



Group 4

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Programme: TU317 MSc Fashion Buying and Management

Module: RETL 1007 Fashion Buying 2

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Student Reaffirmation of Academic Integrity under Approved Changes to Delivery and Assessment of TU Dublin Programmes

Arising from the unforeseen emergency measures required for the containment of the COVID-19 virus outbreak, the University enacted contingency Quality Assurance procedures (Approved by Academic Council on March 23, 2020). Under the referred enactment, physical face-to-face examinations, invigilated in the traditional manner, will not take place in May. Programmes have moved, where possible, towards alternative assessment arrangements.

This is a reaffirmation that each student is responsible for knowing and abiding by TU Dublin Academic Regulations and Policies. Any student violating these regulations/policies will be subject to action in accordance with the University's procedures for breaches of assessment regulations. Some guidelines towards compliance with Academic Integrity are outlined overleaf.

By signing this form, I understand and will abide by the University Regulations and Policies, including those covering Academic Integrity. Therefore, I declare that any individual work being submitted for assessment is entirely the product of my own effort. For all group assessments, I accept that each member of the group is responsible for the academic integrity of the entire submission. I will retain a copy of this agreement for future reference.

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Some Guidelines towards Student Compliance with Academic Integrity

These guidelines should be read in conjunction with the Academic Policy and Regulations applying to your programme and which are provided for in the Student Handbook and relevant TU Dublin Assessment Regulations. Students need to consult their programme coordinator or the designated communication channel that will have been provided for their individual programmes.

All students are expected to complete their modules and programmes in compliance with University regulations and standards. No student shall engage in any activity that involves attempting to pass an assessment by means other than honest effort, for example:

- 1.No student shall complete, in part or in total, any assessment for another person.
- 2.No student shall knowingly allow any assessment to be completed, in part or in total, for himself or herself by another person.
- 3.No student shall plagiarise or copy the work of another and submit it as his or her own work.
- 4.No student shall employ devices excluded by the lecturer in undertaking assessments.
- 5.No student shall knowingly procure, provide, or accept any materials that contain questions or answers to any assessment to be given at a subsequent time.
- 6.No student shall procure or accept assessments from any other student from current or prior classes of their programme.
- 7.No student shall provide their assessments, in part or in total, to any other student in current or future classes of this programme, unless authorised to do so.
- 8.No student shall submit substantially the same material in more than one module without prior authorisation and acknowledgment of the previous submission.
- 9.No student shall alter a marked assessment and then resubmit it for remarking unless specifically requested to do so by the lecturer.
- 10.All programming code and documentation submitted for assessment must be the students original work or material specifically authorised by the lecturer.
- 11.Collaborating with other students to develop, complete or correct assessments is limited to activities explicitly authorised by the lecturer.
- 12.For all group assessments, each member of the group is responsible for the academic integrity of the entire submission.

Oftentimes in retail environments during the course of a season, a business realises that it has failed to recognise the demand for a style, colour, design detail or trend, and therefore has to take corrective action. The purpose of this assignment is to identify and fulfil this unexpected or missed trend to satisfy consumer demand. A missed trend can be a result of poor buying and planning strategies or simply a missed opportunity that consumers become interested in.

With this in mind, the SS21 womenswear department from Zara will be assessed to identify a key trend which has been missed.



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Introduction

Founded in Spain in 1975 under the umbrella of the Inditex Group, Zara is one of the world's largest international fashion companies, known primarily for their fast fashion DNA. Their competitive and unique business model is centred around their customers. As a result, new trends are introduced in Zara's in-store and online offering almost weekly. This framework enables flexibility in their design process, collection and range planning and remains the key factor of success for this fast fashion trailblazer. To comprehensively assess the focal key trend which Zara has missed as part of their SS21 range, various gaps within the current offer will be identified, observations of the trends for the season will be pinpointed and the focal missing gap of the season will be analysed. Details on the average consumers and which competitors these consumers could avail of the focal missing trend will be analysed and a proposal of how the buying team will introduce the missing trend will be put forward. Following this, through recommendations the report will suggest how this weakness can be integrated into Zara, in a manner which is relevant and true to who the brand is.

Identification of gaps within the current SS21 range

Zara are, for the most part, successful in identifying and tapping into the trends they believe their customer's desire. They have however, overlooked several trends due to their fast-moving approach. In Zara's current SS21 offer, some of the key styles and trends that seem to be missing or only slightly introduced to date are as follows:

Disco

This trend emerged with the addition of relaxed sequins and over-sized paillettes and metallics ("8 Fashion Trends That Will Be Big In 2021", 2021), with an inclusion of chainmail accessories

coupled with simple basics and flats for an everyday wearable look. As a little sparkle is needed in everyone's wardrobe this year, this trend appeals to the Zara customer in 2021. They have just begun to introduce this trend to their SS21 offering with a 5 piece



sequinned range including a floor length dress, long shirt, a crop top, pair of shorts and a jumpsuit.

