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DESIGNING PRODUCT PRESENTATION AND COMMUNICATION TO ENHANCE PRODUCT EXPERIENCE AT G-STAR RAW'S PHYSICAL RETAIL STORES AND SHOPS IN 2023

executive summary

Previously to the start of this project a research in fifteen monobrand stores of G-Star Raw has been conducted. During that research four major insights about the current consumer experience in the G-Star stores were derived which led to the following problem definition:

Currently, G-Star RAW's products are not experienced in full potential by the consumers since the product stories and features are communicated and presented unclear and inconsistent across their various physical stores and shops. For this reason, consumers are not able to value the full potential of the products. This is considered as an influencer of missing out on sales potential. G-Star believes that the physical stores and shops are fulfilling an important role in the coming 5 years (until 2023) to enable consumers to experience their products and therefore their role needs to be researched.

To research this problem definition the Vision in Product Design method is used. This approach is used to deconstruct the current context and interactions to be able to design a new vision which functions as a starting point to reconstruct a new context and interactions.

The most important outcome of the deconstruction phase is that G-Star is trying to set up a new identity to appear more emphatic to the consumer. This new appearance is toning down the other values of G-Star and therefore the identity of the brand is experienced less strong by the consumer. Besides that, are the services that G-Star provides in their stores focussed on making instant sales are therefore not matching the needs of the current consumer.

To find out how G-Star can improve their service to the consumer in the coming five years, a research to formulate a new retail vision is executed during the reconstruction phase. In the envisioned context consumers are constantly dealing with an overload of influences in a world where they are always connected to others. This provokes the insecurity of how to express their individual identity. To take this insecurity away from consumers the following statement has been created for G-Star:

I want G-Star to empower people to stand out individually and to express their unique values by approaching them in an assuring way.

To be assuring to the consumer the design should contain the following interaction qualities: clarifying, fascinating, evaluating and unconstrained. To enable this interaction in their physical brand environments G-Star should appear as unpretentious and bold.

The design that is created to facilitate the interaction is called a physical identity environment. In these environments are consumer able to mold their own identity with identity expressions of G-Star. The products of G-Star will be presented in 'attitude areas' and therefore consumers will be able to value the G-Star products by relating the attitudes to their own identity.



HEY.
WHO ARE YOU?

DESIGNING PRODUCT PRESENTATION AND COMMUNICATION TO ENHANCE PRODUCT
EXPERIENCE AT G-STAR RAW'S PHYSICAL RETAIL STORES AND SHOPS IN 2023

content

chapter 1/project introduction	8
chapter 2/current context: G-Star-consumer relationship	16
chapter 3/new context: behavior of consumers	30
chapter 4/new context: experience of consumers	60
chapter 5/new context: G-Star as holistic platform	72
chapter 6/new context: consumer experience at physical retail environments	80
chapter 7/new context: concept discussion	96
chapter 8/new context: concept discussion	102
chapter 9/new context: recommendations and next steps	114

chapter 1

/project introduction

DURING THIS PROJECT AN ANALYSIS WILL BE MADE OF G-STAR RAW. G-STAR CONSIDERS THEIR PHYSICAL STORES AND SHOPS AS UNIQUE TOUCHPOINTS TO ENABLE CONSUMERS TO EXPERIENCE THE PRODUCTS AND THEIR DESIGN STORY. HOW TO DO THIS WILL BE THE MAIN CHALLENGE OF THIS PROJECT.

1.1 PERSONAL RELATIONSHIP TO THE SUBJECT

Already one year ago, I was looking for graduation opportunities in the field of retail design and consumer experience. I have always been interested in the way how clothing can change someone's identity and the role that a retail environment can play in that process. The last couple of years I saw that the process of purchasing those identity defining products was changing. Therefore the role of the stores and shops where they were sold as well.

During my bachelor at the TU Delft and minor at the Design School of Loughborough University in the UK I developed a passion for Human Centered Design. How the user interacts with other persons and products intrigues me. To research what the user really wants and needs was what I wanted to combine with my interest in clothing and retail environments.

When I went to high school, G-Star was a huge hype. It was the brand that you should wear. I can still remember the first t-shirt that I bought from them, I was so proud of it, I showed it off to everyone. Being one of the most innovative Dutch fashion/denim brands combined with my emotional connection with the brand made me decide to write them to do my graduation project for them. Via Emilie Tromp, former employee of G-Star's Design and Development department, I got in contact with Pieter Kool, Creative Director at this department.

After doing an internship from July until November 2017, it was eventually decided to set up a graduation project. During my internship I visited 15 stores in The Netherlands to find out why people were getting into the stores and what they were expecting of it. Everytime I arrived in a G-Star store, I could feel the G-Star experience, but I also discovered focus points for improvement. With these intentions, I started to do my graduation project for G-Star from December; to be part of that experience and to help to take it to an even higher level.



1.2 COMPANY INTRODUCTION

G-Star RAW is a Dutch fashion brand, which is well-known for using the material denim to create their clothing. G-Star has gained global recognition for being a pure innovator in special treatments, finishes, materials or functionalities in all their products. Their products are not just fashion items; their products are designed as functional products with a design story.

G-Star tells the following on their website about themselves:

SINCE OUR CREATION IN 1989, G-STAR'S PHILOSOPHY HAS ALWAYS BEEN, 'JUST THE PRODUCT.' THIS SINGLE-MINDED APPROACH HAS LED TO MANY DENIM 'FIRSTS': THE INTRODUCTION OF 'LUXURY DENIM FOR THE STREETS,' BY FUSING HIGH-LEVEL CRAFTSMANSHIP WITH STREET LEVEL EDGE TO CREATE A NEW DENIM SECTOR; THE POSITIONING OF RAW, UNTREATED DENIM AS A WEARABLE AND DESIRABLE MATERIAL; AND THE EVOLUTION OF OUR DISTINCTIVE DENIM SILHOUETTE, THROUGH THE ADOPTION OF ARCHITECTURAL AND 3-D THINKING INTO DENIM CONSTRUCTION.

WE HAVE ALSO PROMOTED THE INHERENT BEAUTY OF DENIM BY CREATING WASHES AND TREATMENTS THAT BRING OUT ITS UNIQUE CHARACTERISTICS AND QUALITIES. TODAY'S SOPHISTICATED WASHINGS PALETTE REPRESENTS A FULL LIFE-STORY, FROM RAW, UNWASHED DENIM THROUGH DEEP INDIGO DYED TO EXTREME BLEACHED, WITH TREATMENTS ADDING MULTIPLE GRADATIONS OF WEAR TO CREATE DISTINCTIVE, TEXTURED GARMENTS WITH SOUL. (G-STAR.COM, 2017)



FIGURE 1: G-STAR HEADQUARTERS IN AMSTERDAM

1.3 ASSIGNMENT

G-Star RAW is currently making the transition from a wholesale company to a retail company that gets in contact with the consumer. Until recently, all physical stores and shops were ran by third parties. G-Star did not directly get in touch with their consumers. To implement the consumer's perspective in their retail concept decisions, G-Star wants to get to know their consumer. During this subchapter the problem definition is formulated.

foreknowledge: consumer research summer 2017

The problem definition is derived from the insights gained from earlier research to G-Star's consumer. Within the context of their Retail 2020 project, I researched the consumer behavior and brand perception of the current G-Star store visitors during my internship in the summer of 2017. The results gathered from this research were both qualitative as well as quantitative. From this research, four major insights were drawn.

This consumer research was only conducted in Dutch monobrand stores of G-Star. Next to these stores, many other physical stores and shops influence the consumer's brand perception of G-Star, like shop-in-shops (Bijenkorf), multibrand stores (Score, Just Brands) and pop-up stores. These consumer touchpoints need to be taken into consideration during the rest of this research as well.

problem definition

This project researches how G-Star can continue on the statements on page 10 in the future. As a starting point of this project, the following problem definition is formulated:

Currently, G-Star RAW's products are not experienced in full potential by the consumers since the product stories and features are communicated and presented unclear and inconsistent across their various physical stores and shops. For this reason, consumers are not able to value the full potential of the products. This is considered as an influencer of missing out on sales potential. G-Star believes that the physical stores and shops are fulfilling an important role in the coming 5 years (until 2023) to enable consumers to experience their products and therefore their role needs to be researched.

research question

This problem definition leads to the overall research question:

How to present G-Star RAW's products and communicate the product stories and features at the physical stores and shops, so that they create impactful product experiences that enable consumers to value the products in 2023, while they still provide a recognizable consumer brand experience?

current problems of g-star's consumers

CONSUMERS ARE NOT SIGNIFICANTLY EMOTIONALLY TRIGGERED BY G-STAR'S RETAIL CONCEPT

The G-Star stores are based on a traditional fashion retail concept, which does not trigger the visitors' (pleasurable) emotions when visiting the store.

CONSUMERS EXPERIENCE INCONSISTENT COMMUNICATION

Visitors cannot tell where G-Star and their products stand for due to inconsistency in brand expression, collection, service and storytelling per location. This inconsistency is significantly influenced by the fact that all stores and shops are not run by the company itself. The partners who run the stores and shops all have their own thoughts and visions which do not correspond with those of G-Star.

CONSUMERS NEED DIFFERENT INTERACTION AT DIFFERENT LOCATIONS:

Every store location is different and therefore requires different interactions with consumers. For example, the G-Star store in Zwolle receives other consumers with different needs than the flagship store at the P.C. Hoofstraat in Amsterdam and therefore the interaction needs to be designed differently.

FOCUS AREAS AND PRODUCT STORIES OF G-STAR ARE NOT EXPERIENCED IN RETAIL ENVIRONMENTS

G-Star redefined their brand values to Raw, Empathy and Design Led. Within these brand values the focus areas for G-Star's target group (creatives and achievers) are mature, empathy, sustainability, directional and quality. These focus areas and the product stories derived from them are not experienced in physical retail environments yet. This is a missed opportunity since they add extra value to G-Star and the products for the consumers; it makes G-Star unique.



1.4 APPROACH

The design method used is called Vision in (Product) Design. This approach is used to deconstruct the current context and interactions to be able to design a new vision which functions as a starting point to reconstruct a new context and interactions. In this way a truly innovative concept for 2023 can be created.

ViP: vision in (product) design method

ViP is a context-driven and interaction centred approach that offers a way to come up with products that give people meaning or value. These are designs with a soul: authentic products that reflect the vision and personality of their creator. Given the big impact of products on our society, daily life and well-being, the developers of this method consider this responsibility to be essential. ViP provides a perspective on your role as co-shaper of society and a step-by-step approach to developing a responsible and authentic design vision that will steer the conceptualisation. This vision includes the explication of what you wish to offer people in a future context before defining the means whereby the design can achieve this. This aspect of the method makes it suitable for innovation processes of any kind (Hekkert & Van Dijk, 2011).

This project constantly switches between the experience of the consumer and the role that G-Star is playing. In the next chapter this relationship is analyzed for the current context while later the future connection between the consumer and G-Star is analyzed.

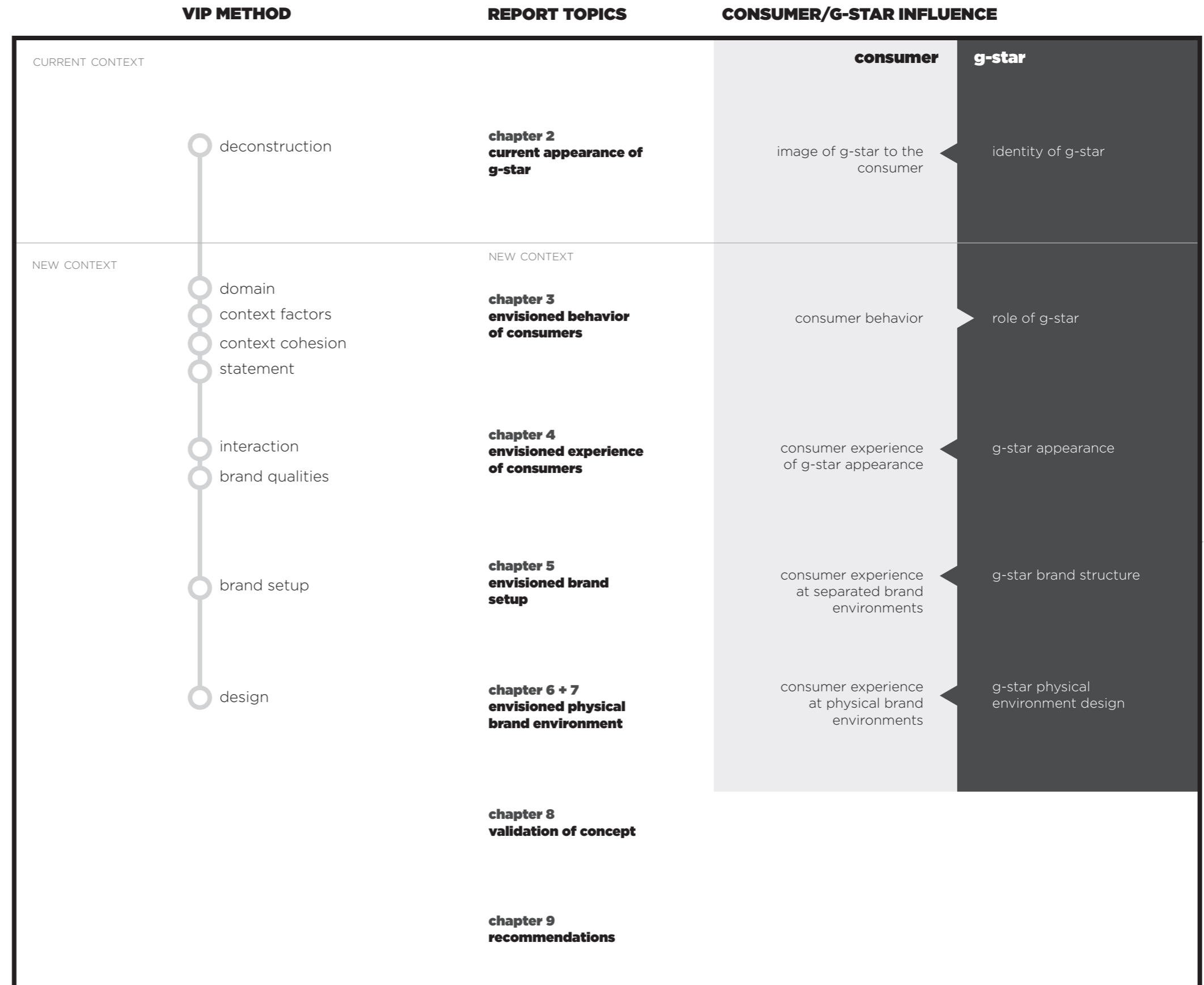


FIGURE 2: PROJECT OVERVIEW

chapter 2/current context

G-Star-consumer relationship

BEFORE A NEW CONTEXT COULD BE DEFINED IT IS IMPORTANT TO GET A DEEPER UNDERSTANDING OF HOW G-STAR AND THE CONSUMER ARE BEHAVING IN THE CURRENT SITUATION. THEREFORE AN ANALYSIS IS MADE OF THE APPEARANCE OF G-STAR AS A BRAND AND HOW THIS IS EXPERIENCED BY THE CONSUMER. THIS ANALYSIS IS FOLLOWED BY A LOOK INTO G-STAR'S PHYSICAL STORES AND SHOPS AND HOW THEY ARE ADOPTING TO THE BEHAVIOR OF CONSUMERS IN THE CURRENT CONTEXT.

2.1 G-STAR'S APPEARANCE TO THE CONSUMER

A valuable first step is to understand what the brand G-Star is about. In this chapter, G-Star's qualities and aspirations are analyzed and how this is perceived by the consumer. In other words: is G-Star's identity matching their image?

mission and vision

G-Star is a company that believes that *innovation is created by being creative* (G-Star RAW, 2017). G-Star has always been a company that is trusting on its own power and resources. They want to be in charge and the consumers then decide whether they like it or not. Therefore the creativity that they speak about in their vision has mainly been coming from inside the company and has left an 'air of arrogance' around the company.

G-Star's mission is described as follows:

Inspire people to be game-changers by being one ourselves.

When typing in game-changer in Google the following is found: "an event, idea, or procedure that affects a significant shift in the current way of doing or thinking about something." For G-Star this means that they want to give people the power to have a significant impact on other peoples' lives and thereby inspire them to take that role as well.



brand values

G-Star has recently revised their brand values to reach their mission: RAW, Design-Led and Empathy (G-Star RAW, 2017):

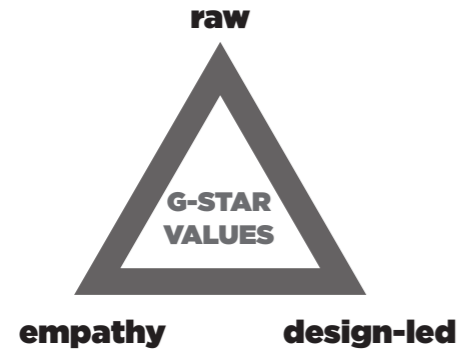


FIGURE 3: G-STAR BRAND VALUES

RAW

G-Star wants to appear Raw to the consumer. They intend to combine honesty and authenticity with rebelliousness. This is how they envision to be a creative company that seduces other people to become creative themselves.

EMPATHY

G-Star aims to be seen as an empathic company. They are highly concerned about the footprint they leave on the world. To be an empathic company they believe in taking care of the needs of consumers, employees and everyone else that is related to their community.

DESIGN-LED

Making functional and innovative design is what G-Star stands for. Workwear of the past is used as inspiration to make products that are based on utility and functional details. Due to this approach they claim not to follow trends but to set the trends themselves.

brand expressions analysis

To find out how these brand values are expressed to the consumers an analysis of G-Star's brand expressions is made.

raw and design-led g-star appearance

While analyzing the brand expressions of G-Star, it strikes that the values Raw and Design-Led have been the core values of the company since their establishment. In this paragraph, some examples of G-Star's brand expressions are shown. Three word combinations are created to describe these expressions.



FIGURE 4: TOUGH RAWNESS

TOUGH RAWNESS

The description Tough Rawness is based on the usage of dark colors, the raw materials, the army inspired clothing and the strong, rebellious and almost arrogant look of the models. This is visualized in the pictures.

SOBERIZED UTILITY

G-Star tried to apply real functionality in many of their designs. The clothes are based on original pieces from the archive that are innovatively modernised by combining them with other (parts of) clothes. Besides that, the stores, the furniture, the headquarters and the collaborations are based on functional design with a tough but sober appearance.



FIGURE 5: SOBERIZED UTILITY



FIGURE 6: UNINTELLIGIBLE DIRECTIVENESS

UNINTELLIGIBLE DIRECTIVENESS

G-Star always intended to do things exactly the way they liked it. They never followed the competition. This is also visible in many of their campaigns; the message or the product functionality was often clear but the atmosphere around it was mysterious and intriguing.

empathic g-star appearance

The values of Design-Led and Raw can be related to the three descriptions on page 17. When analyzing the diverse manifestations of G-Star over the last couple of years the conclusion drawn is that they try to appear in a more empathic way. This is expressed in, among others, the use of colors and style of photography. It feels like they want to get closer to the consumer by implementing the empathy value.



RESERVED VIVIDNESS

The graphical style that G-Star uses has become more colorful and feels a little more mainstream than it was before. This is also seen in the clothing that has shifted to a more modern look, that is inspired more on the trends in the world and less on their archive of workwear. Besides that, the commercial products with large logos are well adopted by a large audience. The models are still looking serious or reserved whilst in general for models with a more friendly face is chosen.

POPULAR ARTYNESS

By involving Pharrell in the company, a whole new creative wind was blowing through the company. Pharrell is a creative person with his own personality, but he is also loved by many different parties. His colorful appearances, the very commercial music he has made earlier and his connections with many other brands like Adidas, Human Nature and Oakley make the connection between him and G-Star feel like a forced clash between two different identities.



finding the balance - identity vs. image

Concluded from this analysis is that G-Star is trying to get closer to the consumer and that the brand is willing to adapt to them. They have been trying to implement the empathy value in their brand but, in the current way G-Star is toning down the Raw and Design-Led values. Therefore, the image of G-Star's identity is experienced less strong. An overview of this can be found in figure 10.

on a vast core of denim (especially raw denim), darker colors and 'soberized utility' (page 17), while nowadays the collection has expanded with many more differentiating influences. The main example of this is the X25 collection which is very colorful. Although this collection was considered as a one-time drop, new X25 collections were made and are still influencing other parts of the collection.

The search for balance is also visible in the collection that G-Star is presenting to the consumer. The collection is used to be based

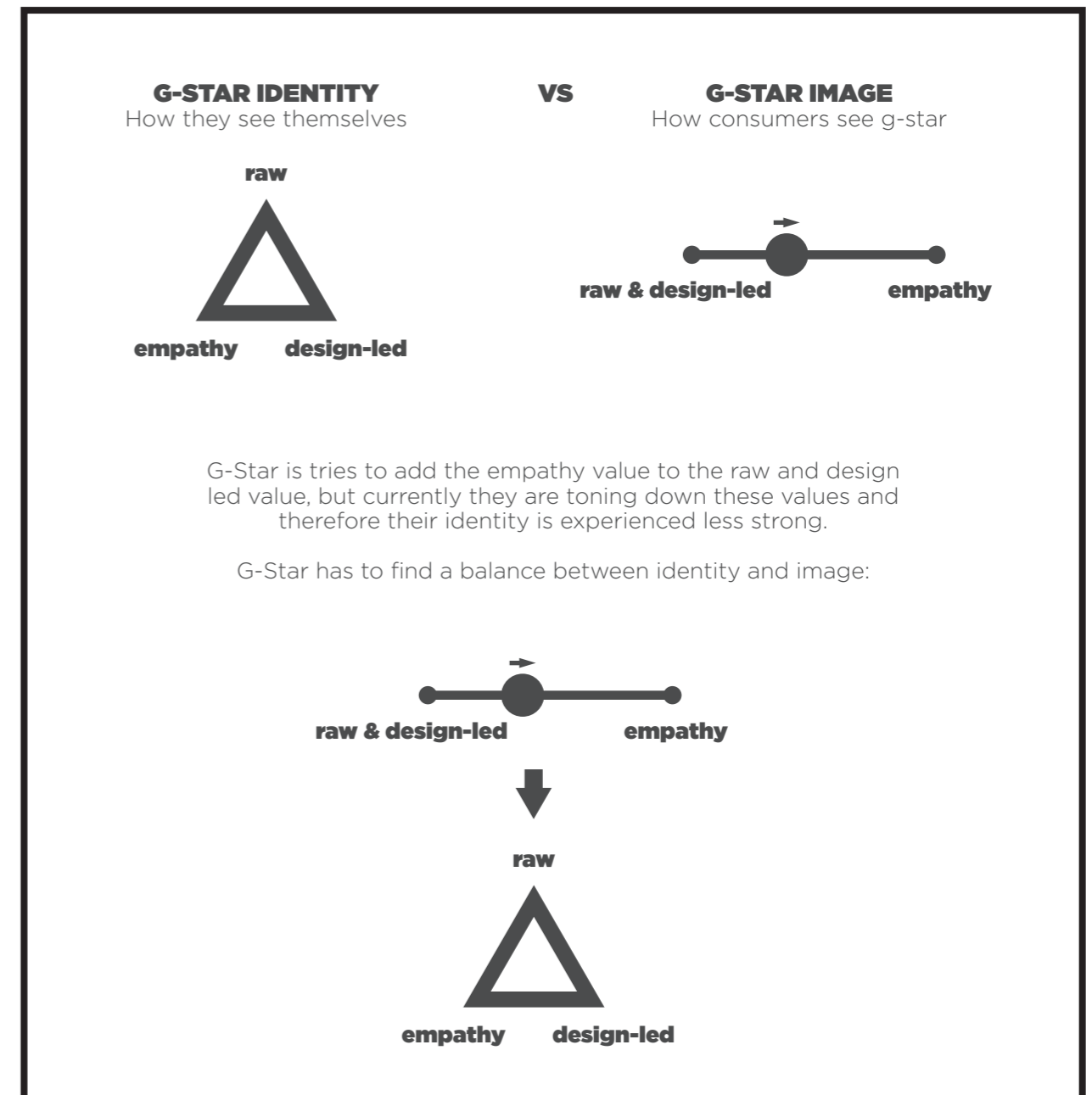


FIGURE 10: AN OVERVIEW OF THE MISFIT BETWEEN IMAGE AND IDENTITY

2.2 PHYSICAL STORES AND SHOPS OF G-STAR IN THE CURRENT RETAIL CONTEXT AND CONSUMER BEHAVIOR

According to literature research, the retail landscapes are changing and many retailers are deciding how to deal with these shifts. This subchapter serves to gain insight of the current retail context and how G-Star is currently dealing with that in their selling points. Literature research is combined with insights from store visits to figure out the expectations of consumers and how this currently implemented in the G-Star stores.

located in city centers

An ongoing trend is that people are moving towards the city. This move suggests a shifting set of preferences — away from the comforts of rural spaces and towards the accessibility of city life. Stores are responding to this high consumer density and follow their consumers to the city centre (Synchrony Financial, 2016). This is also the case for the selling points of G-Star, which are almost all located in the city centers.

franchise partners are complicating accessibility

Additionally, online shopping is enabling consumers to make a purchase at anytime and anyplace (Q&A Research & Consultancy, 2014; De Hernandez, Hoogenberg, 2017). The fact that products are always nearby and available means that the geographical and transactional monopoly of traditional physical retail is shifting away. Stores are trying to redefine themselves to be able to stay relevant in this new retail landscape. For G-Star it is hard to do this because most of their stores or shops are owned by franchise partners that want to make as much profit for their own company and are not in naturally supporting online sales for the brand as a whole.

traditional KPI's are blocking inclusivity

Giving consumers access to the products is considered to be not sufficient anymore in a physical retail environment. Nowadays, stores are expected to facilitate a social and personal experience. Experts are speaking of stores as a place to create inclusivity, where brands are inviting consumers into their community (Cho, Trincia, 2012; G-Star Raw, 2017). Until today, the main Key Performance Indicators of stores are still about sales efficiency instead of service, entertainment and discovery. Due to the high pressure that these KPI's give to the store, the service provided by the staff sometimes is experienced intrusive and insincere to the consumer.

internet based technology implementation is still to be discovered

New internet based technologies are slowly implemented by retailers in their stores, but are mainly used to extend the convenience level of consumer (Internet Retailer, 2017). Endless aisle technology and RFID, among others, are enabling store retailers to provide an omni-channel service. Omni-channel retail is upcoming in order to offer consumers a consistent cross-channel service and brand experience, but for many retailers this is still something that they just discovered. This also counts for G-Star.

Together with the insights that are mentioned in the Assignment subchapter of Chapter 1 the above could be described as issues to be taken into account in the future. Before the step to the future will be made first an analysis will be made, of which elements a store is build from nowadays.

2.3 THE CURRENT PURPOSE AND DESIGN OF G-STAR'S PHYSICAL STORES AND SHOPS

After visiting stores and shops it has become clear that all the physical retail environments are predominantly about selling the products at that specific location (Van der Knaap, 2017). In this subchapter an analysis is made of the design of the physical stores and shops and the services that they provide.

purpose of physical g-star stores and shops

The most important to realize is that G-Star is envisioning their physical stores and shops as selling points. Therefore the physical selling points could be considered as services that are enable the main purpose of making sales at that location.

To fulfill this main purpose, G-Star is currently providing four types of services in their stores and shops. According to observations in the stores, an order has been made from most prioritized to less prioritized by G-Star.

CURRENTLY, THE PHYSICAL RETAIL ENVIRONMENTSOFG-STAR ARE PRIMARILY USED AS SERVICES THAT ENABLE CONSUMERS TO DIRECTLY PURCHASE PRODUCTS AT THAT PARTICULAR LOCATION.

services provided by g-star to support purchasing

1. ADVISING SERVICE
Share the existing knowledge with consumers to help them to come to the best purchase.
2. SUPPORTING SERVICE
Create convenience by making it comfortable to buy the products.
3. INSPIRING SERVICE
The stores are also about giving the visitors new ideas and to let them discover the brand.
4. ENTERTAINING SERVICE
Giving the consumers an enjoyable time while shopping for products.

variables that influence the physical stores and shops

When zooming in on G-Star physical selling points it can be concluded that all of them can be divided into elements that - to a certain extent - fulfill the services that are mentioned in the previous paragraph. In other words, these physical stores and shops are built from several design elements which will be called variables during the rest of this report.

All these variables together determine how a specific selling point is functioning and thus how the displayed products are experienced. The role of the stores and shops and therefore the role and existence of these elements will be different in the retail context of 2023. The stores and shops and the roles of the variables are derived from the consumer experience research in 2017 and will be discussed during this project to create a truly innovative role for them.

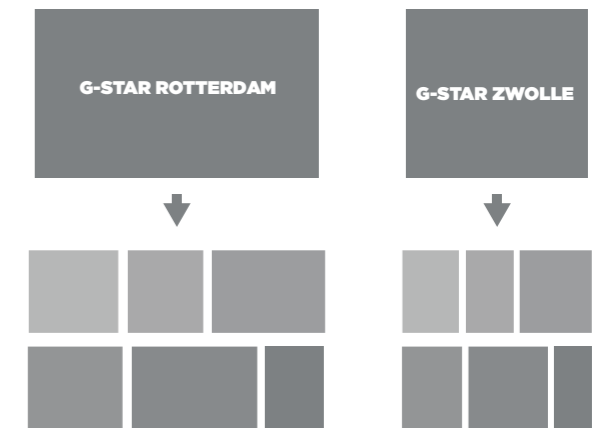


FIGURE 11: ALL G-STAR STORES ARE CREATED FROM THE SAME ELEMENTS BUT THE EXACT EXECUTION OF THEM DEPENDS ON THE LOCATION CHARACTERISTICS

current consumer experience in stores and shops inconsistent due to inconsistency in variables

As mentioned in the Chapter Assignment, the variables of the different stores and shops are experienced inconsistently at the moment. This results in product presentation and storytelling that is unclear or unrecognizable for the consumer and therefore do not provoke the best product experience at that specific location. G-Star wants the consumer to identify with G-Star, by optimally inspiring and informing the consumer about their products at every single selling point since the current experience of the products is considered.

This chapter maps out which variables are defining the design of a physical retail store or shop externally and which G-Star can design themselves. To do this the variables are divided into 'locations determining variables' and 'designable variables'. These variables are focussing on the physical retail environments of G-Star, not on those of other brands/companies do.

location determining variables

When G-Star decides to sell products at a certain location, they are confronted with location specific characteristics. These variables are derived from the consumer research that has been conducted in the summer of 2017.

In my opinion is the successfulness of the G-Star stores and shops currently depending on these variables. In this report is assumed that G-Star has no significant influence on them in the current context.

CITY OR AREA IDENTITY

Is G-Stars' identity fitting to the identity of the consumer at the target location?

CITY OR AREA PURPOSE

What people do in the city and why are they visiting that certain area?

