following statement “I follow Golden Goose on both TikTok and Instagram and I've never seen any posts about that model or the shop.”

It is evident from the data presented that Golden Goose, while undertaking investments in sustainability, as evidenced by its involvement with the Yatay Lab and the Forward Store, is experiencing challenges in effectively engaging consumers through its communication strategies. Referring back to the survey conducted by Deloitte in 2024, it is evident that 90 % of Italian respondents expressed a desire for clear and accessible information regarding sustainability initiatives. The absence of such information can lead to the failure to recognize genuine initiatives, which in turn may not influence consumer perceptions.

It is interesting to note that, after being informed of the brand's sustainability initiatives, the participants expressed a high level of interest in them. This suggests that the problem is not a lack of consumer interest, but rather a lack of strategic communication by Golden Goose. Participant 1 articulated their perspective on the Forward Store in the following manner “(...) I really would have liked to know more about it. If you just walk in and don't know what's going on, it looks like a set-up. But now that I do know, it makes a lot more sense.” The more tangible brand commitment to circularity and consumer engagement, embodied by the Forward Store, is often perceived as a mere aesthetic characteristic of retail outlets unless it is explained.

According to Grubor & Milovanov (2017), sustainability can serve as a vehicle for strategic positioning to help companies to differentiate themselves and obtain competitive advantage. However, the findings of this analysis indicate that this differentiation only occurs when sustainability initiatives are communicated successfully to customers. The data indicates a clear communication failure at the point of sale, with 43% of respondents physically entering the Forward Store in Milan and only one-third of them being aware of its significance. This finding suggests that the brand's capacity to distinguish

itself through sustainability is hindered by deficiencies in communication, thereby diminishing the enhanced perceived value from the consumer's perspective.

Porter & Kramer (2011) argue that companies which create shared value can simultaneously generate economic success and social improvement. However, such efforts must be recognized and valued by stakeholders, a condition that can only be met through transparent and effective communication.

A comparable problem has been identified about the Yatay 1B version. The study revealed that only one of the seven interviewed had prior knowledge of the model. Furthermore, none of them were aware of the model's bio-based materials or its significantly lower retail price compared to the more renowned Golden Goose shoes. In the majority of cases, respondents who were presented with evidence in support of each model opted for the traditional one, basing their preference on aesthetic familiarity and logo recognition, rather than on any expertise regarding sustainability or affordability.

As Participant 3 said "I didn't know the Yatay cost half the price. That could really make a difference for many people." This reaction underscores a broader dynamic: It is evident that Golden Goose's efforts to offer more sustainable and accessible options have not been welcomed by consumers. The brand's message remains often imperceptible, despite the evident inclination of purchasers to engage.

The Yatay case study demonstrates that a lack of focus on product innovation can be indicative of a need to enhance communication strategies. Even well-designed sustainable products are unable to effectively influence customer perceptions or behaviours in the absence of clear, consistent, and observable dialogue.

As emphasised by Yu & Lee (2019), the perceived value of a product is contingent not only on its functional benefits but also on the efficacy of its communication and its alignment with consumer expectations.

Another relevant insight that came out of the interviews is that some participants were aware of certain in-store offers, like product maintenance or customisation, but didn't connect them with a broader sustainability strategy. These activities were seen as part of the company's premium service, not as ways to make products last longer. This disconnection shows that even if sustainable practices are a part of the brand experience, they might not make the brand more sustainable if they are not clearly explained. As a result, the sustainability dimension of the customer journey remains implicit, and the potential to build stronger emotional or ethical engagement with consumers is limited.

4.2 Brand trust and greenwashing

During the interview process, there was an obvious tension underlying brand trust and scepticism concerning the authenticity of its sustainability efforts. Golden Goose has cultivated a reputation for excellence among its consumers, primarily because of the superior quality of its products, their appealing aesthetic qualities, and the overall experience offered in its stores. However, this trust is not unconditional: when addressing sustainability issues, some consumers question the consistency and transparency of the strategies adopted by the brand.

