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## The Textile Industry: A Deep Look into the Environmental Impacts of Fast Fashion

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**The Textile Industry: A Deep Look into the Environmental Impacts of Fast Fashion &  
Sustainable Fashion Campaign Strategies**

By: Jordan Miller

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## **Abstract**

The purpose of this research was to understand the detrimental effects the textile industry has had on global environments and ecosystems across the globe. The textile industry for many years has continued to disregard the current acceleration of global warming and other environmental crises, and it is time the fashion industry holds itself accountable for these actions and takes a change in a new, more sustainable future. With proper education of the environmental pollution the textile industry has made, young consumers will be able to make the change necessary for businesses to develop more sustainable habits for the future production. This thesis explores the environmental damages caused by the textile industry, as well as develops a promotion plan that fashion brands could use to spread awareness about sustainable fashion. With a more sustainable and responsible future in mind, the fashion industry has the power to fix the damage that has already been done.

## Introduction

As time changes, the earth changes. People have been getting more developed, more advanced, and contributing more to changes in the way that the earth functions as a whole. Despite the good that people have contributed to the earth, the numerous amounts of waste and pollution have come to the point in which the earth is seeing many negative impacts such as climate change, animal and species extinctions, and rising coastlines worldwide (Gazzola et al., 2020). Though the ways in which the earth sees and receives these harmful effects vary, the top contributors to the decline of the earth's existence and sources of all of the waste and pollution primarily comes from the automotive industry, the oil industry, and the food retail industry. What many people may not understand is that coming in second place after the oil industry, the textile and fashion industry is the second largest polluter in the world (Sustain Your Style, 2017), and it even accounts for about 10% of all carbon emissions worldwide that are a direct result of textile manufacturing (Marantz, 2019). The fashion and textile industry is the primary focus at hand, and although this industry has contributed much harm to the earth, people are aware of what negative impacts are coming from it and there are many ways in which people are trying to fix this issue. In this paper, there will be discussions on how the earth has been impacted negatively by the fashion and textile industry, how textiles are currently manufactured worldwide, ways in which many brands are stepping up and taking the lead of sustainable fashion innovations, and an example of what a sustainable fashion campaign could look like. Despite the many organic and cellulosic fibers and materials used in the fashion industry, much of the waste and pollution that impacts our earth in a negative way comes from the textile and apparel industry. There are many irreversible and detrimental impacts that the earth has faced because of the fashion industry, but with time and change, there are many more eco-friendly

ways to help revitalize the world we live in, starting with the way textiles are constructed and used.

### **Research Objectives**

The purpose of this research was to understand the detrimental effects the textile industry has had on global environments. The three objectives of this research were: 1) To explore how have fast fashion brands contributed to pollution and environmental problems. 2) To understand how some sustainable fashion brands have been working to combat some environmental crises so far. 3) To develop a sustainable fashion campaign to spread awareness about sustainable fashion among young adults.

### **Literature Review**

#### **Environmental Impacts of the Fashion Industry**

Many people may not realize just how impactful the fashion industry really is; however, this industry affects what people wear, how every garment people own and wear on a daily basis is made and interacted with, and what the world will look like many years down the road. People may not understand that the fashion industry truly does create so much waste and pollution, considering that many common materials used in creating textiles come from natural fibers and cottons. Textiles are often made from sources such as cotton, wool, flax, and many other clean and organic plant and animal sources as well, however there are many man-made fibers that are used in textiles too. Some of the less eco-friendly fibers used in the textile industry include acetate, nylon, polyester, and glass. Though these fibers are used in just about everything, they also play a huge role in the way that this industry pollutes the earth. This is due primarily to their production and the fact that they take hundreds of years to decompose on their own. Chemicals are also often dumped into oceans, rivers, and lakes during the production and dying

process as well, which is another huge way that the world gets damaged by textiles. Not only is this industry polluting and toxic to the earth in many ways, it is incredibly wasteful the amount of fabric is thrown out or discarded when it could be reused in many other ways.

