How to create a sustainable customer growth strategy for a small brand?

To leverage branding and design for sustainable customer growth

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Appendix A: Interview Guide

Main research question:
How does No Label plan for future expansion?

Research goal:
Find out the customer values, company plan and vision for the future fashion

Checklist for start
Does the recorder work? (preferably 2 recorders: laptop + smartphone)
Do you have all the question sheets?
Does the interviewee has something to drink?
Do you have something to write keywords on?

Questions

Customer
How would you describe your customers?(Behaviour/personality/)
What kind of needs or demands of your customers that are fulfilled by No Label?
How/ In what way can No Label be meaningful for customers? In what ways?
How do you envision your future customers? Any changes of remain the same.

Brand
What are the cultures of No Label?
What is the message that you want to communicate with your customer?

Future
What are the main opportunities and challenges for the fashion industry?
How do you envision future men’s fashion? (More fashional? Keep basics)
What are the main strength and weakness of No Label?/ What are the main opportunities and challenges for No Label?
Appendix B: Transcript_Ruben

I: Interviewer
E: Ruben

I: Could you please tell me a little bit about your own position and experience.

R: My own position and experience. My position within No Label. I am the managing director of No Label. So, in the end, I have to do it all. That’s pretty much what it is. Everything. I’m being responsible for the companies so that means every aspect of the company, whether it’s buying, the commercial side, the marketing and stores, e-commerce side. In the end, you or you are doing a part of everything.

I: So if I could conclude is that I think you are in charge of the whole operation, but also the consistency of the company.

R: Very much everything whether you call it. I mean what I’ve been called. Manager or if you want, a CEO wants for every kid. I always believe that CEO is for when you’re when you have a really big company.

I: Do you think that you know your customers.

R: Yes, I do. I think the most important thing I see with No Label is I do not see myself as a perfect customer of No Label.

I: Why?

R: The philosophy of No Label started when we said we wanna to be the best in the basics. This is that we look our customer behaviors, in our source, when we look at our customers, their patterns, their behaviors, I notice a lot of them are just the same as my friends, as my brothers. So I think the problem with most fashion company is that people that run it that they try to look at it as something that is basically a mirror of themselves. If I find something really nice, that’s what I am gonna sell to everybody. But when you think about a concept, as a brand, especially as what we do. We are not a really fashion brand, we are a functional fashion brand. We talk about basics, about your every-day needs and stuff, so that means even though I like a purple sweater, that doesn’t mean it’s perfect basics for our clean and tale, the group of people that we want to serve. So in that perspective when I look at most of our customers. One example I always use is a customer tries on a pair of trousers. And an officer really says “oh, that’s really nice, we have it in other colors.” Yes it’s typical manly or typical men behavior. Yeah we like practical things. So when you look at most men they know they don’t want to shop like women they
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I don’t want to try everything on. They like comfort they want to be practical, it has to be fast in and out, and easy for them to understand.

I: OK.

R: So. Again looking at the brand. No label it is more about I look at my brother and then my brother says “Ruben, do you have a nice shirt?” “Yes. I’m sure. What do you think of this?” “That’s great.” And then he has it. And then two weeks later he says “love the shirt, can you send me three more. And he said yes the same shirt because I like it so much. I want to wear it more often and I want to make sure that it doesn’t sell out. So their biggest frustration is they buy a really nice shirt and then eight months later there’s a hole in the shirt and they go back to the shop and then they say yeah I’m sorry it’s sold out because now we have something new. But a typical man doesn’t want something new we want something that he trusts that he feels comfortable with.

R: And when I look at most fashion that we do, a white T-shirt is a white T-shirt and a navy jumper is a navy jumper. So do I really need to change this jumper every time. Do I need to change the color, do I need to change this. Do I need to change the fit? I don’t really think so. Because this jumper could easily be in our collection for the next 10 years and still most customers will buy it every year because this is my favorite jumper.

R: And when I look at most fashion that we do, a white T-shirt is a white T-shirt and a navy jumper is a navy jumper. So do I really need to change this jumper every time. Do I need to change the color, do I need to change this. Do I need to change the fit? I don’t really think so. Because this jumper could easily be in our collection for the next 10 years and still most customers will buy it every year because this is my favorite jumper.

I: So you think these are the things that would remain for a long time.

R: Yes and I do think fashion changes like when when you look at your trousers for instance I mean in some stage everything is skinny and it’s white and then it’s it’s a high cotton and it’s a long cut. So of course things will change. But normally these trends they take for at least five sometimes 10 years time before they you know it’s always a reoccurring pattern. But the question I always ask most customers. When they buy a chino, do you buy different colors with different buttons or what’s so ever. This is not. I always want to have a navy chino. In 20 years time the fit might have changed but I will still wear a navy chino. I think that’s the essence of both of and most of the things that we do and we do some pop-up colors. We do some fresh items to spice it up a little bit.
R: Yeah you know honestly I mean the stuff that we sell the most is the most basic stuff which a white t-shirt or a white-shirt or Navy chino you know. That’s the that’s the core.

I: In that sense do you think your target group actually cover man of every age?

R: I do and. I do believe that that’s like when you look our biggest group of customers these are guys between 25 and 40 years old. Which I think is also a group of customers that is willing to pay a certain amount for a particular quality. So I guess that’s the deal. I understand that most. A young guy from 16 years old that he can’t afford a jumper of 99 euros. And of course they turn HM. But even in that sense he is willing buy a navy jumper in HM.

I: Yes.

R: So when he starts making more money or he starts to have a different look on quality or even maybe environment or whatever he will change his behavior to where he’s going to shop. And that’s why it’s incredibly important that we, that people love our our values, you know, where we stand for that. We have the best quality for the best price that we do it in a transparent way. We try or at least we aim for ethical production and all those kind of things.

R: If those values are good because I mean I don’t make myself any illusions that the navy crew neck you can buy it in a thousand stores here in Amsterdam. But why do people buy it with us. Yeah. And that’s why I think that the market is the trigger.

I: The things such as premium quality, transparency and sustainability are also the things that other company could do. So what are the main differential meanings that’s no label could create for the customers.

R: Well I think there’s not so many companies that actually are so focused on the basics because you can’t walk into any store in this area. They know they will sell a Navy crew neck in one way but most of their collection is fashion. And I think fashion is also based. I need to find something new because I want you as a customer to spend your money every six months. You know if I do the exact same collection as six months ago you’re going to be like Well I haven’t done so why would have gone. But men behavior is different when it comes to basics, because 60 70 percent of their whole wardrobe is
Now I just want to make sure that whenever his T-shirt is I don’t know. Twisted or there’s a hole in his jumper that he thinks the quality of No label is really good. They always have the basics. I like where the company stands for, I like the feel. So I will go to them straight away. Well because in my opinion, honesty. If I want a good white T-shirt. I think every company has a white T-shirt but there’s so much a difference between a normal white T-shirt and also in price and everything.

R: So Even though it sounds very simple to what we do. But there are not that many companies do what we do.

