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# ASOS

## Deconstructing the Brand

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## **Brand Logic**

ASOS.com is one of a kind e-commerce retailer, founded in London, the UK in the year 2000. During this time, clothing apparel wasn't really sold online. The thought of such a thing seemed completely abstract and simply not too bright. Nonetheless, this is exactly what the founders of our company wanted to provide. Robertson and Griffiths wanted to create a virtual shopping experience, in which young adults could indulge in shopping the trendiest and latest fashions from the comfort of their home (Asos, 2018). In doing so, ASOS instantly branded itself a risk-taker brand. Today, ASOS is recognized as the largest fashion online brand without the backing of a physical store. I personally feel that stories like these, need to be told because it sends a strong message. The story of our company encourages you to be different, to take risks, to push the boundaries on what's perceived to be "suitable" or "prevalent". Taking part in these things can be extremely rewarding and beneficial in the long run.

## **Brand Idea & Personality**

We like to refer to ASOS as a fashion democracy, one that's truly inclusive and truly for the people. A democracy in which all sizes, races, genders, and talents are encouraged. We create an environment where there is a choice for all, and this message transcends through all aspects of our operations. We believe that your power is the power to be you. Thus, we aim to celebrate you and encourage you to express the freedom to be yourself, because that's your best self.

Companies often attest that their inclusive, yet have no evidence to back up their claim. ASOS, on the other hand, is actively supporting and sprinting into action for the causes and values they uphold. ASOS habitually advocates body positivity, loving your curves, your rectangle figure-

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just loving the skin you're in. There's a huge gap in the market for plus size women, and when it is offered, there seems to be a disconnect. For example, a company might retail a size 0 pant at \$30, while a size 20 retails for \$45, despite it being the same style. ASOS doesn't punish you for being curvy, and thus offer sizes 0-30 and keep the same prices across the board despite your size.

### **Brand Identity, Logo, and Symbol**

ASOS stands for "As Seen On Screen" because customers can shop anything that they see while using our Instagram or YouTube channel (Eggertsen, 2016). It is a see now, buy now strategy. On our website, Roman typefaces are used for headings "to give their writing classical weight" (Wysocki, 2004) which gives a formal look to the overall webpage. Beneath the images, Sans serif typefaces are used for all the captions. This makes it less formal, and relates back to the shopper, as it has more to do with the shopper themselves, than the website or season trend (Wysocki, 2004). The use of these images are symbols for domination that bring the models to life, where there are live photos of models showing off the clothing.

### **Packaging and Waste**

We at ASOS are committed to our environmental policy. According to our reduce, reuse, recycle methods, we manage waste generated through our business operations by focusing on packaging, customers, premises, and supply chain. We feel we are obligated as an online retailer to meet these responsibilities globally (ASOS, 2018). Through our packaging, we source over 40 million plastic mailing bags and 5 million cardboard boxes a year which encourages our recycle methods. For customer waste, we encourage our customers to recycle their used clothing and we

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use that post-consumer waste in our ASOS supply chain to make new clothing (ASOS, 2018). We are still working towards our goal for premises waste which is to be sending zero waste to the land. We partner with organizations such as The Recycled Assets Company to collect our unwanted office furniture so it can be reused instead of sent to landfill (ASOS, 2018). As for our supply chain, ASOS has encouraged a change in the way parcels are packaged and because of this change, 14 to 20 lorries have been removed from the road each week and hope for that number to increase throughout our business strategies (ASOS, 2018).

### **Mission Statement**

“Our mission is to become the world’s number-one online shopping destination for fashion-loving 20-somethings (ASOS, 2018).”

### **Vision Statement**

“Our aim is to build an increasingly desirable, defensible and differentiated business model, with a customer experience to match (ASOS, 2018).”

### **Internal Marketing**

For internal marketing, we incorporate ASOS Academy, which is a festival of learning for our employees (Henshall, 2017). Around 1,200 ASOS attendees experience 5 days of masterclasses, workshops and creative taster sessions at ASOS HQ with 55 events. We work with experts to train our employees on body image and health (Henshall, 2017). We provide employees with health and workout facilities, a quiet zone library and cafes as well as a technology bar and help

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them with their non-work related needs (Henshall, 2017). For us, our employees are as important as our customers and that is one of the reasons why help them to grow in our company. By doing this, not only do our employees feel satisfied and happy working in one of our stores, but also provide better customer service.

### **External Marketing**

We at ASOS listens to and interacts with customers, who in turn become brand advocates. One of our best successful campaigns that we have created is the #AsSeennOnMe campaign, where anyone has the chance to post an image on Twitter or Instagram wearing one of our products with the hashtag and can be picked to appear on our main product page. We also use bigger influencers, ASOS Insiders, a mix of fashion, beauty and lifestyle bloggers who wear our clothing (with prompts to buy the look) on sponsored accounts (as opposed to sponsored posts). We also have ASOS Insiders, a marketing initiative designed by us to give its users more personal content - namely, “fashion tips and style advice” (ASOS, 2018).