4.2.1. Trust established through direct experience

The initial group of participants exhibited experiential and affective trust in the brand. Participants 2, 5, 6 and 7 based their trust on direct experience and tangible aspects, such as comfort, craftsmanship and quality of materials.

Participant 6 expressed a high level of confidence in the brand, citing the long-standing patronage over a period of ten years. The following statement was made by the Participant “(...) I have a slight hallux valgus, so having a very soft leather when I put them on I'm comfortable (...).”

Participant 7 also proffered trust based on experience, stating that “I appreciate the craftsmanship, the attention to detail, originality, also the quality of the material, which you notice only after buying them.” The trust placed in Golden Goose by Participant 7 is rooted in concrete experience and is more closely associated with the testing of products.

In a similar manner, Participant 5 has an experiential trust, stemming from the close connection to the origins of the brand, the perception of its quality, and the services that extend its life. This contributes to a description of the brand's uniqueness:

“(...) I also appreciate that it has somewhat revolutionised what the trainer field is, more than other luxury brands have done. (...) You can make your shoes unique, different from any other shoes, (...) I have always found them perfect. (...) I don't wear heels for example, so it seemed like a good compromise to be able to wear something elegant on occasions that required it, without necessarily wearing heels.”

Participant 5 provides further evidence of authenticity as a consumer by demonstrating that purchasing decisions are based exclusively on personal preference rather than on the pursuit of status. Indeed, it is asserted that “I really appreciate it when someone buys a shoe model because they really like it, not to show that they have the shoe worth a lot of money.”

Participant 2 exhibited an affective trust in the brand. The relationship between the Participant and Golden Goose transcends the conventional boundaries of the user experience, instead being founded upon a sense of affiliation and congruence with the company philosophy. Indeed, for the subject, visiting the shop constitutes a genuine immersive experience. The Participant exclaimed:

"I've always been very close to the Golden Goose philosophy. I mean, apart from the aesthetic issue, which has always interested me, it was very much the fact of the philosophy followed by the brand, which is a lot of customer loyalty. And that's because the shoes as well as being beautiful and with attention to detail also have a whole experience. That is, when you go to the shop there is a certain experience you have, you already feel a part of something, and so let's say it pushed me beyond the aesthetic question. Of course I have to admit that I absolutely loved them. I mean, I would never have spent money on shoes that I didn't like, but it was more about the status, the fact that I was part of Golden. And then when I walked into the shop I really appreciated you as a person, in my opinion, so you feel very driven to buy."

It can be posited that the basis for the subject's trust is rooted in a combination of concrete experience and emotional and symbolic elements. This finding suggests the presence of a profound connection with the brand.

It can thus be theorised that for Participants 2, 5, 6 and 7, trust is predicated on a combination of concrete experience and symbolic elements: this type of trust is consistent with the concept of perceived quality proposed by Zeithaml (1988), as consumer trust is derived from tangible factors. Furthermore, Participant 2 speaks of affective bonding, recalling both Aaker's (1997) concept of brand personality and Sirgy's (1985) real congruence, as the brand experience aligns with the participant's self-concept. Finally, these findings align with Freudenreich et al.'s (2020) stakeholder theory, which states that value and trust are co-created by the brand and customers interacting. However, it should be noted that this trust is not unconditional; when the topic of sustainability is raised, some consumers question the consistency and transparency of the adopted strategies.

Participant 6, while expressing confidence in the brand, also felt that major luxury brands, such as Golden Goose, are contradictory when it comes to sustainability. Indeed, the Participant stated that "(...) It is only niche luxury brands that follow sustainability (...)", while large-volume production defies this ambition, due to the number of customers

and the resulting necessity to produce in large quantities. Notwithstanding this, the Participant 6 ultimately concluded that "(...) I try to believe as much as I can, but I know that greenwashing exists". Participant 6 demonstrates a commitment to the programme, whilst maintaining a sense of caution. This participant exhibits qualities of confidence and awareness, devoid of a complete absence of scepticism. Its position can be interpreted as an illustration of a conditional green trust (Deloitte, 2024), which places the brand in a position where it must provide concrete evidence of its sustainability initiatives to maintain the trust it has already earned.