I: Really focus on basic needs. So when a man buy a basic, what do you think he really buys? The value of the basic? Simplicity? Efficiency?

R: Ehmm quality. Say. Let’s say quality. I think most of our customers are very.... Things important to know that fashion has changed, where we used to have brands that sell to retailers. But now we don’t sell to retailers. So we took a massive chunk of costs out of the out of the chain. Now we’re normally a white T-shirt that would have made for let’s say 5 Euros and they would sell it for 15 Euros to a retailer. Yeah and then that retailer would sell it for 45 euros. Yeah in a shop. And what we do is is we we buy it for 5 and we put it in the shop for 19. I think customers but also due to the Internet and everything you see is customers are getting more and more aware of. What quality actually means. Yeah. We used to be very much brainwashed with the idea that if I would buy a really expensive brand that I buy quite often. But these days people actually can see where we make the T-shirt. It’s like very interesting because that’s a very expensive brand makes the same T-shirt as we do. But it’s three times as expensive. I mean we have factories where we buy our shoes and the exact same sneaker is made for a fashion brand and our sneaker is 139 and that same fashion brand puts it in their stores for 339. People starts to find out and also because we’re publishing we’re saying you’re here and here’s our factory. This is what we do. Yes you have a look at it. And customers are are becoming more and more aware. I think it’s almost an old thought of people to think that quality and price is related to each other. It’s not. It’s how marketing functions.

R: And I think. A company like suitsupply for instance was one of the first companies that actually made exclusive quality clothing available for the bigger public. Yeah today they actually I mean their suits are the same as almost as like Vitale Barberis Canonico suit but in half price.
I: Yeah.

R: We’re doing the same trade. We don’t do anything different. Only in a younger way, I think, in a more clean way and pretty focused on basics.

I: So if you look at the future, what are the main opportunities and challenges for No Label?

R: I think opportunities is that we like I said there are not that many brands in the market like us.

I: Now.

R: Yes. I think most brands are struggling because if you have sold your your brands to retailers for the last 50 years and all those retailers go bankrupt means you have to explain to your customer why you’ve basically sold a T-shirt to them that has always been actually too expensive for what it’s worth. Now what they need to do is to... well let’s just look at Tommy Hilfiger. You know that same white T-shirt that we sell for 19 euros they sell the exact same one from the same factory same fabric same country so their T-shirt is 49 euros. Do you think that Tommy Hilfiger is going to drop their prices to 19 euros? Probably not because it would be weird. Why? Why would your price be very low. On the other hand. They can never become transparent even though the market is shouting for transparency. So how can they become transparent because if you say OK guys our T-shirt is 5 euros but I’m selling it for 50 euros. And every customer will think that’s ridiculous. So I think that’s when our opportunity lies is that we can see it from the beginning. Say we this is our model. We are completely transparent about all. There is not a lot of brands that can actually do that.

I: So you mean because of your strength of sourcing, you can be transparent and keep high quality and lower price.

R: Yeah. I don’t think there are a lot of companies could do that. That’s a huge opportunity of how we can grow fast now. Yeah. I think a difficult one in the market is is that the way of growing has changed. So 20 years ago if I would start a brand. It would be very easy for me I would drive around in the Netherlands. If my brand is really cool, I would have 200 selling points within two weeks. Now these days I have to sell it through the internet or through our own stores.

I: or social media.
**R:** Yeah. But building a store costs money. So the way we build our company is quite intense when it comes to capital. You know it’s very easy for me to just send my goods to all these stores of other people and then that’s that stuff. But now I have to build a store and I have to find a store decoration and all that stuff. So. Growth is. Slower. And more capital intensive. On the other, it is more safe because I will only grow at certain pace. I think a lot of companies have gone really....If you look at the companies like super dry for instance, they just literally they grew in such a short time to hundreds of millions of dollars of turnover. But on the other hand when are fed up with your brands which brands like super dry and tend to have because they have big logos and then after two years everybody’s like I don’t wanna wear it anymore. But then all of a sudden, you have. Thousands of people unemployed you have all these stores and then all of a sudden it’s it’s not going as well anymore. I think our our growth is so much more a safe a more normal way. But I think that that’s that’s going to be. It’s gonna be a challenge for a small brand to compete. And I think that’s also a challenge as you see a lot of cannibalization when it comes to the markets like HM and Zara. So they are eating up all this small retailers. This retailers eventually or whether I can walk into 10 shops with different names but still a HM or Zara shop.

**R:** The only problem is these companies have billions of capital. So yeah how can I compete as a small company with such a massive run. So this is our eyes and a huge challenge for us. I think even though it’s a challenge but it also drives us to be very creative. I mean I can never compete with Zara. It’s simply impossible.

**I:** It’s kind of you are afraid to grow super fast but suddenly if you are not relevant to your customers anymore and then you just fail. OK. So as you mentioned that’s you want to stay innovative and creative and relevant to customers. And now there are new business models like rental or pre-owned or this kind of things. How do you think about it?

**R:** I have a little bit different view. I know a friend of mine is starting out at a jeans company. And they do rental jeans or lease jeans. Yeah I like the idea but it’s. It’s quite far fetched. But the biggest problem is is you always have to pay more. So even though you’re trying to do the right thing but you have to take into account that’s if I have 100 euros a week to spend I have 100 euros of week to spend and as much as I would love to change the world and save the planet’s bottom lines. I have to eat something. And then you know they they have time and the money for these initiatives. Realistically 80 percent of the market doesn’t want. The money to buy. These jeans. That is if they had to choose between a jeans for a 39 year old or a jeans for 100 for. They will simply say well, I don’t know if I don’t have the money to save the planet. And even then I like the initiative. But I think the growth perspective behind it is too slow.
We have a saying in Dutch where we say it’s like like a drop of water on a boiling plains. You know it doesn’t make a difference it’s one drop, it’s gone. So it doesn’t mean that that I don’t support the initiative. I personally think that the impact and the scale of the initiative is too slow for what’s happening in the rest of the world.

R: So the way I look at like these really big initiatives is that a lot of the companies that now make a huge difference are not companies that started completely transparent or completely eco-friendly. Or completely organic. So, the companies that are along the way they start to push you earn more money or you make more volume and basically gives you power to lower the prices.

R: So as an example like when we started a couple of years ago we bought like 100 T-shirts. There’s a hundred T-shirts it’s a small quantity so I have to pay a certain amount and I have to pay more. But now two or three years down the line we’re not buying 100 t-shirts. We are now buying 20,000 T-shirts. That means the price is lower. Now I can do two things I can basically take the profit and think I’ll put it in my own pocket and I’ll buy an expensive car and I’m really happy but I can also think right now because my quantities are bigger I need to change the cotton into two organic cotton without the customer actually having to pay the price. We’ll still profit. I will still benefit from the situation and then maybe two years down lines of 20,000 T-shirts to 100,000 T-shirts. And now I can start instead of using 15 liters for water, because of my quantities I can actually say okay, I now can use only five liters of water without impacting the price because I truly believe that the market in the world that we live in today. It is only a very small percentage of humanity that we can afford. Trying to organic or sustainable items. But what if I can change the world by saying I can reach out to hundreds of thousands of people with products that is actually where they don’t have to think about these. At the moment it’s still a choice when you go in a shop it’s your choice. But I don’t know any brand where you can buy sustainable goods with the same price as HM.