### **Brand Customer**

	<b>Performance</b>	<b>Original Target</b>
<b>Age</b>	18-23 (55%) , 24-29(20%), 30-35(20%), 36-42(5%)	15-34 year olds
<b>Gender</b>	80% of customers are female, 20% are male	Female and Male customers
<b>Occupation</b>	Young professionals and students	Young professionals and students
<b>Ethnic Group</b>	The majority are white	All
<b>Income</b>	Average income	Middle
<b>Location</b>	Most of shoppers are from the UK, Europe, USA and Australia.	Global audiences

Figure 1. Target Market (Zhang, 2014)

Our target customers are fashionable 20 something-year-olds. They are mostly between the ages of 18-35. 80% of our customers are female and 20% of them are male. They are young professionals and students. The majority are white, with average income living in the UK, Europe, USA, and Australia (Zhang, 2014).

Our customers spend most of their time on social media including Facebook, Instagram, and Snapchat. They are frequent online shoppers, like having fun, and are mobile-savvy and eager for the new upcoming trends (Zhang, 2014). We focus on the diversity of our customers. Our ‘Celebrating Diversity’ disability program aims to improve access to our products and services and create opportunities for young people living with disabilities. (ASOS, 2018). We believe that everyone should be included no matter the situation. Some of the activities that took place during this program include: donating products to disability charity Scope to raise funds for employment accessibility programs and reviewing the equality of opportunities for potential and current employees with disabilities (ASOS, 2018). We also focus on a positive body image for our customers. We want to influence our young fashionistas to feel good while they look good.

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always want to make sure we are striving for the best customer experience because we are the largest online retailer without a physical brick and mortar. We may have 12.4million active customers across 240 different countries and territories, but we always try to think of them as individuals and give them the care they each deserve (ASOS, 2018).

### **Customer Social Responsibility and Ethics**

We have seen how customer behaviors and interests have been changing lately. Customer social responsibility and ethics in a company has become one of their major interest that has influenced their decision when purchasing a specific brand or in a specific store. This is why our company has committed to social corporate actions to give our customers a positive image not only for caring about them but also all the people in the communities and most importantly, the environment. We are the first to achieve Carbon Neutral status under the Carbon Neutral Protocol (Zhang, 2014). This is an initiative to reduce and offset our total C2O emissions. This involves “the measurement of greenhouse gas emissions from ASOS.com’s business travel, commuting, premises, packaging materials, outgoing deliveries, and the reduction of these emissions to net-zero through a combination of internal initiatives and the purchase of high-quality carbon offsets (“Asos become the first”, 2010).” Our company makes use of marketing techniques to improve society and it is operating many corporate social initiatives in six categories: cause promotions, cause-related marketing, corporate social marketing, corporate



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philanthropy, community business practices, socially responsible business practices (Zhang, 2014).

## Brand Products

To serve our diverse customer base, we offer fashion, including clothing, footwear and jewellery, in over 30 different sizes:

MENSWEAR		WOMENSWEAR	
FOOTWEAR	sizes 3 -13	PETITE RANGE	5'3" or less
CLOTHING	sizes XXXS to XXXL	CURVE RANGE	size 18 - 30
		TALL RANGE	5'9" or over
		MATERNITY RANGES	size 6 - 20 plus Petite & Tall
		WIDE FIT FOOTWEAR	sizes 2 to 9

Figure 2. (ASOS, 2018).

Being that our company is an online-only brand, we are able to provide over 60,000 brands ranging from low to high price points. Carrying Women and Men's clothing, shoes, accessories, face, and body. Offering clothing from zero to thirty to ensure inclusivity. We are sure to provide brands that are super trendy to millennials such as Rag and Bone, Adidas, Missguided, Vivienne

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Westwood and their own brand. Asos also carries a line of their own which offers clothing for women of all sizes. Featuring Asos curve, maternity, petite, tall and etc. In order to stay on top of the trend, they receive 4,000 new products weekly.

### **Brand Competition**

Our top competition would include but is not limited to, Zara, TopShop, H&M, and River Island. They have high fashionability where they provide their customers with innovative trends and fashionable items. Similar to us, they are also placed at a moderate price point. According to Zaczekiewicz (2018), “ASOS, Zara, and H&M” are at the top of the list for most visited e-commerce sites. However, H&M is on top of that list including us (ASOS), with the highest percentage of visits (Zaczekiewicz, 2018). Although Zara and H&M have shown to be the world’s two largest fashion retailers due to their innovation and strategy of fast fashion, statistics have seen a slowdown in sales this year (Marc, 2017). This has given us the opportunity to strengthen our strategies and the chance to move to the top of that list.