The Goth Chic

Popular in celebrity style in 2018, this trend is now making a street style comeback ("Gothic Street Style Ideas 2021 | Become Chic", 2021). The unique style of deep romantics demonstrates a moody decadence after a long year in lockdown. Embracing the wardrobe blackout, there is room for this trend on everyone's rails and Zara should be one to put a trendy flair on these grungy garments.



Observation of trends for the season

Despite the Covid-19 pandemic slowing down the world of fashion, the SS21 season has uncovered exciting designs. In a recent interview with Freeman from Vogue, designer Halpern stated *"it's about having fun—I didn't want to do fantasy and ignore what's happening in the world. Fashion should prop people up and give people a break, especially when they've been having such a terrible time"* (Freeman, p.1, 2020). With designers and trend consulting agencies anticipating consumer optimism, the SS21 trends reflect these predictions. An observation of several popular trends for SS21 have been outlined below, followed by a mood board displaying the main trends for the season.

Monochrome

Pithers (2021) states that in such unknown times many designers opted for a monochrome style in their collections. The monochrome range has been showcased on catwalks from Chanel to Gabriela Hearst and has translated excellently to high-street stores.

Pastel Tones

One of the biggest trends noted for SS21 has been the bright and dreamy pastel tones which have been taking front and centre stage at fashion shows. These feel good tones have been included in runway shows from designers such as Boss, Fendi and Isabel Marrant.

Corsets

With Netflix making waves with the release of Bridgerton earlier this year, Roger (2021) notes the corset is back and in high demand. This trend was successfully translated on the catwalks with designers such as Moschino and Alexander McQueen creating beautiful pieces.



The trend not captured by Zara

The one trend that is noticeably absent from Zara's range is 'Netting', the new fishnet style not to be mistaken with tights. According to Pithers (2021), it is the new mesh dress to be worn over anything from bodysuits, slip-dress and swimwear. It is the perfect layering piece. This look has been showcased on multiple catwalks from Balenciaga's chain-like netted dress to Fendi's leather woven netted jacket. Viewable from the below mood board, a netted dress has been constructed which would be suitable for the womenswear Zara range. The new trend is unusual

yet, highly commercial. Featured in the May 2021 issue of Vogue as the top “12 Summer Style Updates” which enables consumers to add drama, freshness and individuality to their wardrobe.



Detail on the average Zara consumer

The fashion industry faces many difficulties in a rapidly changing and unpredictable market. With customers' demands and expectations growing, fashion buyers in Zara must adapt, be flexible and thoroughly understand their customer. Understanding their customer enables Zara to obtain comprehensive pen portraits and foster long term relationships thus, contributing to profit maximisation (Wiedmann et al., 2002). The average Zara customer is a young contemporary woman, in her 20s to 30s. This broad age range is due to the strategy which Zara adopts; reacting to the latest trends on catwalks and offering them at affordable prices. She is either at the beginning of her professional career earning a mid-range salary or is pursuing third or fourth level education. The Zara consumer is fashion conscious and is looking for higher quality garments which other fast-fashion brands do not offer. She is loyal to the Zara brand and has a clear set of values, with fashion being one of her most important. Although she is loyal to the Zara brand, she can be influenced to shop at ASOS, H&M and Mango. Pre-covid she would visit Zara stores often and frequently check the Zara app, aiming to stay on top of trends. She lives in economically developed, populated and exciting cosmopolitan city and has a busy fast-paced lifestyle.

The average Zara customers who utilise the online app and check it daily, are those that either live further away from cities or do not have time to visit in-store. The average Zara customer is likely to

act impulsively, due to the short window of time the products have to sell on the shop floors or website. With social media having a heavy presence and the rise of influencers, the average Zara customer is actively looking to see what is trending and what celebrities in her age range are wearing. Ultimately, the Zara customer wants to emulate a cool, fashion-forward and sophisticated look without having to pay a designer premium price.

The four main types of pen portraits for Zara are;

The Student



The Young Professional



The Influencer



The Chic Minimal



Identification of where the average Zara consumer can buy the trend

The netting trend can be found on competitors websites such as ASOS, H&M, Mango, Missguided, Monki and Shein. It is to be noted that several of these competitors have not fully developed a range of netted garments and have kept this trend to beachwear and accessories. If Zara was to encompass this trend into their range and strategy for SS21 they would be one of the first fast-fashion companies to encapsulate and offer the expensive runway looks to the mainstream market.