### ***Health Concerns Caused by Textile Manufacturing***

To break it down into a comprehensive analysis of how the textile industry has impacted the environment thus far, it is important to recognize where the majority of this pollution takes place, and why that is a problem for environments worldwide. According to the 2018 documentary, *Fashion's Dirty Secrets*, directed by Emeka Onono, the Aral Sea has been drained due to cotton and textile manufacturing, which has caused some very detrimental effects on the surrounding area. The Aral Sea lies between Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan, and at one point it covered roughly 26,300 square miles. Without this sea to depend on for jobs and a stable climate, the draining of the Aral Sea has eliminated jobs for several industries such as farming and fishing. It has also entirely changed the weather and climate in this region, and it has even created a health crisis surrounding illnesses due to sandstorms and a dramatic increase in poverty levels as well. In countries such as Indonesia and other surrounding nations, rivers are turning black due to pollutants from fashion brands dumping dyes and other waste waters filled with chemicals in the fresh water supply, using these rivers and lakes as sewer systems and drains for their factories (Onono, 2018). Roughly 90% of these waste waters that are discharged into the water systems in these developing countries are untreated, causing many health problems for citizens in these communities (Sustain Your Style, 2017). One of the biggest problems this causes is that children and families are then drinking and using this water to survive off of, and because of the amount of chemicals in this water, these people are developing brain issues and illnesses from several toxins such as mercury, methane, lead, and arsenic in their water supply.

Without clean drinking water and access to the health care they need, 28 million people in Indonesia alone face struggles with permanent brain damage amongst other illnesses caused from this poisonous water, and they are left to suffer and die every day, while new clothes are being manufactured for fast fashion consumption just miles away (Onono, 2018). While most people in today's society only think about the new trends and collections that end up in storefronts worldwide on a daily basis, it is important to consider who is most affected by our garments, and how we often take something as basic as clean water and a new pair of jeans for granted.

### ***Water Pollution Caused by Textile Manufacturing***

Water may seem like such a plentiful and renewable natural resource, but it is important to keep our water systems clean to avoid further damage to our oceans and ecosystems worldwide. About 20% of all industrial water pollution comes from textile treatments and dyeing, which is significantly more than any other industry as a whole (Sustain Your Style, 2017). Of that water, 1.5 trillion liters of water are used by the fashion industry each year, which puts it into perspective just how much water is being used and polluted on a daily basis. When it comes to textiles, people know and understand what cotton is, and as a relatively natural and plant-based fiber, from an outside perspective it looks like a relatively sustainable option compared to many man-made fibers such as acetate, rayon, or polyester. What people do not understand is that cotton is actually a highly wasteful material, using up to 20,000 liters of water that are needed to produce just one kilogram of cotton (Sustain Your Style, 2017). Cotton is also the biggest pesticide consuming crop, using about 11% of all pesticides and 24% of insecticides globally each year for production (Marantz, 2019). Other ways water is over used in the fashion industry is that it takes about 200 tons of fresh water to dye one ton of fabric (Sustain Your Style, 2017), which then contributes more to the amount of that water that is irresponsibly discharged

back into freshwater systems after it has been used. To put it into perspective, there are about 750 million people worldwide that do not have access to clean drinking water, when in reality most of the clean drinking water that they would be able to use otherwise is being consumed for the production of fast fashion garments, leaving communities in developing countries to suffer on their own. At the price of fashion, is a new outfit every few weeks worth the damage that it is causing to ecosystems that so heavily rely on the already scarce clean water sources in these third world countries?

### ***Impact of the Fashion Industry on Oceans***

When it comes to pollution and destruction of the environment, the problems do not stop once a garment has gone from a factory to someone's home. Every time a synthetic garment (a garment made of polyester, nylon, or several other man-made materials) is washed, roughly 1,900 individual microfibers are discharged back into the water cycle (Sustain Your Style, 2017). This cycle is primarily how microfibers and other plastics are then being entered into the food chain, which people will inevitably consume at one point or another (Sustain Your Style, 2017). About 190,000 tons of these microplastic textile fibers that are a direct result of any aspect of the fashion industry end up in oceans all over the world each year (Sustain Your Style, 2017). This may not seem like a lot in the grand scheme of how big the world and oceans really are, but in fact this helps account for the 85% of all human-made debris that end up on shorelines around the world come from these microfibers and other waste and pollution resulting from the textile industry (Sustain Your Style, 2017). Despite these harmful effects of waste and pollution that end up in the oceans on a continuous basis, there are simple lifestyle changes and steps that can be taken on an individual basis to help reduce the amount of waste that ends up in the environment.