I: Now. So you mean basically whatever you want to do. You cannot hurt the benefits of to your customers. Or you cannot make them to be responsible or to pay something for what you want to achieve.

R: It’s not the customers’ choice, it’s my choice to change the output I have in the world. If I have that vision or that wish, then I should be the one that pays the bills. Again many small initiatives these small brands I mean it’s a great initiative. But I know a brand here in Amsterdam that does the same. They started, two or three years ago, Their quantities. They are fully sustainable and organic. Their growth went from 50 t-shirts to 500 T-shirts. Now if you go from 50 T-shirts to 500 T-shirts in two years time.
What is your real impact on the world? I mean you can tell everybody I’m organic I’m doing it right in my core carbon footprint is great. But on the bigger scope of things there are still millions and billions of people that are still buy cheap clothing. So maybe my vision is a big grounder and a bit big. But I truly believe if you want to make an impact in the world. We need to think bigger. They need to maybe even make sacrifices.

R: So my point is is that. Maybe my carbon footprint in the next five years is not as huge as it should be. However if I after five years can reduce my carbon footprint for a million customers and doesn’t that have a lot more impact than my carbon footprint for a 500 customers. And yes I’ve polluted the world. Yes. I. I mean this is the world we still live in. And I think it’s a bit of an Utopian thoughts to see that. The same discussion like you say we tried to change a very small thing in the Netherlands and is very important. But on the other side they say they are building 200 power plants in Brazil every year. It is the scope of things and I think every small initiative should be. We should embrace it. It’s just that I think that making a difference and making impacts requires a bigger vision. It’s very difficult to do it from such a small.

I: OK so you don’t care about what kind of business model or products that you sell but you want it to have bigger impact.

R: I think it’s all related. I think I mean clothing is a substantial part of all of us. We wear clothes and we want to look nice. That will never change. Otherwise we could go back. And just wear like straw skirts or... We’re not going to do this. So I’m trying to to think of a way of it is it’s not only by increasing quantity. It’s also by making sure that the quality that we make is so good that it lasts longer. Now I don’t want a customer that buys this jumpers three times a season. I also know if it’s going to take after two or three weeks he’s not going back. But I can also have impact by selling people basic goods because they don’t constantly have to change it. If I breach that you can always wear this for the next 10 years and somebody doesn’t have to buy something else because I want the biggest impact of fashion is not the pollution. It’s customer behavior. It’s because of our greed. It’s because of when I look into it I walk into a shop. All I want that I want that. And. That and instead of buying one product because why do we wear clothing? To keep warm? To protect us against the rain? That’s... a...Yeah.

I: Function

R: It’s a very functional. But that’s the essence of clothing.
I: But would it be too functional? Because nowadays customers want a clothes not only functional but also could..for example show their personality. So you think those are not your customers?

R: No, I think those customers are very much thing to show their status and trying to show what they are. I mean those are customers that will probably go to Louis Vuitton or Chanel because you want to show what brands they are wearing. They want to show they could make money, which is fine, I don’t really mind. On the other hands, If we are going to kill the platens then I think at one stage we will all think maybe we should do it slightly different, maybe we should change our consumer behavior.

I: Just by offering a nice functional products?

R: Yes, I truly believe. Let’s say that somebody takes that 70 percent of wardrobe is basics and if I can make sure that those basics not change every session but only once every year. Then I think that’s already a massive progress. If I look at my brother, he’s always wearing the same shirt. In the end, he looks at his closet. And I asked so what do you wear most? While-Shirt, blue shirt...So if you look at what people really throw away are those they didn’t use. And 9 out 10 times, when it comes to men, are very fashionable items. If I look at the last 10 years, the amount of the garment that I bought and afterwards I will think it’s such a stupid decision. But overtime when I was in Paris and I saw this beautiful shops and people were wearing nice. I had money so I bought the items. But when I go home and the weather is shit and it’s cold, so all I will wear is just what I’ve got. So 6 month later what I bought in paris will just hang there. And every time I look at it I will think, shit, why I but it and I even blame myself. And it hangs there for another year. The essence, those mistakes are the things we should solve and those mistakes that creates massive pollutions.

I: What is your strategy or plan of becoming the world king of basics?

R: Oh. Yeah. That’s a big question. If I in the strategy that we had three years ago. I think that strategy changes every two months. And the reason why a change occurs is that when you are constantly looking for new developments is. And your strategy is something I would not say I want a global brand. And I want to be there in 10 years. Tell me the strategy it would be. I think it doesn’t make sense.

I: Yeah.
R: The one thing that I do believe in this is is that our strategy is it’s a matter of spreading the world. So it’s a matter of constantly growing. For that growth. Obviously we need the right investors here people that want to invest in this idea and this belief.

I: You are still looking for investors?

R: The thing is there is not a brand in the world. Well there are brands that might have grown completely on their own, but it will take hundreds of years to become a global company. But if you especially in the business that we are and so our sympathy we need to refinance our boots. So if I want to sell a thousand Jumpers I have to pay them before I sell them. So that means to grow. I need quite a lot big investments to finance. That important thing is is that you get the right investors on board who believe in a sustainable idea and not just in a quick profit. So the whole idea the whole strategy is not just a matter of building is making sure your DNA is right.

It also means you have to get in line and find the people all around you, whether they are ambassadors or your investors or staffs....

Everybody has to share that idea. Because the moment if for instance my investors would say like hey you know what, I’ve invested a million euros in your company and I want to have it back within four years with interest. Then straight away my beautiful global idea is going to change because all of a sudden now have to work for the fact that I need to pay back the loan in a certain time instead of trying to create some.

I: OK. so this is far too simple.

R: How do we get there. I think it’s going to be a combination of stores and online. Perhaps in a year’s time that will be a different channel. But I do believe that the biggest drive behind this strategy is social media. I think with social media we are able to cover the world so much faster and so much more focused. But don’t plan too much like I said I. Work in a lot of companies where people are constantly making plan.

Now we are entrepreneurs or cowboys we need to be different in the market. You can’t be different if you’re a global Company.

I: So you now want steady growth and adapt the changes.
R: Yes, because this year, the first plan that we made. We said we are going to open five stores every year. That doesn’t happen. And the reason why is because the market changed because our online growth a lot faster than the growth of our stores. So you adapted. No we said Okay let’s focus more online. Now we focus a lot more online. But now we notice that our logistics and our carbon footprint is quite heavy online now. But our profit centers lie more in the store. So even though we have this massive growth online, we now want to open more stores. Because they are more profitable and the profit of our stores we can invest it easier in the rest of our business.