Participant 5 identifies the sustainable aspect of Golden Goose as "A smart thing to do, to go against the grain". This demonstrates how the sustainable aspect of the brand, as well as that of others, can significantly contribute to reinforcing trust in the brand, if it is perceived as authentic. At the same time, Participant 5 expresses scepticism, stating that the choice of sustainable materials makes a difference and can be clearly perceived in some products, while in others, such as t-shirts, this is not the case: "For example t-shirts: they use the same materials as fast fashion". This statement serves to reinforce the concept of conditional green trust (Deloitte, 2024), as the Participant's trust in brand sustainability is conditional upon the type of product and the authenticity of the claims.

Participant 2 highlighted that:

"I define myself as confident, but as I said before I think there is a big distinction between the different brands, there are those who pretend to do it and those who really do it. For example, Moncler, Cucinelli and Golden Goose do a lot in terms of sustainability, not just for show."

However, a general concern was expressed by the Participant 2 during this interview:

"(...) I think a lot of brands are waking up now, realising how important sustainability is. I'm afraid there are quite a few that are doing it more as greenwashing, pass me that term. Because they have realised now that the customer is very close to these issues, so they do it a lot for, but better to do it as a facade than to do it in general."

This suggests that experience-based trust can coexist with critical trust, whereby consumers evaluate sustainability communication with a closer eye. The present analysis finds resonance with stakeholder theory (Freudenreich et al., 2020), which accentuates the significance of aligning stakeholder values, and also Porter and Kramer's (2011) concept of shared value, in which brand success and social progress are mutually dependent.

Participant 7 embodies a conscious and informed profile, acknowledging the attributes associated with luxury goods. The participant further elaborates on this sentiment, stating "Since they are luxury goods, the quality inevitably increases, so there's a selection of the product, more refined raw materials, and a more conscious use of resources." Conversely, Participant 7 demonstrates that brand trust is contingent on ethical values:

"I generally know that they have different purchasing models and resources compared to fast fashion, but I also know that they shred unsold items rather than sell them at a discount; so, it's not exactly the peak of sustainability. It's a bit of a paradox."

These statements reveal a paradox that highlights the internal tension between the perceived high value of the brand (Zeithaml, 1988; Yu & Lee, 2019) and the ethical values expected of a sustainable brand.

4.2.2 Trust based on brand image and reputation

A more rooted form of trust in brand identity, recognisability and symbolic distinctiveness was expressed by other participants. Participant 1 expressed satisfaction with the consistency and recognisability of Golden Goose products over time:

"I really like the fact that they always remain very recognisable even when various customers personalise them. That is, it gives added value by remaining very recognisable on a brand level but at the same time many people manage to make them unique for themselves."

In addition, it was asserted by Participant 1 that the brand consistently maintains its identity whilst demonstrating a historical evolution, a process which has occurred in a manner that preserves its fundamental essence “(...) They have always remained very faithful to their products (...). They have maintained their own identity, something that is difficult in brands today, and then the quality is always there (...).”

Conversely, Participant 3 places greater reliance on brand recognition, aesthetic appeal and national identity, as evidenced by the following declaration:

“Let's say that I'm easily influenced by TikTok. They were shoes I saw, I liked them, (...) I said, why not get it? (...) I also liked the brand, since it's Italian, I was convinced to get them. (...) Golden Goose is eye-catching! I think everyone would recognise it, at least in Italy.”

The brand's attractiveness lies in its symbolic reputation that has been cultivated through its association with high-profile consumers. These consumers develop a sense of trust in the brand based on its image, rather than on a personal experience with the products.

It must be pointed out, however, that this type of trust is analogous to Aaker's (1997) concept of brand personality: Golden Goose is perceived as cool and recognisable, characteristics that contribute to its appeal. Furthermore, it aligns with the concept of ideal congruence (Sirgy, 1985), in that the brand reflects an image to which more consumers aspire.