### ***Short Lifecycle of a Garment***

The next question that results is, “where does all this waste come from?” People may think that they are shopping responsibly and only buying things when they need them, but what happens to all of the clothes that are outgrown or out of style? On average, a family in western world countries typically throws away about 66.14 pounds of clothing every year (Sustain Your Style, 2017). There is only about 15% of those thrown out clothes that are recycled or donated, while the rest of them end up incinerated or in landfills (Sustain Your Style, 2017). In addition to the microfibers from the synthetic clothing that end up in water systems worldwide, synthetic fibers are not biodegradable, and therefore these garments may take up to 200 years to break down and decompose on their own (Sustain Your Style, 2017). To put this into perspective, how many garments this includes, there are synthetic fibers in roughly 72% of all garments produced worldwide (Sustain Your Style, 2017). With an average lifetime of a garment today being just three years (Sustain Your Style, 2017), it makes shopping sustainable and second hand that much more worth it in terms of keeping the environment clean and safe.

### ***Environmental effects of Fast Fashion Brands***

Though there is much to be shown about how the fast fashion and textile industry has already and continues to harm the environment, it is important to recognize what companies are still continuing to do to further this environmental crisis, knowing how harmful these actions truly are. There is much to be said about why companies chose to practice these unethical and irresponsible actions, but the main reason why garments are produced in Asian countries is primarily due to a low cost of production and less environmental regulations. According to the *Fashion's Dirty Secrets* documentary, this greed and irresponsibility comes from a desire of companies to get things done as quickly and cheaply as possible. That being said, the only way

to actually make any changes regarding the use, disposal of waste, and production of textiles is to change the laws that currently control these practices worldwide (Onono, 2018). Fashion companies are well aware of what the current environmental crisis' state looks like, however companies like Levi's and H&M are some examples of what not to do in terms of keeping the environment clean and safe. Levi's on average will discard 6 out of 10 finished garments and allow them to end up in a landfill or incinerated within the first year of production, due to the garments not selling as quickly at certain price points as the company wants (Onono, 2018). Instead of donating or recycling these garments, companies chose to go with the cheaper option of discarding overproduced goods to landfills or burning them so that the value of the brand name does not diminish. H&M and Forever 21 are examples of some of the companies that notoriously release their untreated waters with dyes and harmful toxins into water systems in underdeveloped countries, as many companies that produce garments on a very short timeline and produce many fast fashion goods are also at fault for many of these environmental problems in production countries as well (Onono, 2018). Other problems that have been arising in recent years with the evolution and dependency on social media is the effect of fashion influencers. Many influencers will create haul videos of numerous products they have purchased or received from fast fashion companies as a promotional technique of these companies to generate more sales with personal testimonies and advice from the influencers for their audiences. If an influencer has an audience of several thousand to several million people, the companies will then receive accelerated sales of these fast fashion products, resulting in a higher demand of items and therefore generating more waste and contributing more to the unethical and irresponsible environmental issues they contribute to in their daily production of fast fashion goods (Onono, 2018). Though there is a high market in advertising these goods in haul videos on many social

media platforms in today's society, it is important to remember the long-term effects of producing fast fashion garments that will most likely not last more than a handful of years.

### **Sustainable Fashion Brands**

#### ***Patagonia***

Patagonia is not only known for their durable and long-lasting outer wear or their vast collections of activewear specifically designed for the wilderness centered consumer. Patagonia has been a leading brand in sustainable efforts in the fashion industry for several years, as they have done much to help spread awareness of the current environmental crisis caused by the fashion and textile industry. From donating money, repairing their garments, and following fair trade practices (Morgan, 2020), Patagonia is an example of what fashion brands can and should be doing regarding actions towards a greener fashion industry. With a strong focus on recycling and reusing materials, 68% of all Patagonia product lines are made from recycled materials (Patagonia, 2020). Of the materials used in the production process that are not recycled, 100% of all cotton that is grown by Patagonia for the production of their garments is grown organically (Patagonia, 2020). This is a company that in 2016 alone, they have pledged and fulfilled their promises to donate \$10,000,000 coming directly from their 2016 Black Friday sales to several different grassroots environmental groups which have been dedicated to repairing, improving, and preserving the environments worldwide (DeBara, 2016). To continue the donations to environmentally conscious companies, 1% of all sales year round are donated back to preservations and restorations of the natural environment (Patagonia, 2020). Patagonia offers services to help consumers repair and alter their Patagonia products instead of prematurely replacing and discarding them (Morgan, 2020), and they urge their consumers to not buy excess garments and buy less in general. In addition to these practices, Patagonia encourages their