STREET TRAFFIC

How many consumers are passing by and how are they confronted with a G-Star store or shop?

PHYSICAL SELLING POINT CATEGORY

In what kind of place are the items sold?

SURROUNDING PHYSICAL SELLING POINTS

What is the competition in the area or are there other G-Star physical touchpoints nearby?

SPACE

What are the properties and qualities of the space and how are we able to make the best use of it?

CLIMATE/SEASONS/WEATHER

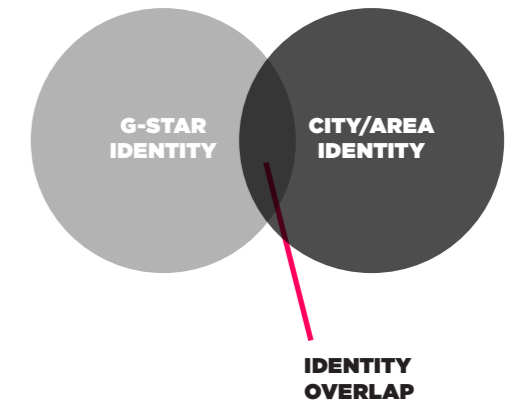
What are the weather conditions at that location and how do we adapt to them?

G-Star did not look in a critical way before into these questions. They have primarily been looking into store locations as an opportunity to sell. To enable them to value the locations and to decide how to serve the consumers and their sub purposes, they have to ask themselves these questions.

city or area identity

G-Star's identity is not seamlessly integrated in the identity of all cities or city areas. Cities differ and brands need to be aware of that. Also between different city districts big differences in the identity of the visitors occur.

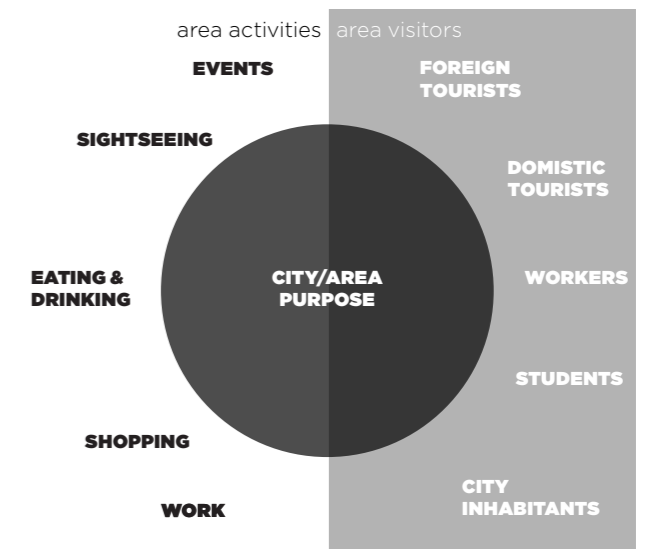
For example, the cities Rotterdam and Utrecht. Rotterdam has a more urban and industrial identity than Utrecht. For this reason it is important to adjust presentation and the composition of the collection to a selection that fits the city identity.



city or area purpose

The purpose of the city and their areas determine the reason why people are visiting this city/area. Whether the mindset of potential consumers is set on buying or not, makes a huge difference for sales.

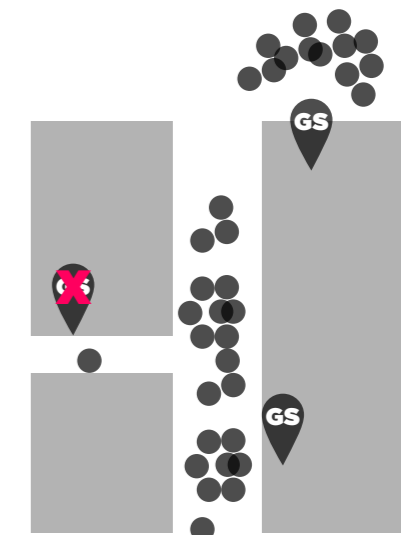
An example is the difference between Amsterdam and Almere. In the city centre of Amsterdam shopping is only one of the many things to do and for most of the city visitors it is not priority number 1. Many tourists are visiting Amsterdam to visit the Rijksmuseum and the canals, and coincidentally pass by a G-Star store. These visitors need to be attracted differently than people that visiting Almere.



street traffic

The amount of people that come across the selling point mainly depends on the location of the selling point. The location determines the visibility of the selling point and therefore the reason why people visit the selling point.

In Haarlem the G-Star store is located in a side street of the main shopping street of the city. There is a lot of traffic at the main street but no one will notice the G-Star store if they are not specifically looking for it. Therefore most store visitors are people that are already familiar with the store. On the other hand the store at Rokin has very densed traffic since it is located at one of the busiest streets in the Netherlands.

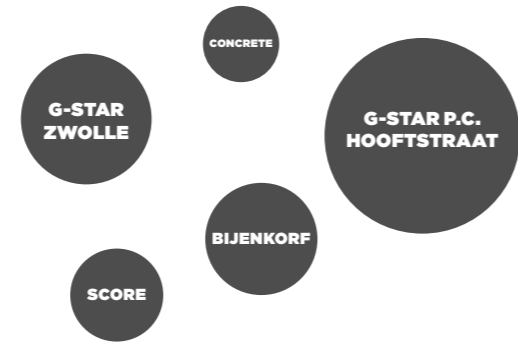


physical selling point category

G-Star is selling their products via multiple channels. The physical selling points are mainly used to sell clothes, but by providing multiple types of services is G-Star is also selling the brand. These selling points can be roughly categorized in:

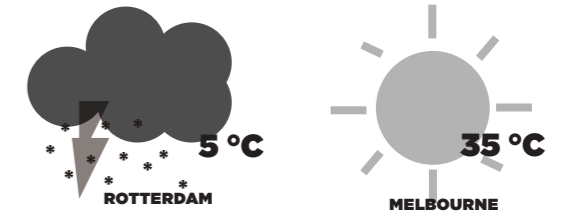
- Monobrand store
- Multibrand store (Score, Concrete, Just Brands)
- Shop-in-shop selling point (Bijenkorf, KaWeDe, Batavia stad)
- Outlet
- Pop-up store
- Monobrand webshop

Currently, all of the described variables can also be applied to these selling points.



climate/seasons/weather

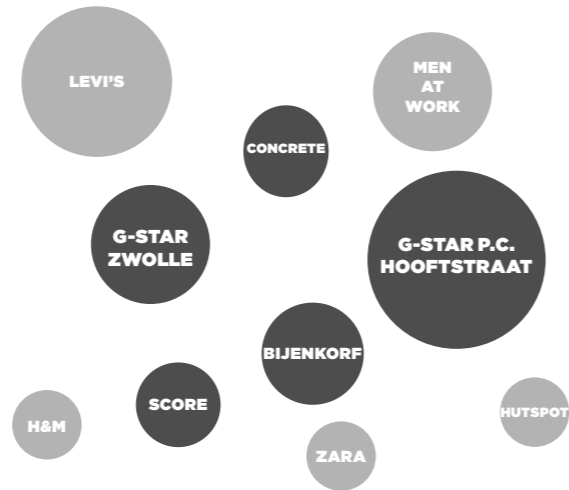
Climate between regions are differentiating. When it is still 24 degrees Celsius in Melbourne, it could be 10 in Rotterdam. It would be pointless to sell the same collection or have the same window at both locations. Nothing can be changed about change in weather, season and climate. Because of this, the retail environment should be able to adapt on those given conditions. G-Star is trying to adapt on this, but currently are the logistic systems and store interior not flexible enough to keep up with the pace of consumer needs that are changing.



surrounding physical selling points

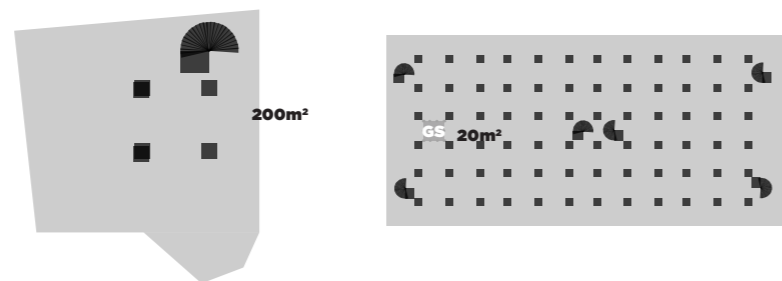
This category can be divided into two categories: competition and own selling points. Competition in terms of other stores that sell comparable products but also other brands that offer a whole other product range and experience can be an indirect competitor.

Currently, G-Star selling points are also competing with each other, due to traditional KPI's and different concerns of franchisers or other resellers.



space

The space that is bought or rented is fixed in terms of capacity and construction from the moment the contract is signed. From that moment the size and shape of the working space is set. Limitations of the location can be diverse; from monumental restrictions to rules set by the building's owner.



designable variables

From store and literature research, I derived variables that can be adjusted after location selection. In the next paragraph will be discussed how these 'designable variables' are currently executed by G-Star.

COLLECTION

Which product to offer.

STAFF-CONSUMER INTERACTION

The attitude and approach of the staff to the consumer.

PRODUCT-CONSUMER INTERACTION AND PRODUCT PRESENTATION

How consumers find, approach, reach, feel and fit the products.

NAVIGATION AND VISIT DURATION

How the consumer moves through the store or shop.

STOCK LOGISTICS

The relation between the visible store and the stock of the brand.

STORYTELLING

Communication of G-Star's principles and the product values.

collection

The collection is the most important incentive for people to visit a selling point of G-Star nowadays. The items should be carefully designed and selected. Currently, for each store location is already selected what part of the collection is offered. Little knowledge about the consumer, long production cycles and logistical infeasibility result in ineffective product segmentation.

staff-consumer interaction

Every location has a (slightly) different strategy to approach consumers. At Rokin a different approach is needed than at the store in Zwolle. This makes it unrecognizable for the consumer and sometimes it does not feel sincere. In the shop-in-shop locations there is not always a staff member available and if there is, they are not expertized since they are not working for G-Star. Training the staff to provide consumers a consistent experience is very hard to control.

product-consumer interaction and product presentation

The product presentation is mainly about how to make a product stand out from the rest. It is about the meeting moment with a product, what the position is of the product (relative to other products) and the reachability of it. Product presentation is depending on the selling points' storytelling and navigation. Furthermore, it determines the product-consumer interaction.

Products are displayed very decently but also quite traditional in the current G-Star stores. The decent presentation is also sometimes experienced as a barrier to consumers. G-Star mainly focussed on displaying the product by itself; it should tell its story by itself. At last, there are a lot of products presented in the G-Star stores and shops and therefore products do not really stand out by themselves.

navigation and visit duration

The G-Star stores are in general between 100 and 200 square meter. Therefore the consumer can in quite easily get an overview of the space. Due to the large amount of products in the stores it is hard to locate what is hanging where. Next to the fact that G-Star is having a more masculine appearance and image so it is not always clear that G-Star is also selling woman clothes.

storytelling

In many stores G-Star is setting an industrial atmosphere that fits to the brand. The vibe setting is also part of the storytelling of a brand. Nevertheless, there is still a lot to improve, especially on the product level. All G-Star products have their own stories, but these stories are only told when the staff gets the opportunity to do so.

stock logistics

The connection between the store and the shop is very important. This can improve the supporting service and make the store experience a lot more convenient. G-Star has started to set up an endless aisle service in some of their stores. With this service people are able to order a product in the store online but due to technical inconvenience this is not yet as well experienced as it should be.



FIGURE 12: COLLECTION



FIGURE 15: NAVIGATION



FIGURE 13: STAFF-CONSUMER INTERACTION



FIGURE 16: G-STAR STORYTELLING



FIGURE 14: PRODUCT PRESENTATION



FIGURE 17: IN-STORE STOCK

conclusion

G-Star has been focussing on delivering high quality service the last couple of years, but they do not always know what the consumer wants, what is emphatic to them and how to implement this in the physical stores and shops. To find out how G-Star can improve their service to the consumer in the coming five years, a research to formulate a new retail vision is executed.

chapter 3/new context behavior of consumers

NOW THAT THE CURRENT CONTEXT IS ANALYZED AND A BETTER UNDERSTANDING HAS BEEN OBTAINED ABOUT THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN G-STAR AND THE CONSUMER, WE ARE NOW ABLE TO CREATE A NEW CONTEXT. CREATING A NEW CONTEXT IS ACTUALLY THE CREATION OF A NEW WORLDVIEW THAT IS THE FOUNDATION OF THE EVENTUAL DESIGN.

3.1 DOMAIN

The domain is the focus of the design activity (Hekkert & Van Dijk, 2009), the area where the research in the new context will be conducted. It is about what the designer is really after. The domain is often perceived as a broad research area that opens the opportunity to consider and incorporate more and broader factors.



FIGURE 18: THE SCOPE OF THIS PROJECT IS SET ON 2023 INSTEAD OF 2020.



setting the domain

The domain is set up from three criteria:

CRITERIA 1: THE DOMAIN HAS TO SUIT THE TIME THAT IS ALLOCATED

As mentioned before, this project is a part of a larger project of G-Star to develop a new retail concept for 2020. This means that G-Star was looking for an intervention in a timespan of only two years. This is quite short for a ViP project so it was decided to start discovering factors in the timespan of five years (until 2023). This decision makes this project less restricting in the beginning and enables the designer to think more 'out of the box'.

CRITERIA 2: THE DOMAIN HAS TO FIT THE STRATEGY OF A COMPANY

G-Star is a company that creates innovative hybrid denim jeans which are based on a 3D approach. All products contain design stories that they want the consumer to know, since it is expected that these stories give extra value to the products. They see the stores and shops as important touchpoints for the consumer to discover those stories and to experience the full potential of products in general.

CRITERIA 3: THE DOMAIN MUST FEEL NATURAL TO THE DESIGNER

To start this project was wished to be able to have a broad look at the area that is researched. For this reason, the label stores and shops won't be used anymore. instead will be spoken about retail environments.

All together, this results in the domain of

'EXPERIENCING PRODUCTS AND THEIR STORIES AT (PHYSICAL) RETAIL TOUCHPOINTS IN 2023'.

3.2 COLLECTING CONTEXT FACTORS

After formulating the domain, the research starts by collecting context factors of which clusters can be formed to describe the predicted consumer behavior in the future.

context factors

Context factors are considered as the building blocks of the context that will be newly designed. By collecting, carefully valuing their relevancy and subsequently prioritizing them. Context factors are classified into states, trends, developments and principles. They tell something about the biological, technological, cultural, social and psychological conditions these classifications are related to.

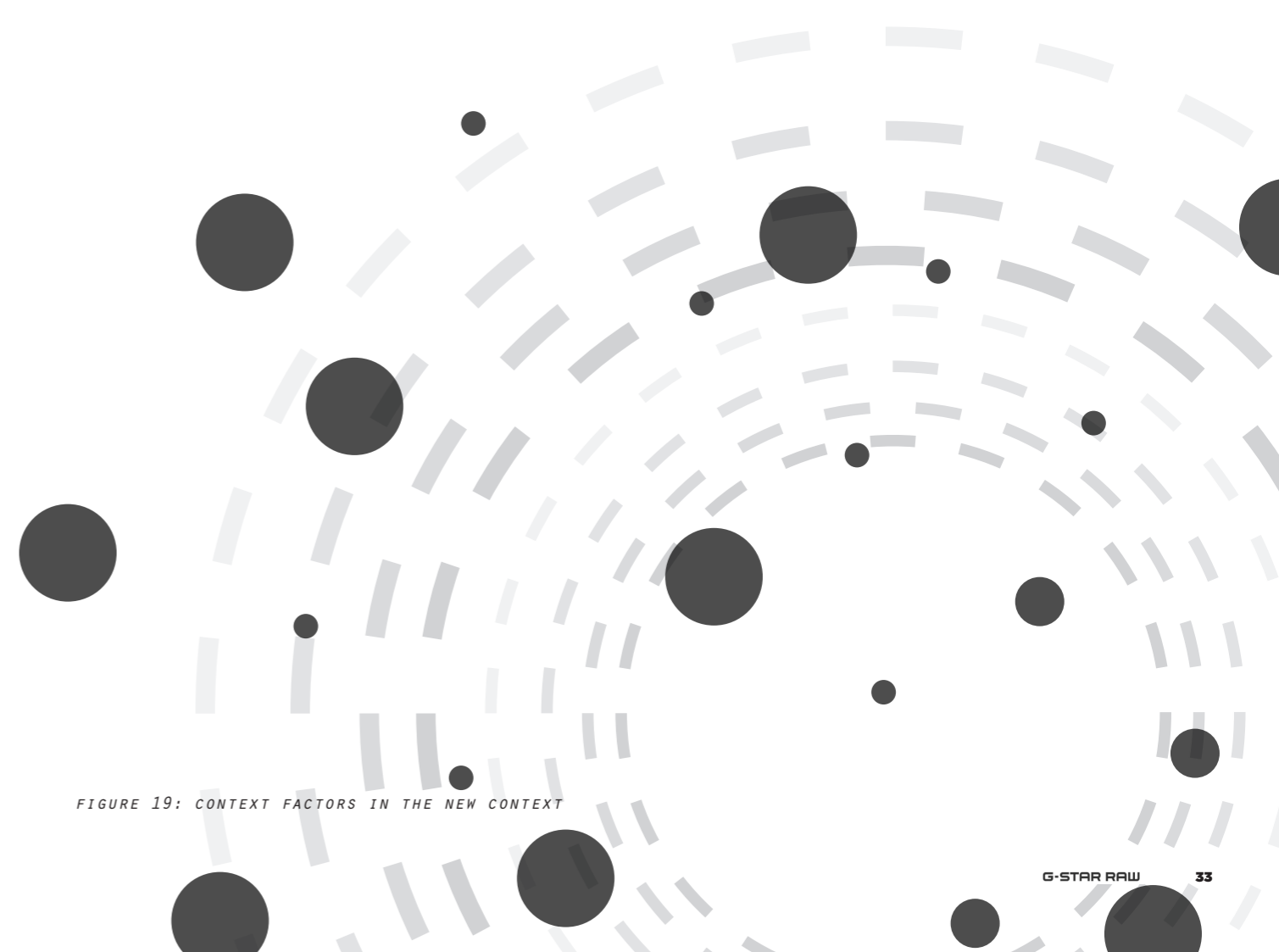


FIGURE 19: CONTEXT FACTORS IN THE NEW CONTEXT

research

To collect the context factors, research is conducted in several steps. The steps and their main contribution to the collection of context factors are treated in this chapter.

interviews

To get to know more about the vision of G-Star concerning the domain, 6 experts of different departments have been interviewed. To obtain a broader and concealed view on the domain also 9 experts from outside the company are interviewed as well.



anne moes
RESEARCHER CROSS MEDIA IN RETAIL
HOOGESCHOOL VAN AMSTERDAM

Anne Moes is a researcher at the Crossmedia research group of the Hogeschool van Amsterdam. Within this research group she is mainly engaged with research into innovations within the retail world and the effect this has on the consumer's shopping experience. She also teaches at the Amsterdam Fashion Institute for the minor 'Fashion in Retail & Marketing'.



twan minten
BRAND STRATEGIST/DESIGNER
PRONK STUDIO

Twan is brand strategist and designer at Pronk Studio. Pronk Studio is a design agency that designs spaces and environments where stories are told like musea and expositions but also retail concepts. A few years ago Twan worked for the strategic design agency of Fabrique and during that period he worked on a retail concept of Giant among others.



myrthe montijn
INTERACTION DESIGNER
FABRIQUE

Myrthe Montijn is Interaction Designer at the strategic design agency Fabrique. During her last project she developed a Gift Shop for IKEA in the city centre of Utrecht. She also graduated on the topic of interaction design in a physical store of Nike. She wrote her thesis in collaboration with Deloitte and won the VEDIS Retail Thesis Award with her project.



maarten wijdekop
GLOBAL TRADE MARKETING MANAGER

Maarten is Global Trade Marketing Manager at G-Star RAW. One of his main responsibilities is to setup a recognizable and consistent brand image at the multibrand stores of both online and offline partners like Score and Zalando. Maarten has over 10 years of experience in different marketing related roles at Heineken and therefore he is a very interesting person to speak to.



eric alkema
CONSUMER JOURNEY MANAGER

Eric Alkema is Consumer Journey manager and Omnichannel Manager at G-Star RAW. Eric is focussing on technologies that can be used to set up a consistent omni-channel journey for the consumer. Before he worked at G-Star he was working at the e-commerce department of lingerie brand Hunkemöller.



andré taris
DIGITAL USER EXPERIENCE DESIGNER

André Taris has been studying Design for Interaction at the Delft University of Technology. He has been graduating on smart materials in fabrics and user interaction. He is now working for G-Star as digital user experience and interface designer and is currently working on the user experience of G-Star.com.



leontine de wit
PROF. ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN
TU DELFT/HOEK & DE WIT

Leontine de Wit is Assistant Professor of Architectural Design and Interiors at the Delft University of Technology. As a lecturer at the TU Delft she is responsible for the minor Spaces of Display; retail and exhibition design. Next to that she is also very experienced in the field since she co-founded her own architectural studio which is called Hoek & de Wit Architecten.



emily van vught
BRAND STRATEGIST & RETAIL DESIGN
TU DELFT/EMILY VAN VUGHT

Emily is running her own business in Brand Strategy and Retail Design. Before she started working on her own projects, she gained experience as a brand strategist at Agency No9 in Amsterdam. During her masters of Strategic Product Design she did a specialisation in Retail Design and finished her graduation with a new retail and branding concept for The Body Shop.



bernadette schrandt
RESEARCHER MUSEUM EXPERIENCES
HOOGESCHOOL VAN AMSTERDAM

Bernadette Schrandt is researcher at the department Crossmedia where she is involved in the projects Fashions Retail Future and Designing ExperienceScapes. Bernadette mainly focuses on the experience of people in museums and how the stories there could be told to the visitors.



jordi de boer
RETAIL MANAGER BENELUX

Jordi de Boer is Retail Manager Benelux at G-Star Raw. As a Retail Manager he is responsible for all stores in the Benelux. Visiting stores and thinking about how to make them the most useful for the company is his daily job. His vision is therefore interesting for this project.



ali keys
PRODUCT DEVELOPER

Ali Keys is a product designer at G-Star RAW. He thinks about new concepts and how to come up with innovative new designs that fit the G-Star identity. He works with a team of designers of which most of them are already here for more than 8 years. Before Ali came to G-Star he worked for Dockers, a subsidiary of Levi's.



kristian braeken
RETAIL ACCOUNT MANAGER BELGIUM

Kristian's function is similar to Jordi's, but more specified to Belgium. As a Retail Manager he is responsible for the monobrand stores. He has a lot of knowledge concerning all Belgian stores, their staff and the consumer. At the time of the interview seven franchise monobrand stores were taken over by G-Star.



emilie tromp
SENIOR DESIGN STRATEGIST
REFRAMING STUDIO

Emilie is a senior design strategist at Reframing Studio. Last year Emilie worked on a vision and concept for the new crew center of KLM. In this center the crew of KLM is arriving and returning from their flights. The crew has to gather a lot of information in a relatively short amount of time. Emilie also worked for .DAY and G-Star so she knows everything about designing spaces and environments.



marcia godet
RETAIL DIRECTOR EUROPE
DENHAM

Marcia is Retail Director of the Europe area at Denham. Denham is founded 10 years ago by Jason Denham. Their core business are denim jeans and therefore they call themselves The Jeanmaker. Marcia is responsible for running the stores in the right way. She started at Denham 4 years ago.



rauke schalke
ASSISTANT STORE MANAGER
LEICA AMSTERDAM

Rauke Schalke is assistant store manager at Leica Amsterdam. The information that is gathered from interviewing him was mainly about how to give the consumer the best service.

consumer touchpoint research

This research (appendix k) is conducted in, among others, the cities of Amsterdam, Rotterdam, Antwerpen and Bristol (UK) but also through desk research. The main goal was to find context factors by researching the role and function of the physical touchpoints and how they should adapt to the needs and behavior of consumers. This research focuses especially on the elements location, the product or service they provide and the presentation of the product or service.

All physical touchpoints are focused on providing consumer service, however all the services differ in many aspects. They are roughly divided into 'consumer platforms', 'store concepts' and 'clothing stores'.

CONSUMER PLATFORMS

ALBERT HEIJN

Albert Heijn is a well known supermarket chain in the Netherlands. They focus on service and want to be able to serve the consumer everytime and everywhere.

NS (NATIONAL RAILWAYS)

The NS is a company that provides the public transport by train in The Netherlands. They are controlling a lot of different touch points, from trains to service centres.

WETHERSPOONS

The concept of Wetherspoon contains 900 locations through the United Kingdom. They are located in big cities but also in very small villages. Wetherspoons provides different functionalities; offering food, being a pub or being an hotel.

FACEBOOK

Facebook is famous for its social media platform.

AMAZON

Amazon is one of the largest retailers in the world. They started as an online retailer that sold books, but nowadays they are offering a broad collections of products.

CLOTHING STORES

CONCRETE

Concrete started selling high fashion and sneakers. Nowadays, they also included art, toys and music to their collection.

DENOISM

Denoism is a store that intentionally started as a denim focussed store that serves people with a high level range of jeans.

STORE CONCEPTS

DE BIJENKORF

De Bijenkorf is the biggest department store in the Netherlands.

HUTSPOT

Hutspot is a concept store that offers multiple services and products at one place. They were one of the first concept stores in The Netherlands founded approximately 5 years ago.

ACE & TATE

Ace & Tate changed the traditional way of buying glasses. Their vision is to enable consumers to buy glasses just as easy as they buy sneakers.

SISSY-BOY

Sissy-Boy is a retail concept that sell men's, women's and kid's clothing, but next to that they sells a broad home collection that includes furniture and smaller gifts.

LEICA

Leica is the manufacturer of very high end optometric equipment. Their company is developing high-end cameras, which are highly appreciated by photographers.

g-star store visits

Two types of store visits are conducted to find out more about the reasons why people are shopping, how they behave in and outside the stores and why they are visiting G-Star.

OBSERVATIONAL WORKING DAY G-STAR LEIDSESTRAAT

During a workday at the G-Star store at the Leidsestraat in Amsterdam observations and small interviews with staff and consumers were conducted. The store has just been refurbished and a new concept has been applied.

The most important finding was that people are naturally opposing against changes like new initiatives of product presentation. Unconsciously, they are trying to hold on to what they are used to do, this is true for both staff as consumers.

RETAIL ENVIRONMENT VISITS BELGIUM

Together with Kristian Braeken (page 32), four G-Star retail environments were visited: The monobrand stores of Gent and Knokke and the shop-in-shop locations at Zeb in Maldegem and Galeria Inno in Brussels.

The most important finding was to see that location and area around the selling point are one of the most influencing factors for these particular selling points.

case studies

Seven new initiatives of other brands have been analyzed to context factors.

IKEA GIFT SHOP

An atypical gift shop in the city centre of Utrecht

IKEA PLACE

Augmented Reality based app that enable the consumer to see the product in its real context.

MCDONALD'S

New concept, based on transparency in Hong Kong

HOINTER

A physical store that enables scanning the products with your mobile phone whereafter they will be laid ready in your personally assigned fitting room.

AUDI CITY

A virtual showroom in the city centre of London.

ADIDAS CLIMAZONE

Multi-sensorial experience of a product on a website.

SCOTCH & SODA

Setting an atmosphere on their website and application

creative session

A creative session has been executed to find interesting context factors in other fields of interests than shopping. The session was set up to by mainly asking the question of: Why are people doing these activities? A company or institute related to that interest field was then provided to make the participants think about the role of the service they provide. In this way very creative and outlying context factors were gathered. The fields and related companies were:

TRAVELLING: AirBNB

PARTYING: Lowlands

SUPPORTING: Feyenoord

GOING TO THE CINEMA: Pathe

SHARING: Instagram

Papers and articles

Papers and articles have been read to find in more in dept context factors.

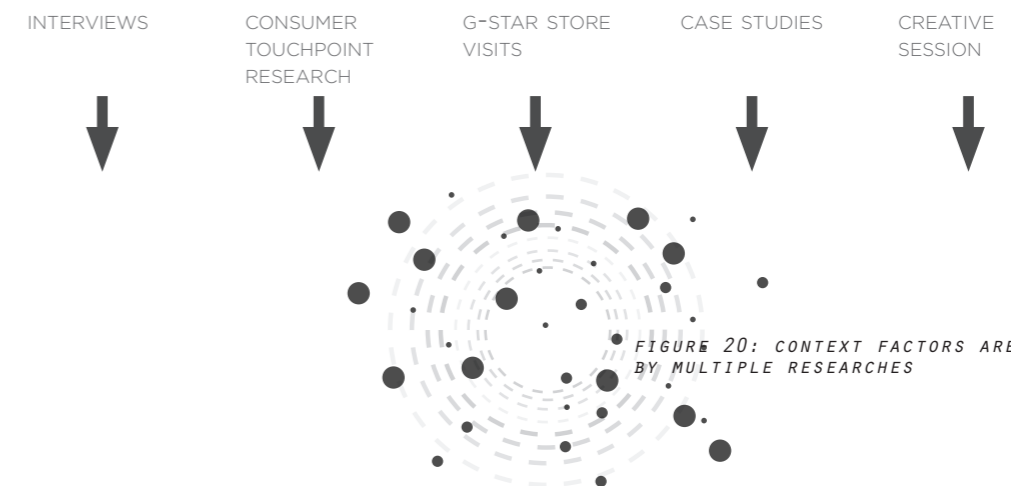


FIGURE 20: CONTEXT FACTORS ARE GENERATED BY MULTIPLE RESEARCHES

conclusion

All the research resulted in 400 carefully selected context factors, that function as building blocks of the new context. On the next page can be found how clusters are formed that describe overarching relationships between the context factors.

3.3 CLUSTERS

After gathering all the context factors, relations between those factors were researched. This is done by clustering the factors into groups related to each other. Relations are envisioned by the designer, which enables him to eventually make his own statement out of it.

process

The process of finding relations between the context factors is an iterative one. All context factors have been written on cards which are reviewed one by one. The factors have first been clustered into small clusters of factors that are similar each other. This brought them back from 400 factors to around 30 small clusters. Then, all separate factors were treated again to find new relations between the 30 small clusters. This resulted into 15 larger clusters that connected the smaller clusters on a higher level.