Integrating the missing trend into Zara's product offering

Mood Board

From a product developer's point of view, netting is a classic fashion element with various forms to be presented. Netting may be a modern form of presentation in traditional concepts, but nowadays, driven by fashion designers and stylists, it can be interpreted as a sophisticated visual language. By understanding Zara's consumer groups and analysing competitors, the right netting material can be achieved, with multiple functions and purposes. The point of the fabric is that the sparse yarns enrich the texture of the garment. By changing the trimming or adding a raw hem, different styles such as urban, traditional, and edgy can be accomplished.



Range Plan

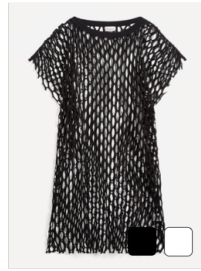
By taking inspiration from the runway of the SS21 collections of brands such as Dries Van Noten, Prada, Rick Owens and Off-White who showcased the netting trend in various styling, a range plan was formed. With emphasis on breathable fabric, elasticity, loose fit, layers, sheer and urban leisure, it was obvious from the runway that this trend is multi-functional and ideal to introduce as a capsule collection into Zara. The garments within the range include a netted black overlay dress, a skirt and top set, boots and a bag.



Fishnet Mesh Top
Loose fit/Cap sleeves
Black/White
100% Polyester



Fishnet Mesh Skirt
Elasticated waist/Knee-length
Black/White
100% Polyester



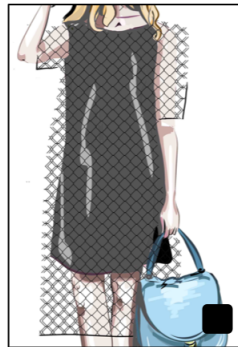
Fishnet Mesh Dress
Knee-length/Cap sleeves
Black/White
100% Polyester



Ankle Boots
Fishnet cut-out/Lace up/Double buckle
Black
Upper: Calf Leather
Lining: 100% Polyester; 100% Polyurethane
Sole: Rubber



Fishnet Dress
Sleeveless/Raw Edge
White
90% Viscose 5% Polyester



Fishnet Dress
Double Layer/Clean Edge
Black
90% Viscose 5% Polyester



Fishnet Drawstring Bag
Double handle/Contrast colour
Black and White
Outer: 100% Polyester Lining: 100% Nylon

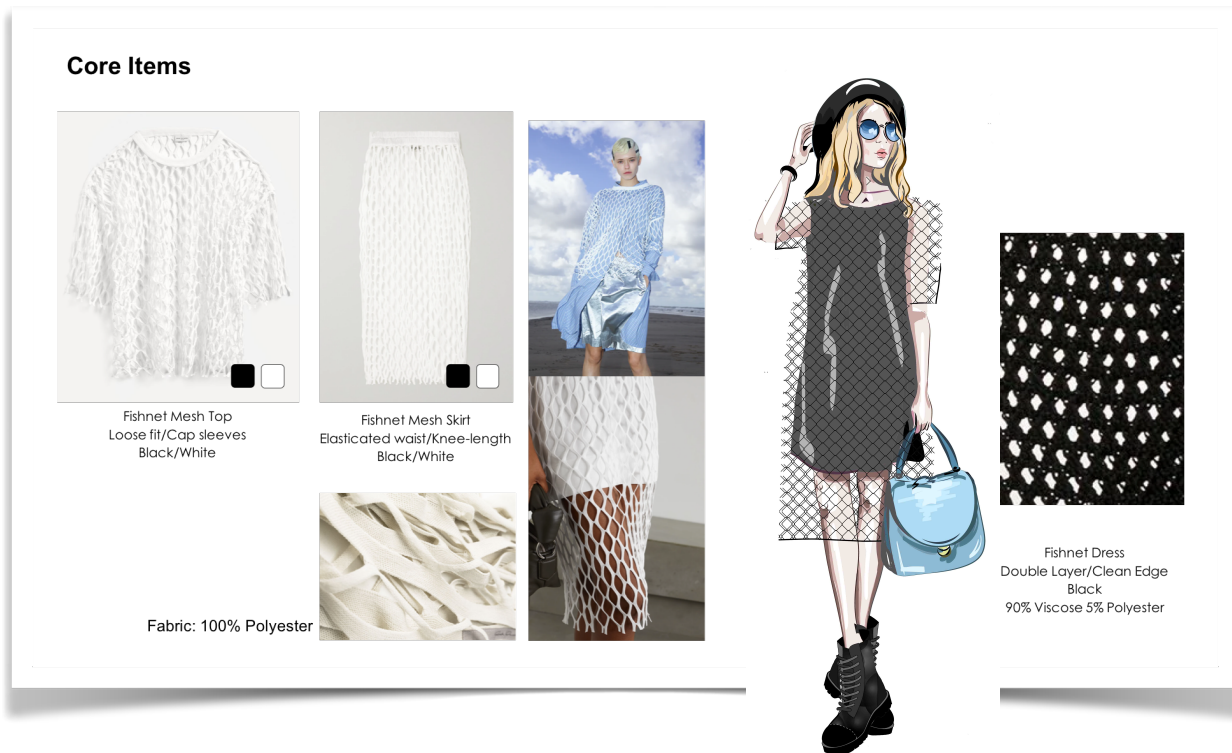
Materials: The clothing uses a fish net made of viscose (EcoVero in line with the 'Join Life' label) and polyester. The inner bag is a 100% nylon drawstring bag, and the outer layer and handles are made of a contrast-colour fish net.