With regard to sustainable practices, Participant 1 expressed criticism of both Golden Goose and luxury in general, stating that “The concept of sustainability in luxury has been lost (...). Brands (...) started to produce things with a much lower quality, which leads products to last much less.” Moreover, the Participant has expressed scepticism

regarding the accuracy of the communication of the brand, reiterating that “Green washing exists for a reason (...). My confidence is in short supply, because I believe that most of the time it is marketing.”

Participant 1 demonstrates a conditional form of brand loyalty, requiring evidence of authenticity and alignment between the brand’s sustainability claims and actual practices.

In contrast, Participant 3 expressed unwavering trust in the authenticity and luxury of both the brand and general luxury, as evidenced by this statement “(...) Honestly knowing that it's a luxury brand you wouldn't go and burn your image like that, going and saying that they use poor quality products, I think a luxury brand goes to the extreme, for example in terms of materials.”

Participant 3 has been shown to exhibit assumed trust (Zeithaml, 1988), which is characterised by the utilisation of external signals to infer their quality and value.

4.2.3 Evolving trust

Participant 4 has an evolutionary trust in the brand, as it has transitioned from a focus on brand recognition to an emphasis on product quality and critical awareness. At the time of the first purchase, approximately seven years ago, the Participant acknowledged having been entirely influenced by the shoes’ recognisability and their status as a luxury product, stating “Maybe when I bought my first shoe I was very influenced by the fact that it was a recognisable and luxurious shoe (...).”

Nevertheless, over the years, there has been a marked shift in Participant 4's confidence. The Participant now places significant emphasis on the craftsmanship of the products and their durability, as asserted in the interview “Now I would appreciate more the fact

that it is well made, it is of quality and I don't care about recognisability anymore. (...) The priority is quality.”

It can be observed that there has been a shift towards from brand image-based trust and direct experience-based trust, i.e. based on the quality actually perceived by using the product. This aligns with Zeithaml's (1988) concept of perceived value, as the Participant's trust now depends on the evolution of the real benefits of Golden Goose products, compared to the price.

In addition to this growth, Participant 4 also demonstrates a critical perspective on sustainability, also asking questions about the marketing narrative “I believe that the various luxury brands, such as Golden Goose, are putting a lot of effort into sustainability, and working in the fashion industry I recognise that there has been an improvement. But, at the same time, I also know that for many brands it is just a marketing move.”

The Participant's attitude reflects a multifaceted relationship with the brand, characterised by both trust and scepticism. This ambivalence necessitates the verification of sustainability claims through authentic practices and frequent over long term.

4.3 Impact of sustainability initiatives on perceived brand value

During the interviews, the participants were presented with a range of sustainability initiatives, including the Yatay Model 1B and the Forward Store. These initiatives were then subjected to analysis in order to assess the impact they had on the participants' perception of the brand. The initiatives in question prompted a range of favourable and intriguingly unanticipated responses, given the lack of awareness surrounding them, as previously discussed in section 4.1.

4.3.1 Yatay Model 1B

During the interviews, the participants were presented with the Yatay 1B trainers and subsequently evaluated against a classic Golden Goose model. It was observed that only one participant had prior knowledge of this model prior to being interviewed. Nevertheless, this sustainability strategy was well received and appreciated by the participants, precisely because of its material innovation.

Participant 6 stated that the Yatay model, being both sustainable and aesthetically appealing, reinforces the brand perception and also appreciates the focus on the planet:

“If I can buy a model that I like and I know that it is also sustainable and has less of an impact on pollution and everything that goes with it I would definitely buy it.”

The model in question has been demonstrated to contribute to perceived brand value, as it is both sustainable and aesthetically appealing. Participant 4 confirms that this strategy is highly effective due to the Yatay model's strong resemblance to the brand's iconic design, thereby developing a sustainable alternative without deviating from the Golden Goose aesthetic. Additionally, it serves to enhance environmental awareness.

Nevertheless, the contribution of the Yatay model to the perceived value of the brand was not consistent. Indeed, a significant proportion of participants have expressed appreciation for this strategy; however, they have also raised concerns regarding its inadequate promotion by the brand. Consequently, this has led to a failure to effect a change in their perception of the brand, primarily due to the limited symbolic visibility.