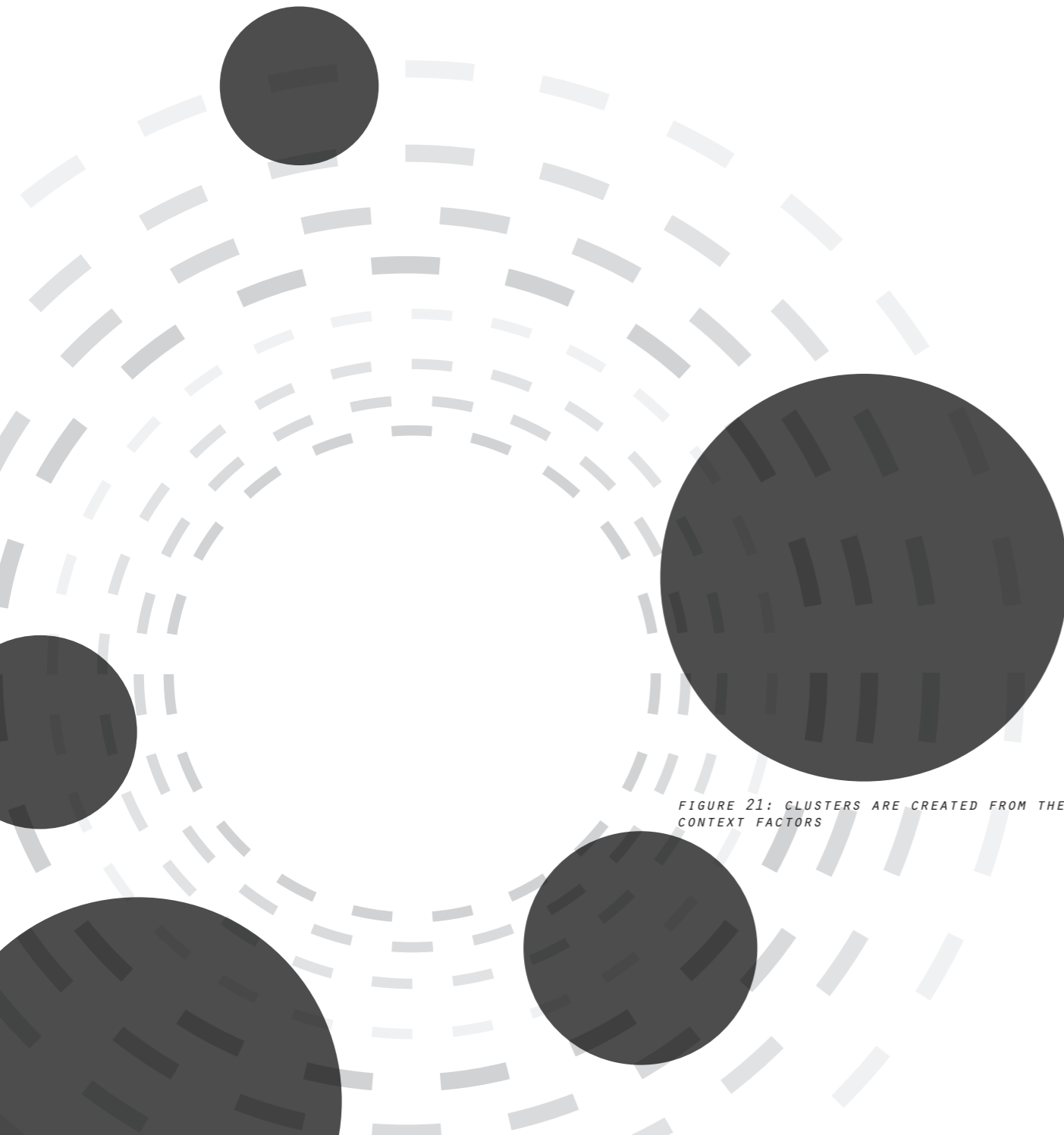


FIGURE 21: CLUSTERS ARE CREATED FROM THE CONTEXT FACTORS

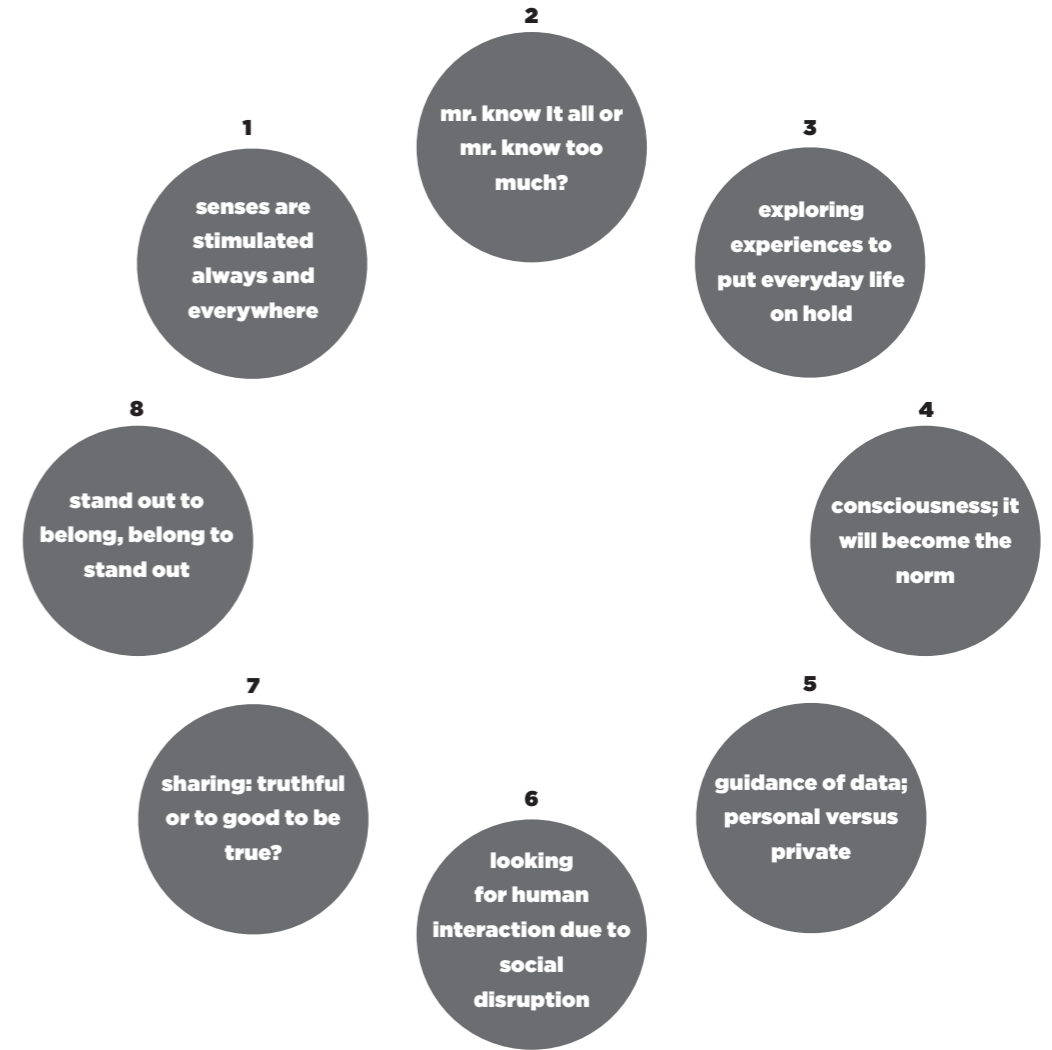


FIGURE 22: 8 CLUSTERS

8 clusters

Lastly, the 15 cluster were brought back to 8 clusters which form a worldview on the new context. All in all, the clustering process took five days. During this process discussions with Eleni Soerjo and David de Kievit of G-Star helped to get to the final 8 clusters. These clusters and their most influencing factors are displayed on the next pages.

1 senses are stimulated always and everywhere

Billboards across the streets are screaming for your attention while your phone is buzzing in the pockets of your pants. **Information is everywhere and all kinds of parties are trying to trigger your senses** so that you are able to catch the message they want to share. These messages are not static textual expressions anymore. Due to the digital revolution they will become **super dynamic expressions** that are triggering all our senses at the same moment. Online and offline expressions are seamlessly connected and are not experienced as separate platforms anymore. The world is changing faster than ever due to this development. The context where we live in is **constantly updated**

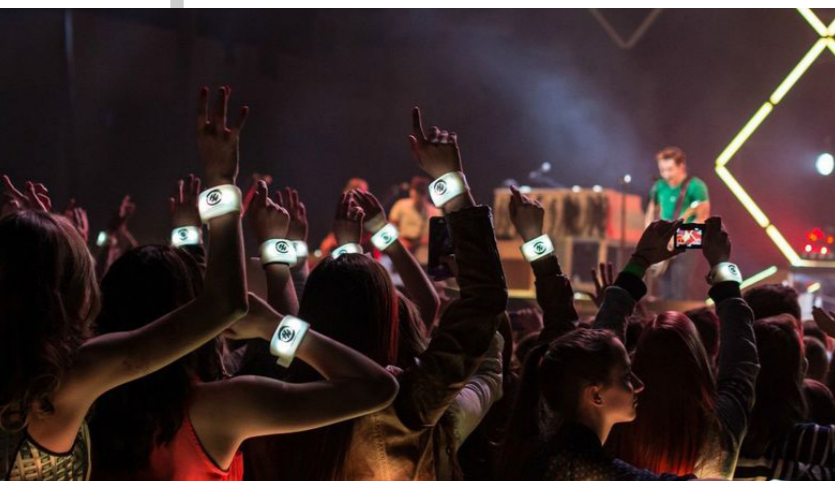
and when information is not relevant to people it will not be noticed by them. To be able to reach people in the jungle of all those sensory impulses, smart strategies to **filter and structure the information** are necessary. Information does not always have to be directly focussed on the receiver. It could be received unconsciously. To do this, it is important to execute this throughout all platforms that your target group uses. Showing of effort will become an important aspect. People appreciate it when they see that a company or authority has taken **real effort** to tell your story.

2 mr. know it all or mr. know too much?

People can get what they want, whenever they want it. Delivery is possible at any place, at any time, in an extremely short amount of time. They are extremely **critical and therefore pushing companies to fulfill all their wishes.** They are **always informed** and when they are not, they want to be able to **get the information they need on demand.** They know what they can get, where they can get it and how they can get it. And if they can get what they want somewhere else cheaper or more **convenient**, they will do that. People start looking at marketplaces where all brands are displayed next to each other without noticeable displayed differences. This **endless competition**

makes it hard for brands to contain people or make people loyal to the brand. On the other hand are too many options for the consumer also not always helpful. Too many options can bring consumers **choice stress.** Due to the enormous amount of options people are always questioning themselves if they make the right/best decision. The independent consumer of the new era needs to be given **time to explore**, but when they need something, stores need to be there 'on demand'.

<p>The enormous amount of information and products makes it hard for consumers to eventually decide on what to get. <i>Q&A, 2016</i></p> <p>development</p>	<p>The information pressure is countered by other technologies. WeChat is an example of this. It combines all channels in to a single one. <i>Emilie Tromp</i></p> <p>development</p>	<p>From a keyboard interface to a sensory interface in the form of image and sound. Seeing and hearing the most important sensory perceptions of human. That is why it is not surprising that the online environment is transforming. A transition from a text-dominated static environment to an image and sound dominated interactive environment. <i>InRetail, 2017</i></p> <p>development</p>
<p>The consumer suffers from 'infobesitas'. The consumer is often unwillingly confronted with an overload of messages and signals that are often irrelevant. The consumer of the future requires relevance. <i>Q&A, 2016</i></p> <p>development</p>	<p>People who get in store want to get inspired. To be able to inspire them environments are expected to be dynamic and clean. Consumers certainly see it when effort is taken. <i>Twan Minten</i></p> <p>development</p>	<p>Consistency in a company, through every department, will be recognized by the consumer in store. Recognizable visual communication through all levels of an institute results in consistent and recognizable content for the end user. <i>Emily van Vught</i></p> <p>state</p>
<p>context factors</p>		
<p>Gen Z is even more visually oriented than millennials: they love video. Shorter is better. Several brands are already responding to this with video ads of about six seconds. Especially for the first contact with a user this seems to be an ideal length. <i>Ubels, D. 2017</i></p> <p>trend</p>		



context factors



<p>Products are able to be tracked always. RFID is enabling a very specific supply chain and in store locationing. In this way it is easy to adapt immediately to the consumer's options to get the product. There are already companies that have implemented RFID in their products. Hunkemöller is now implementing one-hour delivery in Amsterdam and Antwerp. This will become a common phenomenon. <i>Eric Alkema</i> development</p> <p>development</p>	<p>Consumers have the power to make a trade-off at any time of the day if they want to seek, arrange or buy something regardless of time, place or medium. <i>InRetail, 2017</i></p> <p>state</p>	<p>People expect that everything is possible nowadays. They are critical and do not take no for an answer. They expect their money back immediately on their bank account at every selling point. As retailer you are expected to always be able to answer those questions. <i>Marcia Godet</i></p> <p>trend</p>
<p>The more expensive, the more people want to experience a product. We have sweaters of kashmir that consumers want to feel. People that buy a jacket of 600 to 1000 euros think about the sale. They do not just click two times on the webpage and decide that they want it. <i>Marcia Godet</i></p> <p>principle</p>	<p>In specific retail markets, the online channel has become very dominant and can be considered a disruptive development. An example is the travel industry with many new online players, such as BOOKING.COM, EXPEDIA and TRIPADVISOR, inducing a shake-out among traditional travel intermediaries. <i>Verhoef, P.C., et al. 2015</i></p> <p>development</p>	<p>Amazon continues to expand the capabilities of its Alexa Voice Service, the operating platform of its popular Echo digital assistant, a technology that not-so-subtly aims to disintermediate not only Google but every retailer on the planet from the consumer product search process, 55 percent of which already defaults to Amazon. <i>Stephens, D. 2017</i></p> <p>development</p>

3 exploring experiences to put everyday life on hold

People's **lives are getting busier and busier**. There is always something to do for them. To **escape this life full of appointments and obligations they want to have extraordinary experiences**. People are increasingly having the need to immerse in a different world, to go somewhere where they can be someone else for a while and where they can (shortly) escape everyday reality. This is also returning in objects. A racing bike can be beautiful but it only gets real value when is told that it is used by Tom Dumoulin in the Giro d'Italia. Humans are **collectors**, they want to collect stuff that remind them of good or bad times. That brings them back to lasting experiences that had an impact on their lives.

People are **experience driven**. There will be more brands, concepts, parties to fulfill these needs. To memorize the experiences, **manifestations** of them are used collect and share them share them with others.

4 consciousness; it will become the norm

The last couple of years society started to **realize** that if we continue to live like we have done the past couple of decades we cannot **guarantee the quality of life for the future generations**. Slowly, initiatives started to come up with, for example, innovative ideas to reduce CO2 emissions and the plastic ocean soup. This development of taking **real action** will continue the coming years. A big subject in the awareness movement will be the use of waste as a raw material. Before, **sustainability was something to show off with**, but it will not stay special forever, it will become the norm. **Circularity will not only occur in materials but also products will get new lives at new users**. Back in the days, this

meant that these products were bought from platforms like Ebay but this shifts from buying to using. Consciousness is about raising the quality of life of the future generations so this also covers the concerns about working and production conditions and **healthy lifestyles**. Biological food and local production is appreciated and becomes normal, also in the city.

<p>Millenials care less about saving money. They spend more money to (luxury) experiences, they go out more often. They use money to buy off 'fun-time' or convenience. This development is supported by the fact that more people are living in the cities. <i>Entertainment/Pathé case</i></p> <p>trend</p>	<p>Stores will become more like showrooms. Those well-known touchpoints (like fitting rooms and the counter) will become different in the future. Their presence in the shopping process will become smaller due to the flexibility of the buying process. <i>Leontine de Wit</i></p> <p>development</p>	<p>Visitors want to take the museum home. The Rijksmuseum is selling dresses reproduced from paintings that are hanging in the museum. Consumers rather have a keychain than that they visit the the museum of a football club. They prefer the physical memory that they can take with them above the one time experience of a museum. <i>Bernadette Schrandt</i></p> <p>principle</p>
<p>Musea are trying to put people into a scenario. The visitor is the one who is going through the story. He/she is guided through the museum through the atmosphere. <i>Bernadette Schrandt</i></p> <p>trend</p>	<p>Consumers want to experience product details and this is also possible online with close ups of the material for example. <i>Adidas Climacool case</i></p> <p>development</p>	<p>When an experience is painful or gainful they will be memorized and therefore have a lasting impact on their behavior and on the associations with it. The stronger a pain or gain is, the heavier is the impact on a person and their memory. <i>Anne Moes</i></p> <p>principle</p>

context factors



<p>Consumers are becoming increasingly aware of what they buy and consume. They focus more on the quality of life for future generations. Think about themes such as nature and the environment, sustainability, social justice and 'socially responsible'. <i>Q&A, 2016</i></p> <p>trend</p>	<p>Expectations are that there will be virtually no growth in consumer expenditure. <i>Leontine de Wit</i></p> <p>development</p>	<p>Driven by economic, social and practical motives, more and more consumers are open to paying for use instead of ownership. They buy more and more contracts and fewer products. Ownership of the product is not necessary to use products. Car lease contracts, renting skis or a subscription to Spotify are well-known examples. <i>InRetail, 2017</i></p> <p>development</p>
<p>"In evolutionary terms, we all collected," says Dr. Dimitrios Tsivrikos, consumer psychologist at University College London. "We collect articles or resources to survive, but survival doesn't only rest upon what we need physically. We need, psychologically, to distinguish ourselves." <i>Clifton, J. 2016</i></p> <p>principle</p>	<p>At the moment, a limited number of Dutch population is consciously thinking about environmental issues when they purchase products. Many think it is important but it does not yet have any consequences for brands and retailers. <i>Q&A, 2016</i></p> <p>state</p>	<p>From fat to fresh: People are eating more conscious for the earth and more healthy for their bodies. McDonald's is not only about burgers anymore. They will still be there but, it is main not reason to visit the McDonalds anymore. Consumers can get salads and healthy sandwiches which are all made freshly for you. <i>McDonald's Case</i></p> <p>trend</p>

context factors



5 guidance of data; personal versus private

Society is becoming more and more **data driven**. Companies are collecting information about you at any place and moment. They do this to be able to serve you in the best possible way. Due to this **personalisation they are able to change, adjust or predict the consumer's choices and therefore their journey**. People are liking this personalisation but it should not pass a certain level. **People want to keep control, they want to decide when they share private information**. Companies therefore need to watch out to which extent they are recognizing people. There are technologies available that are able to scan people that pass by and make a profile to adjust their shown content to that type of

person. A **relationship between a brand/institution and a person needs to evolve**. How this evolution will be is depending on factors like the image of the brand.

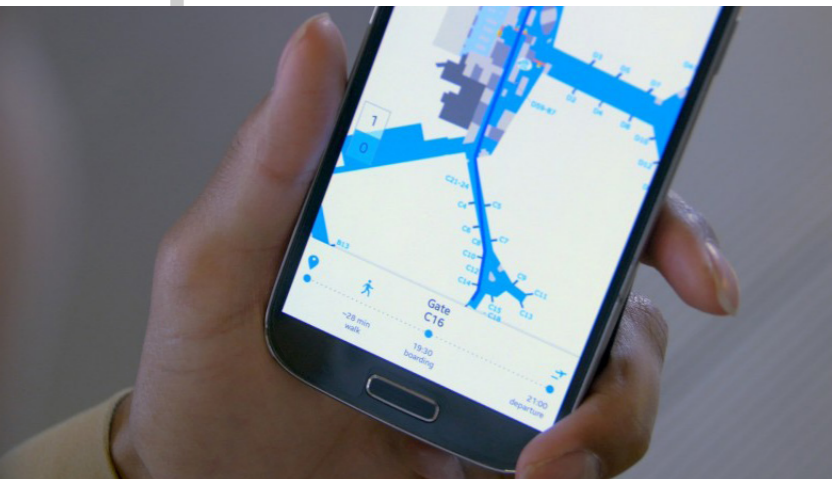
6 looking for social interaction due to social disruption

Due to all digital interventions of the past decade **the way people interact with each other has changed**. People are locked up in their mobile phones; they speak to each other more often via messenger apps than they do in real life. Especially in places where it is crowded, like train stations, everyone is closed off in their own bubble. This **social disruption** is provoking the contra-movement that people are **craving for a place to have the social interaction**, especially since the amount of single living people in cities is rising. Public spaces and events are designed to make people interact with each other again. People are together visiting cinemas again instead of watching Netflix alone. They

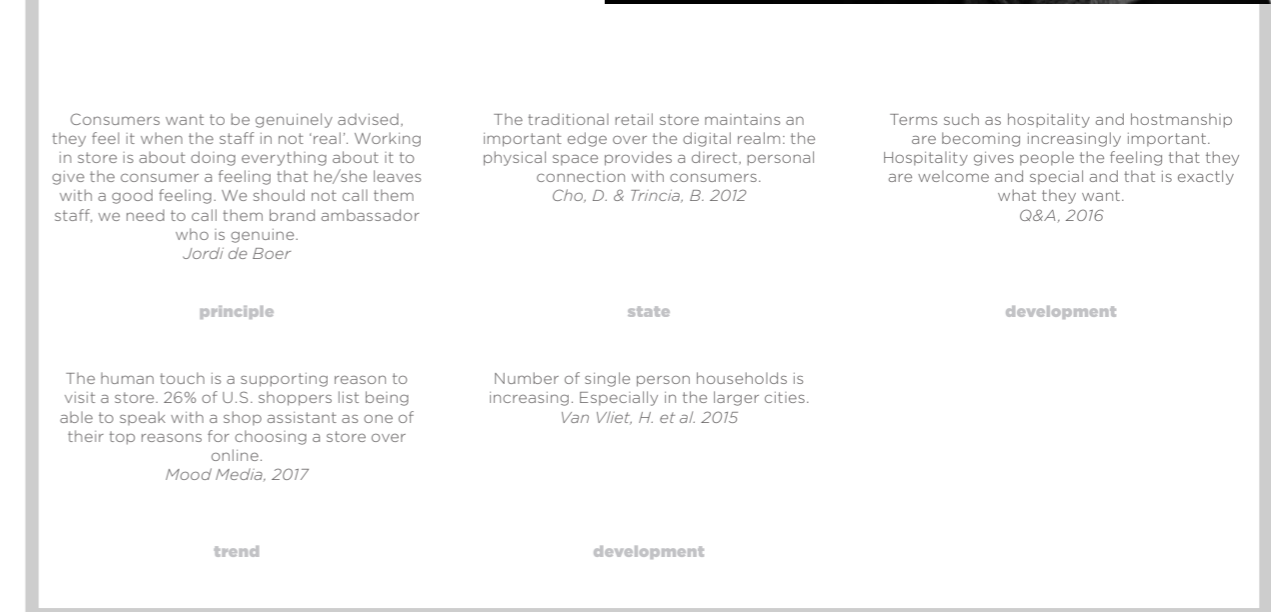
value the moments of real personal contact more since most of the contact they have is **superficial**. **Sincere interest, hospitality and transparency** are therefore highly appreciated. People are looking for a place where they can find this and where they can take some rest from everyday's volatility.



context factors



context factors



7 sharing; truthful or to good to be true?

People are willing to share everything. Internet enables users to **share all their experiences with the whole wide world**. Generation Z has more in common with someone of similar age at the other side of the world than with their grandmother who lives in the same city. Due to this extreme connectedness people are able to always **take a look in each other's life**. Social media are used to **show the best version of yourself** as a user. People will absolutely see what is placed online since they surely **do not want to miss out on all the extraordinary impressions that can be found**. Consumers are able to respond on each other but also on the profiles or posts from organisations and companies. This gives people the power

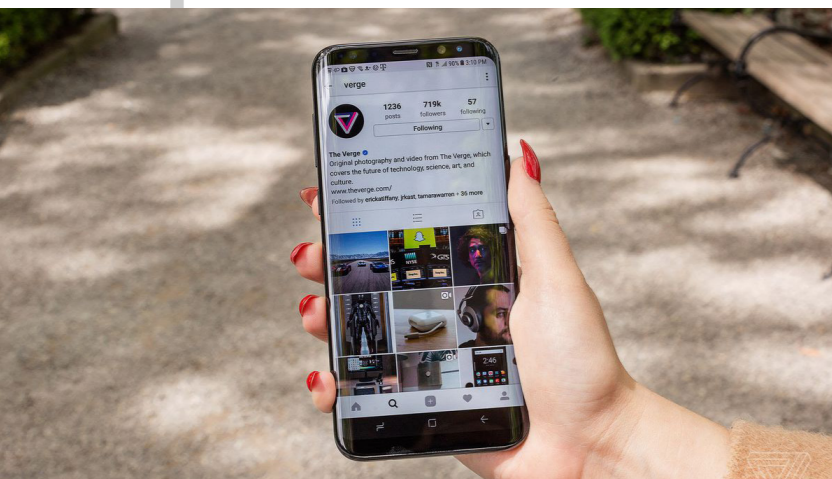
to make or break a company online. Good **peer to peer relations and reviews** are most valuable for them. But sharing is not only seen in sharing experiences, but also in **products and services**. Autonomous cars are seen as the most optimum form of this sharing community. To make sharing possible, **mutual trust between the involved parties and privacy issues** are always on top of mind. This is especially true since we do not share on local level but on global level.

8 stand out to belong, belong to stand out

Forming an identity is of importance to every single person. In this **individualizing** world this is becoming more and more of an issue. How do you stand out from the rest? With the endless opportunities of today's society people are **looking for uniqueness**. This goes from taking the perfect picture at a place where nobody comes, to (partly) designing your own shoes. This search for uniqueness also brings the desire to have your own **influence on processes** in their environments. In this way people are able to create their own identity. The search for a unique identity is for many persons a scary one. People are always **looking for confidence and fitting to a certain identity can take insecurity away**.

Especially when peer people are confirming this. So, although we want to be different, there are still others where we are looking at. The **context where you live in is also influencing your identity**. This is also true for brands. Brands that are too commercialized do not communicate a strong identity and therefore it is hard to relate to them. **Expressing a strong and consistent identity** is differentiating a brand from others and makes it easier for people **to form an opinion about it**. In this accepting world it doesn't really matter anymore what your identity is as long as it appears to be real. **Authenticity** makes this believable.

<p>A serious development is that of consumer-to-consumer transactions. On the one hand this concerns marketplaces where consumers can trade between each other, with the most well-known examples being eBay.com and marktplaats.nl. This has expanded into all kinds of products and services <i>Van Vliet, H. et al. 2015</i></p> <p>development</p>	<p>Instagram is a stage to show of your achievements or creations. Everyone is able to see it and everyone can judge about it. <i>Sharing/Instagram case</i></p> <p>state</p>	<p>Fashion apps and fashion blogs are becoming more and more popular. Fashion apps are applications that offer a shopping and/or inspirational platform for the app user. <i>Van Vliet, H. et al. 2015</i></p> <p>development</p>
<p>People read the Grazia and Highsnobity from their phone. If there is a fashion show for example, you have to know how it looks on a mobile device. Be there or be square. <i>Maarten Wijdekop</i></p> <p>state</p>	<p>Uber and AirBnB have fundamentally disrupted long established industries. <i>Calam, M. 2017</i></p> <p>state</p>	<p>As with most things in life, you get out Airbnb what you put into it. Trust is shared, it goes both ways. the more effort is done the more trust is generated. <i>Aufman, C. 2017</i></p> <p>principle</p>
<p>context factors</p>		
<p>Blockchain is seen by experts as the biggest technological innovation since the rise of the internet. The "trust machine" of the future. It is the logical answer to the dominant movements described above towards 2030. <i>InRetail, 2017</i></p> <p>development</p>		



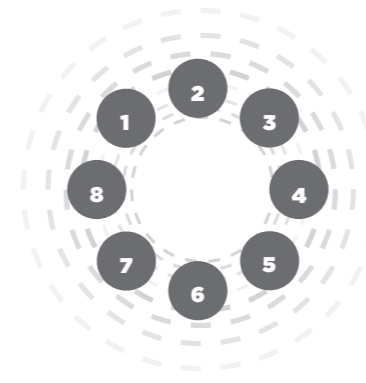
context factors



<p>People always mirror themselves to a certain state, where they look up to. <i>Traveling/Airbnb</i></p> <p>principle</p>	<p>Stories are focussing on the visitor him/herself. The stories are written in a language that is easier to understand. Before they only facilitated the short, goofy stories next to the artwork; made in 1768 by Pietje Puk. This is information that makes it hard for a visitor to refer somewhere to. <i>Bernadette Schrandt</i></p> <p>trend</p>	<p>Clothes are a continuous self-expression. People are wearing it all day, everyday. People are showing how they are with clothes so G-Star should show who they are. The consumer wants the opportunity to make the consideration if they fit the brands' identity. <i>Maarten Wijdekop</i></p> <p>state</p>
<p>Identification is a crucial aspect of the process of sale. Especially when you buy an article that you do not usually buy. The consumer asks itself many questions during that process. But if you are able to identify with it, the brand or the person that wears it than you will buy it sooner. The question 'Is this who I want to be?' <i>Emilie Tromp</i></p> <p>state</p>	<p>Denim is an organic natural fabric, the store is a place to add a context to it. Denim is rough, it is imperfect, it is washed, it is worn out, it is lived in. <i>Ali Keys</i></p> <p>state</p>	<p>History and heritage make a brand or a person appear authentic and therefore they got a raised credibility. <i>Supporting/Feyenoord</i></p> <p>principle</p>
<p>People relate to the world where the clothing is or aims to be present. A cool guy in Berlin, in a G-Star outfit who is doing cool stuff in a cool city is what people want to relate to and want to copy. <i>Maarten Wijdekop</i></p> <p>principle</p>		

3.3 CONTEXT COHESION

To discover what role G-Star could play in this context, the core concerns of the consumer need to be found to understand what this context actually means to the consumer. In the next subchapter will be discussed what the relations between the clusters are in this context and what this means for the consumer.



influences are constantly trying to trigger (underlying) needs

While studying all clusters, the first thing that emerges is that they are all about influences that are trying to affect the consumers. In the new context people are constantly receiving and radiating impressions and expressions.

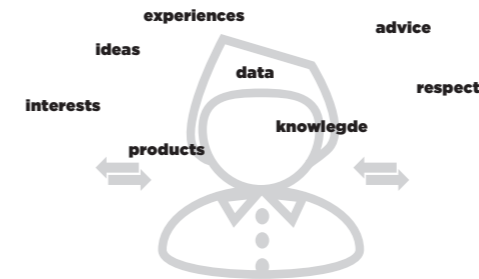


FIGURE 24: NEEDS ARE TRIGGERED BY INFLUENCES

People are having different needs which can be affected by the influences from the context during multiple situations. These needs can be on top of mind for the consumer but they can also be underlying in their subconsciousness.

The consumer's needs and their level of awareness of these needs at a particular situation will be called the state of mind of a consumer during the rest of this report. Due to the endless competition in the new context, brands are constantly trying to get the attention of this consumer to remind them and thereby create a stronger consumerbrand relationship. In other words, by confronting the consumers with an overload of influences that fulfill or induce needs, they are constantly affecting the state of mind of consumers.

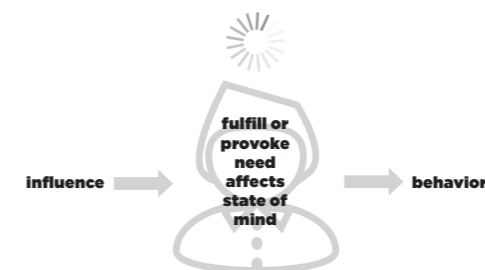


FIGURE 25: INFLUENCES ARE AFFECTING CONSUMER STATE OF MIND WHICH RESULTS IN CONSUMER BEHAVIOR.