Colours: Black and White with orange/ tangerine accents in accessories such as sandals and hair pieces for a pop of colour.



Core Item

The core item is a double-layered dress, which is the most important item within this range. The netting layer is a black sheer fabric, attached to a slip underneath which is a basic black midi dress. This dress is at the core of the proposed range due to its multi-functional purpose and versatility.



**Illustration of the core item in
the proposed netting trend**

Recommendations and integration strategy

Overview

Keeping in line with Zara's entire aesthetic and core values, it was important to look at previous and similar current collections and trends to inform how to introduce this collection. It can be understood that this dress has derived from the trendy knit midi dress of SS20, and therefore that dress was factored as an influence in the decision-making and recommendation process of the proposed netted dress.

Costing Recommendations

When determining a price point for the main piece of the collection - the netted overlay black dress - one must look at Zara's current and previous knitwear dresses, while also looking at the price-point of competitors doing similar collections. Zara's womenswear is split into two groups; the women's collection and TRF section. This trend will be introduced as part of the women's collection, with some pieces like accessories to be included in TRF for price inclusive reasons. This will also aid in the trend being introduced across the store in a seamless manner, catering for all consumer profiles.

In Zara's current SS21 collection, there are multiple standard knit dresses averaging around €39.95. Therefore, the netted overlay dress will be retailed at this price. H&M, a competitor of Zara, are offering a white netted mini dress retailed at €59.99. This is due to the high percentage of organic cotton which allows for H&M to promote it as part of their conscious collection. This must also be considered when looking at the material composition of the proposed Zara range and places importance on the 'Join Life' label attached to this garment.



H&M

dress at €59.95

The premium brand Ganni recently released a black netted midi dress, similar to the dress in our proposed collection above. This dress is priced at €195 and it is notable for comparison and

inspirational purposes. It is made of 100% polyester. Zara can offer a similar style at a lower price point to make this high-end trend accessible to the masses.

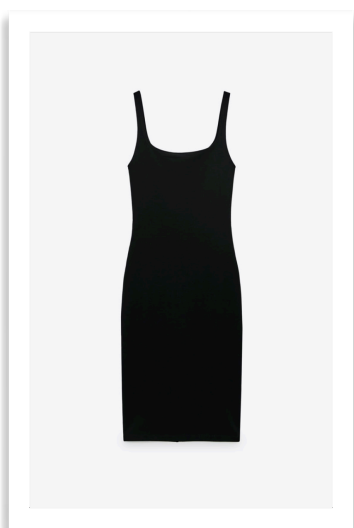


Ganni dress at €195

Material Breakdown

There are two components to the main netted dress; the midi slip underneath and the netting on top. The slip underneath will be made in line with Zara's 'Join Life' label, which cares for fiber of the fabric, usually viscose. The black slip underneath will be made up of EcoVero. The 'Join Life' label promises at least 50% EcoVero viscose. Therefore, the slip will be comprised of at least 60% EcoVero. The netting on top will have a crochet look to hold more structure. To achieve this, the material used will be a 10% cotton and polyester blend, and 90% EcoVero viscose.