Participant 1 expressed scepticism regarding the ability of a single model to effect a sustainable transformation, positing that “(...) Only the release of a sustainable model may not influence the desirability of the brand itself so much, but maybe by those who buy

totally sustainable yes.” It is evident that only those who place significant value on sustainability can truly recognise the inherent value of this strategy. Conversely, other participants have defined it as a benefit to the brand, albeit not a distinguishing factor that sets it apart from numerous competitors.

Concurrently, recognisability and aesthetics maintain their preeminence in brand valuations, with sustainable value frequently subordinated to more conventional attributes. The Yatay model, therefore, reinforces the perceived value of the brand when it combines an attractive price and design, but its impact remains limited when sustainability is not clearly integrated into Golden Goose’s brand identity.

In order to increase the perceived value of the brand, it is therefore necessary to increase communication efficiency and align sustainability and brand identity. The findings of this study align with the theoretical framework outlined by Grubor and Milovanov (2017) concerning the notion of sustainability. This framework underscores the significance of effective communication and the integration of the concept of sustainability in order to enhance organisational performance.

4.3.2 Forward Store

The interviews revealed that only 4 out of 7 participants were aware of/attended the Forward Store. It has been observed that some individuals possess an incomplete understanding of the comprehensive range of services available. This phenomenon can be attributed to a communication deficit, a concept that has been previously explored in the context of the Yatay 1B model (see Chapter 4.3.1). Despite their lack of awareness, all participants expressed a favourable response upon being informed about the Forward Store, characterising it as a concrete exemplar of sustainability value.

Participant 1, states that there is potential to increase perceived brand value through the Forward Store, but the communication gap within it should be filled:

“(...) Although I had been there, I hadn't had such a detailed description as you have, which I think is a great pity, because if they had told me inside the shop I would really have been much more interested in it. No salesperson explained to me that there were all these services inside the store.”

Despite this, all participants agree that the Forward Store is a true expression of sustainability, as it allows for the extension of the life cycle of products and thus the reduction of waste. The majority of participants (6 out of 7) defined the product repair service as the most useful, considering it to be a symbol of durability and responsibility for the brand. Meanwhile, 5 out of 7 participants expressed their intention to repair their Golden Goose trainers in the future, as opposed to purchasing a new pair.

The act of repairing garments or sneakers can also be considered from an emotional perspective. This is because repairing items of clothing or shoes can help to preserve memories, in addition to saving money. Indeed, as stated by Participant 2:

“I have a pair of Golden Goose, for example, the first ones I bought, which I cherish because they mean so much to me. So rather than buy a new pair I would repair them because for me that's the philosophy behind the pillar of repair. So I'd rather have those shoes that I know for €150 will make them practically as good as new, but their history remains that, than buy another pair. But it's not a question of economics, it's a question of effectiveness.”

It can be argued that the present testimony serves to reinforce the concept of how the concept of sustainability, when linked to a personal symbol or meaning, is able to engender stronger levels of brand loyalty. Furthermore, the Forward Store was regarded as a sustainability strategy that enhances the perceived reliability of the brand, as asserted by Participant 3:

“(...) Many brands do not even have a repair service available. (...) Golden Goose, offers any kind of repair for any part of the shoe whether it is damaged or broken.”

So Golden Goose excels over all the other brands in the luxury sector in fashion. It is more reliable. If I had to buy another pair of shoes I would definitely go to Golden Goose.”

This demonstrates that, when implemented effectively, sustainable practices have the potential to enhance a brand's competitive standing. In a similar vein, Participant 7 emphasises the potential for such a strategy to foster a stronger alignment between the brand and the consumer, as articulated in their statement:

“(...) It also means that the seller is not only interested in the sale itself, but also in building a relationship with the customer, especially the fact that they meet customer needs—because if there’s the option to repair the shoes, it shows that they themselves believe they’re offering a quality product that should last over time.”

This underscores the brand's commitment to fostering long-term relationships with its customers and cultivating their trust.