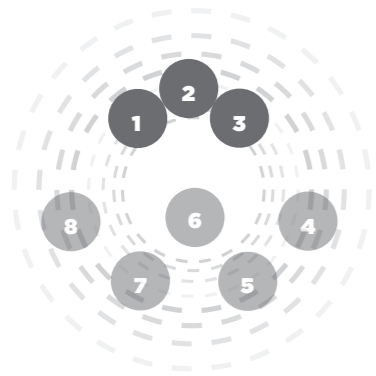
CONSUMER BEHAVIOR METAPHOR

When describing the consumer behavior in the new context the metaphor of 'Dory that is trying to find Nemo' is used.

Just like Dory consumers are subconsciously knowing what they want but they are not directly looking for it all the time. They are swimming through the sea of influences. They have to be triggered to be awakened from their subconscious state of mind by something that reminds them from time to time.



FIGURE 26: THE CONSUMER IS SWIMMING AROUND LIKE DORY IN AN OCEAN FULL OF INFLUENCES



overload of influences brings insecurity

When a deeper look is taken at clusters 1, 2 and 3, it can be found that people are constantly dealing with this enormous amount of influences. The overload of influences from the environment make consumers critical, it gives them plenty of options to choose from after all. People expect brands to do more than giving them just access to the products. They expect them to do this in the most convenient way, but also in the most meaningful way.

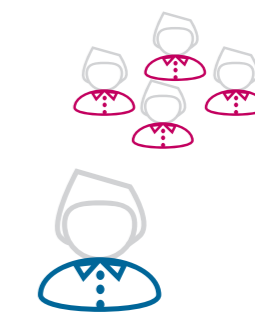
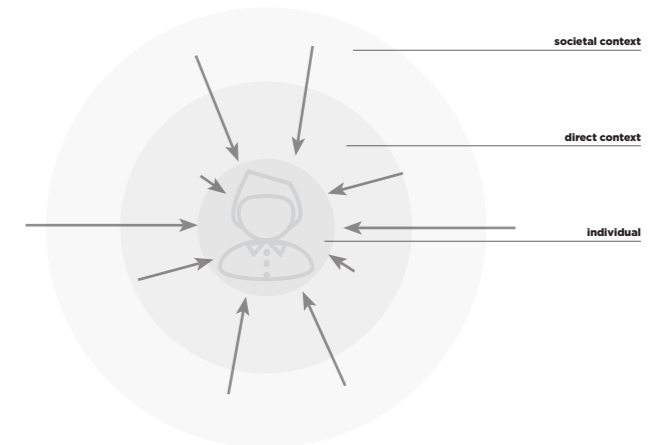
The other side of this overload of influences is that consumers are also becoming insecure of it. All those influences give people endless opportunities that they are constantly valuing. This process of valuing influences and (subconsciously) doubting how to deal with them confronts consumers with two types of insecurities:



expressing identity in an always connected world

When a closer look is taken to clusters 7 and 8 it is found that they are about decisions that people have to make about how to express their identity. Consumers are constantly connected to everyone in the whole wide world. People from everywhere can take a look into each other's lives. They are able to join more social groups than ever and get the respect of the people in there but they also want to be able to express their own uniqueness. They are constantly balancing between expressing themselves by joining a peer group or by standing out individually.

This confronts them with the following important question: How do I want to express my identity and values?



CONSUMERS DON'T KNOW WHAT TO CHOOSE AND WANT TO FEEL ASSURED TO MAKE A DECISION
 On the one hand there are so many opportunities, that consumers are having a hard time to make a decision that feels right to them. Since they have easy access to all kinds of resources they are constantly doubting about making the right decision.

CONSUMERS WANT TO SEE WHAT ELSE IS THERE AND WANT TO FEEL CHALLENGED TO EXPLORE NEW OPPORTUNITIES
 On the other hand consumers are always curious to know what else is there. They are constantly looking for new opportunities due to the endless possibilities that they have. This is making the consumer insecure because they never know when to stop. Is it enough or do they have to explore more?

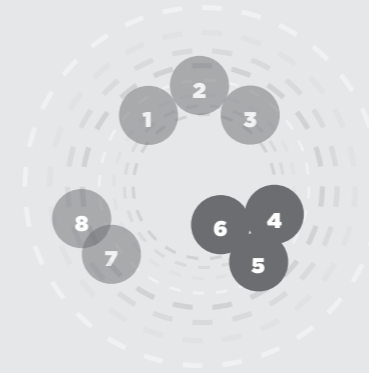
CONSUMERS WANT INVOLVE INTO PEER GROUPS
 On the one hand consumers collaborate and mirror themselves to others and can and want to relate to them.
 "I want to involve in this group because I can relate to the values/ characteristics of that group."
 In this situation the respect of others is more important to this person although they still don't want to feel restricted in their behavior.

CONSUMERS WANT TO STAND OUT INDIVIDUALLY
 On the other hand, consumers are willing to make their own decisions and keep control about how they deal with expressions that are based on our own values.
 "I want to feel unique as an individual and I want to decide how I express myself".
 In this situation, having influence on uniqueness is more important to them but still they do not want to lose the respect of others.

cohesion conclusion

Brands are overloading consumers with influences. They do this to trigger more (underlying) needs of consumers and with the intentions to create a lasting consumer-brand relationship. These needs have expanded the last couple of years. Consumers are becoming more critical. They have so many options to choose from that they are not only willing to purchase functional products, they are willing to use products and brands to gather meaningful experiences.

On the other hand, all those influences are making consumers insecure. They are constantly doubting about how to value all the influences that are affecting them and how to express identity in a world that is always connected. What role G-Star could take in this will be discussed in the next subchapter.



meaningful influences

From the clusters 4,5 and 6 it could be derived that particular topics of influences are valued as more meaningful to the consumer. These are not considered as leading factors in the process to set up the design statement but as supporting conditions while creating the concept later. This paragraph discusses what makes influences meaningful.

CONSCIOUSNESS ABOUT SUSTAINABILITY AND QUALITY OF LIFE

Influences about sustainability and quality of life are highly valued, although it is not something to show off with anymore. Consumers find it important that a brand is taking care of the planet, because not taking care of it is a huge turnoff for them.

UNIQUENESS, AUTHENTICITY AND CREATIVITY

When having a strong identity, consumers are able to form an opinion about you. Creativity and honesty add value to influences. People appreciate that and therefore is it meaningful to them.

EXPERTISE AND KNOWLEDGE

Since people are used to find a lot of information by themselves, they can only be pleased being confronted with information that shows off expertise.

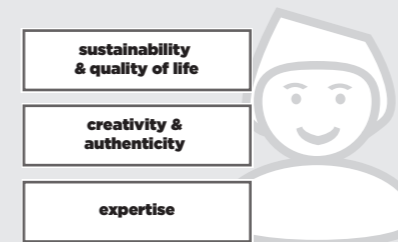


FIGURE 27: TOPICS THAT ARE MEANINGFUL TO CONSUMERS

When the content of brand's expressions contain the topics that are mentioned above, they provide consumers with expressions that are meaningful to them. When the aesthetic experience of the brand is also positively valued by the consumer, a brand is able to awake positive emotions that can convince the consumer to connect with a brand (Desmet & Hekkert, 2007).

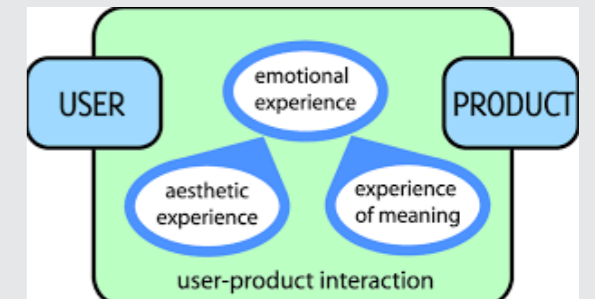


FIGURE 28: FRAMEWORK OF PRODUCT EXPERIENCE OF DESMET AND HEKKERT

3.4 ROLE OF G-STAR - THE STATEMENT

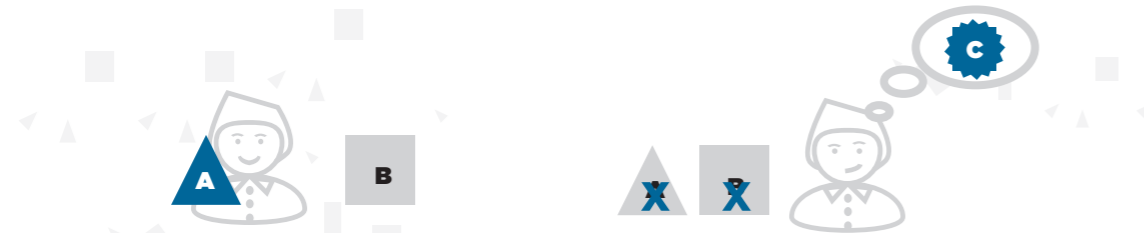
In the cohesion chapter, two types of interesting consumer concerns are discussed. These consumer concerns are describing the tensions in the new context that the consumer deals with. In the last subchapter of this chapter a statement is set up to define a strategy for G-Star to interact with the consumer.

The statement sets the abstract goal to design for during the rest of the ViP process. It described the way G-Star effects human behavior of the ones coming in touch with the brand in the future context.

consumer concern 1

CONSUMER ATTITUDE TOWARDS THE INSECURITY OF OPPORTUNITIES

People that are insecure to make a decision, want to be empowered in some way. They can be empowered in two ways:



EMPOWERED BY FEELING ASSURED
Consumers want to be sure about making the right decision. Therefore they need someone who says: "Stop, this is the right decision. Take this".

EMPOWERED BY FEELING CHALLENGED
Consumers want to be empowered to challenge ourselves to look for other opportunities. Therefore they need someone who says: "Come and get it".

g-star should empower people by assurance

The brandbook of G-star is used to define which way of empowering the consumer would fit the brand most. G-Star is an innovative company that wants to make innovative, new denim. They are challenging themselves to create tomorrow's denim classics by being trend setters instead of trend followers. This would make them appear innovative to their consumers.

Besides this, G-Star is focussing on three other qualities that will have an assuring effect on consumers. The company aims to:

DELIVER HIGH QUALITY

G-Star stands for high quality and creating premium denim that is also accessible.

BE A FRONTRUNNER IN SUSTAINABILITY

G-Star wants to be trendsetters in one of the most meaningful fields of interest of the consumers in the new context: sustainability and quality of life.

BE DIRECTIONAL IN DESIGN AND COMMUNICATION

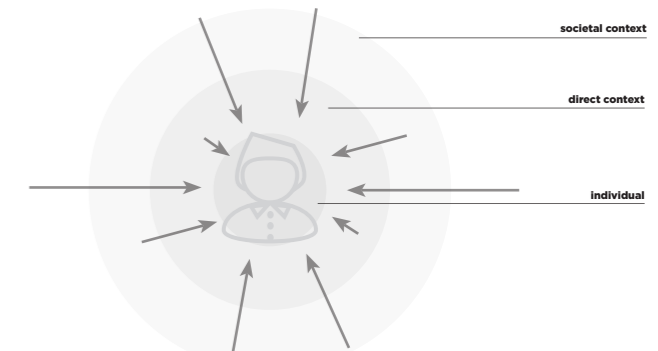
The tone of voice of G-Star is directional and respectful, both factual and humble, which should have a calming effect on consumers.

All together, this makes G-Star a company that is pushing innovation, that is delivering high quality and communicates in a very clear way to the consumer. These are all assuring factors that are saying: "Hey, we are G-Star, we are the right decision." Therefore G-Star is an innovative company that is acting assuring to their consumers.

consumer concern 2

ATTITUDE TO THE INSECURITY OF EXPRESSING IDENTITY

People who are insecure on how to express their identity, want to be empowered in some way.



EMPOWER TO INVOLVE INTO A PEER GROUP
G-Star can empower people by making the respect of others more important than the feeling of expressing individual uniqueness.



EMPOWER TO STAND OUT INDIVIDUALLY
G-Star can empower people by making people feel that they can express their individual uniqueness without losing the respect of a peer group

g-star should empower people to stand out

To find out which way of empowerment would fit better to G-Star, the mission of the company will be consulted. The mission of G-Star is to 'inspire people to be game-changers by being one ourselves'. A game-changer is described as an event, idea, or procedure that affects a significant shift in the current way of doing or thinking about something.

To enable people to do this they need to be able to have full influence on expressing their own unique values and characteristics and not feel restricted by anyone or anything. Therefore G-Star should empower people to stand out individually to make them express their uniqueness.

forming statement

The previous page explains how G-Star should respond to the two state of minds of people in the future context. We are able to combine those two responses, resulting in the following statement:



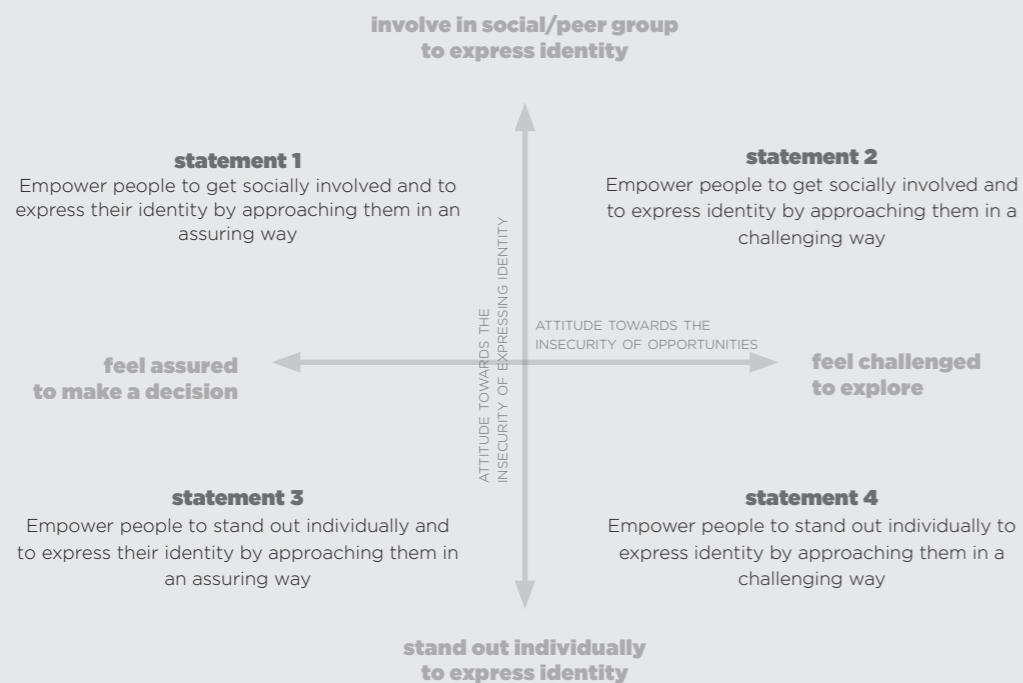
**I WANT G-STAR TO
EMPOWER PEOPLE TO
STAND OUT INDIVIDUALLY
AND TO EXPRESS THEIR
UNIQUE VALUES BY
APPROACHING THEM IN
AN ASSURING WAY**

other statements

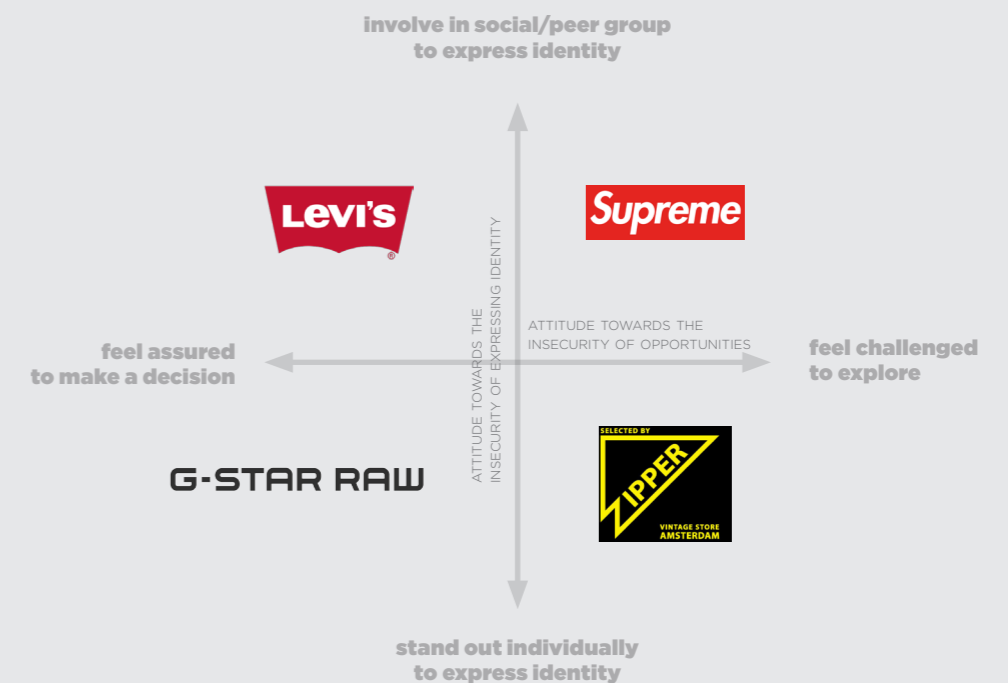
By combining the two dimensions, four quadrants will appear. From these quadrants four statements could be derived. The other statements describe different strategies that could have been taken but I think that the chosen one is the one that fits best to G-Star.

To make this even more clear the other statements are related to other brands.

STATEMENTS: ROLES THAT G-STAR COULD HAVE TAKEN TO REACT ON CONSUMER BEHAVIOR



STATEMENTS: WHICH WOULD FIT TO WHICH COMPANY?



other companies

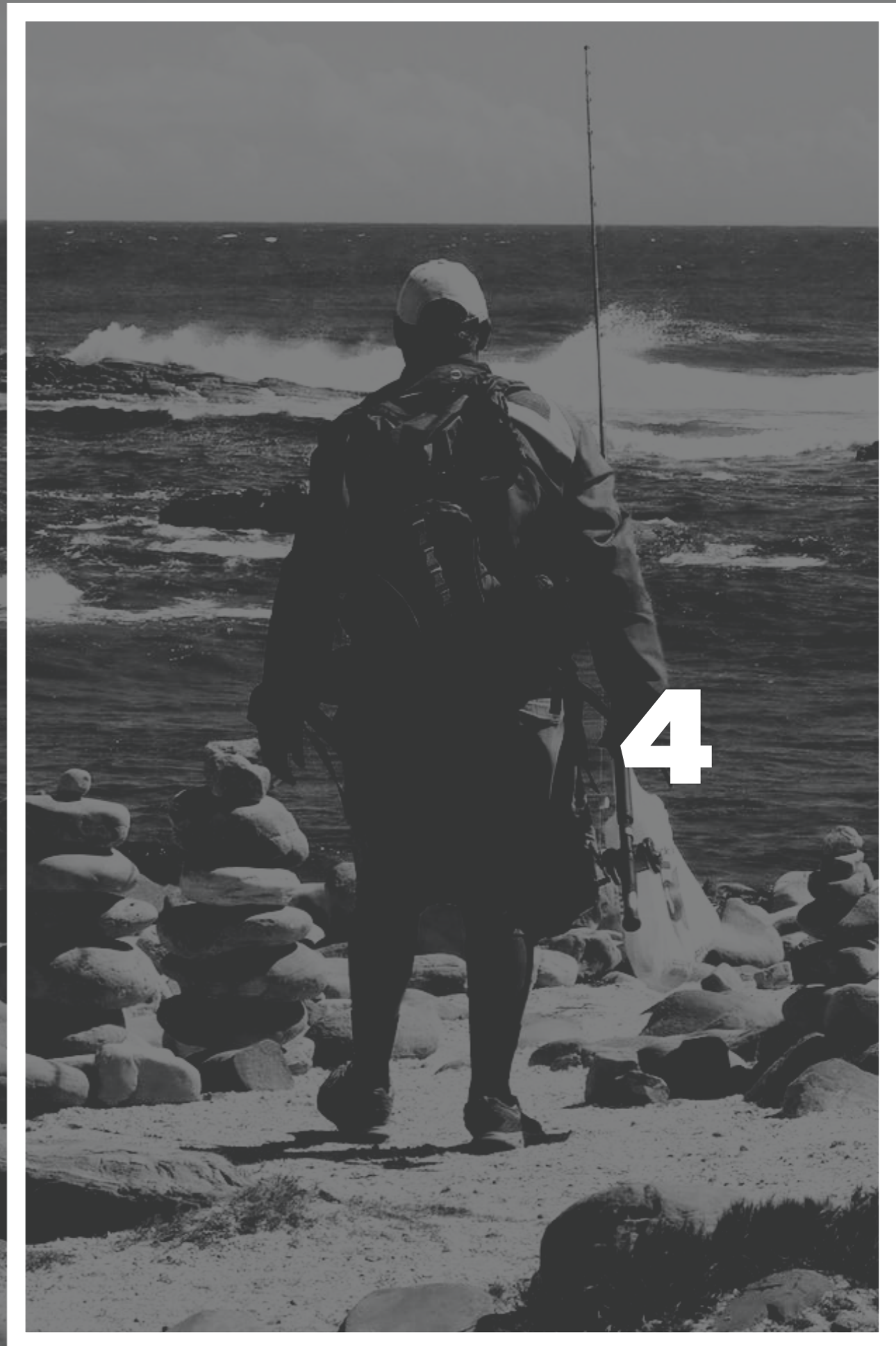
To give some insight in the meaning and differences between the statements of the quadrants other brands will be used to describe them. Levi's is a company that approaches people in an assuring way by being very authentic. The designs of their clothes are quite basic and therefore widely supported by a broad audience. Supreme is acting more challenging by keeping their products scarce, and therefore people want to join the peer group. A vintage store like Zipper is all about insecurity, you never know what to find and all the pieces are unique. This is what it makes it challenging and individualising.

chapter 4/new context experience of consumers

IN THE PREVIOUS CHAPTER A STATEMENT IS CREATED THAT DESCRIBES THAT G-STAR SHOULD APPEAR TO CONSUMERS IN AN ASSURING WAY. IN THIS CHAPTER IT WILL BE DISCOVERED WHAT THIS ASSURING INTERACTION BETWEEN THE BRAND AND THE CONSUMER INVOLVES.

4.1 CONSUMER EXPERIENCE - INTERACTION

Envisioning the interaction in an early phase of the design process, provides designers a different perspective on their design situation that is not limited by constraints of the product or the user.



assuring consumers to express identity as main purpose of the brand

I stated that G-Star should empower people to express their identity individually by approaching them in an assuring way. This is considered as the main purpose of the brand. To be able to do that, the consumer state of mind is going through a couple of phases.

consumer phases of mindstates and moment of interaction

To understand when the interaction between the consumer and the brand takes place, it is important to understand which phases the consumer will go through. In Chapter 3 is discussed that the consumer most of the time wanders around subconsciously in the new context. A confrontation with a brand expression of G-Star should get the consumer out of this subconscious state of mind. This is the moment where the interaction starts. The next phases of the consumers' state of mind are based on the strategy that the statement unveils: Empower people to stand out individually to express their unique values by approaching them in an assuring way.

Four stages that the consumer will go through:

STAGE 1: SUBCONSCIOUSLY WANDERING AROUND
The consumer is wandering around subconsciously through the overload of influences.

STAGE 2: IDENTIFICATION - BEING CONFRONTED WITH AN IDENTITY EXPRESSION OF G-STAR AND BECOMING ASSURED BY THIS IDENTITY EXPRESSION
To be able to express identity, people first need to be able to meet, understand and reflect on the brand expressions to see if they identify with the brand expressions.

STAGE 3: MOLD INDIVIDUAL IDENTITY BEFORE EXPRESSING INDIVIDUAL IDENTITY
Before people can express their identity they first need to get the opportunity to enrich it. Therefore people need to be able to mold their own identity by selecting and/or influencing G-Star identity expressions.

STAGE 4: FEELING ASSURED TO SELF-DETERMINE TO EXPRESS IDENTITY INDIVIDUALLY
The consumer feels assured to express identity.

The interaction starts at the identification stage (stage 2). By confronting the consumers, they fall into a moment of insecurity and therefore they should be assured to become empowered to mold and thereafter express identity individually.

assuring interaction

Now that is specified when the assuring interaction takes place it will be explained how this interaction will feel to the consumer. Therefore a description of the meaning of assurance will be given:

ASSURANCE
If you are assuring, you relieve someone else's fears. When your sister takes her first dive, you might want to give her an assuring pat on the back.

The verb assure has origins in the Old French word *asseurer*, meaning "to reassure, calm, protect, and render sure." If you are a coach, you may find yourself assuring your athletes of their preparedness and ability so they overcome their game-day jitters and have the confidence to do their best. Assuring can be used as an adjective, too: you are an assuring parent if you exhibit confidence in your child's abilities, which will bolster his self confidence. (Vocabulary.com)

how an assuring interaction should feel in the new context

To 'wake up' the consumer from its subconscious state of mind they need to be confronted with a brand expression that they are able to identify with. Therefore the expression needs to be *clarifying*. But to not scare the critical consumer it should feel *unconstraining*. Now that the brand has gotten their attention they need to make sure that the consumer stays attentive.

G-Star should not do this by overloading them with dynamic expressions, but by giving them a *moment of evaluation* that *fascinates* them. By evaluating the expressions, they feel like getting more empowered to self-determine how they want to express their identity via expressions of the brand. The moment of fascination and evaluation is assuring them.

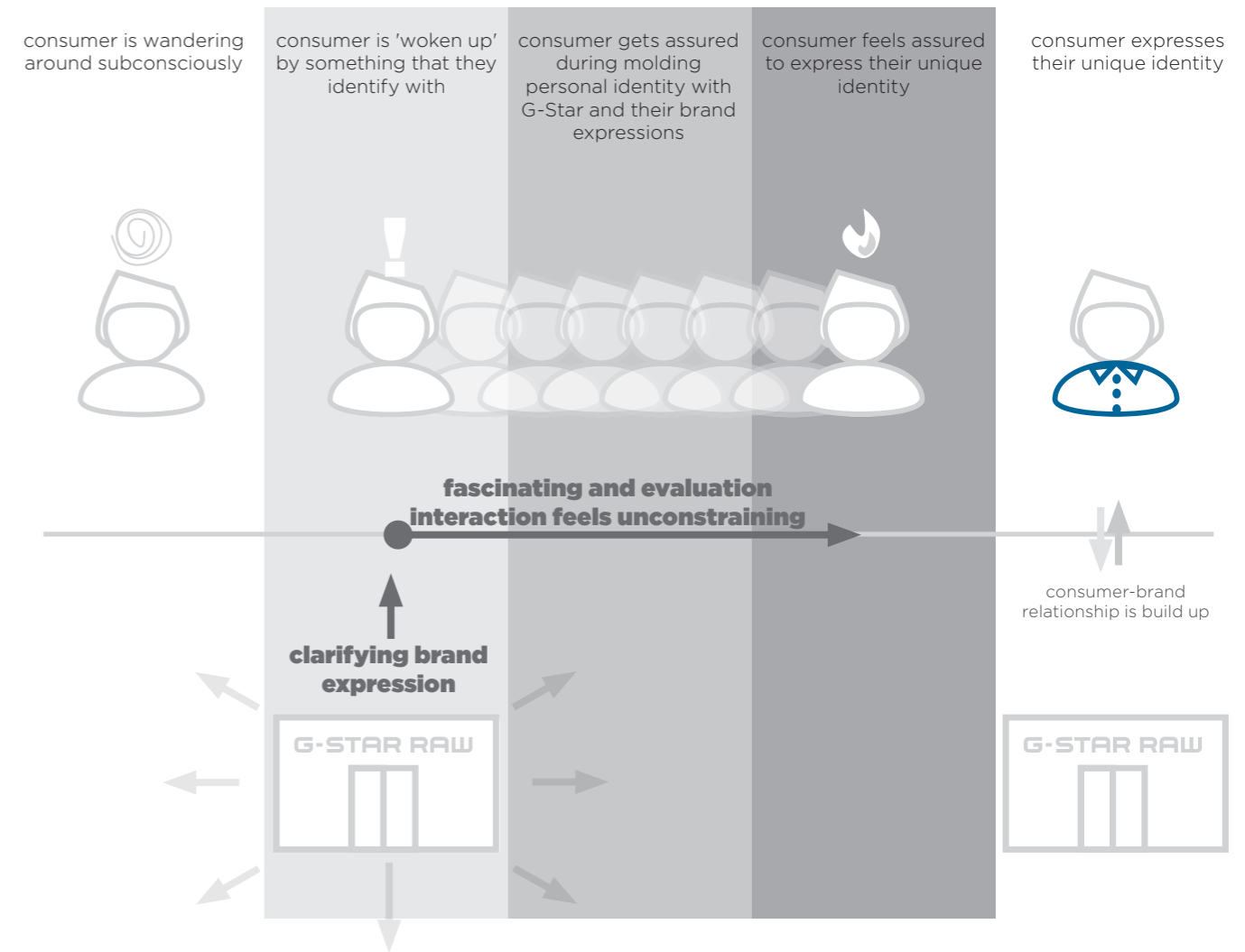


FIGURE 29: INTERACTION OVERVIEW

conclusion

The interaction that occurs should assure people to express their identity. To be able to assure consumers, the interaction has to be based on the following qualities: *Clarifying, fascinating, evaluating and unconstraining.*

Now that the interaction qualities are defined, there is looked into which brand qualities fit G-Star to be able to meet the interaction qualities. This is discussed in subchapter 4.2.



LIKE GETTING WELL-MEANT ADVICE FROM THE BIG GUY IN THE GYM

interaction metaphor

So far the envisioned interaction has only been described by words. To make sure what is meant with those words, an interaction metaphor has been set up.

Imagine that you are training in the gym. In every gym there are always the big guys who are looking more muscular than you. Sometimes they might look very impressive but actually they are very friendly and above all very passionate about what they do. One day while you are training very hard, the big guy passes by but then he suddenly approaches you and asks what you want to achieve with your training. You start thinking about your goals and answers hesitating that you want to become stronger.

The big guy frankly smiles and says:

"Okay stop there then, let me give you some tips".

The guy patiently gives you some tips and due to his experience and passion you feel assured after his explanation. When you know what to do, he greets you and says: *"See you around".*

You feel free to proceed with your exercises but you take his tips into account while trying to make progress. The next times that you enter the gym you greet each other and you know that you can always approach him if you want some advise.