consumers to recycle their old and unused Patagonia products instead of throwing them away, as well as shopping second hand for more of their pieces (Morgan, 2020). This company monitors closely the supply chain of their production and execution of company activities to ensure the safety and responsible and ethical actions for the close care of the environment, their workers, and their consumers (Morgan, 2020). With a continuous focus and drive towards a more sustainable future of fashion, Patagonia has been leading the change for fashion brands to work towards a greener and more environmentally responsible future for the production and evolution of the textile and fashion industry worldwide.

### ***Toms***

Toms Shoes was founded and created with a sole purpose to give back to communities and individuals in need. With charity and sustainability being two of their biggest motivators, Toms has made tremendous efforts in using clean and recyclable materials in their production processes. From the company start in 2006, Toms has donated one pair of shoes for every pair of shoes sold to a child in need (DeBara, 2016). In the past 14 years, this company has donated over 60,000,000 shoes to children around the world (DeBara, 2016), and continues to practice actions supported by the Fair Labor Association as well (Toms, 2020). In addition to giving back to communities in need, Toms has been known for their efforts in providing clean drinking water, safe birth kits, and various eye services to struggling people across the globe (DeBara, 2016). Though the company has not yet perfected 100% clean and recycled products to date, Toms has pledged to source 100% of their cotton organically by 2025, and they have been closely monitoring and reducing their CO2 emissions and carbon footprint on a yearly basis (Toms, 2020). All of the current products, shoes, shoe boxes, and packaging materials are made with a variety of levels of recyclable and vegan materials (DeBara, 2016); which will continue to have

100% of their packaging sourced from sustainably managed forests while making sure that at least 80% of all of their packaging is used from recycled materials (Toms, 2020). Some of the recycled materials used in the production process of Toms garments includes Repreve materials, which is recycled polyester that is made from post-consumer used plastic water bottles, made in a process which uses much less water and greenhouse gas emissions than many other common materials (Toms, 2020). In the dyeing process of Toms goods, plant dyes are used from pigments derived from natural botanicals that are much more environmentally friendly than many man-made dyes (Toms, 2020). Toms uses many eco-friendly fibers such as hemp, linen, and jute - all otherwise known as eco-fibers – due to the fact that all of these fibers consume much less water and require far less harsh chemical treatments to grow and produce than many traditional fibers and textiles (Toms, 2020). With a sustainable and charitable focus, Toms has continued to drive the fashion industry into a much more giving and responsible direction for the future.

### ***Tentree***

Tentree is a sustainable and responsible fashion brand which gets its name from the actions they practice planting ten trees for every item sold within the company (Morgan, 2020). This interactive and environmentally conscious company allows consumers to physically track the growth of their trees by providing a code to track these trees on every one of their products, and consumers even get to choose where in the world they want their ten trees to be planted between Madagascar, Nepal, Cambodia, Senegal, Indonesia, Haiti, Canada, and the United States (Hirsh, 2019). So far, Tentree has planted at least 50,643,360 trees (Tentree, 2020), and they have plans and visions to have at least one billion trees planted by the year 2030 (Hirsh, 2019). In addition to being a company that focuses on ethical manufacturing (Hirsh, 2019) and restoring land in over eight different countries (Tentree, 2020), Tentree puts their main environmental

focus and efforts on targeting three main problems- water, waste, and carbon emissions (Tentree, 2020). All of their garments are produced in ethical and responsible factories, and they use sustainable and recyclable materials in their production processes such as cork, coconut, recycled polyester made from plastic water bottles, organic cotton, hemp, and Tencel materials; which are materials made from wood pulp fibers (Morgan, 2020). Tentree was founded and created with an environmental and sustainable motivation in mind, and they believe that they have the responsibility to ensure the protection and preservation of the environments worldwide (Tentree, 2020). Tentree understands that the current state of the environmental crisis and acceleration of climate change and global warming is largely due to the role the fashion industry has taken regarding their environmental actions, though they strive for the notion that with 10 trees being planted for every single item sold, their products will have an environmental impact that lasts longer than a single lifespan of a basic t-shirt (Hirsh, 2020). With companies such as Tentree taking part in making a strong move towards a more sustainable and nature centered industry, the fashion industry as well as global environments in general will be seeing dramatic changes in the right direction towards a greener world.

