



MORPH & THRO

EXECUTIVE MARKETING REVIEW & PLAN

Private and confidential

Prepared for Scott Hairston & Glenn Earl

November 9, 2015

Shaffstall

4548 Deep Forest Drive

Pinetop AZ 85935

cshaffstall@cshaffstall.com

928 358 1839

www.cshaffstall.com



TABLE OF CONTENTS

SECTION I: REVIEW	1
Purpose	1
Company	1
Brand	1
Performance-wear industry	3
Price	4
Price comparison	5
Recycled-materials product price comparison.....	5
High-end product price comparison.....	5
Mid-range product price comparison	5
Low-end product price comparison.....	6
Buyer	6
Demographics	6
Psychographics	6
Target audience.....	7
Market potential	7
Spend.....	8
Competition	9
Competitors.....	10
Influencing factors	11
Economic	11
Legal	11
Environmental.....	11
SWOT	12
Strengths.....	12
Weaknesses	12
Opportunities.....	13
Threats	13
SECTION II: ANALYSES	16
Market analysis	16
Approach	16
Competition.....	16
Product analysis	16
Description.....	16
Value	16
Sourcing.....	16
Pricing	17
Advantages.....	17
Disadvantages	17

Shaffstall

Marketing and promotion analysis	17
Positioning	17
Logo text.....	17
Logo.....	18
Slogan	18
Domain name	18
Website.....	18
Social media	19
Facebook	19
LinkedIn	19
Twitter.....	20
Instagram	20
Vimeo.....	20
CrunchBase.....	20
Pinterest.....	20
Executive Athlete Pro	20
Outbound marketing.....	20
Professional endorsements.....	20
Sponsorships.....	20
Traditional media (articles).....	21
Offline events.....	22
Celebrity appearances.....	22
Distribution and reselling channels.....	22
Sears	22
Shop Your Way	22
Shape.com	22
Sales Spider	22
SECTION III: MARKETING PLAN.....	23
Approach.....	23
Quantifiable goal	24
Measurement and testing against goals.....	24
Focus groups	24
Buyer-persona development	25
Unique selling proposition.....	26
Strategy/focus	28
Marketing features.....	28
Price	29
Buyer targeting	30
Online-sales services.....	31
Branding	32

Shaffstall

Marketing and promotion activities.....	34
Website.....	35
Online activities	36
Content marketing (inbound marketing)	38
Automated outbound marketing	41
Public relations: press and news announcements	43
Social media marketing (SMM) and search-engine marketing	43
Professional endorsements.....	44
Offline activities	44
Celebrity appearances.....	44
Celebrity networking	45
Sponsorships.....	45
Partnerships	45
Associations and memberships	45
Branded promotional items.....	45
Petitions	46
Budget.....	46
SECTION IV: CONCLUSION.....	48

SECTION I: REVIEW

Purpose

This Morph and Thro Executive Marketing Review & Plan document has two purposes:

1. Provide a review of past and current product positioning and marketing efforts; and
2. Provide an executive-level summary of proposed product positioning and marketing efforts.

The document, therefore, should be considered as a whole since one cannot propose changes to marketing efforts without an overview and understanding of what has already been accomplished and how it was accomplished.

Company

Morph and Thro is a company owned and operated by (at least two) professional athletes: Glenn Earl, former safety in the NFL, now living in Chicago, IL; and Scott Hairston, free-agent outfielder in the MLB, based in Phoenix, AZ. Earl founded the company in or about 2008, and launched the current online shopping-cart website sometime thereafter. Lifelong friends, in 2010, Earl sought investment from Hairston to provide additional funding for the start-up. Hairston invested capital (unknown amount), and assumed the role of CEO. Since that time, he has contributed additional operating capital, which has been spent primarily on manufacturing and marketing.

**Consumers, not the industry,
are responsible for making
sure plastics don't wind up
littering the environment.**

—Mike Neal
PlasticsEurope

Brand

Morph and Thro produces a brand of high-quality men's and women's activewear/performance wear/workout gear woven of yarn spun from recycled bottles. The brand is also known as Morph and

Thro. Manufacture of the clothing is contracted, and the fabrics made without the use of synthetics such as polyester or virgin fibers—which have been found to contribute to the depletion of the earth’s environment in some ways.