4.2 G-STAR APPEARANCE - BRAND QUALITIES

In this subchapter will be discussed how G-Star should appear to the consumer to be assuring in the new context. To understand which qualities G-Star needs to have to assure consumers, there is referred back to the context to see what qualities are highly valued in the new context. These qualities will eventually be matched to the brand values of G-Star.

g-star should be unpretentiously bold

G-Star should be assuring by being unpretentiously bold. By being unpretentiously bold, I envision that G-Star is still able to meet their value of being RAW. by doing this in a way that is purely experienced as empathic by the consumer. Below the descriptions of unpretentiousness and boldness are given.

UNPRETENTIOUS

The adjective unpretentious is perfect for describing someone you know who's modest and natural.

Pretentious comes from the Latin word meaning "pretend," *præterensus*, so when you're unpretentious, you see no reason to pretend. Some of your favorite people are probably unpretentious, tending to be honest and genuine. When extremely talented or well-known people are unpretentious, they feel no need to show or remind you of their accomplishments. A place can also be described as unpretentious, if it's straightforward and comfortable, somewhere you like to hang out (vocabulary.com, 2018).

BOLD

Someone who's bold is daring and brave. You might show how bold you are by climbing onto the roof of your house, or by speaking up when you see someone being treated unfairly.

When you act in a bold way, you're taking some kind of risk; you could be risking physical danger, embarrassment, or your reputation. Whatever bold actions you take, they are confident and fearless. The adjective bold can also be used to describe a particular typeface that is thick, dark, and confident. Bold type is often used to emphasize something strongly (vocabulary.com, 2018)

From the context could be derived that honesty, openness and modesty of brands are making a brand appear more authentic and real in the new context. On the other hand is being innovative, directivity, creative and expertise highly appreciated and will therefore be assuring to consumers. When combining these qualities together a tension appears that feels interesting and highly relevant in the new context. This tension is described with the description unpretentiously bold.

g-star approach in vision

Now that is envisioned how G-Star should behave towards the consumer, a first expression of the brand is created in the form of a text and a video. The video is made to be used as starting point to come up with a design. It is combining the context, the statement, the way of interaction and the product qualities in one expression.



unpretentiously

BOLD

HEY
 WHERE ARE YOU GOING?
 WHERE ARE YOU HEADING TO?
 WHAT DO YOU WANT?
 WHO DO YOU WANT TO BE?
 WHO ARE YOU?
 WE ARE HERE.
 HERE TO HELP YOU.
 HERE TO ADVISE YOU.
 HERE TO SUPPORT YOU.
 HERE TO INSPIRE YOU.
 NOT TO TAKE YOU BY THE HAND.
 BUT TO MAKE YOU EVALUATE YOU.
 WHO ARE YOU?

WE KNOW SOME THINGS.
 WE HAVE EXPERIENCE.
 EXPERTISE.
 WE DO EFFORT.
 WE BELIEVE IN SUSTAINABILITY.
 WE ARE HONEST.
 BUT SYMPATHETIC.
 WE ARE RAW.

COME INTO OUR WORLD.
 AND BE INSPIRED.
 BE FASCINATED.

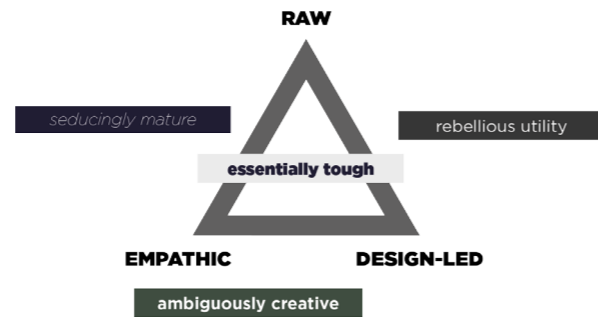
BE ASSURED TO FLOURISH.
 TO EXPLORE YOU.
 TO DISCOVER YOU.
 YOU CAN DO WHATEVER YOU WANT.
 EXPRESS YOUR UNIQUENESS.
 WE WILL BE THERE WHEN YOU NEED US.

INSPIRE YOU.
 INSPIRE US.

G-STAR RAW

translating the new brand qualities into g-star identity pillars

Being unpretentiously bold can still feel as a quite broad and vague description. To describe what it really means for G-Star, four word combinations are set up. These combinations are more concretely describing the way G-Star should appear. The descriptions will be called identity pillars during the rest of this report.



ESSENTIALLY TOUGH

G-Star Raw is denim. As the name initiates G-Star is specialized in creating products that are descending from raw denim, which is a pure, sober and tough material. G-Star does not take the stage by using screaming bright colors, they stand out by individuals wearing their innovative, functional and responsible denim based clothes. This unique story needs to be told convincingly but humble. Being consistent in communication and product quality assures people that G-Star is the right choice.

SEDUCINGLY MATURE

By asking the consumer questions with a straightforward but respectful tone of voice, G-Star opens a conversation with the consumer. G-star always initiates to start a mature dialogue based on genuine interest from both sides. Providing the consumers a clean, unconstraining but expertised service is what needs to be on top of mind to seduce them. By being honest and transparent about how they share the world in a responsible way, they have no reason to pretend.

REBELLIOUS UTILITY

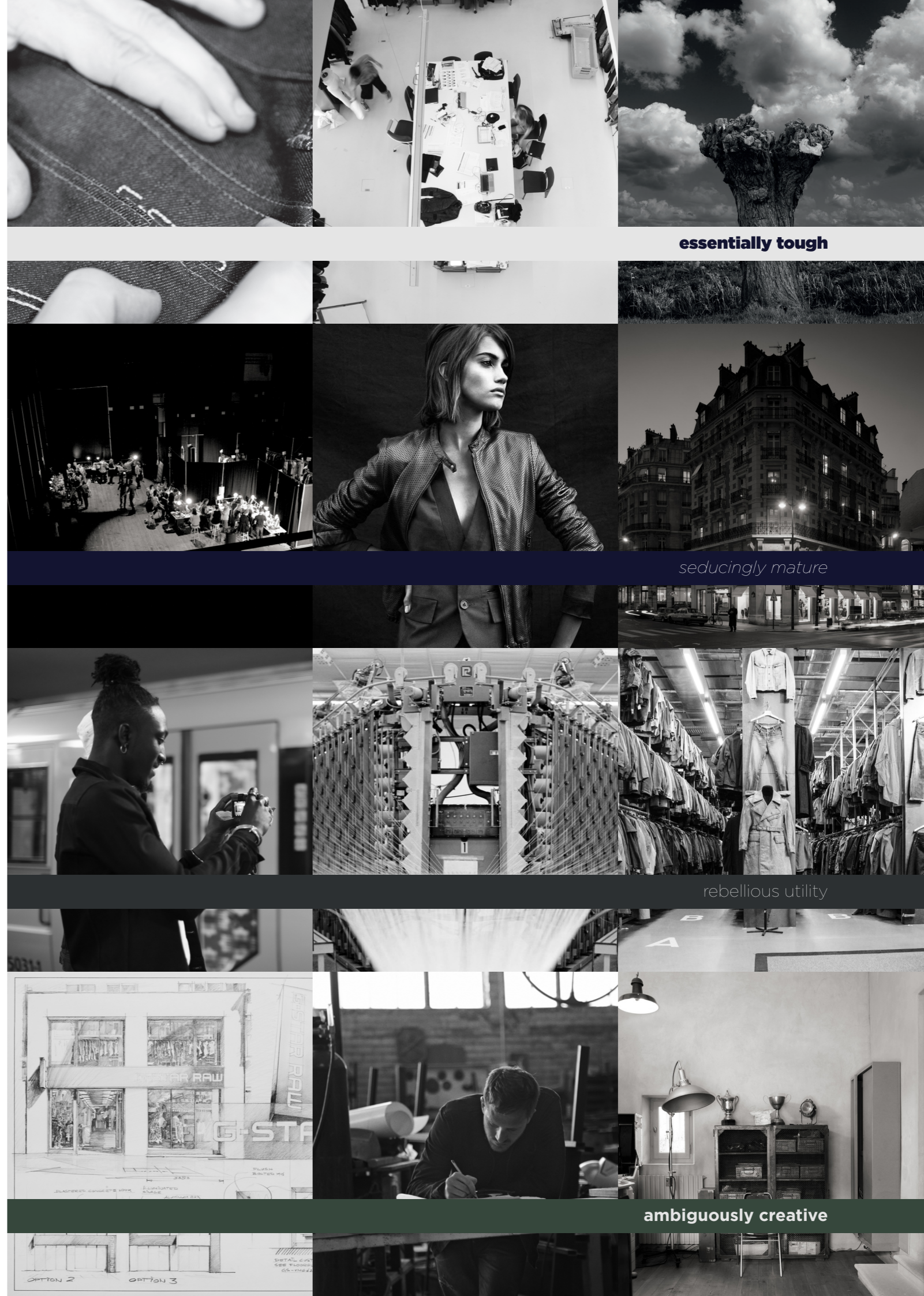
G-Star envisions clothes as functional products. G-Star believes that beauty is hiding in the utility of products and clothes are the products that people wear everyday. Inspired by functional workwear from the past, new rebellious wear for people to stand out and hit the streets is made. Denim is a living material, the more it is worn, the better it fits to the consumers identity and lifestyle.

AMBIGUOUSLY CREATIVE

Denim is a material with endless opportunities, it is a fascinating material and G-Star is able to do anything with it. G-Star should not be fascinating to the consumer by appearing dynamic and super enthusiastic. G-Star fascinates by being understanding, down-to-earth and docile but progressive, creative and a little unintelligible. G-Star takes raw denim as a starting point and dares to explore with it to make unconventional creations that triggers consumers to express their uniqueness. By being flexible and showing interest in local passions, G-Star is inspired by the uniqueness of their community.

conclusion

In this chapter the general appearance of G-Star is described as unpretentiously bold. From this description identity pillars are derived to give a more detailed description about the envisioned appearance of G-Star towards the consumer. In this way is aimed to match the raw, empathy and design-led based identity of G-Star with the image of consumers about the brand.



chapter 5/new context g-star as holistic platform

SO FAR HAS BEEN DISCUSSED HOW G-STAR SHOULD APPEAR TO MEET THE STATEMENT. THIS CHAPTER WILL DISCUSS FURTHER HOW IT SHOULD FUNCTION AS A PLATFORM OF ONLINE AND OFFLINE ENVIRONMENTS THAT FACILITATE CONSUMER INTERACTION.

5.1 G-STAR BECOMES A HOLISTIC PLATFORM

I believe that G-Star as a brand becomes a holistic platform of many different online and offline environments that are all constantly connected. All these connected environments are creating situations of interaction that together serve to assure people in expressing their identity.

HOLISTIC: HOLISTIC MEANS ENCOMPASSING THE WHOLE OF A THING, AND NOT JUST THE PART (VOCABULARY.COM, 2017)



FIGURE 30: G-STAR AS A HOLISTIC PLATFORM OF MANY CONNECTED CONSUMER TOUCHPOINTS



applying the statement to the platform

Back in the days, consumers had less options to switch between the environments of a brand. Most of the consumer phases of interaction took place at the physical store, that was the environment to seal the deal.

In the new context, the interaction and the phases of the consumers' state of minds that are described in Chapter 4, will not only take place at a single consumer environment but over multiple merging environments. To be able to adapt to the consumers, an analysis is made of how to design those environments to meet the needs and wishes of the consumer during the different phases. This means that G-Star's environments will be designed to optimally utilize their characteristics to serve the consumer in their needs.

Therefore the following has been questioned:

How to serve the consumer the best in every phase they are going through?

To answer this question it first needs to be further defined.

environments fulfill sub purposes during phases of interaction

I stated that G-Star should empower people to express their identity individually by approaching them in an assuring way. Expressing identity is considered as the main concern for consumers and empower them to do that is the main purpose of G-Star. When looking into the consumer phases in the new context, sub purposes that serve the main purpose are derived.

A G-Star environment does not have to fulfill all sub purposes anymore. Since brands become holistic platforms, all touchpoints should be connected and complement each other. The mentioned sub purposes are not needed at all environments and can be fulfilled at a specific brand environment.

Therefore the following question arises:

Which sub purpose are needed to fulfill and how do those environments need to be designed?

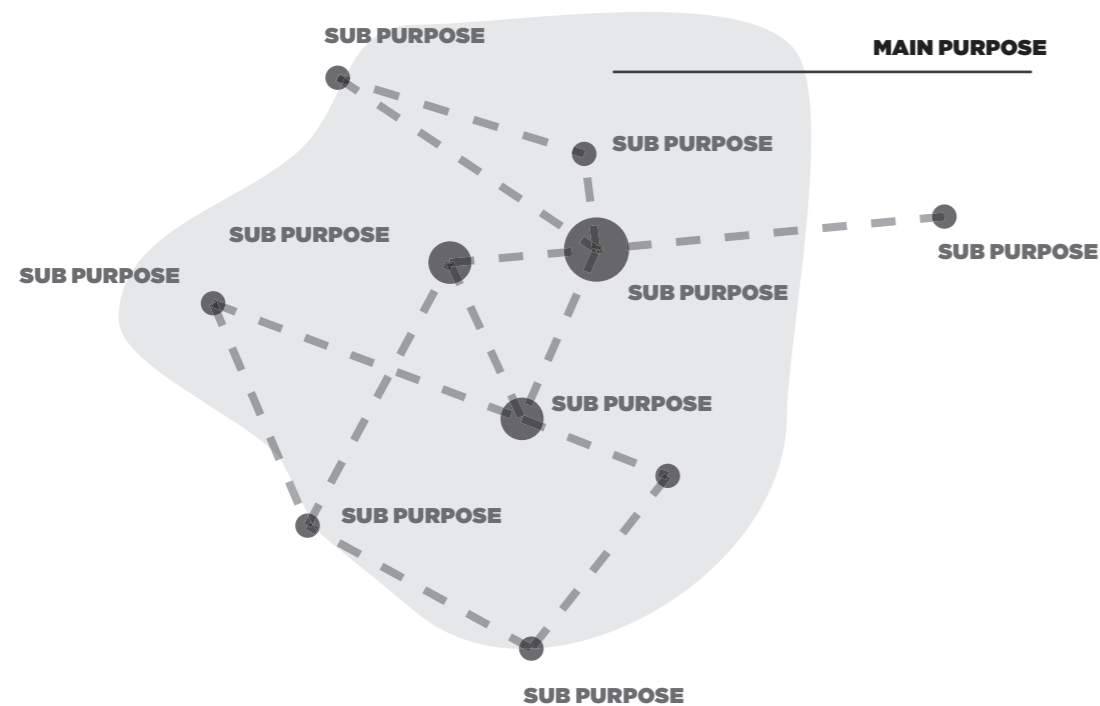


FIGURE 31: ALL CONNECTED G-STAR ENVIRONMENTS SERVE THE MAIN PURPOSE OF EXPRESSING IDENTITY

general brand development - holistic platforms

The time of only meeting a brand in brick-and-mortar is over. Brands will turn into holistic systems which are seamlessly integrated in the lifestyles of their users. People do not visit a brand environment just because of the functional reason of purchasing, they have multiple reasons to visit.

Because all touchpoints are connected, not every physical retail environment has to touch all the consumer needs by themselves. Consumers do not only physically or digitally visit you, they use both channels at the same moment; a phenomenon that is also known as blurring.

Multiple consumers have multiple missions and preferences at a brand's interaction environment and even at parts or elements of such an environment. All those environments are linked to each other. They are expected to be adapted to each other to be able to offer the user a consistent and seamless experience that fits in their flexible lifestyles.

Brands that keep reaching their users in separate channels will not survive, they need to function as networks. Together the touchpoints of a brand need to appear open and transparent to be inviting. People want it to be so inviting that they are able to leave their mark in the companies. New initiatives, start-ups, collaborations and the development of open source strategies are used to become closer to users' lifestyles. Barriers do not exist anymore, otherwise users step into another journey.

two main drivers for this development

Two main drivers for this development could be derived from the context. These drivers are interrelated to each other.

ENDLESS COMPETITION MAKE CONSUMERS MORE CRITICAL AND LESS LOYAL

Due to the endless competition, brands are pushed to please consumers in many more ways. They are providing experiences that are not directly related to the brand's core business. Consumers are therefore constantly developing new needs and got more critical. Consumers expect brands to create experiences around their products and to be there when they want them to be there. When brands are not matching these expectations, people will easily look further and get in touch with other brands.

TECHNOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENTS ARE GIVING BRANDS THE POSSIBILITY TO OFFER MORE SITUATIONS OF INTERACTION

Due to technological developments brands are able to offer more and more flexible environments to interact with the consumer. Barriers do not exist anymore, otherwise users step into journeys of other brands. Consumers are now able to interact with brands everywhere and vice versa are brands always able to reach the consumer, sometimes even if they are not aware of it. Therefore brands will become more seamlessly involved into the lifestyles of consumers.

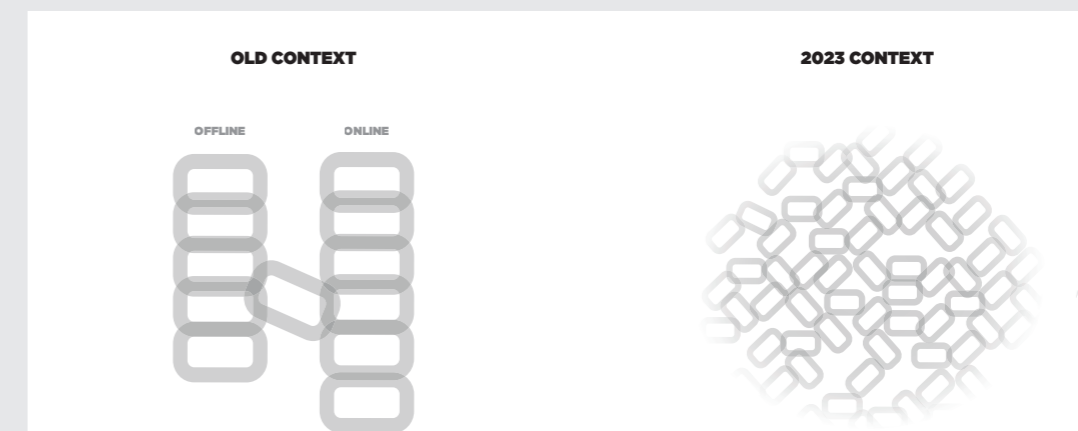


FIGURE 32: IN THE NEW CONTEXT CONSUMERS HAVE MORE OPPORTUNITIES TO SWITCH BETWEEN DIFFERENT ONLINE AND OFFLINE BRAND ENVIRONMENTS

sub purposes per environment

The questions that have been asked on the previous page will be answered for each consumer phase on this page.

sub purposes to fulfill at G-Star's online and offline environments

<p>STEP 1: IDENTIFICATION</p>	<p>ENCOUNTER G-STAR'S IDENTITY EXPRESSIONS Getting in touch with the brand and their brand expressions.</p> <p>UNDERSTAND G-STAR'S IDENTITY EXPRESSIONS AND MEET THEM TO PERSONAL IDENTITY Getting a deeper understanding of the brand and their expressions.</p>
<p>STEP 2: MOLDING OF INDIVIDUAL IDENTITY</p>	<p>REFLECTION OF OWN IDENTITY TO G-STAR'S IDENTITY EXPRESSIONS Consumers need to be able to evaluate if G-Star expressions match to their own identity.</p> <p>SELECTION OF G-STAR'S IDENTITY EXPRESSIONS TO ENRICH PERSONAL IDENTITY Consumers need to be able to select the G-Star's identity expressions that the visitor wants to mold their identity with.</p>
<p>STEP 3: ENABLING EXPRESSION OF INDIVIDUAL IDENTITY</p>	<p>EXPRESSION OF UNIQUE IDENTITY Expressing the uniqueness of their molded identity with G-Star brand expressions.</p>

SIDE NOTE: BRAND EXPRESSIONS DO NOT NECESSARILY HAVE TO BE CLOTHES. IT COULD BE ANYTHING THAT CAN BE COLLECTED BY THE CONSUMER IN TERMS OF PRODUCTS, INFORMATION AND EXPERIENCES.

identification

People need to be able to identify with G-Star's brand expressions. Therefore they have to get in touch with these expressions and they need to be able to gain deeper understanding of them.

To make people identify with G-Star, the following strategy is set up:

From the context it became clear that people are more often **looking for activities that fit their interests to escape everyday reality**. People are more often going to have drinks on terraces, to cinemas to watch a film and to visit the stores they like. This does not mean that people are all going to the same places in the city centre; they specifically **go to the places and areas that fit their own identity**. For this reason, people want their favourite cinema to offer an exclusive range of movies, the terraces should serve that one special beer they like and the retail environments should sell that specialized brand in a street with other retail environments that are related to a similar identity.

When G-Star is planning to open a **physical environment** in a particular area they should discover if the brand fits to the identity of that area. When it does, G-Star will reach the people they want to reach. By **seeing peer people** wearing the brand expressions of G-Star around those areas, more dedicated consumers get in touch with the brand and due to the area identity they will better understand what the brand is about.

The same also applies to **online environments**. By relating G-Star to brands and brand ambassadors that target groups identify with, people that are relating to them will also relate to G-Star. Collaborations between brands can create unique and creative expressions and therefore they trigger people and get on top of mind. Social platforms like Instagram, Youtube and Whatsapp can fulfill the role of encountering the brand and could link the visitor to the website to get deeper understanding of the brand and its expressions.

molding identity

In this stage consumers are molding their identity before they proceed to express their uniqueness. Therefore they need be able to reflect their identity to the identity expressions of G-Star. This reflection assures them to select the brand expressions that they want to mold their identity with. It is important to emphasize that consumers are not creating a totally new identity; they already have their own identity that they enrich with G-Star expressions.

People are highly valuing a **real and personal attention**. Therefore the G-Star environments that facilitate the visitor in this identity molding phase should be focussed on this. In 2023, human interaction is a highly valued form of real and personal attention, according to cluster 6 of the context. The insecurity at the reflection phase can be very frightening for people and therefore a personal **human relationship to a peer person** is of huge importance to the consumer. Besides that, reflection on identity expressions by enabling **real physical interactions** like touching material and fitting jeans will still be the best way to experience products and their fabrics. The combination of these factors are underlining the urge of physical environments. The core purpose of physical environments therefore shifts from enabling purchasing to **providing human service to enable consumers to select G-Star identity expressions and reflect on them to mold their personal identity**.

This does not mean that this is the only way to give visitors the opportunity to mold their identity with G-Star brand expressions. Because of the **busy lives** that people live they are not always able to visit a physical environment of G-Star. They want to go through the molding process **on demand**, this can be done by setting up an **online profile**. Entering their own characteristics and preferences (partly based on social media data) enables them to make their profile as personal as possible, whereafter they will be able to mold and enrich it with G-Star identity expressions and expressions that are related to that. The online and offline environments are merging to complement each other, using the online profile to save expressions that consumers run into in the physical world is the future.

To make the online profile feel as real and personal as possible, it should become a **dialogue tool**. Artificial intelligence enables the consumer to speak to it, when they want new inspiration or when they want to buy something. By using augmented reality they are able to experience the brand expressions to make them also experience the brand expressions on demand.

People want to have **influence on the expressions of the brand** and **feel involved with the brand**. When a brand enables them to do this, they will become assured easier during the process of molding their identity, therefore these principles need to be implemented in this phase of the consumer interaction.

expression of unique identity

In the new context, G-Star needs to function as a platform to facilitate identity expression. By involving them in the brand they can share thoughts and interests with peer people and inspire each other with their identities.

As said, physical environments will more often become places for consumers to mold their identity, but they **also facilitate the opportunity to express themselves and share thoughts** about identity expressions to peer people. This will make the physical environments **meeting places of all kinds of identities**. Expression will also be possible via the online profile which can be shared with peer people via a G-Star platform or via social media.

By enabling G-Star visitors to set up a profile, they will be able to **collect digital manifestations of G-Star identity expressions**. This process will become different at the physical environments than it used to be. Visitors will be able to **experience products, but they will not always be able to physically collect it**. Not everything will be available directly at the physical touchpoints, but due to multiple storage hubs and Deliveroo-like delivery services **instant delivery will become possible**. Sealing the deal can still happen via the G-Star physical touchpoints but will more often happen via **marketplaces** that are seamlessly integrated in the logistic chains of the brand.

conclusion

Physical environments should fulfill the role of physical touchpoints, physical servicepoints and physical meetingpoints, located in areas that consumers are identifying with. **The focus of physical environments should be providing the service to consumers to mold their identity, due to the highly valued real and personal attention.**

The same division can be made for the online brand environments: **online touchpoints, online servicepoints and online meetingpoints.** The main advantage of online environments is that consumers are able to get or share things on demand. This is most valuable during the phase of identification. People can be reached anywhere at anytime and they can decide themselves when they dive deeper into the brand. Besides that, online platforms are also very interesting to express identity; people are able to collect and share expressions easily by setting up an online profile.

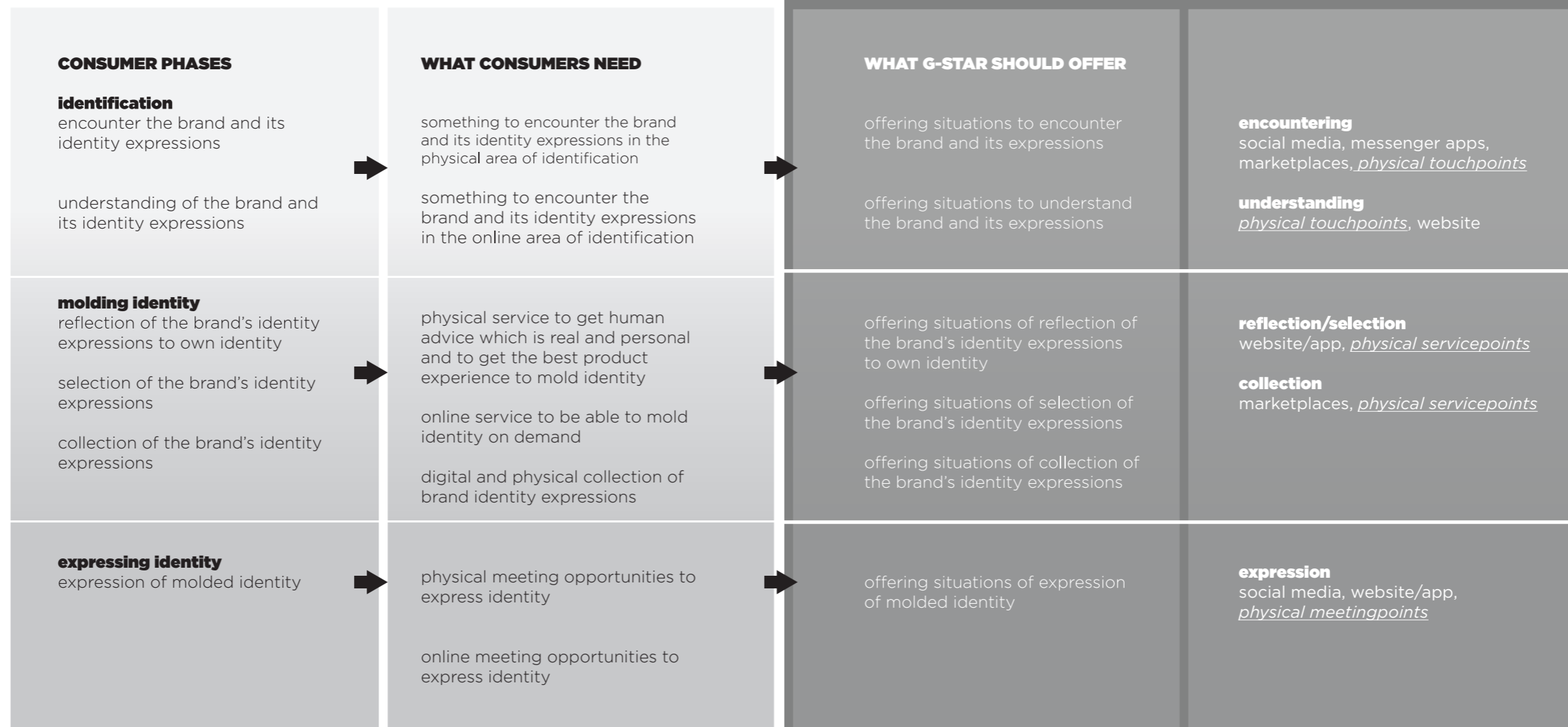


FIGURE 33: OVERVIEW OF HOW CONSUMER BEHAVIOR IS TRANSLATED INTO A ONLINE AND OFFLINE ENVIRONMENTS

g-star interaction environments

In the following text are the environments of consumer-brand interaction more specifically defined. The physical environments are combined into a single category, they will be defined in chapter 6. As visualized in the figure below are the interaction environments able to complement and substitute each other.

