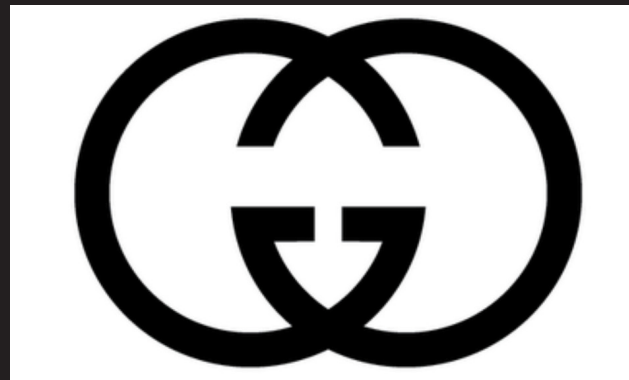


GUCCI

Luxury Biologically Redefined



KEA Copenhagen School of Design
& Technology

Group 1

Clio Gydé & Christina McIntosh

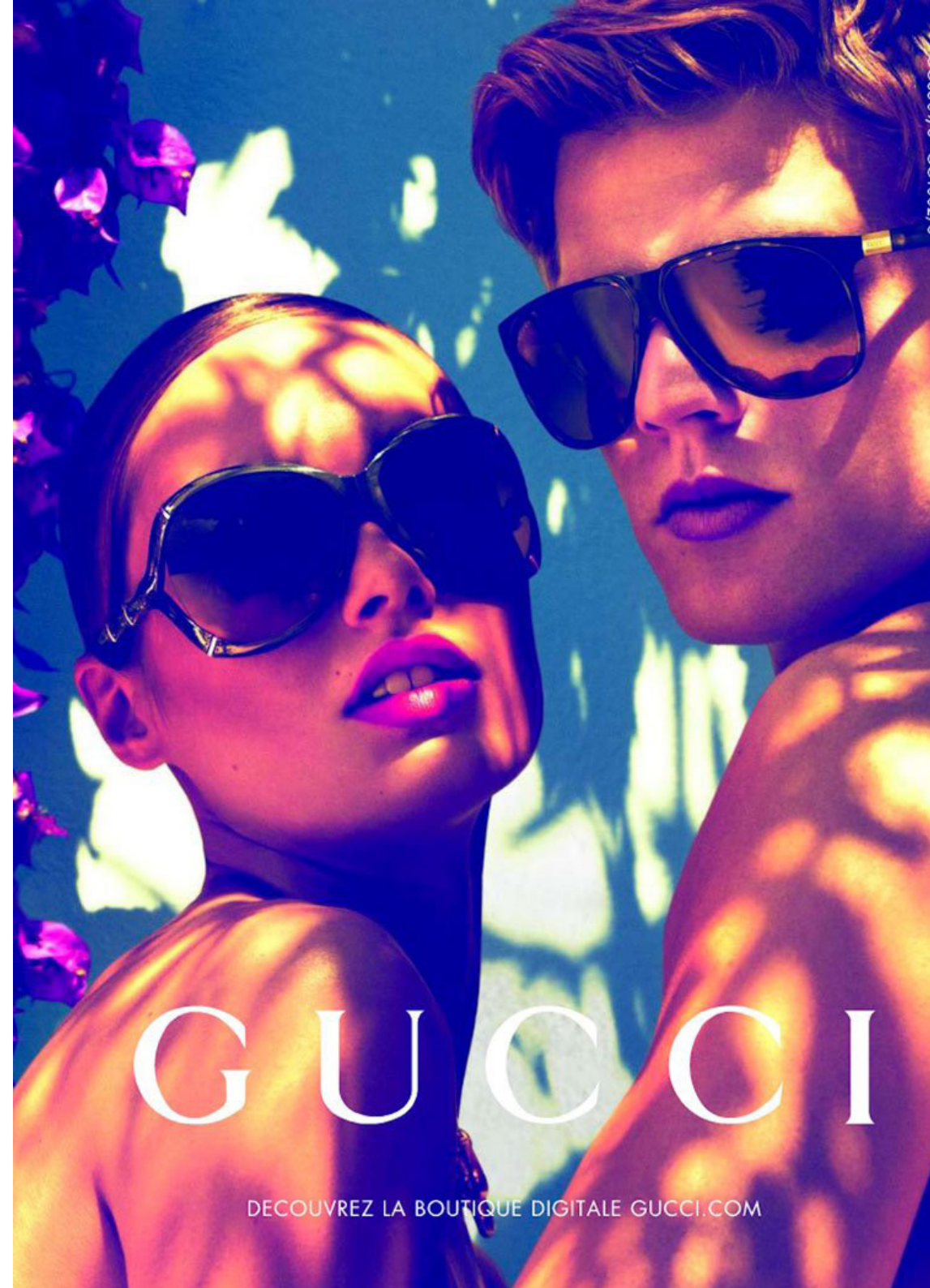
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