### **The Need for Education of Sustainable Fashion**

To truly understand how fast fashion has taken over the world, it is important to understand what fast fashion really is. According to the Merriam-Webster dictionary, fast fashion is defined as “an approach to the design, creation, and marketing of clothing fashions that emphasizes fashion trends quickly and cheaply available to consumers”. Fast fashion typically targets Millennials and Gen Z people, as they are the most likely to be persuaded by fashion trends and have the desire to adapt and change their style based on current trends and fads. Since these age groups are most easily persuaded and convinced when given the right things to stand

up for or shop for, people within these generational age groups also have the greatest internal satisfaction for giving into consumerism and purchasing new goods. The average fast fashion garment is worn less than five times (Marantz, 2019). With an increase of sales at roughly 9.7% for the fast fashion industry as a whole between 2010-2015 (The University of Queensland, 2018), people are buying more and wearing these items less. In a global standpoint, people are now consuming around 80 billion new pieces of clothing every fiscal year, which is about 400% more than humanity as a whole was consuming just two decades ago (The University of Queensland, 2018). On average, a typical UK based shopper will only wear about 70% of the clothing they possess in their wardrobes, while throwing away 70 kg of textile waste per year (The University of Queensland, 2018). Now that it has been understood what fast fashion is and how it appeals to so many people, it is important to recognize how the industry will influence a change in consumer behavior in order to make the right steps towards a more environmentally friendly and sustainable textile and fashion industry.

### **Methodology (Creative Process)**

Sustainable fashion campaigns must be made in order to educate the young consumers who typically feed into business for fast fashion brands. With the education of sustainable fashions, education of the detrimental impacts of the fast fashion industry, and promotion and advertisements for sustainable fashion outlets, consumers will be more likely to get behind the needed change for the fashion industry towards a greener and more sustainable future.

### ***Target Market of Fast Fashion Brands***

In order to convince the minds of fast fashion consumers about the environmental impacts of the fashion industry and persuade these shoppers to shop more sustainably, it must be understood who the target market of a more sustainable fashion industry includes. The target

market of fast fashion companies includes young men and women aged 16 – 35, as they are the biggest consumers of fast fashion garments, and they are the most influenced by current trends and styles within the fashion industry. People of this target market include teenagers with a passion for fashion with a disposable income to spend, as well as young business professionals who want to wear the most current styles, however, they also want to shop at a lower price point than higher end designer goods. These men and women typically enjoy shopping, traveling, and enjoying various social interactions with large audiences of people. These shoppers are technologically inclined, and they are of the generational age group that will be most affected and influenced by climate change and environmental crises worldwide.

### ***Creating A Sustainable Fashion Campaign***

In order to persuade and change the behaviors of fast fashion consumers in a more environmentally responsible direction, the consumers of fast fashion companies must be educated and motivated to shop more sustainably. Three methods of marketing and advertising these educational resources towards this audience include the creation of a sustainable fashion window display, the use of social media, and promotional flyers that can be printed into physical papers and banners, as well as being used for electronic purposes on company websites and in emails. The communication objectives behind creating these sustainable fashion campaigns include spreading awareness and knowledge. The reason behind the awareness objective for these campaigns is that there needs to be a greater common awareness of what sustainable fashion truly is, as well as why it is important and relevant to shop sustainably in today's society. As for a knowledge-based objective goes, these campaigns will help to increase the knowledge of why fast fashion has been a problem for the environment for several years, and what will continue to happen to the environment if no change is made towards a cleaner and greener



shopping focus. After education and an understanding of how the fast fashion industry is so harmful and toxic from an environmental standpoint, consumers in this target market will be more likely to change their shopping behaviors and convince their friends and family to do the same, leading the fashion and textile industry into a more sustainable direction with this permanent change.