In the interview, participant 4 draws attention to the fact that a significant proportion of consumers view the act of repairing luxury garments as a process that results in a diminution of their value. The participant further elaborates on this perspective by stating, “I think that for many people (...) repairing the garment it's like losing a bit of luxury, as if it were a used garment, but for me it represents added value.” It is imperative to acknowledge the significance of his observation in comprehending the potential of sustainability to subvert conventional luxury standards. Consequently, through the implementation of its strategic initiatives, Golden Goose has successfully established itself as a leading innovator in the luxury sector.

In conclusion, the Forward Store is regarded as a commendable strategy, with the potential to enhance the perceived value of the brand and cultivate customer loyalty. Notwithstanding, the impact may remain negligible due to the following factors: firstly, a lack of consumer awareness; secondly, an ineffective communication strategy. These findings are consistent with the notion of Stakeholder Theory (Freudenreich et al., 2020),

in that value creation occurs precisely through relationships between the brand and its consumers, which engender trust and a sense of belonging.

4.4 Impact of sustainability initiatives on purchase intention and price sensitivity

Despite the Yatay 1B model being held in high esteem by the Participants, it proved to be an ineffective influencing factor on the purchase decisions of the respondents. Aesthetics continue to play a pivotal role in the purchase decision, with a significant majority of respondents (6 out of 7) expressing a preference for the recognisable model of Golden Goose trainers with its iconic design. This tendency to prioritise design and recognisability as pivotal factors in the purchasing phase aligns with Zeithaml's (1988) conceptualisation of perceived value. Despite the fact that all participants had been educated on the subject of sustainable product characteristics, aesthetics remained a priority.

Participant 1 stated:

"I (...) know that I have to keep an eye on them, (...) probably if I saw these shoes on people I would definitely be more inclined to buy it. But if I had to compare the two, I would choose the latter, even knowing that the former is a sustainable trainer anyway."

Participant 2 proposed a similar argument, stating that "(...) Simply knowing that the shoes are made of bio-based material, I would still be more inclined to buy a shoe that goes more with the aesthetics I am interested in."

As has been demonstrated, the decision-making process does not entirely comprise sustainability as a driving factor. Participant 5 also stated that design and recognisability will always remain predominant in the purchasing decision, and that the brand must adapt

and attempt to produce well-known and recognisable models in the Yatay Lab in order to communicate the message of sustainability to all customers.

When the Participants were made aware of the significantly lower price of the Yatay 1B compared to the renowned models, the change in perception was significant, leading to a re-categorization of the Yatay 1B as an extremely similar model in design to the distinguished models. Price is usually a significant factor in making a purchase decision for a product, particularly when there is no noticeable difference between two models, one being significantly pricier than the other and both from the same brand. Participant 1 acknowledges that price would influence the choice by 50% of the time, while Participant 6 indicates that it would influence his choice between 25% and 30% of the time.

Participant 2 also stated that "(...) If I had to choose a new pair of Super-Stars, which are now priced at around €600, and I knew they were made of Yatay material and cost €700, I would buy them." The interviews demonstrate that all participants are willing to pay a premium for sustainability as an added value, provided that the design remains true to the iconic brand aesthetic. Similarly, Participant 3 demonstrates a preference for sustainability value over monetary value, stating that "(...) If I find a sustainable shoe that costs up to €1,000 but I like it, I'll buy it, it's not a problem."

Consequently, sustainability becomes an additional variable, but not the main motivation for the customer to purchase a product. In summary, it is imperative that companies develop a successful combination of factors that will influence the consumer's purchasing decisions. This should include offering competitive prices and ensuring consistency with customer values. Nevertheless, it is evident that the design and symbolism associated with Golden Goose remain the primary factors in the decision-making process for a significant proportion of consumers. It is evident that the Yatay model exerts a significant influence on purchase intention, provided that a favourable trade-off is established between design, sustainability and price.