So that means we are still focusing online instead of having 70 percent focus online. But we’re shifting the focus to store again. So as much as you can blend in three or five years ahead. The chances of a plan especially at this stage of the company were younger where we were easy we can adapt very easily. So it’s easy to change directions.

I: How does it happen that a physical store is more profitable than online shop? Because you have to cost more for people for renting for the building?

R: And the reason is it’s a bit of a most people still think that online is basically you have a warehouse. Yeah. And so you don’t have to have a store and you don’t have all the stuff but your online store has also sold need a platform. Yeah it costs money. So that already equals.

I: Ah, ok.

R: For online, you already have like three to five people on the payroll. And. Then you still have your let’s just say your warehouse costs.where it’s rents or.... but also your your package through the box cost money. One box cost two and a half euros and they have all the taping and all the stuff from within I send it to a customer which cost money and then a customer is going to return it , which also costs money. Then when he returns it he just threw it in a box so I need somebody to fold it again and to send it to another customer again. And all these steps they take time and they cost money. And where most people think is just online is literally like I’ll put it in a box, then it’s done.

I: It looks simple.
R: But it doesn’t. Plus in your shop, only 2 percent of everything that you sell in your shop is returns. Online, on average with bigger companies it lies between 30 and 40 percent. The really big company is 50 percent. For us is like 9 percent, but that’s 9 percent is literally the turnover that is wrong. It is stock that is somewhere in between us and the customer and it costs money.

I: It’s a big cost to through logistics.

R: It’s everything. It’s a rental it’s it’s it’s it’s a huge amount of energy.

Eventually when you then look at all the factors it turns out that stores are actually more profitable than online business. And this is why big companies like Ronaldo and Amazon why they’re struggling because they simply look it seems that this is it’s only if this is the margin online so thin that you need to become as big as Amazon to actually make money.

I: But you do have more customers online.

R: Obviously. But the thing is that the customer shops here is a lot more loyal. They will come back more often. It’s easier you can let you take and you can sell something. Online is easier getting traffic is not the biggest issue is actually getting them to buy something that is actually fits that is right. That they made the right decision. And how many times have you bought something online and they open the package and you’re like, well, that’s really not something that I expected. Where when you walk into a shop and you say I really like this or you just say no no this isn’t from me now. And that whole stage between the customer and online there is it’s literally the human factor that is taken out.

I: So then you are planning to open more stores in the key cities.

R: It’s the idea. The only thing is is it still requires an investment to open a shop.
Appendix C: Transcript_Potential Customers

I: Interviewer

Jerry (Age: 38)
(See the website)

J: But it’s very. I think it’s almost Scandinavian you know.

I: Yeah. But I think. Probably the problem for them is let’s just say you look at their websites or think about it’s a style of them.

J: And I think there’s not so much engagement. No no joy no humor. No. It’s it’s so so plain. But it seems like that is an explicit choice.

I: Just you remind me that the initial proposal that I came to this country. Yes. Because when I go to this store when I went to the store I see a website and it is engaged. Yeah.

J: So yeah a bit just to also be done by that text but I think you should go back. Who are you. What we do. Who do you want to be. And if you still want to be this then then it’s a bit distant aloof.

Tom (Age: 18)
(At shop)

I: Why would you work here?

T: I want to do a part-time job as a shop assistant. I applied in Suitsupply but I was rejected. One day I saw No Label in the street and I really like the style of this store. It’s very clean and simple. I applied and now I can work here.

I: Do you like to work here?

T: Yes, I really like it. The people here are nice and also the clients. I don’t really need to do selling and talk too much. Most of the time I gave suggestions and also get the right size for people here. It’s simple and also comfortable.
I: Really? How did they know No Label?

T: I don’t know, probably from Instagram or Facebook. They all like it, the style. But it’s still expensive for us. We are not ready to buy yet.

I: Do you think you will buy No Label after you graduate? Or start your career?

T: Yes, of course, why not.

Housing (Age: 25)
(See the website)

I: How do you think about it?

H: It’s cool. It’s my style. It’s very clean and simple. And I also like the color, not very strong.

I: Would you consider buying from this brand?

H: Sure, I am considering buying a sneaker now. Let me see....Ah, here it is. I like this sneaker. But the price is a bit high...Ehm, probably I will buy one for my graduation ceremony hahaa....

I: What are the brands you buy now?

H: Uniqlo.

I: What do you think is the difference between No Label and Uniqlo? (How)

H: I think Uniqlo is more bold and fashionable. And Uniqlo is more colorful, always have new products and color in trend. While No Label is more functional and pure...more like unchangeable basics...Besides, I think No Label is also more expensive than Uniqlo. Sometimes you will also thinks No Label could be too dull.
Roel (Age: 26)  
*(See the website)*

I: Have you heard about this brand before?

R: I am not sure, it sounds like some hipster brand.

I: Ehms...you can check it online.

R: It looks very clean...are they sustainable?

I: You can check their brand story.

R: It looks like they are doing something, but I am still not sure...ehms...Okay

R: The shorts look expensive. Because you know, this is something you can also find in HM and Zara, with very low price. I don’t know why they are so expensive. If it’s very fashionable, stylish, I can understand. But it just looks the same as what HM and Zara have.

Jim (Age: 25)  
*(See the website)*

I: How do you think about it?

H: I think it’s not my style. It looks not stylish and too plain, probably suits elder people.

I: How do you think about the brand?

H: I don’t know much about the brand, but they show these factories. I am not sure what does it mean, they are just the same factories as I can imagine.

I: Would you consider buying from this brand?
H: Yes, I would probably buy some shirts or knitwear. It looks so comfortable and clean.

I: Any additional comments?

H: I don’t feel this brand is something for me. I don’t know the context of wearing those clothes and I don’t see strong images to convince me where and how could wear those clothes.

Yeejek (Age: 28)
(Visit the store)

I: How do you feel about it?

Y: It was cool. It’s really nice, modern... It’s clean-looking shop like some shops that I go into. So I thought well I will come. I didn’t know about this shop. I would love to go look at because I was a very neatly place and a nicely display and that’s I really like that is really minimal. So I could wear on any occasion like to work or even going out, so it’s kind of shop that I would love to go into.

I: So mainly about the product and the style. Do you know anything about the Brand?

Y: No, never see it before, I didn’t hear it before.

I: Do you know the name of the brand?

Y: Honestly, I did’t even see the brand name.

I: Even after you visit the shop, you didn’t know anything about the brand?

Y: No, I don’t know. I thought it’s just nice. And there are a lot of nice brands in Rotterdam. I was just one of those shops where they have good nice stuff that they picked out for me. This shop looks like one of those shops as well.
Y: Yeah, I think so. It’s quite similar. They pick up nice ones and put it side-by-side for you.

I: Could you now recall the name of the brand?

Y: I didn’t actually look the name.

I: When you walk into the store to what extent you feel that you are engaged.

Y: I quite like the way. I like the color tones and then they put it side-by-side but it’s really nice. And then I remember seeing the wall with a lot of their shirts and different colors and materials. Because I can easily see all the possible selections. I really like the display and overview of the store.