### **Pricing Strategy**

Our company is positioned in the moderately priced marketplace. We offer opening price points with a large variety of one product at different price levels. We also offer prices by using global zonal pricing technologies which allow us to price brands in line with local markets, internationally (ASOS, 2018). Our branded goods are priced similarly to other department stores our own collection is priced very competitively when compared to other similar high street brands (Zhang, 2014). Our tops range from \$5 to \$348, our jeans from \$21- \$375 and shoes

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from \$5 to \$410 (ASOS, 2018). Our prices are affordable, especially the products for our target market, which are mostly college students, looking for affordable and fashionable clothes. We include a price range bar when searching for items.

### **Promotional Strategy**

Our promotional strategies consist of having our ASOS Outlet which is a connection to our website that offers products at a discounted rate from previous seasons. We also offer email sign-ups that allow coupon codes and we offer a service to sign up for two-day express shipping for \$19.99 up to one year. When it comes to promotional strategies, we try to stray away from mixing regular priced items with the sale. Offering an Asos outlet section that provides clothing up to seventy percent off. Also providing key months throughout the year of sale but only customers who are registered by email will receive promo codes in order to get the discount. Finally opening price points which provide clothing at all price levels which allows customers to shop within their budget.

### **Distribution Strategy**

Our company works every day to provide our customers with an excellent delivery service. We offer free shipping and returns to 241 countries (Zhang, 2014). Free standard delivery is within 4 business days and we charge for the next day and two days' deliveries. Orders can also be shipped and returned via collect + service worldwide (Zhang, 2014). We also have express and standard delivery options for our international customers. Our customers have the opportunity to track their orders. In America, the shipping time is speeded up to 2 days (Zhang, 2014). We

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have our central distribution warehouse in Barnsley Yorkshire, UK, which is 450,000 squares feet and with a capacity of 22 M units. Most of our stock is stored here Oghedo, Nkem. (2015,. We also have warehouses in Sydney, Shanghai, and Poland, where all the local returns are processed Oghedo, Nkem. (2015,.

### **Brand Positioning**

We provide fast fashion at competitive prices and stimulating fashion editorials, our distinctive brand image is well reflected by our merchandising assortment, packaging, and website design. We benefit greatly from our pure-play positioning. Our company target a particular market segment (twenty-something) that is full of internet users (Zhang, 2014). Also, unlike Amazon or eBay, we only trade in the field of fashion to better serve the audience within specific market sectors (Zhang, 2014). Thus, our online presence is convenient to customers and enables our company to offer products at more competitive price point than multichannel retailers. Because of our marketing edge and unique position, we are the fastest growing and largest online pure-play operator (Zhang, 2014). Additionally, we are involved in many CSR activities to help our environment and communities. Multichannel marketing is used in our positioning strategy by using social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Google Plus, Instagram, Pinterest, Tumblr. YouTube allows customers to shop through pop-up images within the videos. We also feature a monthly magazine that provides insight into the brand and features new talent, features exclusive shoots, and display new styles for the season and interpretation of new trends. Our blog allows new labels, independent brands, and boutique sellers to share their blogs about fashion news.

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## **Brand Communication Channels**

If anyone knows the power of the internet, it is our team. It's almost like they took a glance at the future back in 2000 and saw the effect it would have someday. Staying active across all social media channels is imperative to us. We can be found on Instagram, Snapchat, Facebook, Twitter, and Youtube. Through digital communication, we learn an abundant amount of information about our consumers, which can, later on, be taken into consideration. We quickly learn what consumers are loving, what they aren't too ecstatic about and what they want to see next. All in all, learning and listening to our consumers and implementing the data collected is another thing that differentiates ASOS from other brands. We take pride and make it a priority to listen to our consumers, to give them what they want and to meet their expectations and exceptions.

## **Vertical Integration**

Today, we offer a handful of brand names for our consumers to choose from. In excess of 800 brand names, not allowing our consumers to ever leave the website because they couldn't anything that spoke to them. At our commence, our sole responsibility was to choose the styles, sizes, color palettes from each individual brand and then retail those items to our consumer.

Nonetheless, over the years we have created a number of exclusive brands such as ASOS WHITE and ASOS4505, and so things got a little more complex. These private labels required us to implement vertical integration into our operations. Vertical integration occurs when a brand aims to consolidate the supply chain, by taking the responsibility of other stages. Through these

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labels, we are part of every garment from its initial sketching stage to the finished product. We now take part in picking materials, styles, colorways, silhouettes, etc. It's important for us to maintain a good relationship with our developers, it's also important that our private brands don't fall short to the other brands we sell. Today, we have four private labels available for sale on our site so it's safe to say that we are quick on our feet. In the future, we hope to introduce more private brands to our family.

### **Brand Growth**

Our company pursues an organic growth strategy without resorting to business acquisition or merging (Zhang, 2014). It archives customer acquisition and conversion through merchandise development, customer communication, and brand expansion strategies. E-commerce is succinctly demonstrated by our growth. Through the development of our own brands, our company definitely indulge in vertical integration, in which they oversee and control the various stages of the production/distribution chain (Zhang, 2014). We pride ourselves on the global reach on a global expansion that we have accomplished throughout the years. However, our global expansion is an ongoing effort. We want to be able to say that it is available to everyone with no exceptions.

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