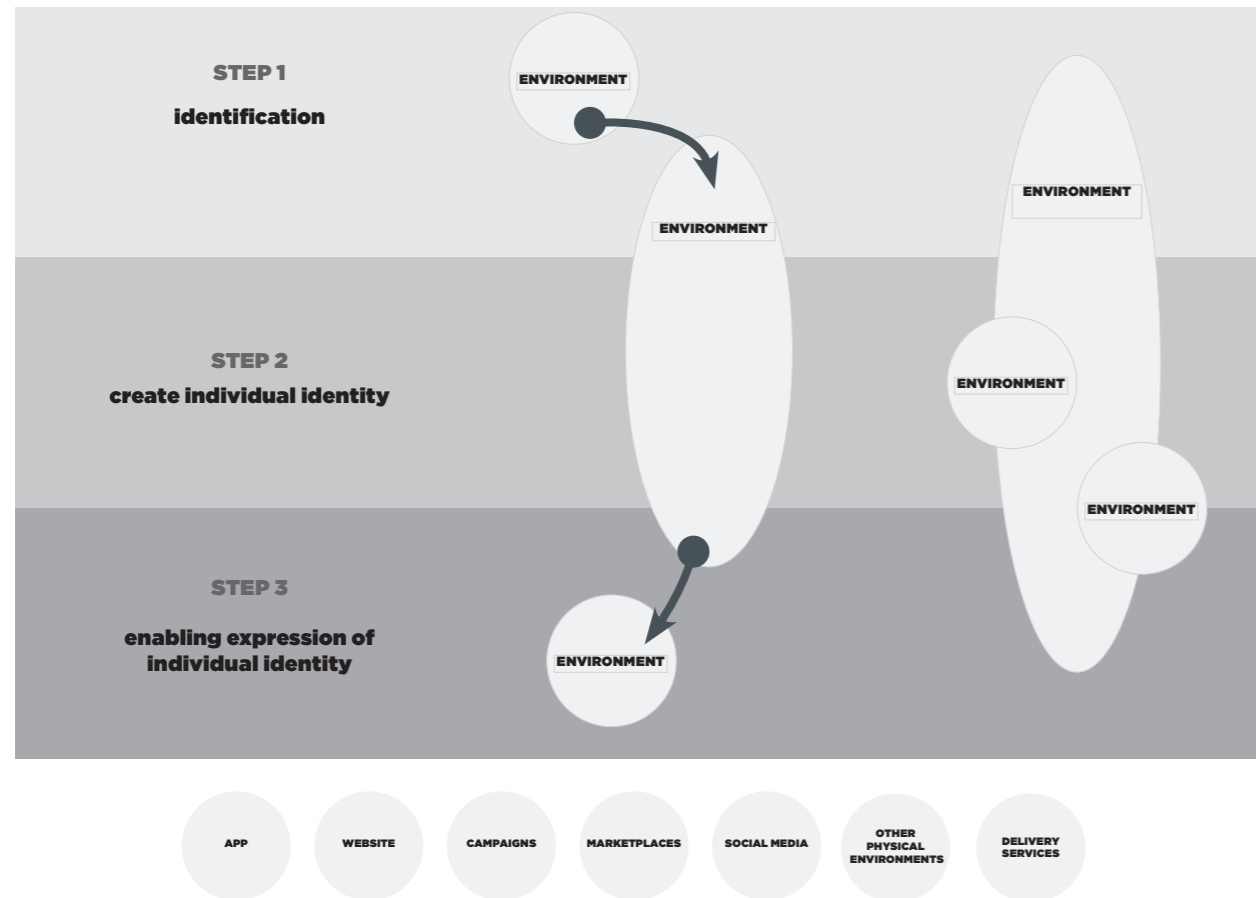


FIGURE 34: INTERACTION ENVIRONMENTS CAN COMPLEMENT AND SUBSTITUTE EACH OTHER

website

The website is envisioned as an online environment that is mostly important **to help people to get more understanding** of the brand and its brand expressions. Most people that are visiting the website are visiting it because they have already encountered a G-Star brand expression before. Visiting the website is envisioned as a directed action, there is already some kind of familiarity with the brand. The design has to be highly recognizable as a G-Star identity and people need to be able to identify with it. In that way understanding of the brand's identity is created and consumers will be able to reflect the G-Star identity on their own identity. In the new context the website will be better linked with the physical environments. Therefore it needs to provide in depth information in an on demand world.

app

The app that is envisioned can be seen as a mobile extension of the website. Where the website is a platform that is generally made to **inspire people to enrich their identity** by showcasing and storytelling, the app is doing this by *actively creating a profile* that fits to the personal characteristics of the consumer. Therefore it is also very closely connected to the social media profiles of the consumer. The consumer can choose whenever he/she wants to share things on those media, and in the meanwhile work on his/her masterpiece. In this app the consumer can build its identity by collecting pieces of clothing in its 'closet'. The app is a dialogue tool, artificial intelligence enables the consumer to speak to it when they want new inspiration or when they want to buy something.

marketplaces

The marketplaces will be increasingly involved in G-Star's sales process. **On platforms like Zalando and Amazon the final purchases will be made.** G-Star consumers will be linked from other G-Star environments to the website of those marketplaces. To make sure that G-Star stands out, G-Star has to have a 'sub site' on these marketplaces which is recognizable for consumers. Therefore it will become an environment where G-Star can be met between other brands and where the final sale can be made.

Physical environments are also changing because of the marketplaces. Consumers can select that they want to collect their package at the store locations. In this way the traffic in the physical environments will become higher and better service to the consumer can be offered.

social media/messenger apps

The social media accounts of G-Star will become more visual and personalized, but by keeping the values of unpretentiousness and boldness.

Social media are **platforms to share expressions with each other**, both between consumers as between companies and their (potential) consumers. In this way people can easily meet and involve in all the happenings and events that are related to the brand. It opens opportunities for brands to give people insight in their community and to let them join whenever they feel like.

Nowadays, 360 degrees videos and augmented reality are already starting to come up but it is not yet experienced so real that people can really step into the world of the brand. Many phones are not able to offer a seamless experience yet using these technologies but in five years this would not be a problem anymore. On social media everyone is able to keep in touch with their own interests and to show the creations that are made on the app and in the stores.

Messenger apps will become inspiration platforms with a direct connection to purchasing. In China this is already happening with WeChat. It will become the fastest way to buy products.

campaign

The purpose of a campaign should be determined on beforehand. Based on the purpose(s) of the campaigns can be decided which environments need to be used and how to design the campaign. Events, fairs and pop-ups are touchpoints that can be used for this.



FIGURE 35: A FORM OF A G-STAR CAMPAIGN EXPRESSION

delivery services

Delivery services are used to provide the consumer its ordered products as fast as possible at any place. Since physical touchpoints become service and stock hubs, systems like Deliveroo could be used to provide consumers with their clothes at anytime in a short amount of time.

physical environments

Since the assignment was to design product presentation in the physical environments of G-Star they will be discussed in a separate chapter. In this chapter will also become clear how the other interaction environments will function in combination with the physical environments.

chapter 6/new context consumer experience at physical environments

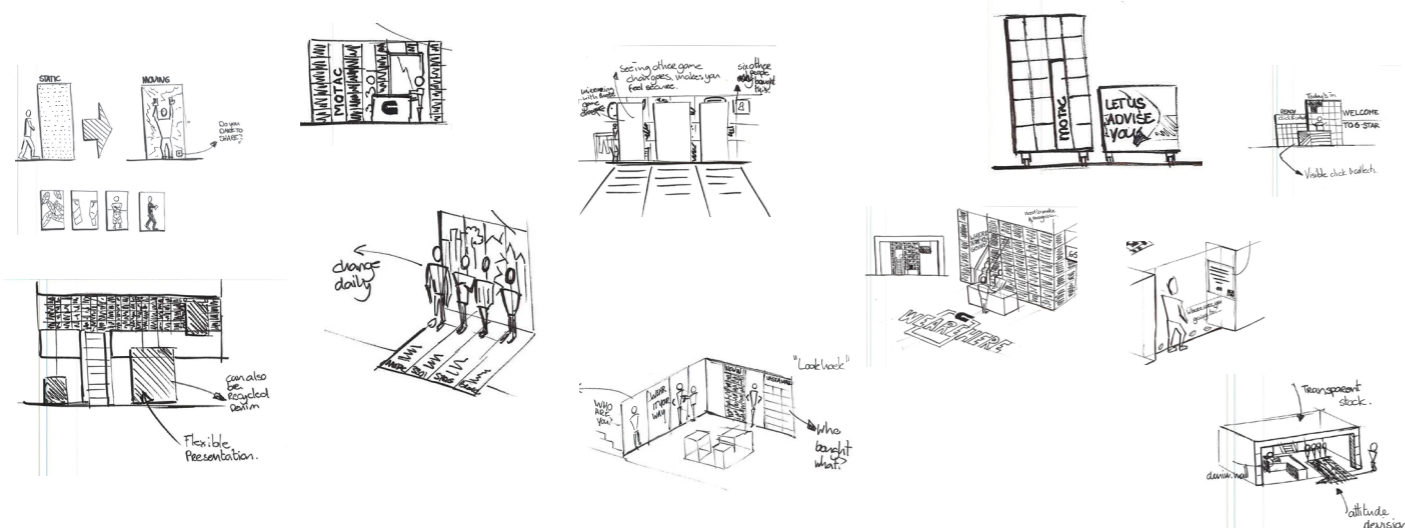
SINCE THE ASSIGNMENT WAS FOCUSED ON THE PHYSICAL PRODUCT EXPERIENCE IN THE STORES AND SHOPS, THE DESIGN OF A NEW PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT FOR G-STAR WILL BE HIGHLIGHTED IN A SEPARATE CHAPTER. DURING THIS CHAPTER, THE PROCESS OF DESIGNING A NEW CONSUMER EXPERIENCE FOR G-STAR WILL BE DESCRIBED.

6.1 IDEATION PROCESS

This project has started with the following question:

How to present G-Star RAW's products and communicate the product stories and features at the physical stores and shops, so that they create impactful product experiences that enable consumers to value the products in 2023, while they still provide a recognizable consumer brand experience?

As is explained before, the main purpose of the physical environments is based on the identity molding phase but it also allows consumers to go to the other phases of interaction. In this chapter, the concept will be explained based on those different phases. The definition store and shops do not cover the function of physical retail anymore and therefore they will be named physical identity environments during the rest of the report.



ideation

During the ideation phase explorations were done on how to translate the consumer brand interaction into a concept. Therefore multiple principles of identification have been separated, which are derived from the context, the new vision, a separate research about denim presentation in stores (appendix q) and a creative session with other design students.

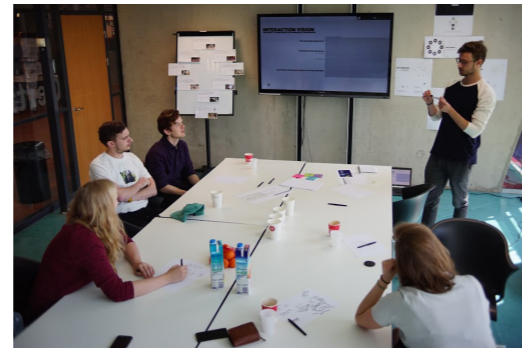


FIGURE 36: CREATIVE SESSION WITH DESIGN STUDENTS

principles of identification

PEOPLE IDENTIFY WITH PEER PEOPLE AND THEIR LIFESTYLES

People want to understand what the product means for them and what they can do with it. Consumers are relating themselves more easily to a product when this product is displayed in the context of an attitude/identity.

PEOPLE ARE TOUCHED BY STRONG, MEANINGFUL BRAND EXPRESSIONS

Brands that touch interests of consumers make it easier for them to relate to the brand. Creativity, authenticity and responsibility are topics that are highly valued.

PEOPLE WANT BRANDS TO BE OPEN AND DO EFFORT WITHOUT BEING INTRUSIVE

Environments that are lively and show human activity, are more easy to enter for consumers. It is assuring for people to see when there are other people in an environment. Besides that, consumers want to experience that they are able to ask for anything when they need something but also have the freedom to look around by themselves.

three exploration directions to find the best translation of the envisioned interaction

These three principles of identification are used to discover ideas in three exploration directions, which are the following:

EXPLORATION DIRECTION 1: CREATING IDENTITY ALONG IDENTITY ATTITUDES

This direction is based on consumer identification by making use of identity attitudes derived from the identity pillars of G-Star that are set up in chapter 4. The entrance area is functioning as a 'walk in window' to invite people to come in and explore the attitudes. The attitude division is extended all the way to the back of the store.

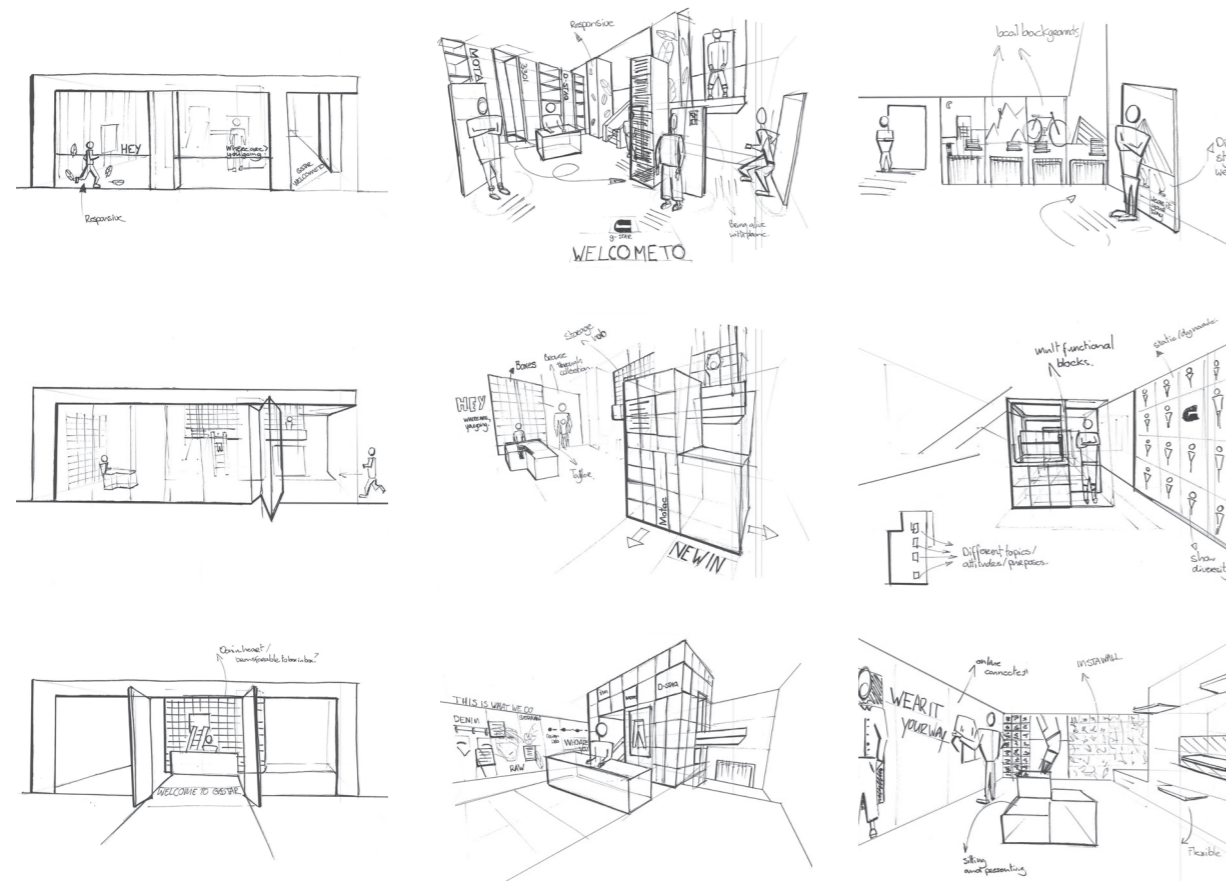
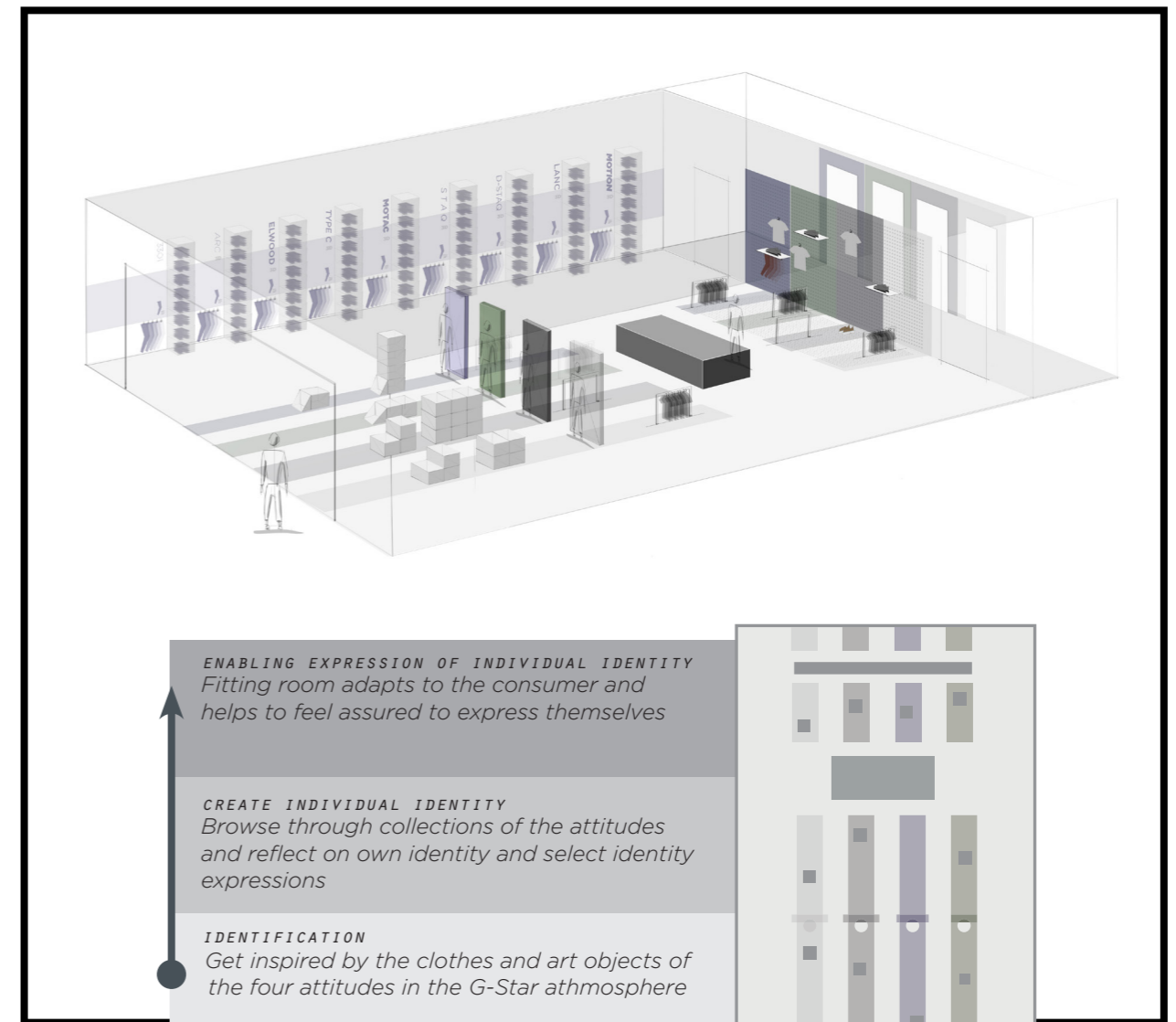


FIGURE 37: SKETCHES TO EXPLORE IDENTIFICATION AND IDENTITY MOLDING

ENABLING EXPRESSION OF INDIVIDUAL IDENTITY
Fitting room adapts to the consumer and helps to feel assured to express themselves

CREATE INDIVIDUAL IDENTITY
Browse through collections of the attitudes and reflect on own identity and select identity expressions

IDENTIFICATION
Get inspired by the clothes and art objects of the four attitudes in the G-Star atmosphere

self identification with attitudes

One of the key insights of side interviews with G-Star employees about the current jeans presentation (appendix q) is that consumers are relating themselves more easily to a product when this product is displayed in the context of an attitude/identity.

Explanation of an attitude is important to make people understand what this attitude is about, although some space for free interpretation can be left to trigger the imagination of people.

The attitude that a jeans can provide is created from a combination of its fit, material, color and design.

attitudes inspired the four identity pillars of g-star

To set up attitudes for the consumer to relate to, the identity pillars are used as a base

The four attitudes that are created, function as a starting point for consumers to find clothes to create their own identity.

4 attitudes

The four attitudes all need to be different to make people relate to them. Nevertheless, they all have to relate to the overall brand appearance of G-Star.

The attitudes will be presented visually to the consumers, but they won't be labelled with a title. This will create an atmosphere around them that people can identify by interpreting the attitudes in their own way.

The attitudes are meant as a clarification and guidance, but in the end the consumers need to be able to create their own identity by making a combination of the attitudes and their expressions. A more detailed description of those attitudes can be found in appendix b.

EXPLORATION DIRECTION 2: CREATING IDENTITY AROUND 'DENIM BREATHING' SERVICE CORE.

The consumer is identifying with G-Star by the impact of the denim area, a brand identity exposition and the activity of the staff. The consumers are guided around the service core and are therefore able to create their identity around it (appendix c).

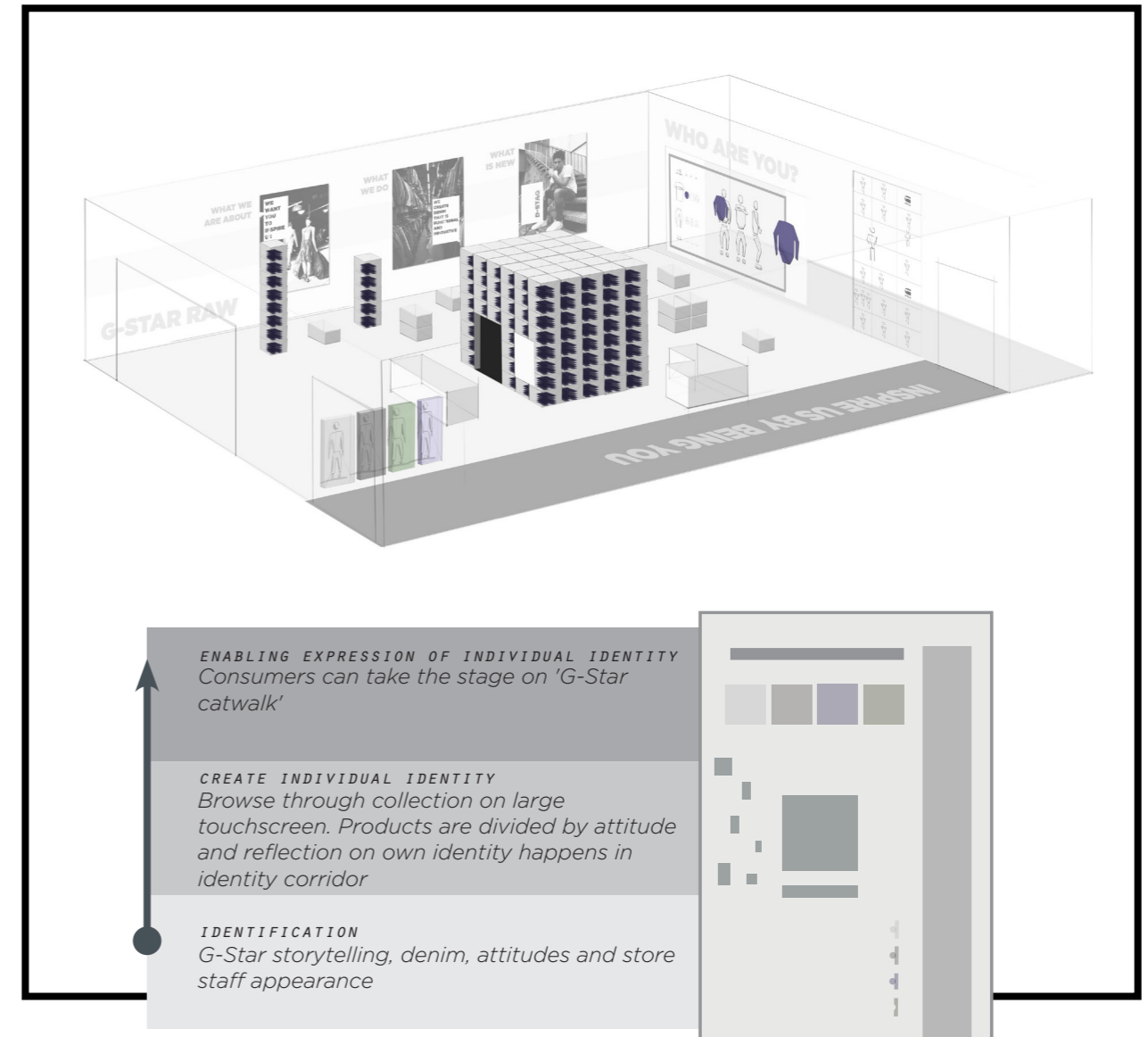
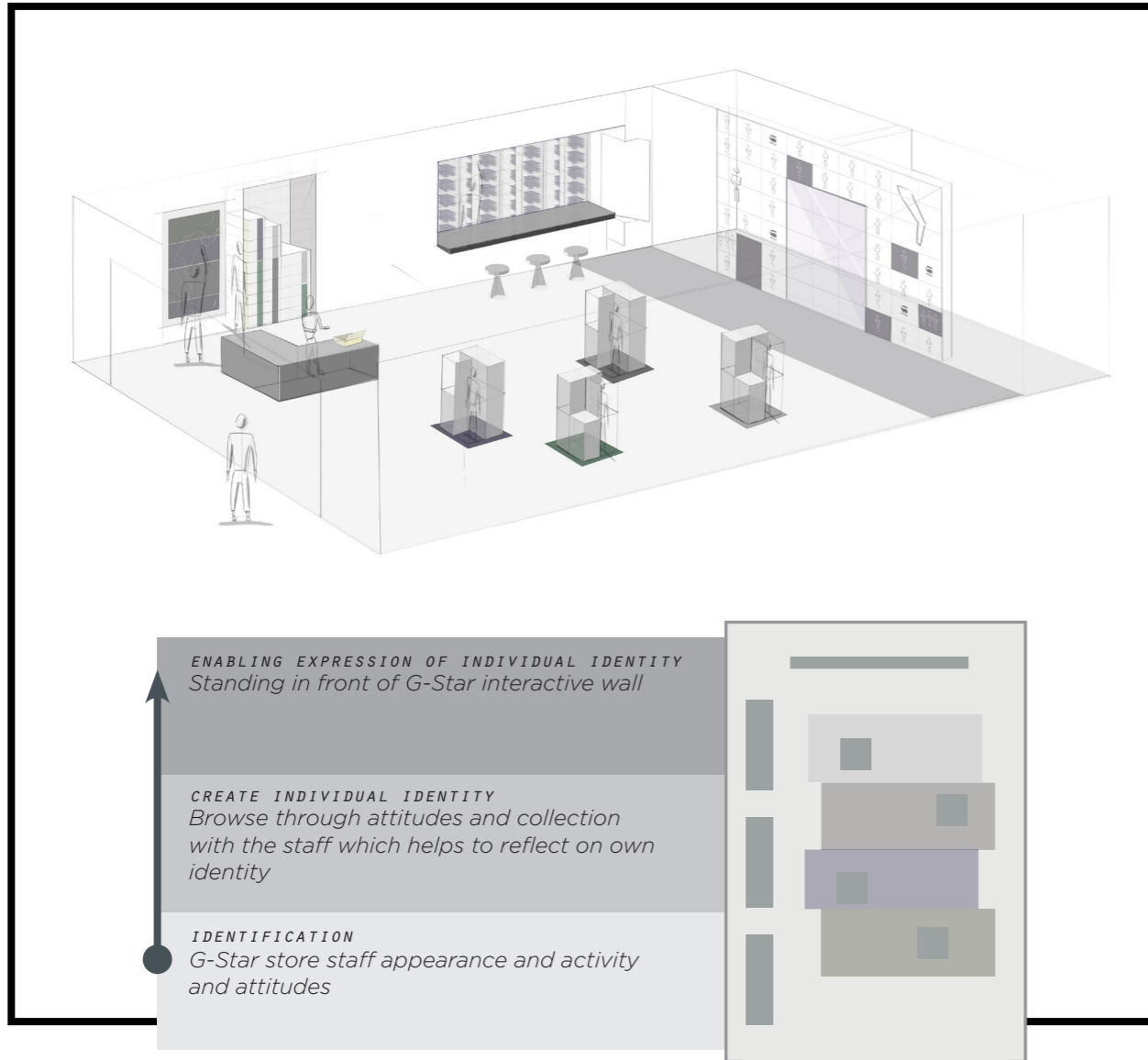


FIGURE 38: G-STAR ATTITUDES IMPRESSIONS

EXPLORATION DIRECTION 3: FLEXIBLE ATTITUDE AREAS AND STORE ACTIVITY

This direction is based on making the service that the store provides as transparent as possible to make the consumer identify with activity. Hereby the environment becomes a giant service area that is divided into attitude areas that the consumer can wander through. (appendix c)



More information about these explorations can be found in appendix c.

6.2 FINAL CONCEPT

For every exploration direction, the best ideas are eventually further developed and used in the final physical identity environment. A scenario is used to explain the concept.

The concept and scenario are based on a shortened version of the text of the video of chapter 4. The text of the video has been used to find a clear order of the consumer experiences.

- STEP 1 *HEY*
- WHERE ARE YOU GOING?*
- WHERE ARE YOU HEADING TO?*
- STEP 2 *WHAT DO YOU WANT TO DO?*
- STEP 3 *WHO DO YOU WANT TO BE?*
- WHO ARE YOU?*
- STEP 4 *WE ARE G-STAR.*
- WE DESIGN,*
- DIVERSE*
- FUNCTIONAL*
- UNCONVENTIONAL*
- DENIM*
- WE ARE RAW*
- STEP 5 *WHO ARE YOU?*
- STEP 6 *WE ARE HERE*
- HERE TO MEET YOU.*
- HERE TO ADVISE YOU.*
- HERE TO SUPPORT YOU.*
- TO MAKE YOU EVALUATE YOU.*
- STEP 7 *WHO ARE YOU?*
- STEP 8 *COME AND JOIN US*
- AND INSPIRE US*
- BY BEING YOU*
- WHO ARE YOU?*
- INSPIRE YOU.*
- INSPIRE US.*
- G-STAR RAW*
- STEP 9 *STAND OUT AND BE YOU*
- (NOT IN VIDEO)*

physical identityenvironment setup

The setup of the physical environment is shown below. It gives an overview of the elements that the physical environment of G-Star should consist of.

The consumer will be displayed in the map to explain the movements of the consumer through the environment during a scenario to describe the concept.

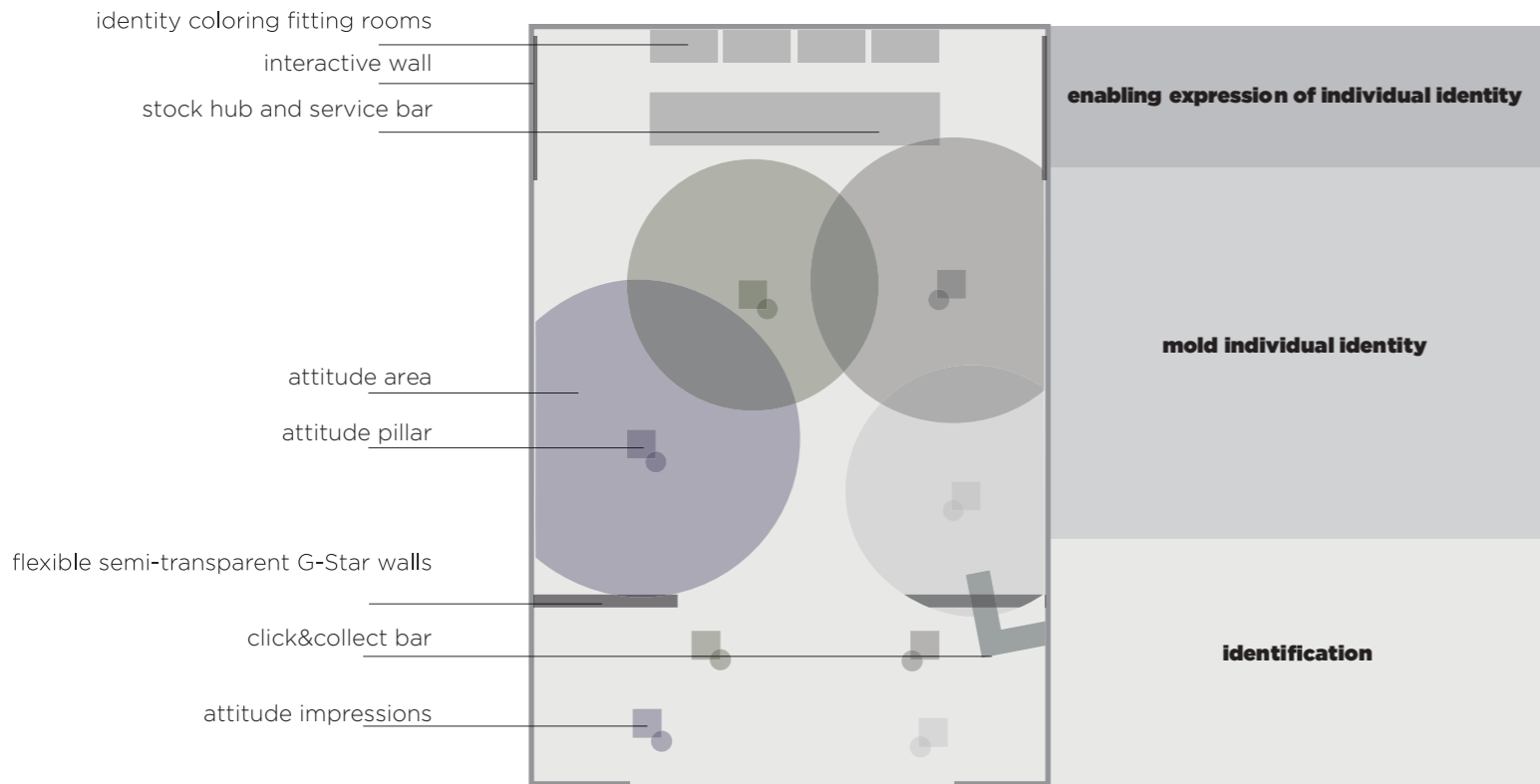


FIGURE 39: PHYSICAL IDENTITY ENVIRONMENT

1

IDENTIFICATION
hey, where are you going?