I: Would you consider buying the product from the store?

Y: Ya, I touched the material, they are quite good, good quality. I really like the simple color selections. They had as a bit different as well from outside.

I: What is the difference?

Y: It’s very classic. These colors, so things are going well for years. So the white, denim and ... these colors.

I: How likely do you think you will buy from this brand when you want to buy a T-shirt or a pair of sneaker.

Y: I mean, I’m not really sure because I don’t know whether it is really worth the price because I don’t know whether if the quality is as good as it is. Because for the same price I can buy from Zara Mango other brands that I’m pretty sure they have a certain quality that I know will last a while because I’ve been wearing them for a while so I know. And also I don’t know the material of their products. I know some brands they would put a little notice like tell me like this from Sweden or they’re made from what material. So I feel like this kind of know a little bit more and I’m assured of the quality that makes me want to pay a slightly higher than average.
Appendix D: Customer Research Booklet

Introduction

Dear Customer,

This booklet is intended to help us know more about you. You will spend around 3-6 minutes a day to complete it. Please send back to us after you finish it. You could send us an email or post, if you have any questions regarding the booklet, feel free to contact us by [...] 

Best wishes,
NoLabel

Day 1: About me

Hi, I am ______, ______ years old. Currently, I work as ______.

I would like to describe myself as:
(please write the 5 words that represent you most and cross out words that definitely not you. Feel free to add the words if you can’t find a proper one)

- Original
- Elegant
- Reliable
- Smart
- Rebellious
- Ambitious
- Social
- Confident
- Curious
- Attractive
- Fashionable
- Environnment-friendly
- Normal
- Creative
- Direct
- Furry
- A warrior
- Helps
- Helpful
- A business type
- Rebellious
- A perfectionist
- A gentleman
- Honest
- Easy-going

This is how I would like to dress like:
Please draw your favorite outfit in the blank below on the right. Feel free to add descriptive words and indicate the reasons why you would like to dress like this.

Think about a celebrity or a person you know that you would like to be, I want to be ______ because ______.

If I could be an animal, I would like to be ______ because ______.
How to create a sustainable customer growth strategy for a small brand?

Day 3: Brands I use

Here’s a look around you. Could you identify the 5-8 brands that you use? And list the decisive factors that you choose these brands.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The brands I use</th>
<th>Here are the reasons</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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</tbody>
</table>

Day 4: Me and No Label

Please draw two typical occasions that you wear No Label and complete the sentence below. It’s better to think about one formal occasion (work/business trip/meeting) and one casual occasion (travel/party/hangout).

Example: When I wear No Label for work, it is (formal, high-quality, comfortable) and gives me the (confidence) to be professional and reliable.

Occasion 1:

When I wear No Label (occasion), it is (product attribute) and gives me the (functional benefit) to be (emotional benefit).

Occasion 2:

In the morning, I wear No Label (occasion), it is (product attribute) and gives me the (functional benefit) to be (emotional benefit).

Day 5: Me and No Label

How would you evaluate the connection between you and No Label? Please draw a circle in the axis. Feel free to add reasons why you would evaluate it like this.

Emotional connection

To what extent do you feel that you are engaged and connected with No Label emotionally?

Weak and Superficial

Strong and Deep

Functional fulfillment

To what extent do you feel that you are connected with No Label because you meet your needs and fulfill your functional demands?

Weak and Superficial

Strong and Deep

Thanks so much!

Thank you for filling in the booklet! Do you have any additional comments for us?

We would like to thank you for participating with a free shirt to pick up in our store. Fill in your email address below for the gift card.

For me, No Label is......
Appendix E: Customer Research Questionnaire

https://admin.typeform.com/form/wpPtUj/

No Label, My Label
A No Label customer research program
>>> Let's start the journey :)

Start press ENTER
### Appendix F: Customer Research

#### Questionnaire: question details

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RESEARCH QUESTIONS</th>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Intention</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>What's your first name?</td>
<td>To make sure we give the chino to the right person :)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>What's your last name?</td>
<td>To make sure we give the chino to the right person :)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>How old are you?</td>
<td>General information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>What is your current job?</td>
<td>General information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>In which city do you live?</td>
<td>General information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>How would you describe yourself?</td>
<td>Personality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>How would you like to be described by other people?</td>
<td>Status goal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Please choose your top 2 favorite fashion styles.</td>
<td>Personal style preference</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Why do you like those styles?</td>
<td>Personal style preference</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Where do you find inspiration or get advice when it comes to fashion?</td>
<td>I want to explore this as a design opportunity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>In what occasions do you prefer to wear No Label?</td>
<td>Using situation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Please choose typical professional occasions when you wear No Label.</td>
<td>Using situation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>What products of No Label do you wear?</td>
<td>Using situation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Why?</td>
<td>Functional needs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>The same as 13 (private occasions)</td>
<td>Using situation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>The same as 14 (private occasions)</td>
<td>Using situation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>The same as 15 (private occasions)</td>
<td>Functional needs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>What are the factors that attract you most when choosing No Label?</td>
<td>What people like about No Label</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>What are the things you want No Label to improve?</td>
<td>The opportunities for NO Label</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Imagine No Label as an animal, what animal would it be?</td>
<td>Brand personality of No Label</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Why?</td>
<td>Brand personality of No Label</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>To what extent do you like people to know you are wearing No Label brand?</td>
<td>Brand relationship: engagement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>Why?</td>
<td>Brand relationship: engagement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>To what extent do you feel you are connected with No Label when it comes</td>
<td>Brand relationship: functional fulfillment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>to fulfilling your functional demands or needs?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>To what extent do you feel that you are engaged and connected with No</td>
<td>Brand relationship: emotional attachment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Label?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>To what extent do you agree that you have a connection with others who</td>
<td>Brand relationship: community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>also wear No Label?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>How willing would you be to recommend No Label to a friend?</td>
<td>Net promoter number as evaluate of overall brand health</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>Would you like to be our ambassador and have an in-person talk with us?</td>
<td>Following research</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix G: Observation & Interview at shop

Observation

- Most of the customers shop very fast. On average, they spend around 2 minutes for trying one garment. If they like it, they will buy it.

- Most of the questions from customers are about size and color.

- They will not ask questions directly like, how do I look like? But they are also very happy if the shop assistant could give them some suggestions.

- Almost 30-40% of them come with partners or small children. If they come with partners, their partners would pick up clothes for them and make decisions.

- Some new customers will ask about the brand story.

- Some customers buy one item in different colors.

- Most of them have a clear goal when walking into the store like I am looking for a white T-shirt.

Interview with Shop assistants

I: Interviewer  
S: Shop assistants

I: Who are the main customers?

S: I think most of them are men between 25-45. But also you will see men over 65 also come. Some rich gentle men, they also like to buy from us. Once, a group of young boys (17-18) come, they walked around in the shop and discussed with each other. They enjoyed the coffee and they found it so cool. In the end they all bought a 19-euro T-Shirt.