### ***Promotional Mix Recommendations and Rationale***

The advertising for the sustainable fashion campaign could include a window display, the usage of social media, and a sustainable fashion flyer. The sustainable window display will be able to connect to the young target market of fast fashion brands as it will feature garments sold in the store that are made from recycled and organic materials, but these garments will be styled and featured according to visual merchandising techniques and following current fashion trends. The target market of fast fashion brands will be drawn to this display because it will feature their favorite styles in a marketable and easy to understand the arrangement. A specific idea has been created for a sustainable fashion store in Chicago, IL, however this education and promotion could be set to take place in any city across the globe. This display will also be having the perfect location in Chicago, IL for consumers to see on their daily commute, it will be nearby many tourist attractions, and it will be nearby other competing fast fashion stores that the consumers would have been interested in viewing before they learned about the environmental impacts of the fast fashion industry. Social media will be used primarily in the form of an Instagram account for the sustainable fashion campaign, as Instagram is a highly used social media platform for fashion companies to show photos of their garments and appeal highly to the target audience of fast fashion brands. The target market of this campaign uses Instagram on a daily basis, and Instagram is the top social media platform for posting pictures and content for companies to

educate and advertise on. Instagram is also one of the most commonly used social media apps among users ages 16 - 35, which is another reason why it would make an excellent choice for education and advertisement of sustainable fashions for this consumer market. A flyer will be used to advertise these sustainable efforts as well, as the flyer could be used in a print form or a virtual form. A print form of the flyer could be used as handouts and posted in various locations, or the print form could consist of a banner or poster for a larger scale. A virtual form of the flyer would be used on company websites and in emails, accommodating shoppers worldwide in a consistent and repetitive manner. The flyer will be designed to visually appeal to the target audience, and it will be easy to understand for all age groups. The public relations aspect of the promotional mix is that with an appeal to the target market by convincing people why they are impacted by the environmental impacts of the fashion industry and how they contribute to this environmental crisis without even knowing it, people will be more inclined to have a stronger devotion to shopping more sustainably and responsibly. These actions people will take towards a more sustainable fashion relationship may also carry into their everyday lives in terms of recycling (even items that are not clothing but would otherwise end up in landfills either way), reusing products when they would otherwise prematurely throw them out or replace them after short periods of time, and by convincing others to follow in their sustainable efforts as well. Influencers may be used in terms of advertising and marketing these sustainable garments as well, seeing as influencers have a strong power of persuasion amongst men and women between the ages of 16 – 35. Since influencers do so much to draw people into buying fast fashion garments in the first place, they would be an excellent source of education and advertising the environmental impacts of the fast fashion industry and how shopping more sustainably can have a positive impact on the way consumers shop in the future. Events promoting the sustainable

fashion campaigns may take place in the forms of trunk shows and sustainable fashion shows in parks in the Chicago area, bringing in a larger audience and appealing to more people in the target market for these sustainable fashion campaigns as well. With the strong use of these promotional tactics for the sustainable fashion campaigns such as the window display, the usage of social media, and the use of a promotional sustainable fashion flyer, this target audience will help to create the change that is so desperately needed regarding the move towards a sustainable future for the fashion and textile industry.

### **Media Strategy and Creative Executions**

#### ***Sustainable Window Display***

In hopes of creating a more sustainable and environmentally responsible industry for textiles and fashion production and consumption, education and advertisements for sustainable fashion sources are essential to any changes that can be made in this industry. Though cotton is a large contributor to much of the pollution and waste within the textile industry, using clean and organic cotton is a way in which production can move into an eco-friendlier direction. Below is an example of a window display of goods made out of 100% organic and sustainable cotton, wool, flax, and other natural and clean fibers. Denim can also be made out of recycled plastic water bottles, which is an excellent way to reuse plastics and eliminate them from landfills worldwide. When it comes to durable leather alternatives, vegan leathers can be made out of recycled plastics, fruits, cork, and other sustainable and recyclable materials. This display will be changed every 4 - 5 weeks to highlight different garments based on season and trend, and it will be changed often to keep the interest of consumers and to renew freshness of the display. All of the garments and materials in the window display pictured below are made in ethical and clean factories, and with the right branding, merchandising, and advertising, displays such as the