Because of the environment's open and transparent appearance, the consumer is able to identify with all the things that are going on in the environment. The identification will be called a 'walk-in identity window'. Potential consumers can walk in to just quickly collect an expression and take it home or to proceed to the next area of the environment deeper into the brand. It is an area to land as a consumer to slowly get out of the social bubble they are in.



This is Rodney, walking down the street in one of his favorite areas of the city. Although Rodney is outside, he is locked up in his phone. But then suddenly a text appears. The sensors of the retail environment measures that someone is passing by and to get Rodney's attention, the text 'Hey, where are you going?' is displayed on the ground.

It reminds Rodney of the question that he has seen around more often in his favourite neighborhood and on the social media pages that he follows.

When Rodney looks inside the environment, he sees people working around a big hub that is stacked with denim. He recognizes those people as staff because they all wear some denim items. Although they are wearing denim, they all look different, but the appearance of each of them seem to fit them very well. The staff is making jokes with each other and are helping visitors that are moving around the environment.

When Rodney is looking to a mannequin in the 'walk-in window' a new quote appears behind that mannequin..



2

IDENTIFICATION
what do you want to do?

The start of the scenario was seen from the perspective of a consumer that is in a subconscious state of mind and not entering the G-Star identity environment with premeditation, but consumers can come in for many reasons.

As said there are three general reasons: identification, identity molding and identity expression. The main purpose of the environment is identity molding. Offering the click and collect area in the front of the environment, enables consumers to quickly collect or return their items.

3

IDENTIFICATION
who do you want to be?

Imagination is triggered by showing attitude expressions and showing how they are meaningful by displaying them in context.



The quote that is appearing triggers the imagination of Rodney. Although Rodney also looks to the other mannequins, he is most intrigued by the mannequin that he saw first. When Rodney is getting closer to that mannequin, the screen behind it starts to light up. In this way information is provided to the consumer a very focussed and directed manner.

A context that is perfectly fitting the style of the mannequin emerges and triggers the imagination of Rodney. Then the screen says 'scan to watch and collect'. Rodney still has his phone in his hands and aims it on the screen. It links Rodney to the website of G-Star and because of augmented reality he is able to see the mannequin in a 3D context. Rodney is able to zoom in on the clothes but he is also asked to 'collect' the clothes in his 'Closet'.

To do that he has to setup a profile. Although this is quite easy since he just has to ask Siri to fill out his personal data, he does not feel comfortable to do that yet. Instead he decides to put his phone away and goes a bit further in the environment.



4

IDENTIFICATION
we are.. G-Star, we are here to meet you

Providing the consumers an impression of what G-Star is about and explaining meaningful activities of G-Star. Consumers also get explained that G-Star is supporting them to mold and express their identity.



On the floor the text 'Welcome Rodney. We are G-Star, we make 3D denim' appears. Rodney looks around and sees all kinds of products and art objects that are made of denim. There are also little stories displayed that give some more explanation about G-Star and what they have been doing.

They give Rodney an impression of what G-Star is about: Pushing innovation and creativity with denim. Then the following question is catching his eye: 'Who are you?'.



5

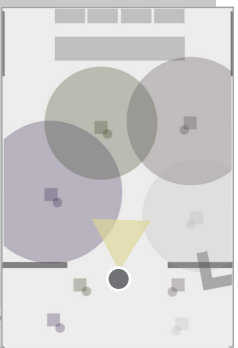
IDENTITY MOLDING
who are you?

Providing consumers a moment of evaluation by asking who they are. G-Star should assure that they are in good hands to mold their identity.



Rodney is confronted with an environment that exists of four areas that are slightly overlapping each other. These areas all contain a pillar in their centres while clothes are hanging around it. The appearance of the four areas slightly differs but not too much. The mannequins are dressed in different styles, and the pillars all have different colors. The visuals are all black and white but they display different contexts.

Then Rodney looks at the question again: 'Who are you?' He gets a little confused by this question. Luckily one of the staff members is appearing..



6

IDENTITY MOLDING
we are here to advise you, support you

Literally standing by the side of the consumer. The big stock and service hub is visible all the way from the front of the environment. Staff is actively working around and therefore they are not experienced as intrusive while they are still easily approachable. The staff is continually updating the store and hanging new combinations of clothes. In five years from now even more packages will be collected and delivered from these physical environments; they will also function as stock hubs. Therefore there is always something to do for the staff and the dynamic connection between the Click and Collect area and the stock hub provides a lively atmosphere in the environment.



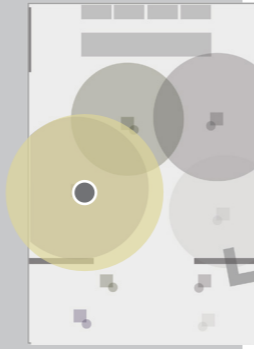
The staff member says: 'Hey, who are you? I am Lieke, I am working here, so I am here to support you. At G-Star we try to inspire you with our unique identity so that you will be able to select items that fit you. We want to enable you to inspire us with your identity. Take your time to look around, but give a shout when you need me!'



7

IDENTITY MOLDING who are you?

This question is coming back at the attitude areas while moving through the molding area. In this area consumers are able to collect G-Star brand expressions and mix and match them. On the walls of the environment, extra explanations of brand expression are shown to assure consumer of the expertise of G-Star.



The 'Who are you?' question arises again. Rodney decides to have a look at one of the four areas. When he enters the area the pillar starts to show contextual impressions. These impressions are displayed calmly and directed. Rodney sees himself literally walking in the context on the background. Therefore he is able to see if his own identity matches with the one of the G-star attitude area.



When Rodney grabs a product from one of the racks around the area, the pillar shows that product worn by someone in that context and displays the question: 'How would you wear it?' The moment after that, the pillar shows more detailed information about the material, the fit and the name of the product. It also makes clear how it is made and where it is made. The connection between the pillar and the products is enabled by RFID technology that is integrated in the products. The pillar also gives information about the sizes and washes that are available at this physical location and which are only available online.



G-Star is inspired by loads of things and they also want to inspire their consumers with these things. If Rodney wants to find out more about the brand and the attitude he can find this information by approaching the pillar without carrying a product. The consumer can scroll through stories by touching the screens of the pillar.

After visiting all attitude areas Rodney has picked a few items from the attitude areas he feels most related to.

The products are displayed on racks that are hanging on a rail, like a curtain. They are movable and enable consumers to hang products that fit to multiple attitudes in the overlapping sections. Therefore mixing the products to mold your identity will become easier.

The poles on the places where the lines of two areas cross each other can be used to hang up a selected set of items to see if they match with each other



8

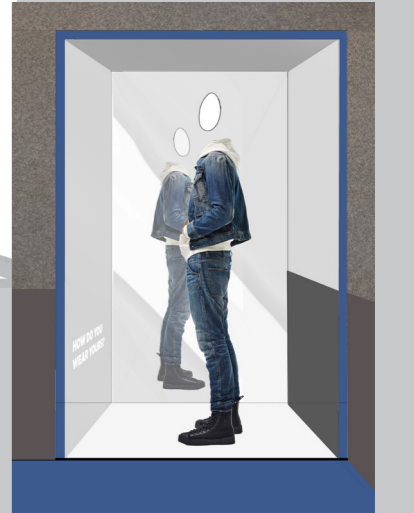
IDENTITY MOLDING inspire us by being you

In this area, consumers are able to reflect the selected items on their own identity and to combine them and adjust them to their own preferences. The more G-Star knows of the consumer, the more some parts of this area is turning into an unique color and context combination. This is for example happening in the fitting rooms.



Rodney proceeds to the back of the environment. Here Lieke is working in the denim storage and service hub. The products in the identity molding area are only displayed in one size, so he asks Lieke if she can get the sizes that are available. At this hub, samples of all materials are presented so Rodney is able to feel the material of the products that are not available. While he is discussing the samples with Lieke, another staff member gives them the available products. He exactly knows where he can find which product since the staff is constantly working around the denim stock hub.

When Rodney enters the fitting room, it changes color. The color is a merged color of the selected items from the different areas and represents the identity that Rodney has created.

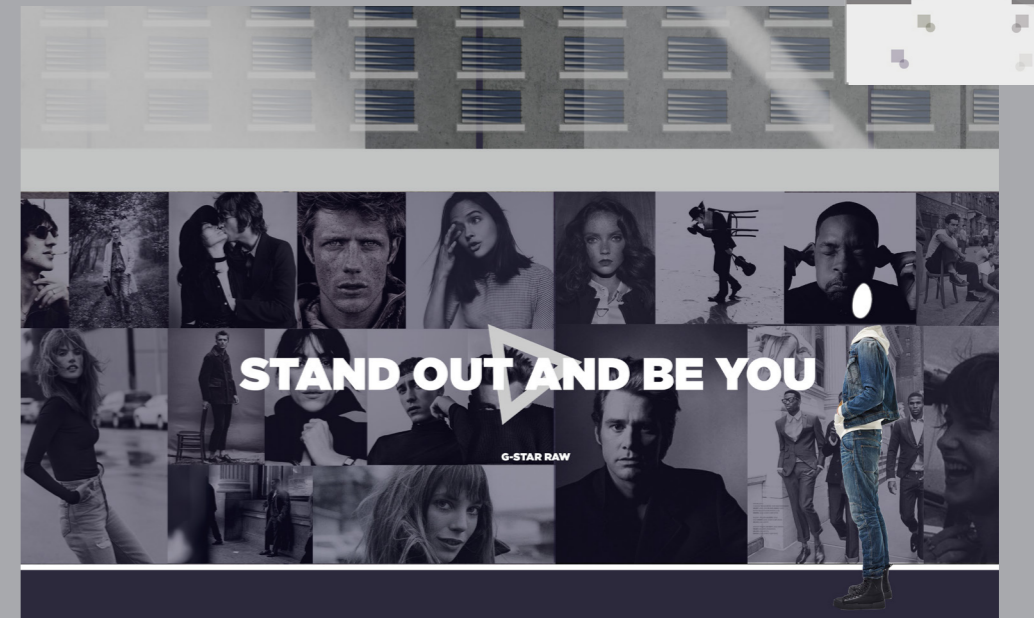
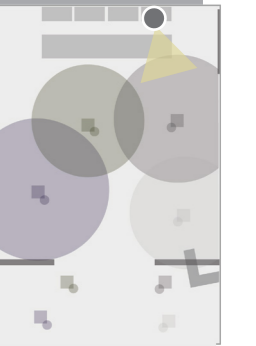


9

IDENTITY EXPRESSION stand out and be you

When exiting the fitting room, the consumer gets confronted with the next statement: 'Stand out and be you', while looking game changers that inspire G-Star. This statement is also returning when entering G-Star events.

The combination of all game changers and the quote assures Rodney to step in the light and to show his molded identity.



9

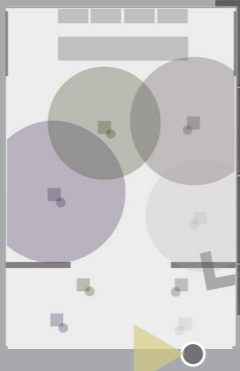
When Rodney stands in front of the interactive wall it changes from background. Rodney is now able to see himself in a cool context with the color that was also displayed in the fitting room. The wall gives Rodney also some recommendations about other products, some details of the products that he is wearing and again the ability to collect the products in his 'Closet'. Rodney asks Lieke what this 'Closet' means. Lieke explains that when Rodney sets up a profile he will be able to 'save' his identity. By adding products to his Closet Rodney is able to see online what he has already bought and what is still on his wishlist. This enables him to further mold his identity online and to share it eventually on the social platforms.

Due to his positive experience in the store Rodney gets very enthusiastic about this possibility and decides to setup a profile. Before Rodney leaves, he decides to take away two items directly and to order one online. The online order will be shipped from another physical environment of G-Star, and will be delivered to Rodney the same day.



Next time..

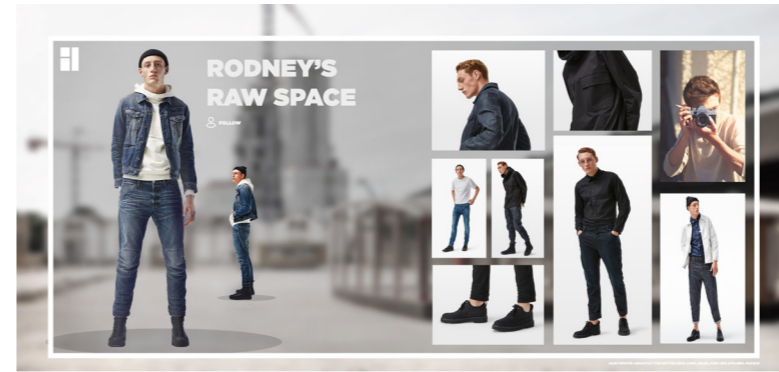
The next time that Rodney visits a physical environment of G-Star he will be recognized because the profile on his phone is connecting to the platform of G-Star. Artificial intelligence enables him to say to his phone or a pillar in the environment that he wants to add it to his Closet. The staff in the denim storage hub will then already select the items that he wants to fit.



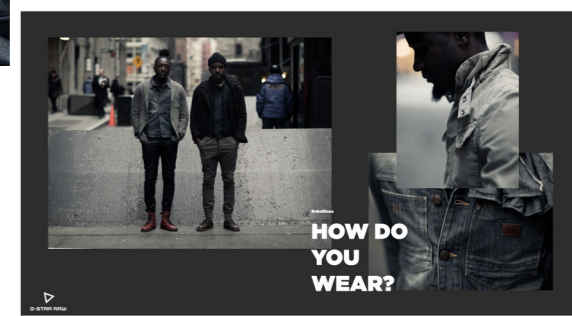
At home..

Rodney is able meet the brand anywhere he wants. The website and the app are providing him with more in-dept information about the brand and the attitude and via his profile he will be able to mold his identity on demand and to share his creation online.

THE ART OF RAW



WHO ARE YOU?
G-STAR RAW



At the streets..

The app contains a scanning function to even collect G-Star brand expression on the most inspiring place: at the streets!



conclusion

The main purpose of a G-Star physical environment is to help people to mold their identity. The scenario describes that this is envisioned by providing a more structured and imaginative way of product presentation, which is supported by human interaction and tactile experiences.

In the next chapter the concept is discussed by referring back to the variables that are described in chapter 2 and the interaction qualities of chapter 4.

More information about the app and the app flow can be found in appendices e and d.

chapter 7/new context concept discussion

IN THIS CHAPTER THE CONCEPT IS DISCUSSED BY LOOKING INTO THE VARIABLES THAT THE CONCEPT WILL BE CREATED OF IN THE NEW CONTEXT.

7.1 SERVICES TO PROVIDED IN PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENTS

Since the main purpose of the physical environments has been changed from a place that serves the purpose of purchasing to a place that serves to mold the consumers' identity, the 'traditional' division and form of the variables will change.

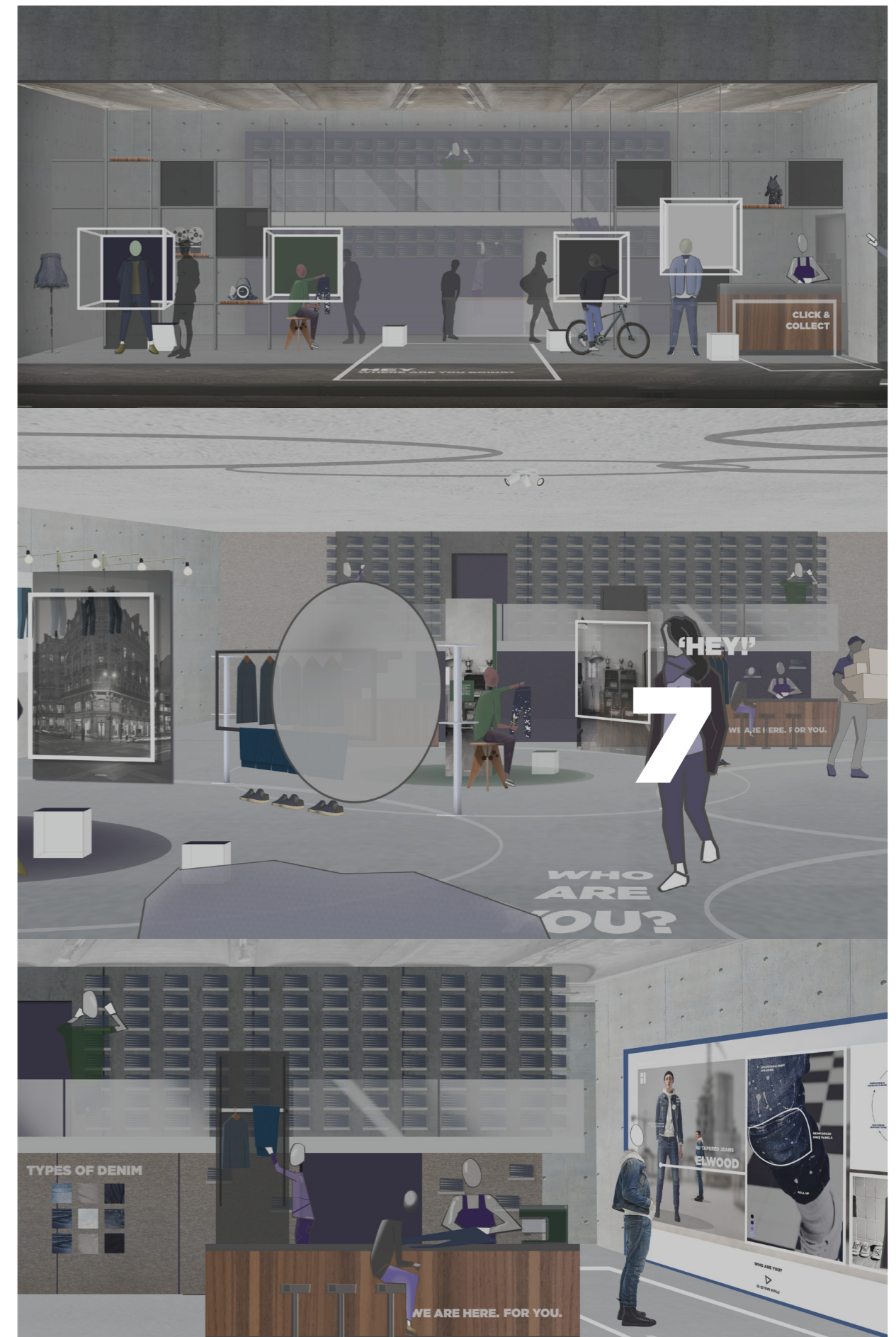
services provided in old physical environments

In the current concept of the G-Star store are the advising, supporting, inspiring and entertaining services all pushing sales at that specific location (chapter 2). In every store the daily revenue is the most important Key Performance Indicator. This daily goal makes the experience of the current store intrusive; it feels like now or never for the staff and that is scaring away the consumer.

On the left the traditional priority division of providing services in stores is shown.

services provided by old physical stores

1. ADVISING SERVICE
Share the existing knowledge with consumers to help them to come to the best purchase.
2. SUPPORTING SERVICE
Create convenience by making it comfortable to buy the products.
3. INSPIRING SERVICE
The stores are also about giving the visitors new ideas and to make them discover the brand.
4. ENTERTAINING SERVICE
Giving the consumers an enjoyable time while shopping for products.



services provided in new physical environments

In the new concept, it does not make a difference anymore at which moment in the journey the consumer decides to proceed to purchasing. Consumers have different needs at the different stages of interaction and therefore the services that are provided depend on the consumer need at that moment. Therefore the services provided in the in the new physical environments need to be revisioned to match with the consumer needs at the separate phases of interaction.

SERVICES AT IDENTIFICATION PHASE

In the identification phase G-Star needs to provide an **inspiring** and **entertaining** service that feels clarifying and fascinating. This is envisioned by providing them information about attitudes that they can relate to, but also by explaining them the G-Star identity in a directed and unconstraining way. The information is provided to consumers in a structured way that gives consumers the freedom and time to use their own imagination.

SERVICES AT IDENTITY MOLDING PHASE

During the molding phase it is most important to **support** and **advise** consumers to make decisions. Genuine and expertized advice will assure people about G-Star being the right choice for them. This will convince them to make decisions and select identity expressions of G-Star, especially when it is supported with a seamless and convenient service. Lastly, it is also important to **inspire** consumers during the process by triggering their imagination with the right information at the right moment.

SERVICES AT IDENTITY EXPRESSION PHASE

During the identity expression phase consumers need to get over the barrier of expressing identity. To enable them to do this, two types of **inspiring** services are created. The personalized color confirms that have a specific identity to express and by seeing the game-changers showing their identity, consumers got inspired to do that themselves as well.

all types of services are brought to a higher level

Due the concept that is created I believe that all types of services are brought to a higher level and therefore the products of G-Star can be valued better. This is not in first place the result of better product presentation and information provision but especially because of an unconstrained overall consumer experience in physical environments. The next paragraph discusses how the earlier mentioned variables are changing to provide this experience.

7.2 LOCATION DETERMINING VARIABLES

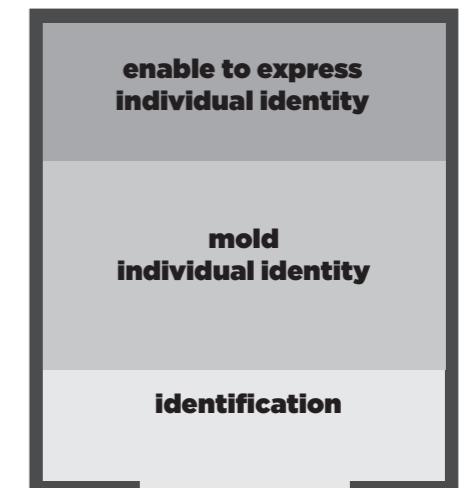
As mentioned before is the main purpose of the physical identity environment to enable people to mold their identity, but needs the store also provide the other phases of interaction. The extension of this fulfillment can differ per location.

The exact design of the designable elements of a physical environment depends on the location determining variables.

STORE A



STORE B



STORE C

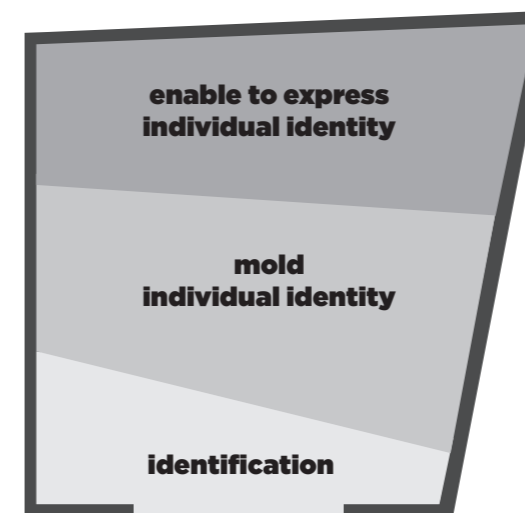


FIGURE 40: STORES ARE NOT IDENTICAL. ALTHOUGH THEY ARE BASED ON THE SAME CONCEPT THEY HAVE TO ADAPT TO VARIABLES OF LOCATIONS

Location determining variables

CITY OR AREA IDENTITY: IS G-STAR'S IDENTITY FITTING TO THE IDENTITY OF THE CONSUMER AT THE TARGET LOCATION?

G-Star should better identify if their identity fits to the identity of the potential consumers in the area where they want to open a new physical identity environment. By knowing what the consumers identify with, G-Star will be able to adapt their designable variables to those consumers.

When the identities of G-Star and the potential consumers are differentiating too much they should consider to not open a physical environment there. When G-Star has to adjust their designable variables too much, their identity becomes inconsistent and unrecognizable for consumers.

CITY OR AREA PURPOSE: WHAT DO PEOPLE DO AT THE AREA AND WHY ARE THEY VISITING THAT CERTAIN AREA?

This question is related to the area identity question. People that go to a specific area to find new brand expressions in general have a different state of mind than people that are specifically looking for G-Star identity expressions. In the first situation should G-Star emphasize the identification phase of the interaction to enable those people to encounter and meet the brand and its expressions. In the second situation should G-Star emphasize the identity molding and expression phases.

STREET TRAFFIC: HOW MANY CONSUMERS ARE PASSING BY AND HOW DO THEY GET CONFRONTED WITH A G-STAR STORE OR SHOP?

In the scenario a very personalized interaction with the consumer is shown. In my opinion is this the most optimized interaction to make the consumer experience the clothes, but in more crowded places it would be harder to make the interaction as responsive. The exact execution of the interaction should therefore be scaled to different locations.

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT CATEGORY: IN WHAT KIND OF PLACE ARE THE ITEMS SOLD?

The traditional division of monobrand, multibrand and shop-in-shops won't exist

anymore. By answering the questions of this paragraph a specific strategy per location can be created, to design the interaction phases more specifically.

SURROUNDING PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENTS: WHAT IS THE COMPETITION IN THE AREA OR ARE THERE OTHER G-STAR PHYSICAL TOUCHPOINTS NEARBY?

In the old context brands were seen as competitors of each other. For the new context is envisioned that brands should specify more to create a stronger identity. This identity becomes stronger when brands with identities, services and products that are complementary collaborate with each other. Therefore consumers that identify with those complementary brand identities will identify easier with G-Star.

SPACE: WHAT ARE THE PROPERTIES AND QUALITIES OF THE SPACE AND HOW ARE WE ABLE TO MAKE THE BEST USE OF IT?

Because is envisioned that G-Star becomes a holistic platform of environments that are seamlessly connected by internet, dimensions of a space in theory don't have to be a limit anymore to fulfill consumer needs. Everything can basically be looked up on a screen.

In practice is a space setting a specific atmosphere that supports the experience of the consumer. Therefore is decided that a physical identity environment of G-Star should give people the opportunity to wander around and get the personal service to give consumer the 'real G-Star experience'.

CLIMATE/SEASONS/WEATHER: WHAT ARE THE WEATHER CONDITIONS AT THAT LOCATION AND HOW TO ADAPT TO THEM?

This question influences the physical identity environments of G-Star in terms of flexibility. The concept should be able to adapt to the climate and weather conditions, anywhere it will be located. Brand expressions will for example differ season each season and therefore the presentation in the environment needs to be able to adapt to that.

7.3 DESIGNABLE ENVIRONMENT VARIABLES

When is chosen to set up a physical identity environment the location determining variables are providing a set of requirements. To create the best design for this environment, the designable variables should be adjusted to the location. How these designable variables are designed overall and how they can differ per location is discussed in the next subchapter.

designable environment variables

COLLECTION: WHICH PRODUCT TO BE OFFERED.

The collection becomes smaller and more focussed on denim. It always needs to be clear that G-Star is about denim, the rest of the collection should be derived from this denim core. Location determining variables like the weather and the area identity are having a significant influence on the collection that is offered in the physical environments. The offered collection should be adapted to them to a certain extent.

STAFF-CONSUMER INTERACTION: THE ATTITUDE AND APPROACH OF THE STAFF TO THE CONSUMER.

The staff-consumer interaction is an important factor in the new concept. The staff needs to become brand ambassadors that are passionate about their job and are extremely expertised about the products and the brand. The staff has the freedom to create their own identity with G-Star expressions, but also with brands that G-Star collaborates with. The Key Performance Indicators that they have to meet will not be based on the daily revenue anymore and therefore the interaction with consumers will feel more real and unconstrained. This way of interacting with the consumer needs to return at every physical environment.

PRODUCT-CONSUMER INTERACTION AND PRODUCT PRESENTATION: HOW CONSUMERS FIND, APPROACH, REACH, FEEL AND FIT THE PRODUCTS.

Products will be displayed in matching sets and only in one size, which should make it easier for consumers to focus on products. It needs to be clearly communicated that other products are available in the stock and service area or online. The physical environments are divided into four attitudes to make it easier for people to relate to a certain context. It gives them a starting point to explore the collection. Local expressions could be implemented in the attitude areas to make it easier for people in that specific area to relate to the brand and its products.

The context that is displayed in those areas creates a context around the products to make people identify with the products more easily. The identity pillars are responsive and therefore only provide information to consumers when they really need it. Extra information about the brand and products is given to increase consumers' understanding of the stories behind the products and to inspire them with new ideas of how they can wear the products.



FIGURE 41: PRODUCTS DISPLAYED IN SETS AND IN ONE SIZE ON MOVABLE PRESENTATION RACKS

conclusion

Defining the location determining variables set the requirements to make the physical environment function optimally at that specific location.

NAVIGATION AND VISIT DURATION: HOW CONSUMERS MOVE THROUGH THE ENVIRONMENT.

Consumers are guided step by step through the environment. In this way, they will be able to slowly get out of their subconscious state of mind and 'land' in the environment. By making the G-Star expressions responsive they will only get confronted with new information when they really need it. The staff is working around in the molding area but are easily approachable. This enables the consumer to wander around in the store in their own pace. The stock and service area in the back of the environment is a place to ask for advice and support and therefore it becomes a place to evaluate and become assured. When more space is available the services that are provided the services that this area provides could be extended with, for example, a tailor and a lounge.



FIGURE 42: ACTIVITY AROUND THE STORAGE HUB AND SERVICE AREA.

STOCK LOGISTICS: THE RELATION BETWEEN THE ENVIRONMENT AND THE BACK-OF-HOUSE OF THE BRAND.

Since G-Star only provides one size of the products in their new environments, the communication about available sizes in store and online needs to be very clear. Besides that, the connection between the stock and the molding area needs to be seamless. Therefore staff members are constantly working around the denim stock. The physical environments have, next to the three purposes of identification, identity molding and identity expression also the function of a storage hub. This means that products can be shipped from those environments to other environments and consumers. Products can also be collected or returned by consumers at the click and collect bar in the front of the environment.