I: Why do your customer love No Label?
S: The quality, and also the services we offer and also the price. We are located in the rich area here. Actually people come for us.

S: What is the uniqueness of No Label, compared to some competitors like Suitsupply.

S: The style. It’s very...clean. And it’s not so formal, it’s smart casual. Especially here in Holland, people don’t like to show off. They want to look nice but not too much. If you dress too...too colorful or too much... People will look at you and think who do you think you are?

I: I actually saw many customers come with their girlfriends or wife, it’s very interesting.

S: Yes, I am so surprised that man are actually very insecure. If they come alone, they will take pictures and ask their partners. And say I will come back the other day. If a customer comes with his wife, she is in charge, we don’t have to do anything. And you know what, men actually know nothing about combination. So sometimes, they are asking for agreement, from us, and from their partners. I also think it’s good to have female assistant in our shop, because then they get opinions from female’s perspective.
## Appendix H: DESTEP Factors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Trend Book</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Demographic</strong></td>
<td>Frustrated consumers will welcome LEGISLATIVE BRANDS.</td>
<td>Trend watching</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Brands that offer rich, playful experiences are more likely to engage with users.</td>
<td>Trend watching</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Consumers will take their online expectations offline.</td>
<td>Trend watching</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Young adults feel shut out of the housing market, having less job security, carrying large students debts, and less income and wealth.</td>
<td>Brand Management</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Consumers expect to summon retail experiences as they would a genie from a lamp.</td>
<td>Trend watching</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Consumers want more deep personalization</td>
<td>Trend watching</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Growing middle class in developing countries.</td>
<td>Mckinsey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Middle class are flexing their newfound spending power by expressing their own tastes through fashion.</td>
<td>Mckinsey</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A dramatic rise of nomads</td>
<td>Inclusivity goes mainstream</td>
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<td></td>
<td>People increasingly tend to reward the purveyors of ethically, socially and environmentally sound brands with loyalty.</td>
<td>Space 10</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Consumers now expects companies to reciprocate with radical transparency and sharing of information.</td>
<td>Mckinsey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Consumers want to be sustainable, but most of them don’t know how.</td>
<td>Observation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Youth unemployment</td>
<td>Futures Centre</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Consumers are increasingly demanding that the products produced by fashion brands are original, reflecting their own desire for their fashion choices to be reflections of their sense of style, self-image and values.</td>
<td>Mckinsey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Nine in ten Generation Z consumers believe companies have a responsibility to address environmental and social issues.</td>
<td>Mckinsey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Environmental problem has now shifted to the consumption side: the insatiable appetite for fashion means people are buying more and more clothes.</td>
<td>The Conversation</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>And 44% of gamers say the biggest benefit is improved emotional well-being.</td>
<td>Mckinsey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Humans have always used fashion to satisfy emotional, egotistical desires.</td>
<td>The Conversation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fashion is a social activity for setting our status (the egotistical drivers).</td>
<td>The Conversation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fashion is an activity that is driven by emotional desires such as the fantasy, excitement and aspirations of living a better, more fulfilling life.</td>
<td>The Conversation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Individuals make choices that balance costs and benefits.</td>
<td>The Conversation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Millennials like innovative brands.</td>
<td>Mckinsey</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Customers are increasingly going to have a one-to-one relationship with their shopping through text message and through one-to-one requests.</td>
<td>Mckinsey</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Customers are spending less on apparel and expecting more experience.</td>
<td>Mckinsey</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Millennials crave the new, different, and authentic, while often scornning traditional brands.</td>
<td>Mckinsey</td>
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<td></td>
<td>People worry about polarized politics, the environment, trade wars, cyber crime, technological displacement and more.</td>
<td>Mckinsey</td>
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<td></td>
<td>People are crying out for a happy distraction.</td>
<td>Mckinsey</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Across much of the West public confidence in government is plummeting.</td>
<td>Word economic Forum</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Political-legal</strong></td>
<td>Traditional governmental and bureaucratic institutions are increasingly either unwilling or unable to meet many of people's basic expectations.</td>
<td>Trend watching</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The EU General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) fundamentally reshape the way in which data is handled across every sector.</td>
<td>EU GDPR &amp; LGD</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Environmental Audit Committee is launching an inquiry into the sustainability of the fashion industry.</td>
<td><a href="http://www.parliament.uk">www.parliament.uk</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Economic
- **OPEN SOURCE SOLUTIONS** brings company opportunities.
- The subscription e-commerce market in the US has grown over 100% a year over the past 5 years.
- The lifespan of the fashion product is becoming more elastic as **pre-owned, refurbished, repair and rental business models** continue to evolve.
- From accumulative consumption to smart consumption.
- The ethics economy is booming.
- The shift from products to services.
- **Internet of Physical Things**
- **On-demand production**
- Circular fashion
- Experiences and access to items are more desirable than ownership.
- Explosion of small brands. Small brands are better able to target specific market niches.
- Smaller players will continue to have their role to play as long as they differentiate on emotion, curation and trust.

### Social cultural
- The border between public and private space is increasingly blurred.
- Imagined and real worlds collide in the name of play.
- Increasingly societal polarization, inequality and political turbulence are prompting many to seek out a break from the 'real world' with greater urgency.
- 24/7 connectivity and digital experiences that blur the boundaries of the real and virtual are not 'new' trends.
- In anxious markets, consumers crave escapism.
- Inclusivity goes mainstream.
- The individual as a co-creator.
- Score/credits as new currency.
- Cities, regions and countries are creating strong brand images for themselves in order to compete on a global scale.
- Slow fashion may become the norm.
- Spending on play is growing.
- Social media becomes an important engaging channel.
- The brand is not only here to sell product to the client. It’s also about communicating and conveying messages and values to the entire community of the brand.
- Brands measure the environmental impact of every garment and show the location and factories they collaborate with.
- New luxury today? Is it a logo or is it a product that I know has not cost someone’s life or the environment?

### Technological
- People demand ethical AI and algorithms that deliver fair and unbiased decisions.

---

**How to create a sustainable customer growth strategy for a small brand?**
## How to create a sustainable customer growth strategy for a small brand?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interactive movies: Bandersnatch</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Face recognition/voice recognition/image recognition</td>
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<tr>
<td>Automation of hunting, negotiating, purchasing, delivery arrangements and more.</td>
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<tr>
<td>In the mobile consumer journey, the gap between discovery and purchase has become a pain-point for a more impatient fashion consumer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Automation and data analytics have enabled a new breed of start-ups to achieve agile made-to-order production.</td>
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<td>Predictive Purchase</td>
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<td>Faceprints as identity</td>
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<td>Searches happen 85% online, (Google/Amazon)</td>
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<tr>
<td>AR/VR fitting room</td>
</tr>
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<td>Visual recognition and recommend similar garments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>API'S are used for existing systems to create new experience and get details of stock level.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Machine learning algorithms use customers profile, location, item local availability, and chatbot answer to recommend relevant items.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amazon Alexa, google home for voice conversation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consumers are more likely to find inspiration from external sources (e.g., influencers, friends, TV) than directly from the brand or retailer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Digital technology gives small brands an easy way to engage with consumers, who are increasingly glued to their smartphones and the internet.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technological displacement</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Ecologically