At the same time, the Forward Store initiative exerts an indirect influence on purchase intention by strengthening the emotional connection and brand reliability. The potential for extending the longevity of products has been identified as a genuine symbol of sustainability, with the capacity to enhance the relationship between supplier and customer. Consequently, the Forward Store has devised a unique and sustainable approach to purchasing Golden Goose products, encouraging customers to engage with the brand in a distinct and environmentally responsible manner.

5 Conclusions

The present study focuses on the manner in which sustainability initiatives influence brand perception and purchase intention among consumers. This is achieved by conducting a case study on the Italian brand Golden Goose. In relation to extant theory, including corporate sustainability (Dyllick & Hockerts, 2002), shared value (Porter & Kramer, 2011), brand trust (Deloitte, 2024), and stakeholder theory (Freudenreich et al., 2020), the prevailing opinion in the literature is that sustainability can only become a strategic asset if it is authentically embedded.

This thesis, therefore, aims to answer this research question:

How do brand sustainability initiatives influence consumers' brand perception and purchase intention?

A detailed analysis of the interviews reveals that sustainability efforts can positively impact the perception of the consumer about the brand, as long as they are perceived as being authentic, aligned to the values of the brand, and accompanied by participative experience. The sustainability journey of Golden Goose, as exemplified by the Yatay 1B sneaker model and the Forward Store, is perceived as an integral component of the brand's identity and philosophy. This journey serves to reinforce the fundamental concepts of craftsmanship, uniqueness, and innovation that form the brand's foundation. It is evident that both initiatives serve to reinforce the brand's favourable image and cultivate a greater sense of trust.

However, the impact of sustainability initiatives on purchase intention may be rather limited, as candidates rarely identified it as a decisive criterion during the purchase process. This aspect can be defined as conditional and dependent on context. In the decision-making process of purchasing a product, it has been observed that candidates frequently prioritise factors such as recognizability, design, and price. Despite an attempt

to compare the iconic Golden Goose sneakers with the Yatay 1B model, it was found that the primary decision driver was in fact iconic design.

The study also found that transparent and more interactive communication would greatly benefit sustainability initiatives. It was observed that a number of participants indicated a lack of awareness regarding Golden Goose's sustainability initiatives prior to the interview, thereby underscoring a discrepancy between the brand's practices and consumer knowledge. This underscores the significance of developing sustainability strategies through the effective and coherent communication that effectively engages customers.

In conclusion, this thesis emphasises the pivotal role of a brand's sustainability strategies in enhancing consumers' perception of it, particularly in regard to trust and responsibility. Nevertheless, the impact of these factors on consumer purchasing behaviour is relatively constrained, as price sensitivity, aesthetic considerations, and symbolic value assume primacy. In order for sustainability to become a purchasing driver, it is necessary to integrate it effectively into the product, while also ensuring that it is meaningful and resonant for the buyer.

5.1 Limitations of the study

The research is also subject to certain limitations. A qualitative method was employed for data collection, an appropriate decision to achieve a general understanding of the participants' thoughts and feelings. Moreover, it is not possible to generalise findings based on qualitative analysis due to the extremely small and non-representative sample size.

Despite the participants being interviewed in a completely informal manner, thus feeling at freedom to express their thoughts, there is a possibility of unintentional biases, such

as the organisation of the questions asked or the influencing of the spontaneity of the answers by the researcher. Cases of this nature, though seemingly inconsequential, can nevertheless exert an influence on the ultimate outcomes.

A total of seven participants were interviewed, all of whom were Italian Golden Goose consumers, aged between 21 and 25, with one exception aged 38. Had the sample comprised a more extensive age range, it is possible that divergent outcomes would have been observed with regard to attitudes towards sustainability and purchasing behaviour.

The limited scope of the study precludes the ability to draw broader conclusions. In the analysis of a larger and more diverse group, the results would be more robust and more representative of the population. Furthermore, all participants are from the same geographical and cultural background, that of Italy. This may have influenced the results, as they may vary from country to country, thus rendering their validity for another population segment in another country questionable.

Finally, the research is grounded in a luxury fashion brand, Golden Goose, which has a strong identity. Therefore, it is important to note that the results of the survey cannot be generalised to other brands, especially those belonging to different segments.