From the stance of a development team, this report will propose an alternative material for use within the fashion industry. The focus will be on the luxury Italian fashion brand Gucci who are searching for an innovative material to create a Cradle to Cradle clothing line and accessory collection to accompany their existing sustainable range of eyewear and footwear. Proposed within the report is the research and eventual use of grown bacterial cellulose Gucci garments.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	i
TABLE OF CONTENTS	ii
1.0 INTRODUCTION	1
2.0 GUCCI	2
2.1 Company background	2
2.2 Vision, Mission and Values	2
2.3 S.W.O.T	3
2.4 Ethnoraid	3
3.0 PROPOSAL	4
3.1 BioCouture	5
3.2 Analysis	6
3.3 Timeline	7
4.0 CONCLUSION	8
REFERENCES	9
APPENDICES	10



GUCCI

DECouvrez LA BOUTIQUE DIGITALE [GUCCI.COM](https://www.gucci.com)

I.0 INTRODUCTION

This report will aim to describe an alternative approach to the consumption and disposal of clothing within the fashion industry with regards to the Cradle to Cradle theory. Grown bacterial cellulose fabric is proposed as a new material, and a solution to the problems associated with the production and disposal of textiles today.

Gucci, the luxury Italian fashion brand, are used as a case study within the report where the company's current position is analysed and potential future directions are proposed.



2.0 GUCCI

2.1 Company background

The House of Gucci, or simply Gucci, is an Italian fashion brand and leather goods label. It is part of the Gucci Group, which is owned by French company PPR. Gucci was founded by Guccio Gucci in Florence in 1921 and became one of the world's leading luxury fashion brands during the Twentieth Century. The company has 376 directly operated stores and 8 249 employees (PPR, 2012). Since 2006 Frida Giannini has been the creative director of Gucci (Gucci, 2012).



2.2 Vision, Mission and Values

The company's mission is to become the leader in luxury market at world-wide level.

Gucci describe themselves as cool and responsible, and value themselves on their craftsmanship. These three concepts are linked; Taking up responsibility can aswell be cool. For Gucci, Corporate Social Responsibility is an important part of their global strategy. They work with a holistic, yet realistic approach. They state that it is their duty to use their position as a luxury brand to pioneer and promote sustainability.

The Gucci values are deeply embedded within ethics and in fact, the company began to work on a sustainability strategy in 2004. Quality remains a main priority, but they began to elaborate upon this. Sustainability for people and the environment became part of the quality-concept. Gucci state that their sustainability strategy is supported by their stakeholders.

June 2010, saw the introduction of Gucci's 100% recyclable packaging. Shortly after this, the company launched a collection of environmentally-friendly glasses which utilised biodegradable plastic and recycled metal; with a new collection of these to be launched in 2013. Biodegradable plastic is also to be used in a shoe collection which the company describe as a combination of style quality and new material (Ravagli, 2012).

The Gucci target group is the affluent middle to upper classes. The consumer is hip, aged thirty plus, and above all, is an individual who invests in fashion as either a treat or a lifestyle (Ward, 2011).

2.3 S.W.O.T

Strengths

- Very strong brand identity
- High level of control over distribution channels
- Strong relationships with suppliers & retailers
- Directly operated stores

Weaknesses

- Not seen as being sustainable
- Seen as being tacky

Opportunities

- Emerging luxury market
- Innovative opportunities with textiles
- Be a pioneer of sustainability within the luxury market

Threats

- Lacking innovation
- Competitors targeting the conscious consumer

2.4 Ethnoraïd

The ethnoraïd was carried out in Copenhagen at the Gucci store in order to gain an insight into Gucci employees and customers. The main purpose of the interviews was to gather more information about the Gucci customer. It was important to know if the consumer was interested in sustainability.

The average customer in Gucci is an upper class business person who prioritises quality and design. It is important that the products are luxurious and exclusive. The customer does not consider the environmental issues but places emphasis on sustainability through the quality of merchandise.

3.0 PROPOSAL

There are many problems associated with the production of textiles and the disposal of these. It is proposed, however, that grown bacterial cellulose fabric (see section 3.1) is a solution to these issues.

The ultimate goal would be that the bacterial cellulose fabric becomes a viable product easily accessible to all. However at a research and development stage, the material is not yet commercially viable and there must be further investigation.

In order to gather funds for the research is it proposed that a foundation is established. A capsule collection will promote the idea through the media e.g. at fashion week, Vogue magazine, blogs and Gucci museum. The capsule collection (see appendix 1.) will be available to consumers through select outlets with a limited and exclusive 1000 pieces. 15% of the profit of these will fund further research of the material.

The following are proposed goals for Gucci to reach through the use of the material.