- Retailers must make the leap from customer experience (CX) to intimate experience (IX). **Trend watching**
- The analytics is moving offline into the physical world **Raft Trend Report 2018**
- People will still make their way to physical stores, to get experiences that they won’t find anywhere else. **Vend**
- Retailers will increasingly rely on robots **Vend**
- People want seamless experience between online and offline **Forbes**
- New retail concept such as Amazon go, and Alibaba Hema are shaping the retail. **Supplychain Dive**
- Another growing trend is "micro warehousing," where retailers put small distribution centers close to large urban areas
- More brand experiencing centers
- More nearshore sourcing and production **McKinsey**
- A recent survey ranked "sales account manager" as one of the most stressful jobs in the US, with 73 percent of respondents rating the role as "highly stressful." relationship, high pressure, on the way, multi tanker, fast paced, attention to detail
- Simple and playful
Appendix I: Synthesized themes
Appendix J: Top-down Search Areas
Appendix K: Bottom up Search Areas_Session Material

Value simplicity.
People value the simplicity of No Label, not only the style and design of the products but also the shopping experience and overall feelings. They like basics because it’s easy to mix and fit on different occasions.

What’s interesting:
Some Men will buy one product in different colors. If they know the right size, they will buy from online. Men keep purchase one brand if they are satisfied.

Feel comfortable.
People love to dress suits and be confident on professional occasions. At the same time, they also want to be comfortable. For personal occasions, such as hanging out, traveling, going to a party, they normally wear shorts, T-shirts, knitwear, sneakers. Those products from No Label enable them to dress fashionably and make them feel good and comfortable.

Feel confident.
People love the high quality and style of No Label because it makes them look good. Thus they feel confident about themselves. Besides, they also like to be described as confident.

What’s interesting:
When buying clothes, men are insecure, they want advices and suggestions from friends and partners. Most of men don’t know how to combine clothes.

Be seen as reliable.
Most of the customers will face multiple professional occasions such as giving a presentation, meeting clients, going on a business trip and attending the conference. In those occasions, they would like to dress elegantly and seen as reliable. So they would choose No Label’s suits, knitwear, and sneakers.
**Appendix L: Bottom up Search Areas_Session Result**

**Uniqueness of No Label**

1. Basics
   - “1+N”
   - simple
   - Plain
   - not fresh or interesting
   - It serves as a foil for people
   - What is the difference with other basics? All the white T-shirts are the same, especially the basic white T-shirt.
   - Versatile, both casual and formal

2. High quality
   - what does it mean?
   - How could you set the standard of quality?
   - It’s a niche for people who want to dress well with less money

3. Price
   - related to transparency
   - what is the meaning of showing the price
   - the way of showing the price is too literally

4. Transparency
   - transparency is good, but may be in a more interesting way

5. Sustainability
   - What does sustainability mean for people?

6. Brand personality
   - Honest
   - Reliable
   - No outstanding personality

How to create a sustainable customer growth strategy for a small brand?
# Appendix M: Competitor Research

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Brand Name</th>
<th>Direct competitor</th>
<th>Brand purpose</th>
<th>Target Audience</th>
<th>Product Features</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Re-Tread</td>
<td>Footwear and apparel company</td>
<td>To provide sustainable and ethical footwear</td>
<td>Women, men, children</td>
<td>Environmentally friendly, ethical, sustainable design</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Van Gils</td>
<td>Dutch brand known for its classic and timeless designs</td>
<td>To offer high-quality clothing and accessories</td>
<td>Men, women, children</td>
<td>High-quality materials, timeless design, versatile clothing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dickies</td>
<td>American workwear brand</td>
<td>To provide durable and functional clothing for professionals</td>
<td>Men, women, children</td>
<td>Durable, comfortable, versatile clothing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Society Shop</td>
<td>Online retail store</td>
<td>To offer unique and eco-friendly clothing</td>
<td>Men, women, children</td>
<td>Sustainable, ethical, unique design</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oskar Noah</td>
<td>Australian organic cotton brand</td>
<td>To provide eco-friendly and comfortable clothing</td>
<td>Men, women, children</td>
<td>Organic cotton, sustainable, comfortable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ukiyo Co.</td>
<td>Japanese casual wear brand</td>
<td>To offer unique and modern clothing</td>
<td>Men, women, children</td>
<td>Japanese design, unique, contemporary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eternale</td>
<td>United States clothing brand</td>
<td>To offer timeless and elegant clothing</td>
<td>Men, women, children</td>
<td>Timeless design, elegant, versatile</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## How to create a sustainable customer growth strategy for a small brand?

1. **Identify your target audience**: Understand who your customers are and what they value. This will help you tailor your products and marketing efforts to their needs.
2. **Develop a sustainable brand identity**: Create a brand identity that reflects your commitment to sustainability. This can include using sustainable materials, reducing waste, and supporting ethical practices.
3. **Offer sustainable products**: Design and manufacture products that are environmentally friendly and socially responsible. Consider using renewable materials, reducing waste, and reducing water usage.
4. **Develop a marketing strategy**: Use social media, content marketing, and other digital marketing tactics to reach your target audience. Highlight your commitment to sustainability in your marketing messages.
5. **Partnerships and collaborations**: Partner with other sustainable brands or organizations to expand your reach and credibility. This can also help you leverage their resources and expertise.
6. **Listen to your customers**: Regularly solicit feedback and engage with your customers to understand their needs and preferences. Use this information to improve your products and marketing efforts.
7. **Stay informed and innovative**: Continuously research new sustainable practices and stay ahead of industry trends. This will help you stay relevant and competitive.

By following these steps, you can create a sustainable customer growth strategy that appeals to eco-conscious consumers and helps your brand succeed in the long run.
How to create a sustainable customer growth strategy for a small brand?
Appendix N: Competitor Research_Results

Product Performance of competitor

1. Convenience
   i. Suitsupply offers free trial at home service
   ii. Van Gils offer traveling tailor services

2. Fashion suggestions and inspirations
   i. Only For Men offer fashion consultant service
   ii. Cos have Summer Party, Holidays collections
   iii. OGER and The Society Shop send customers cookbooks and magazines
   iv. Everlane developed an app to give dressing recommendations based on weather

3. Make the perfect fit for customers_Tailoring service
   i. Suitsupply, Van Gils, The society shop, Oger, all those brands offer tailoring service
   ii. The tailoring brands look more to the details
   iii. Perfect fit is the positioning of Suitsupply
   iv. Van Gils is positioned as best dutch tailor

4. Make slim fit style, create an image of confidence
   i. Suitsupply, Van Gils, The society shop, Oger, all have the slim fit style
   ii. The purpose of Van Gils is to make every man feel confident in a stylish suit
   iii. The image of Suitsupply, Van Gils, The Society Shop and Oger are all men with confident smiles
   iv. OGER focuses its Italian style heritage and makes it accessible for Dutch people