Made from *upcycled* materials

Products, such as plastic bottles, are recycled and remanufactured into a yarn, which is then used to create the fabric of Morph and Thro’s high-grade performance wear. The company and others call this process of using recycled plastic bottles *upcycled*.

According to claims made by Morph and Thro, the upcycled fabric used in their clothing is unmatched in performance, comfort, and durability, and the manufacturing process has a far-less damaging ecological impact than conventional fabrics. Also claimed: each Morph and Thro shirt upcycles six plastic bottles. The fabric makes the Morph and Thro activewear line desirable to buyers with concerns for the environment. Though the activewear line is unique, competition exists.

Energy savings and safety

Morph and Thro's efforts at sustainability are an approach designed to contribute proactively to protecting earth’s resources, while also promoting a healthy lifestyle. The fabrics’ yarns save roughly 80% on energy expenditures during production compared to polyester, which is made of crude oil and is the most common fabric found in the performance-apparel industry. One pound of Morph and Thro's polyester-alternative yarn made from recycled materials saves an average one-half gallon of gasoline, reduces the amount of harmful CO₂ released by 75%, and decreases water waste by 60%.

This yarn is not without its own impact on the environment, however, and this is discussed in the SWOT analysis later in this document.

“One of the most ubiquitous and long-lasting recent changes to the surface of our planet is the accumulation and fragmentation of plastics.”

—*David Barnes*
author and researcher,
British Antarctic Survey

Performance-wear industry

According to Camilo Lyon, managing director at Canaccord Genuity, “Over the past two-three years, the growth of athletic apparel companies has consistently outpaced the growth of traditional apparel companies.” Lyon cited four key factors driving the shift:

1. Availability of better athletic fabrics (attributed to advances in technology);
2. Ever-increasing interest in the fashion component now found in activewear;
3. Fantastic brand focus; and
4. More people interested in working out.

Given these factors, traditional apparel retailers have been developing their own activewear lines and more companies are entering this space. American fast-fashion retailer Forever 21 launched a line of activewear in 2010; the Gap, Inc. began opening brick-and-mortar stores for their brand, Athleta, in 2011 (which had previously been sold only online); and the Gap also launched its own branded workout line, Gap Fit.

“...the growth of athletic apparel companies has consistently outpaced the growth of traditional apparel companies.”

—*Camilo Lyon*
managing director, Canaccord Genuity

Upscale designer Tory Burch launched an activewear line, Tory Sport, rooted in golf and tennis; Sweaty Betty, with nearly 50 stores in the UK and a healthy online business known for targeting *yummy mummies* (the British euphemism for attractive, wealthy, young mothers), now has eight stores in the U.S.; and New York fashion publicist Robyn Berkley launched Live the Process, another high-fashion, high-performance collection.

Clothing retailers are looking beyond their standard lines, and many have rolled out products in the comfy-casual-athletic category known as *athleisure*. Sales for athleisure saw a sharp incline two years ago and continue to rise, while sales for traditional women's clothing lag. This new type of clothing would seem to indicate Americans are not just getting more fit, they are also getting more casual.

Price

In 2015, the economy continues to show signs of recovery with a current 5% unemployment rate. With more people employed, Morph and Thro's target audience has grown because more people have money to spend on products such as activewear. With that said, conservative spending habits developed in the last decade are not yet forgotten and people continue to be price sensitive. Morph and Thro's products are competitively priced in the upcycled/recycled and high-end markets, but higher in cost than traditionally manufactured products, as shown in the next section.

The cost for Morph and Thro's apparel is 48% higher than the average cost of activewear made of upcycled or traditional fabrics.

Price comparison

Recycled-materials product price comparison

M&T	PATAGONIA	DIRTBALL ¹	TEEKI ²
			
\$50	\$29	\$24	\$54

High-end product price comparison

M&T	LULULEMON	NIKE	ATHLETA	GAPFIT
				
\$50	\$58	\$30	\$54	\$30

Mid-range product price comparison

TEK GEAR	FILA	CHAMPION
		
\$14	\$14	\$14

¹ Menswear only.

² No short-sleeve T-shirt available.

Low-end product price comparison

DANSKIN	HANES	BLVD
		
\$6	\$9	\$12

Due to the increased minimum wage of California, where Morph and Thro's products are manufactured, price increases across the board may be required in the near future. Such an increase would move the needle of the income demographic and more in-depth evaluation of the target market would be needed to determine the best marketing channels for reaching a higher-income buyer. A shift from the recommendations of this document may be required.