STORYTELLING: COMMUNICATION OF G-STAR'S PRINCIPLES AND THE PRODUCT VALUES.

G-Star's principles are displayed on the G-Star identity walls that separate the identification area from the identity molding area. More G-Star information is displayed on the walls of the identity molding area. In this way is the consumer surrounded with G-Star expressions that give the staff some support to explain the stories behind the brand and the products. This storytelling can be slightly adjusted to every area, for example by showing visuals of the city or initiatives of other organizations that G-Star collaborate with.

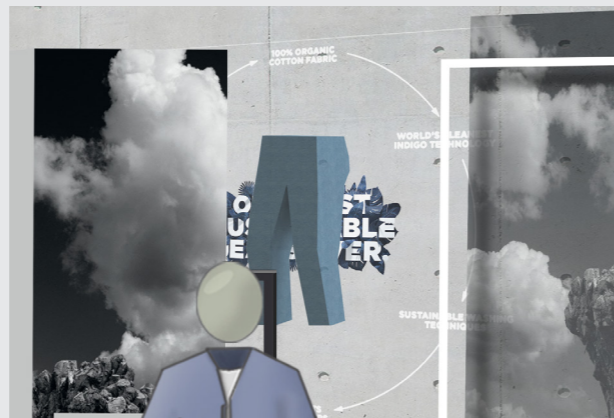


FIGURE 43: EXTRA G-STAR INFORMATION IN THE WALLS OF THE IDENTITY MOLDING AREA TO INFORM THE CONSUMER AND SUPPORT THE STAFF

PHYSICAL IDENTITY ENVIRONMENT



PHYSICAL IDENTITY ENVIRONMENT XL

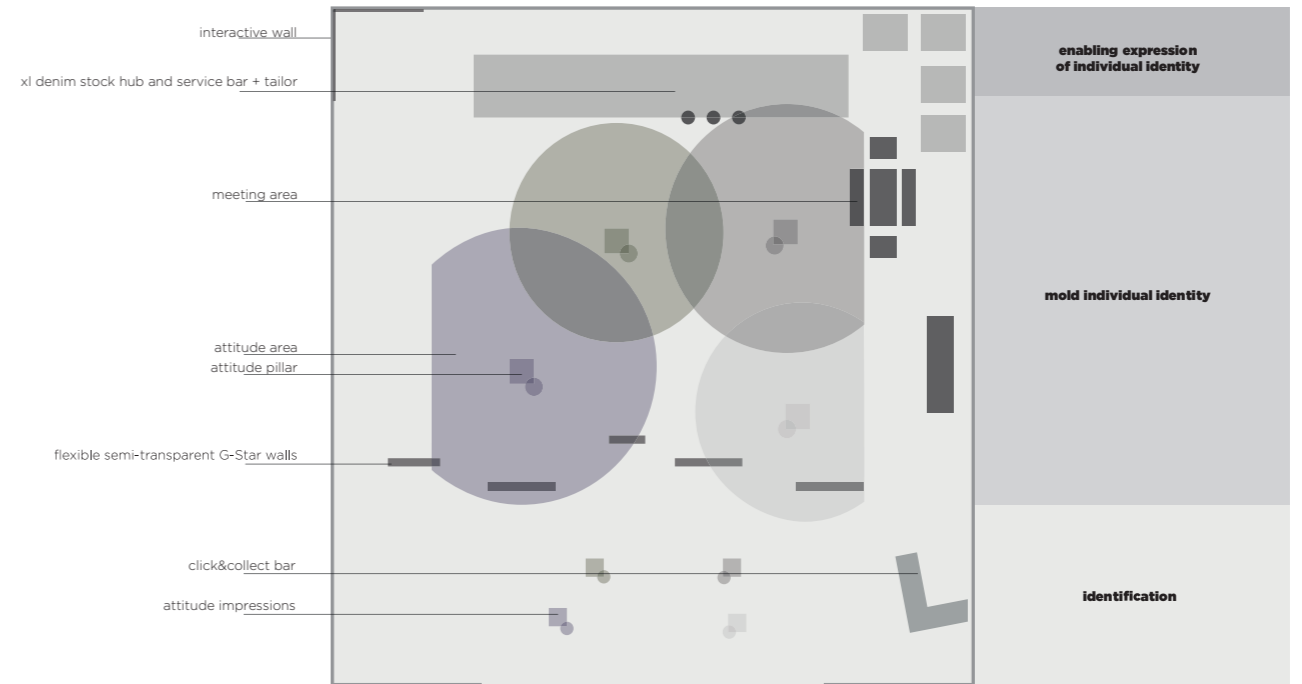


FIGURE 44: PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENTS CAN BE EXTENDED OR DOWNGRADED BASED ON THE LOCATION DETERMINING VARIABLES.

conclusion

The designable variables that are described above describe the elements that a G-Star physical environment should contain to provide consumers the experience that is envisioned. They can slightly be extended or downgraded to fit to the location determining variables (figure 40), but until a certain level to secure that the provided experience is consistent over all environments.

chapter 8/new context validation

THIS PROJECT WAS STARTED WITH AN IN-STORE RESEARCH IN SEVERAL G-STAR MONOBRAND STORES ACROSS THE NETHERLANDS. THE MOST IMPORTANT INSIGHT OF THIS RESEARCH WAS THAT CONSUMERS THAT VISITED THE STORE WERE NOT ABLE TO VALUE THE FULL POTENTIAL OF THE CLOTHES. THEREFORE IT WAS HARD FOR THE CONSUMERS TO RELATE THE CLOTHES TO THEIR IDENTITY. IN THIS CHAPTER THE TEST TO EXPLORE THE EXPERIENCE OF THE NEW CONCEPT BY REAL CONSUMERS IS DISCUSSED.

8.1 GOAL OF THE TEST

From the research mentioned above was derived that consumers were lacking understanding of the background stories of the brand and products. During this graduation project was found that consumers identify with products when they are confronted with something that is meaningful to them. Therefore it is important to make them understand what the product and brand can do for them. To test if the envisioned concept does this, a setup of four attitudes is created in the G-Star store of Almere.

three levels of information

During this test, real consumers are confronted with three layers of information that also return in the concept.

ATTUDE - CONTEXT INFORMATION: WHAT IS THE ATHMOSPHERE OF THE ATTITUDE?

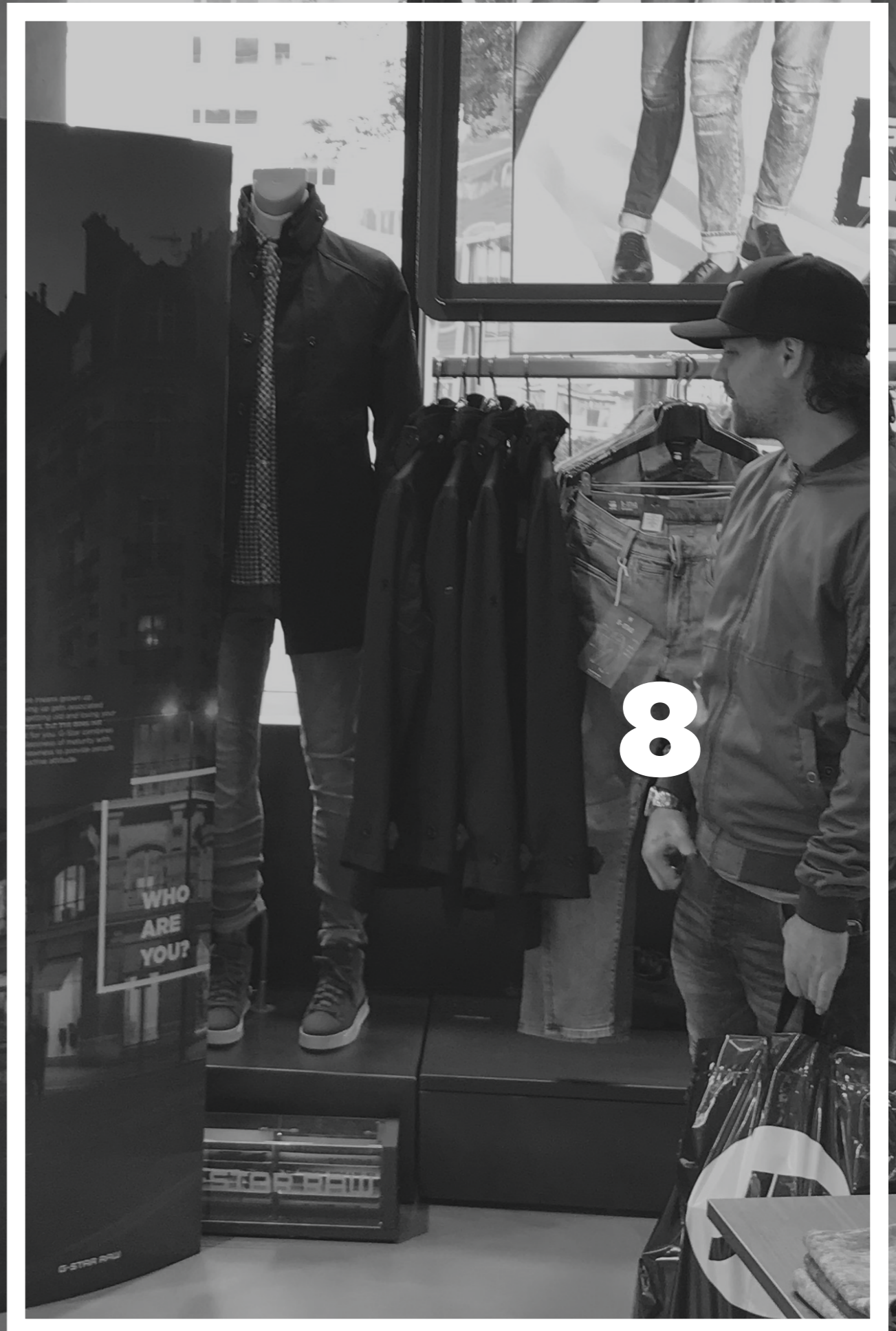
This information is given by adding a background to the mannequin and attitude related attributes

CONTEXTUAL BRAND INFORMATION: WHAT MEANINGFUL DOES THE BRAND PROVIDE CONSUMERS AND WHAT IS IDENTIFYING FOR THEM?

This information is given by textual stories of the brand and photographs.

PRODUCT INFORMATION: WHAT IS THE PRODUCT PROVIDING THE CONSUMER?

This information is provided by photo's of models that wear the products and by more detailed information about the features of the products.



research questions

For this test three research questions have been set up.

question 1

Are consumers better able to identify with the products of G-Star when these products are displayed with human and brand context information and product information that is based on different attitudes? And will they value the products therefore higher?

HYPOTHESIS

People are better able to relate to the products and therefore they will identify to the products and value them higher

question 2

Are people triggered to mold their own identity when they get confronted with the attitudes and are they showing the molded identity?

HYPOTHESIS

People are triggered by the differences that the pillars are radiating and therefore they are intrigued to see what they all mean to collect information of all set ups.

question 3

Are people experiencing the interaction qualities that the set up intended to address?

HYPOTHESIS

The consumers are sufficiently experiencing the interaction qualities and rate them on average with 4 out of 7 or higher.

interaction qualities

CLARIFYING

'The way of presenting gave me more understanding.'

FASCINATING

'The way of presenting fascinated me.'

EVALUATING

'The way of presenting made me think about my own identity/appearance.'

UNCONSTRAINED

'I felt free to make my own decision.'

7.2 SETUP OF THE TEST

To execute this test, four attitude areas were created in the store. Each attitude is about one keylook displayed on a mannequin that is supported with information about context, product details and related lifestyle attributes. This information is displayed on cardboard pillars which are shown below.

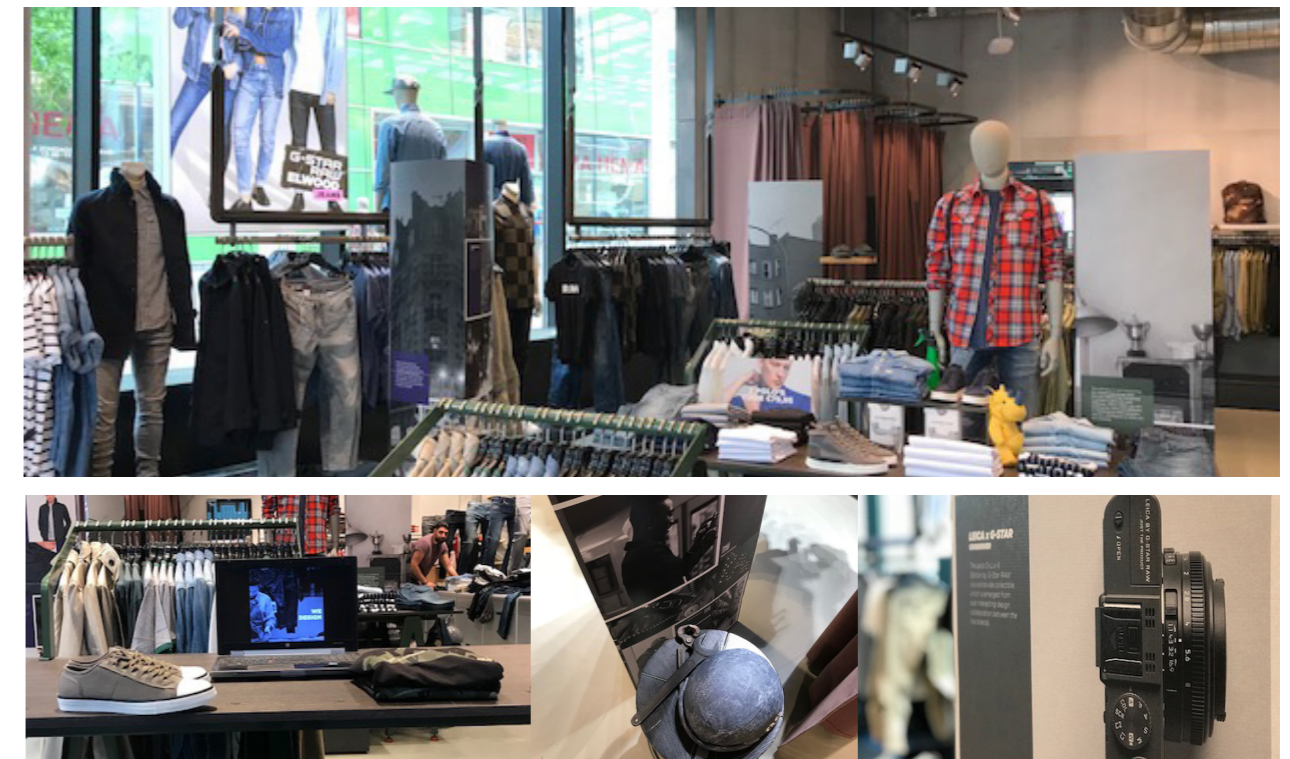
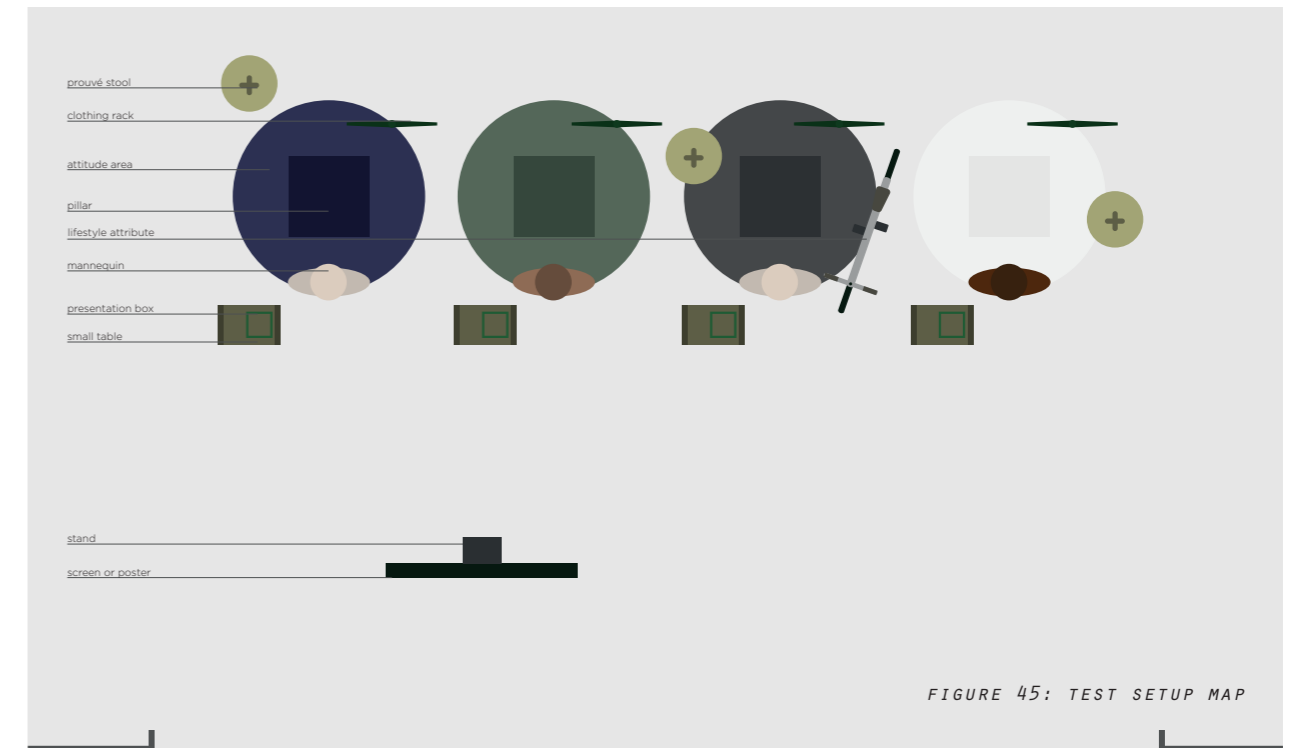


FIGURE 46: TEST SETUP IN STORE ALMERE

information on pillars

The attitudes are based on the four G-Star looks that were created. These are the following:

- Seducingly mature
- Ambiguously creative
- Rebellious utility
- Essentially tough

7.3 EXECUTION OF THE TEST

The test was conducted during two days at the G-Star store in Almere. The pillars contained product information of products that were sold in that store. These products were presented next to the mannequins that were wearing the same products. Since the displayed products were only male products, they were located next in the male section of the store.

The consumers that were browsing through this section of the store were observed until they intended to leave the store. Just before they were leaving, I introduced myself as a staff member that wanted to ask them some questions about their store experience. The outcomes of the observations and interviews were filled out on a checklist.

The 'regular' staff was allowed to interact with the consumers. They were instructed to keep two things in mind during their interaction with the consumers :

- Show off your own identity and your way of wearing the G-Star products and try to inspire the consumers with your identity.
- Always keep the interaction qualities in mind and handle to them.

pilot

During the pilot was found that the set up was not significantly affecting behavioral change. Therefore was decided to revision the questions for the interviews.

execution of test

The questions that were revised after the pilot were derived from the three main questions:

- Did you notice the information that is displayed next to the mannequins and product?
- What do you think of the pillars when you see them now?
- What do think of the idea to add contextual information next to the mannequins?
- What do you think of the brand context information?
- What do you think of the extra product information that is given?
- Do you see the difference between the attitudes?
- 'Explaining concept': I am thinking about a new concept for the G-Star store that makes consumers browse through the store by using different 'worlds' that the consumer can relate to. If you try to imagine that, how would you rate the concept then on the interaction qualities that are set up?

The given answers were written down on the checklist that can be found in appendix f. The checklist was made to gather quick data and to fill out the scores of the interaction qualities.

The people that have been interviewed were all man that have been browsing through the male area. During the two days of testing 220 people visited the store. Eventually 20 of the visitors have been interviewed.



FIGURE 47: THE PILLARS DISPLAYED THREE TYPES OF INFORMATION. FROM LEFT TO RIGHT: ATTITUDE-CONTEXT INFORMATION, CONTEXTUAL BRAND INFORMATION AND PRODUCT INFORMATION

7.4 RESULTS OF THE TEST

The results of the test are presented and discussed on the basis of the three main questions. In this sub chapter the main outcomes are discussed. The specific answers of the consumers can be found in appendix f.

question 1 results

Are consumers better able to identify with the products of G-Star when these products are displayed with human and brand context information and product information that is based on different attitudes? And will they value the products therefore higher?

HYPOTHESIS

People are better able to relate to the products and therefore they will identify to the product and value them higher

consumers do not notice the setup by themselves

Only 3 of the 20 interviewed visitors noticed one of the attitudes by themselves and none of them discovered that these attitudes were part of a set of four.

PEOPLE RELATE TO COMMUNICATION THAT FITS TO THEIR INTEREST

Two of these visitors were triggered by the stories that were displayed on the contextual brand information side of the pillar. The reason of them was that they were triggered by something that was related to their interest.

''I SAW THE LEICA PICTURE WHILE MY WIFE WAS FITTING'' - CONSUMER

The other visitor was looking for a jeans and saw the model on the pillar wearing a jeans. He said that he was looking for a jeans in a light color. The model was wearing something that matched his current interest. The mannequin that was wearing the same jeans and the stack of jeans next to it weren't noticed. Three other people answered that they want the products to become more connected to an attitude, because now they could not see the connection between them.

THE ATTITUDES DO NOT STAND OUT ENOUGH

All the visitors said that the pillar did not stand out in the store. They gave multiple reasons for this. The most mentioned reason was that the pillars blended too well with all the other elements of the store.

''THE GREY BACKGROUND OF THE PILLARS CONTAINS THE SAME COLOR TONES AS THE STORE. IN THIS WAY THEY DO NOT STAND OUT FROM THE REST. IT FEELS JUST LIKE A PART OF THE STORE'' - CONSUMER

The location of the pillars was also discussed by the visitors. One of them gave the suggestion to locate the pillars in the window, two of them said that they should not be separated from each other. Two other visitors suggested to locate them more in the middle of the store path.

people are looking for clothes

People often mentioned that they were looking for products and that they were therefore focussing on the products and not on other information around it. The first priority is finding a product.

This extra information is more appreciated when it is given afterwards. While analyzing the answers that people gave during the interviews, emerges that 12 out of 20 visitors mentioned that they appreciated the product information side of the pillar. 7 of these 12 said that they especially like the model pictures to be able to get information about how to wear the products. 4 of the 20 mentioned that they would like to see how they could wear it themselves in the contexts that were displayed.

''THE BRAND CONTEXT INFORMATION IS APPRECIATED BUT TOO MUCH INFORMATION, I WOULD LIKE TO READ THIS ON INSTAGRAM.'' - CONSUMER

''COOL THAT THEY HAVE SO MANY STORIES TO TELL. ESPECIALLY THE PRODUCT INFORMATION IN COMBINATION WITH THE REAL PRODUCT IS INTERESTING.'' - CONSUMER

CONTEXTUAL BRAND INFORMATION

About the contextual brand information has been said that the information could be interesting but that visitors are not specifically looking for it. People liked the information that was given, but not in the area around the clothes. The information was not related to the clothes and there was too much information given at once. 3 of the 20 visitors said that the fitting room area would be better for this kind of information.

conclusion

The location of the pillars was also discussed by the visitors. One of them gave the suggestion to locate the pillars in the window, two of them said that they should not be separated from each other. Two other visitors suggested to locate them more in the middle of the store path.

question 2 results

Are people triggered to mold their own identity when they get confronted with the attitudes and are they showing the molded identity?

HYPOTHESIS

People will be triggered by the differences that the pillars are radiating and therefore they are intrigued to see what they all mean to collect information of all set ups.

the current store lay out is not supporting identity molding via the four attitudes

None of the visitors recognized that the different attitudes were radiating different identities. Most of them were entering the store to get inspiration in store about the products that are sold. After asking the consumers if they see the differences between the different pillars 18 out of 20 consumers confirmed, but only 2 of understood they were expressing different attitudes. The others only noticed the different colors. How they interpreted the different form of information could be read on the previous page.

conclusion

The location of the pillars was also discussed by the visitors. One of them gave the suggestion to locate the pillars in the window, two of them said that they should not be separated from each other. Two other visitors suggested to locate them more in the middle of the store path.

question 3

Are people experiencing the interaction qualities that the set up intended to address?

HYPOTHESIS

The consumers are sufficiently experiencing the interaction qualities and rate them on average with 4 out of 7 or higher.

results

Clarifying; 5 out of 7
Fascinating; 5 out of 7
Evaluating; 5 out of 7
Unconstrained; 6 out of 7

conclusion

After informing people that was intended to set up four attitudes to identify with, they were asked to rate the interaction qualities. The qualities were all awarded with a 5 or higher and therefore the hypothesis is matched.

7.5 DISCLAIMER

This research is conducted in a store in the current context. The mindset and behavior of people will therefore be different than in the envisioned concept. Besides that, the tested setup is just a part of the envisioned total concept.

Another factor to be aware of is that the test was only conducted in the G-Star store of Almere. The results might be influenced by the 'location determining variables' of the Almere store.

These variables could should taken into account while discussing the recommendations and next steps for the envisioned concept in the next chapter.

chapter 9/new context recommendations and next steps

THIS IS THE CLOSING CHAPTER OF THIS PROJECT. THE CHAPTER DISCUSSES THE OUTCOMES OF THE VALIDATION AND THE NEXT STEPS THAT SHOULD BE TAKEN IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE CONCEPT.

9



9.1 RECOMMENDATIONS

From the validation two major insights could be derived, which are influencing each other.

MOLDING IDENTITY VIA ATTITUDES NEEDS TO BE SUPPORTED BY ALL VARIABLES OF THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

The test was conducted by making use of static pillars which were presented in a store that was not designed in the way that is envisioned. The 'designable variables' around the setup were still designed in a traditional way. Product presentation and staff interaction amongst others need to be changed before the intended interaction of the concept could be experienced.

THE MOMENT, FORM AND CONTENT OF THE PROVIDED INFORMATION SHOULD BE CONNECTED TO THE STAGE OF INTERACTION.

The moment of providing information is of huge importance and needs to be as relevant as possible. If G-Star wants to provide the consumer with more and better product information, it can't be static anymore. To make people attract to the products they need information that triggers them to understand how it could be worn and how it fits.

Afterwards more detailed information could be given about materials and production. Superficial brand information could be given in the first part of the environment. Consumers that are having more time are calmer and can be confronted with more in dept information about the brand. People are attracted by topics that have their interest, if that is provided they become more interested in the brand.

9.2 NEXT STEPS

To further development of the concept the topics below would be the first to research.

FURTHER DEVELOPMENT OF COMMUNICATION MATERIAL FOR ATTITUDES

In this report four attitudes are described. The first steps towards a style per attitude are described, but they need to be further defined. What colors to use, which models, which contexts to display, what style of photography is needed? These are all questions that need to be researched to create new, strong identities. This also needs to be done for the women attitudes and their implementation in the environments

FURTHER DEVELOPMENT OF THE ROLES AND DESIGN OF THE OTHER ENVIRONMENTS TO MAKE G-STAR BECOME A STRONG HOLISTIC PLATFORM.

In chapter 5 has been described how the roles and the connections between the multiple online and offline environments are envisioned, but more research needs to be conducted to explore what they will really look like in 2023. Therefore a strategy for them needs to be created. In this strategy logistical capabilities will become an important factor.

RESEARCHING THE OPPORTUNITIES THAT TECHNOLOGIES OFFER TO CREATE THE INTENDED INTERACTION

In the new concept the consumer is step by step assured to express its identity. For this interaction a couple of technologies that could support this interaction are mentioned. It needs to be tested if the interaction will be indeed as seamless as intended while using these technologies.

DIVE DEEPER INTO THE 'LOCATION DETERMINING VARIABLES' AND THEIR INFLUENCE ON THE CONCEPT

How will the concept differ over multiple locations and which locations should G-Star decide on? These two questions stay very important during further development of the G-Star physical environments to provide the consumer a relevant and consistent experience at all locations.

closing off

EVALUATION

Now that this project has come to an end it is time to look back on the things that I have learned. My initial goal was to finish this project in June, just before the summer holidays. While trying to declare the three months delay a couple of reasons come to mind. The most important reason is corresponding with what I have been researching all the time during this project: I am constantly looking how I want to express my own identity.

I am born and raised in Wateringen, a small village in the Westland region. In this village everybody knows each other and everybody is looking out for each other. The mentality in the Westland is not to be the smartest but to try and work as hard as possible. Everything is fine as long as you show that you do everything what you are capable of. Doing more, is doing better.

Since I only moved from my parents place to Rotterdam 3 years ago, I still got the Westland mentality. This mentality has been a benefit and a drawback for me during this project. By working hard I have come this far, I am graduating for my masters. But during this project I was also confronted with the drawback of this way of working.

From the start of this project I have been speaking to many experts, I have been conducting multiple sorts of researches and I have been trying to produce as much content as possible. This sounds like doing a good job, but now that I look back I realize that doing more is not always better. Sometimes you also have to take your time and think about what you are doing otherwise you can't make decisions. This is what I have not been doing enough or too late during this project.

During every monthly meeting with my tutors Paul and Merijn I got confronted with this. Before the start of this meeting I always was full of confidence because I produced a lot of content every time. That was the way to go for me and I was sure that I was going to blow them away with my hard work. But every month it did not happen.

It did not happen because I did not allow myself to think and form an opinion about the content that I produced. I did not dare to truly rely on my intellectuality or creativity, because I am not used to that. Nevertheless, after those meetings I have never been too disappointed, because I felt that that I was triggered to allow myself to think more and to make decisions. After those meetings I always made my biggest steps.

Many times I had the feeling that I got insights with great potential, but on the other hand I also thought 'I am just the guy from Wateringen, how should I know how it should be.' During the rest of my career I need to be aware of this pitfall. I need to allow myself to think and make decisions. I also need realize that I am able to make decisions, and to get confident about my abilities. Producing a lot of content can be very valuable, but according to chapter 3 all those influences also bring insecurity to make decisions. This is what I should realize and what I should balance better to really get the full potential out of my work.

THANK WORD

In this last section I want to thank everyone who has helped me, supported me, motivated me and inspired me. Special thanks the following persons:

Nynke Bootsma for being supportive, caring and especially for being patient with me.

Eleni Soerjo for supervising me during this project and being helpful every time I asked for something, without any exception.

David de Kievit for giving me the chance to do this project at G-Star RAW and for taking the time to listen to my unstructured waterfall of words every two weeks.

Paul Hekkert and Merijn Hillen for challenging me during this project and pushing me to make decisions.

Rob Huisman, Paula van den Boer and Oda Landsman for reading this report and for the feedback that you gave me, also throughout the project.

G-Star colleagues of the Interiors department for your interest in the project, the fun at the office and the drinks on Fridays.

Mom and dad for making it possible to study at the Delft University of Technology and being proud of me.

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