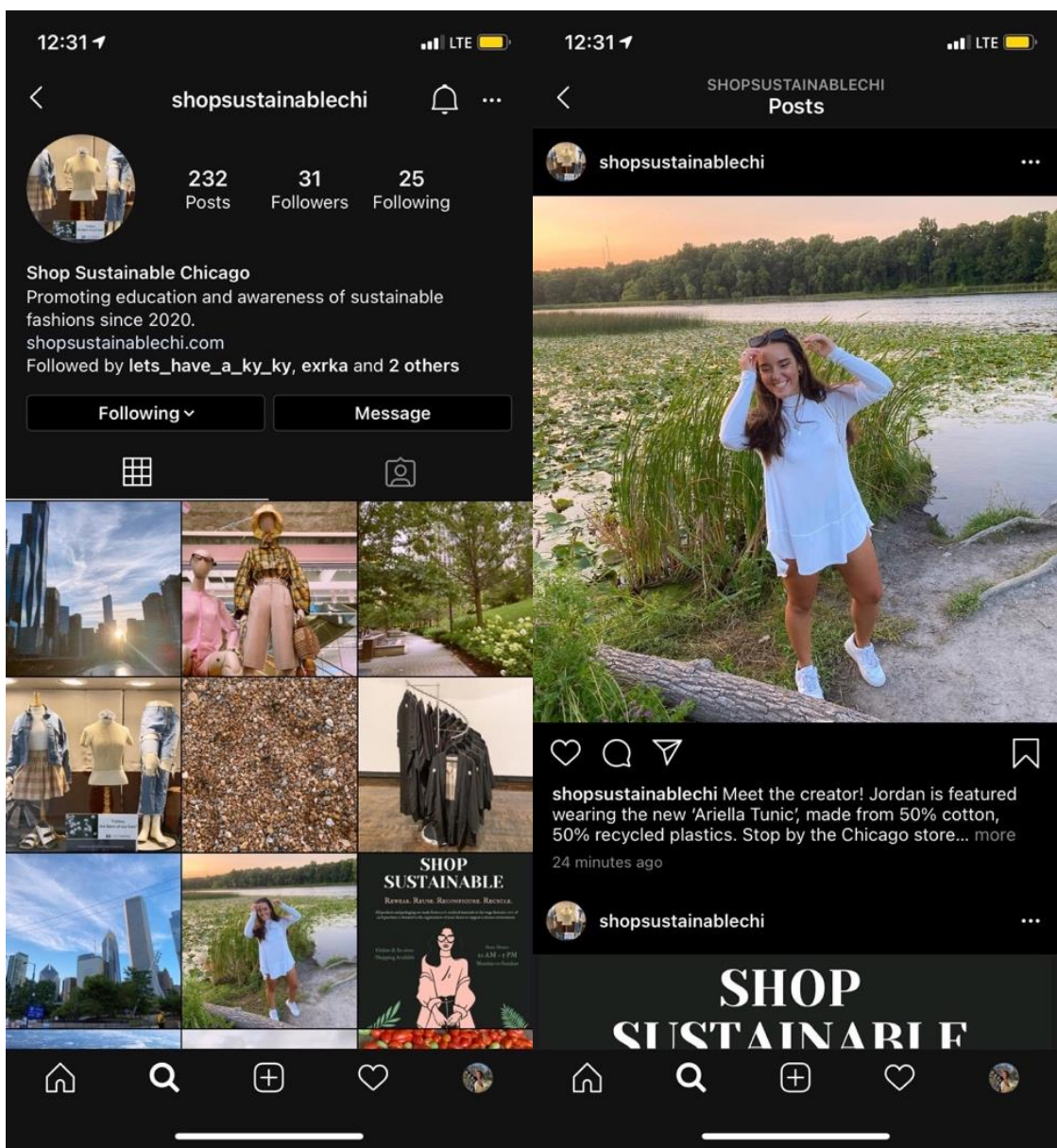
option pictured below can and will help to change the way consumers view fast fashion garments and productions.



### *Sustainable Instagram Page*

Instagram is one of the most popular social media platforms worldwide, especially within the 16 – 35 age range of social media users. Instagram is highly used to post photographs and for companies to reach out to and appeal to their consumers. By using a social media page such as Instagram to raise awareness and gain knowledge about the environmental impacts of the fast fashion industry, it would make an excellent choice in the promotion and advertisement of sustainable fashion campaigns. Content posted on the Instagram page for this sustainable fashion campaign include statistics of how the fast fashion industry has impacted the environment thus

far, how clothing can be made using recycled garbage and discarded clothing garments, as well as promoting a sustainable fashion store to boost business and sales. Pictured below is an example of an Instagram account that could be used by a fashion company to execute these actions, and the content will be posted every 2 – 3 days to spread awareness of the sustainable fashion efforts. In a day and age where almost everything people do is influenced by the internet, a social media page is essential in the advertising and education of a sustainable fashion campaign.