Current Zara black slip dress



'Join Life'

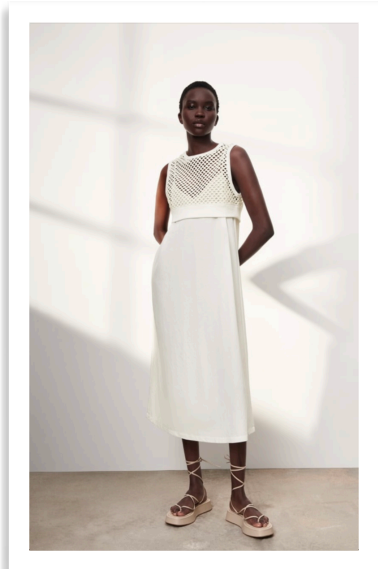
Label promising at least 50% Viscose



Sizing Suggestions

The sizing of the dress will be split into Small, Medium and Large as a result of the stretchy nature of the slip and loose-fit of the netting. The sizing of this proposed dress parallels dresses of a similar material composition. This dress would be produced with consideration to personal preference of fit; XXS-S fitting a Small, S-L fitting a Medium and M-XXL fitting a Large.

Current Zara dresses offered in Small, Medium and Large



Quantity Suggestions

Because of the nature of trends, it is difficult to predict whether the netted trend will carry into the AW season. Therefore, the dress would be bought in a limited quantity for stores, although it will be accessible to everyone via [Zara.com](https://www.zara.com). The popular city stores will see this trend introduced as a range, with the smaller stores receiving less of the range. However, the main piece, the dress, will feature in all Zara stores in all three sizes. Therefore, 50,000 dresses would need to be ordered in total.

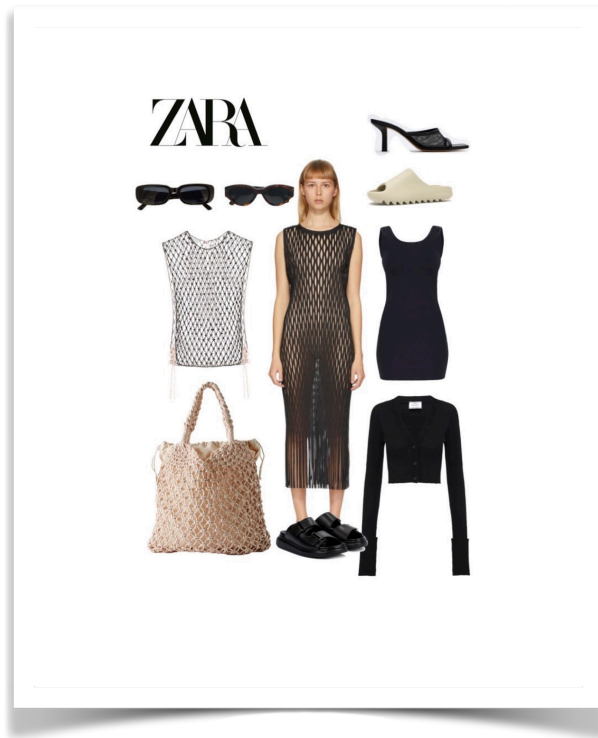
Integration Strategy

The netted trend will be integrated into Zara in a seamless manner which fits the overall aesthetic of the retailer. It will be introduced in the women's collection with accessories being added to the TRF section to encapsulate the trend. The range will be merchandised in a very clean and minimalistic way. The dress will be placed in the window of

SIZE BREAKDOWN	
Three sizes:	
- Small	
- Medium	
- Large	
QUANTITY BREAKDOWN	
- Limited Range in Stores	
- Full Collection Online	
Small-	20,000 Units
Medium-	15,000 Units
Large-	15,000 Units
DRESS NEEDED IN 50,000 UNITS	
IN TOTAL	

the city stores to showcase how the dress can be styled. The colour palette for this range is mainly black, with accents of a tangerine-orange adding a pop of colour. This way, the range would fit in with the SS21 collection, while also carrying the trend across into AW21.

Range Plan Outfit Builder



Conclusion

To conclude, it is evident that Zara has missed an important trend gap this SS21 when it comes to the netting trend, thus preventing profit maximisation. The netted trend stands out as a lack of judgment on the buyers' part. Featured on the runway through brands like Dries Van Noten and Fendi and in competitors stores, the success of this trend is evident. The trend can be considered a huge loss to Zara given the versatility, adaptability and functionality of the pieces proposed in the range above, especially the centre piece; the netted black overlay dress. If launched just in time for Summer, such a piece could be sported at a festival with a bucket hat or on the beach as a swimsuit cover-up, at an occasion with heels, or dressed down for brunch with friends. Priced reasonably at €39.95 as part of the women's collection, the range will be accessible to customers both online and in store for them to consume and style as they please. This trend would gain

traction amongst regular shoppers at Zara, while proving to display a competitive edge which makes them an outlier from their competitors.

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