- To bring Cradle to Cradle products to the market.
- To make these available to consumers within 5 years.
- To introduce the idea to other companies.
- To create transparent documentation.
- To promote Gucci as an innovative brand.



3.1 BioCouture

'With so many environmental concerns related to the production, consumption and disposal of fashion textiles BioCouture is pioneering a new eco-friendly and sustainable alternative.' (BioCouture, 2012)

BioCouture, still at a research and experimentation stage (TED, 2012), is an idea that very well has the potential to revolutionise the fashion industry, and become the future of fashion.

The grown and biodegradable material, created by BioCouture founder and research fellow at Central Saint Martins, Suzanne Lee (Science Museum, 2012), gives a whole new meaning to the term disposable fashion.

The bacterial cellulose fabric, cultivated in baths of green tea, is fully biodegradable at the end of its life and can be composted to return nutrients back into a biological Cradle to Cradle cycle.

The creation of the material sees a mother culture of yeast and the bacteria *Acetobacter* feed on a sugary green tea solution. It is the byproduct of this process however, that creates the fabric. As the bacteria feed, they spin a cellulose thread that eventually fuse together to create a non woven mat. The mat can then be laid flat to dry and cut and sewn into garments. (Science Museum, 2012)

The main problem with the BioCouture material at this stage is that it is not water resistant, and in fact, if it was to come in contact with rain for example, the garment would absorb the water, become incredibly heavy and the seams would fall apart. (Luscombe, 2010) In order to make the product commercially viable then, the material must become hydrophobic.

One way in which this might be achieved is through a water resistant coating. There are many options available, for instance the biodegradable OrganoTex™ a water-repellent finish for cellulose-based fabrics that uses no fluorocarbons or other chemicals that are toxic to the environment. The technology involves binding of a highly hydrophobic, biodegradable bio-additive to the fiber via strong covalent chemical bonds that are highly resistant to laundering, according to OrganoClick. The finish can be applied using dipping, padding and other conventional application methods. The company adds that the water-repellency is durable and effective for the normal life of the textile product (Textile World, 2011)

3.2 Analysis

The grown bacterial cellulose material would be a solution to many environmental issues; using the Cradle to Cradle system, the renewable material does not produce any waste, pollution or chemicals, and biodegrades at the end of its life. It can be produced with waste sugar water and it has proposed that it might utilize factory waste. The fabric is very absorbent, therefore less dye is needed to achieve vibrant colours; one to eighteen. The material is of a similar quality to leather, but requires substantially less resources and finance. The process involved in the creation of the material is relatively simple and has the potential to create many job opportunities.

The project is very ambitious and innovative; it has the potential to have endless possibilities. It will educate the fashion consumer about sustainability and the Cradle to Cradle philosophy but also has the opportunity to influence other industries, including the automotive, interior and medical industry, to think similarly and advance technological research. It has the potential to solve economic problems by starting new industries in new countries.

The weaknesses of this project are that production requires a new system; very specific conditions and a lot of space which can make the costs initially high. The material also requires further research which too might be costly. Created from bacteria, it is no surprise that to some, the fabric holds negative connotations; having been described by one critic as a 'walking infection'. However, Gucci, with such a high luxury image and quality reputation, will promote the material as a desirable product using the name BioCouture. The company is also financially capable of funding the research required to bring the material to market.



3.3 Timeline

20 year timeline:

1. Intensive research.
 2. Intensive research. Introducing the idea to the consumers.
 3. Capsule collection of 1000 pieces released.
 4. Research continues. Investigation of reactions.
 5. Second capsule collection of 3000 pieces.
 6. 3 other PPR companies start using the material.
- The material is a part of Gucci Ready to Wear Collection.
7. 5 other PPR brands use the material.
 8. 5% of Gucci RTW in this material.
 9. Gucci starts collaboration with other brands.
 10. 10% of Gucci RTW Collection is in this material.
- Material available to many consumers.
11. 20 other brands using this material.
 12. Continued collaborations with other brands.
 13. 20 RTW Collections use this material.
 14. Gucci profit increased by 10%.
 15. All PPR brands using this material.
 16. 20% of Gucci RTW is made of this material.
 17. 40 RTW Collections use this material.
 18. Gucci profit increased 15%.
 19. Continued collaboration with other companies.
 20. Easily accessible to consumers.



4.0 CONCLUSION

This project then, will lead Gucci further along the path it started out on in 2010. It is able to describe the possibility to innovate and become environmentally beneficial in an exclusive and pioneering way. Gucci`s Cradle to Cradle products will no longer be limited to only glasses and shoes; the collection will become complete with garments and accessories.

The company will pioneer products that have the ability to change the textile market and change the Cradle to Grave fashion industry of today. Gucci will become renowned for their innovative take on the fashion product whilst remaining, as always; cool and responsible, and expert craftsmen.

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APPENDICES

Appendix i. Capsule collection