### *Sustainable Fashion Flyer*

Ways in which education and advertising these sustainable fashion campaigns can continue include the use of a flyer such as the option pictured below. This flyer can be used in print and virtual formats, and it conveys a strong method of persuasion regarding why shopping sustainably is relevant in today's society, as well as giving information about store hours and services offered. This flyer is impactful in the ways in which it will appeal to a consumers' emotions and actions with the choice of colors, branding, and style. This flyer will be changed every 1 - 2 weeks to highlight new product and updates for the store, and it will be distributed via email and on the company website bi-weekly. This is just one design of what a company could use to promote and educate consumers at the same time, and from a business point of view, it will be effective in drawing in sales for the company as well.



### ***Measurement and Evaluation of Promotional Activity Effectiveness***

In terms of recognizing how effective and influential the promotional activities of the sustainable fashion campaigns are, it is important to receive feedback from consumers and mass markets on a continuous basis to better serve the target market of these sustainable fashion efforts. The sustainable fashion store will conduct small customer surveys to evaluate the satisfaction and effectiveness of the window displays with the reduce, reuse, recycle concept as its backbone. There will be social media surveys on the Instagram page in forms of quizzes and polls on posts and Instagram stories, as well monitoring follower count and attraction towards the page as a whole. These surveys, polls, and counts will be done every 4 – 5 weeks to allow time for growth and improvement, and to allow enough time to see a physical change between opinions and statistics regarding content and consumer interaction with the page. The surveys and questionnaires will be asking questions regarding the awareness of sustainable fashion efforts for the brand or store, and they will be a key component for the future of the sustainable fashion campaigns, as well as for the education and content the store and brand promotes.

### **Conclusion**

There is much to be said about how and why fast fashion companies continue to practice unethical and irresponsible actions regarding the production and discharge of garments worldwide. Though there are many irreversible damages that have already been done to accelerate the current global environmental crisis and climate change that the fashion industry has taken a large role in, there are many sustainable efforts companies can and do practice in hopes of changing the fashion industry and the environment in general, one t-shirt at a time. Sustainable fashion campaigns such as the education and awareness of shopping sustainably from the use and demonstration via window displays, social media platforms, and flyers will help

to spread information regarding how the environment has been impacted by the environment thus far, and what consumers can do while shopping to help reduce their carbon footprint. Shopping from sustainable companies and avoiding fast fashion brands will help to create longevity and the reusing of garments in one's closet, as well as help the environment and support businesses that are striving towards a greener fashion industry. The harmful effects of the fashion industry will not change overnight, however with education and consistency in shopping more sustainably, the textile and fashion industry can become a leading change in combatting global warming for decades to come.

### **Advice to readers for Sustainable Shopping**

In a world where everything people do is influenced by capitalism and consumerism, it is easy to forget that all purchases and actions have consequences. Shopping for new clothing and garments is to be expected and accepted in today's society, but there are many ways to stay up to trend while still striving to reduce one's carbon footprint. Shopping second hand from places such as thrift stores, online retailers such as Poshmark, Depop, or Ebay, and various other retailers in which goods are sold second hand is an excellent way to give a garment a second life rather than letting it end up in landfills or incinerated. Learning to sew and alter clothing is another way consumers can get custom made products or slightly fixing or changing previously worn items can not only bring individuality to one's wardrobe, but can also be a way in which people can wear one of a kind pieces while still being conscious of their environmental impact. When it comes to buying brand new goods, try to shop from sustainable companies such as Patagonia, Toms, or Tentree, and do some research into companies to see if environmental and sustainable efforts are one of their key values. Shopping on impulse or shopping from fast fashion brands such as H&M, Forever 21, or Zara will not only have a negative impact on the



environment, but garments from companies such as these will be made from cheaper materials that most likely will not last more than a year on average. Remember to have a sustainable shopping focus and taking these shopping tips will help to fix the global environmental crisis that is so desperately in need of change.

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