5.2 Suggestions for further studies

The present thesis is founded on research conducted on a relatively small and not particularly diverse group, which limits the scope of its findings. First of all, conducting this research using a larger and more diverse group of respondents, expanding the age range, could be helpful to explore the impact of different habits and attitudes towards sustainability on the purchasing decision-making process and the perception of a particular brand. Second, expanding the geographical and cultural diversity of participants to include those from countries beyond Italy could provide invaluable insights. Third, taking

the research to another fashion category, such as fast fashion or premium brands would enable a comparison of the results gathered to see how sustainability assumes different roles depending on which segment it belongs to. Finally, a quantitative study could be conducted to identify the relationship between sustainability initiatives, brand perception and purchase intention. A survey-based approach would facilitate the collection of statistically significant data, enabling generalisation to a more extensive population.

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Appendices

Appendix 1. Interview Guide

Introduction

Thank you for being here today! I am exploring the impact of fashion brands' sustainability initiatives on consumer perception and purchase intention, with a focus on Golden Goose. Your perspective will be invaluable in understanding how Golden Goose's sustainable strategies influence its customers.

My name is Alice and I am leading this interview today. My goal is to listen and understand your experiences. There are no right or wrong answers, so feel free to express whatever you want.

This interview will be kept confidential. Should there be any questions that you would rather not answer, that is perfectly fine. You are also free to stop the interview at any time.

Finally, if it is OK with you, I would like to record our conversation so that I can collect all the data more accurately. Let me know if you agree.

Questions

1. Can you tell me how old you are?
2. When did you buy your first Golden Goose item? Why did you choose that product?
3. Are you a regular customer of the brand?
4. What aspects of Golden Goose do you value most?
5. If you have bought trainers, what influences you most when buying their models?
6. Have you ever thought of buying a less well-known model as opposed to the more recognisable classics? Why? How important is it to you that your Golden Goose shoes are unique and recognisable?
8. Are you aware of Golden Goose's sustainable initiatives? If yes, which ones do you remember, or which ones do you think are the best?

9. What do you think about sustainability in luxury? Do you believe what they say about it?

10. Golden Goose recently introduced a model called the Yatay Model 1B: these sneakers are sustainable, made from bio-based and recycled materials, with no petroleum derivatives. Each pair has a QR code that allows you to plant a tree with Treedom and follow its growth. The packaging is 100% waste-free. They are made entirely in Italy and are genderless, combining Golden Goose's stylish look with a commitment to sustainability.



If you had to choose between a classic model (like the one in the picture below) and the Yatay Model, what would matter most in your decision?



11. How much does the price affect this decision? The Yatay model costs about half as much as the well-known models. Would that make you think twice? Would you be willing to spend more for a sustainable product? If so, how much more would you be willing to spend?

12. In 2022, the first Forward Store opened, which is a new kind of shop that promotes sustainability and circularity through four services:

-Repair: repairs and customises products;

-Remake: allows customers to design their own unique items and customise products;

-Resell: physical resale platform for used Golden Goose trainers and selected clothing items;

-Recycle: collection of old items for recycling.

The goal is to extend the life cycle of products and engage consumers in a unique sustainable experience. Forward Stores are currently located in Milan, Paris, New York, Miami and Dubai.

Have you ever heard of or taken part in this initiative?

If not, would you like to use this service? (If yes, which of the 4 would you find most useful?) Also, do you think that the presence of these services in a shop could influence your purchasing choice?

13. Have you ever thought about repairing a pair of Golden Goose instead of buying a new pair?

14. Do you think the Forward Store project could make the brand more desirable and reliable in its sustainable strategy? Why?

15. Do these two initiatives (Yatay model trainers and Forward Store) change how you see the brand? Do they make it more or less desirable?

16. Would you buy more often if you had these two initiatives (Yatay model trainers and Forward Store)? If yes, which of the two has the greatest impact on your decision?

Conclusion

Thank you so much for your help. This will help me a lot to understand my research question.

I'll read all the answers and understand what people's experiences are. If you have any questions or would like to know more about the study, please get in touch.