5. Make product unique
   i. Van Gils make personalization from fabric to finishing
   ii. The Society Shop focuses much on style, color, and pattern
   iii. Ralph Lauren offers personalized T-shirts for customer
   iv. Uniqlo positions its product as the basis for people to combine with their unique styles
6. Make their simple design keep fresh
   i. Cos make functional and simple design, but it also collaborates with designers to make seasonal design, and make the style different
   ii. Uniqlo offer basics for people, at the same time, it has new design themes every year. Its UT is an good example of collaborating with designers.
   iii. Uniqlo uses technology to innovation fashion

7. Develop services or participate in activities aligned with their statement
   i. Cos wants to have product last for seasons, it offers product care guide for customers
   ii. Everlane uses its website and social media to educate customers on its supply chain, factories, employees, and the price breakdown of each product.
   iii. Everlane holds “Choose What You Pay” sales, which allow shoppers to select one of three prices for a piece of merchandise. It aligns with their transparency statement.
   iv. Uniqlo’s recycle service
   v. Uniqlo participated in different sustainability activities

Brand Associations
Appendix O: Ideation Session_Inspirational Cards

- **Take off No Label**
  A symbolic behaviour after buying the No Label’s clothes. The customers will take off the label and give it back to recycle the label.

- **Personalized Label**
  Customers can print their own label.

- **Material Label**
  Use the visualized material information as a label. For example, use cotton as Label if it’s made of 100% cotton, or show the amount of water used when producing the clothes.
  When you choose meat in the supermarket, it’s not about the brand, but about ingredients.

- **Life Expectancy of the Clothes**
  Show the life expectancy of products on the clothes. Every product of No Label is designed to be worn at least 3 years.
  Do you know by wearing the clothes for an extra 6 months, you can reduce waste and water usage by 20–50%?

- **Search by Image**
  Customers can search for proper clothes to fit what they already had via uploading the pictures of current clothes.

- **Weekly Inspiration**
  Customers can post their own No Label clothing combination on Instagram and hashtag No Label. No Label will select one photo every week as weekly inspiration and share with every follower (i.e., show on the screen at the store).

- **Versatile Basics**
  To show that No Label’s basics fit both casual and formal occasions. No Label could give different combination inspirations with the same clothes and show it on website or Instagram.

- **Recycle Clothes**
  The clothes of No Label could be recycled after 2 years. The life expectancy sign will gradually disappear in 2 years. Then customers can send the clothes back and get a coupon.

- **Who Made my Clothes?**
  Customers are able to see where their clothes were made, how they were made and who made them.

- **No Label Scanner**
  A transparent scanner in the shop that helps customers to know the materials and composition of price. It creates a transparent shopping experience.

- **No Label Vlog**
  Make a Vlog about how No Label chooses the factories and how the clothes were made in the factories. Share it via Instagram or Facebook.

- **Washing Guide**
  Every product will have a washing guide to make sure the clothes can last longer.
  Do you know by washing until you have a full load, you can save over 19,000 liters of water each year. That’s the same as taking 237 baths.
How to create a sustainable customer growth strategy for a small brand?
How to create a sustainable customer growth strategy for a small brand?
Appendix P: Internal Evaluation_Interview

**Interviewer:** Yujing Yang  
**Interviewee:**  
- Ruben (Managing director)  
- Sharon (Happiness manager)  
- Milo (Customer service)  
- Tatchatrin (Photographer)  
- Joris (Photography producer)  
- Jesse (Intern)

**Yujing Yang:** Are those brand positioning and promises clear for you?

**All:** Yes, it’s very clear and very relevant to what we are doing.

**Yujing Yang:** Which brand promise do you like the most?

**Tatchatrin:** I like Horizon 2 the most. It sounds very promising and it’s most relevant for No Label. I also like Horizon 3. But it’s... a bit too far. We are doing something relate to transparency, but only a little. So, even if we are going to change, it still takes time. And I also think the second one is more capable and confident for us to do. And we can do a lot of more things, like choosing the right material.

**Ruben:** “Good enough, Last long.” It’s very interesting, because just last time I was discussing with another design agency that we should only have 20 items a year. The last one I like it, but I am not so sure about it. Also there is a problem with “radical transparency”, because Everlane already claimed it. So it will be a problem for the following company to claim the same thing. At the same time, I’m also wondering whether our customers care about this? Do they care the ethical and sustainable part of the company? I am not sure. That’s why I feel a bit afraid to go this direction. I think my customers care more about the product and the price.

**Sharon:** The second one. It’s direction we are going ahead. But I also like the third one very much. It’s more ethical and more transparent. And you can attract more people who care about the sustainability. Those customers are not our customers now, but I think they could be our customers in the future.
Milo: Personally I like the last the most. It’s super cool, it’s also where we should go. I was surprised that our customers actually do appreciate the sustainable things we are doing. Once we by accident used the organic cotton, and they liked it very much. So I think we should do more things like this.

Jesse: The second one is really about how you change you business model. Because if you want to sell less items with higher quality, then you have to raise the price. And then you lose the price advantage. But it’s still good to try, because I don’t know. It probably works.

Joris: The third one. The thing with the second one is that you have to keep profitable, you have to sell to more people, you have to tell them. But then you spend more money on marketing. I don’t think this is for No Label, because you have to stick to your price. If you have higher quality, then your price also goes up. So people will be more confused with our brand. I think we shouldn’t go that way. And for the third one, I think we can do much more. We could make our product traceable and show more about the fabric. I can imagine people do care about that. At least they are going to care.

Yujing Yang: How do you think about the current promise of “High quality, Fair price”?

Tatchatrin: The first one is what we are doing right now. I think we are doing well. It’s just…it’s not so inspiring. It’s not hitting me. This is like..what it is, it’s not promising. The second one is much more interesting. You can see, you can judge. But from what I heard from the customers, they always talk about the price and quality. So I think quality is the most important thing for us.

Joris: Quality is subjective, it’s about feeling. So you really have to tell the customers. To explain where quality is coming from, so they become more aware of it. The price, what we are doing now is good. But it’s just for some people are interested in it, some people are not. But customers buy for the quality and price, I think we should stick to this.

Sharon: It’s exactly what we are doing right now. We deliver high-quality products, honest service and breakdown the price and And it’s also how we started. Because we started with no middle man. That’s how we lower the price.

Milo: Sometimes our customers are very confused about what we are doing with the cost. Especially in the beginning. They are wondering what does this mean and where is the big amount of money going. I think what we are doing now is good but also tricky.
Appendix R: Likert Scale

Likert Scale for Condition 1

- Name ________________
- Age ________________
- I am from ________________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>This product appears to be of quality</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>Slightly disagree</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>Slightly agree</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Likert Scale for Condition 2

- Name ________________
- Age ________________
- I am from ________________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>This product appears to be of quality</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>Slightly disagree</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>Slightly agree</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
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How to create a sustainable customer growth strategy for a small brand?
Appendix S: Test Process