Buyer

Demographics

Marketing demographics—data concerning gender, race, religion, family size, ethnicity, income, age, and education of the person(s) we believe have or will purchase clothing similar in nature to Morph and Thro's products.

Due to the high costs of manufacturing, and the self-imposed requirement that manufacturing be accomplished with American labor, the cost for Morph and Thro's apparel is 48% higher than the average cost of activewear made of upcycled or traditional fabrics, as seen in the previous section. Cost differentials such as this generally pose a barrier, and Morph and Thro found evidence of this in to-date sales.

Psychographics

Psychographics—buyer personality traits, values, attitudes, interests, and lifestyles.

A gap exists between the companies/brands marketing through demographics and companies/brands marketing through psychographics. With all competitors the *products* are the focus or of equal focus to the *cause*. Marketing to community involvement—the *cause*—is lacking or absent.

Target audience

Morph and Thro's target audience has both a demographic and a psychographic profile. Without access to current buyer data, it is supposed the profile is approximately described with the following and/or attributes:

1. Between the ages of 18 and 34 (primary);
2. Between the ages of 35 and 54 (secondary);
3. Is educated;
4. Median income or higher;
5. Exercises more than three times per week, and thus, is more likely to live in Vermont (65.3%), Hawaii (62.2%), Montana (60.1%), or Alaska (60.1%);
6. Has concern for the environment; and/or
7. Recycles/reuses products regularly.

Demographic is not specified for gender, race, religion, family size, or ethnicity. It is believed (until future marketing data proves otherwise) none of these demographic measures contain majority groups large enough to warrant market focus.

By most definitions, low-income people as a group engage in less physical activity and suffer from poorer health outcomes than the general population.³

—*Active Living by Design*

Market potential

The global sports-apparel market is set to grow to \$178 billion by 2019, according to Boston-based research firm Trefis. In 2013, in the US, sales of women's activewear alone reached \$11.5 billion, a 9% jump from 2012, according to market research firm NPD.

³Low-income status is determined in a variety of ways, including: by income quintile, in comparison to area median income or the federal poverty line, or by qualification for various public services.

Spend

Median income—household income is an economic measure applied to one household, or aggregated across a large group such as a county, city, or the entire country. Commonly used by governments and private institutions to describe a household's economic status or to track economic trends in the US. Household income is measured in various ways. One key measure is the *real median level*, meaning half of households have income above that level and half below, adjusted for inflation.

The Census Bureau estimated *real median household income* at \$53,657 for 2014 and \$54,462 in 2013. Household income varies by race, with Asians the highest in 2014 at more than \$74,000 and African Americans the lowest around \$35,000.

With consideration for the median income of the U.S., it is left to Morph and Thro (and their competitors) to predict the target market's future spend on upcycle activewear. Later in this document we will propose paths to determining that spend and the potential growth of spend.

Households below median income have less disposable income and therefore are less likely to feel they can afford the higher-priced products, no matter the benefit to the environment. This is not to say below-median income levels are not buying or will not buy the products, only that upon examination of the buyer demographics, it is more likely those purchases were made by persons above median income levels.

The global sports-apparel market is set to grow to \$178 billion by 2019.

Any industry newcomer—whether company or brand—is challenged to unseat the established and better-known company/brand. Head-to-head competition can come in the form of pricing, product features, customer service, timing, and other differentiators, but most often these efforts are met with lower-profit results.

Morph and Thro's activewear is a new entry in a well-established market ruled by companies such as Nike, Tek Gear, Gap, and others—companies with marketing budgets and teams many times greater than the size of Morph and Thro's. Morph and Thro can compete—even with such well-funded powerhouses— but the company must develop a unique approach. In this document we put forth the

proposal that inbound marketing—an area these giants are either lacking or ignoring—is the profitable approach.

Inbound marketing—an area current activewear market leaders are either lacking in or ignoring—is the profitable approach.

With inbound marketing, Morph and Thro will find *new* buyers—those not necessarily looking to purchase activewear at the moment of their website visit—and convince them of the value of Morph and Thro’s products in order to garner the sale, increase the size of the sale, and encourage the buyer to make future purchases. (See unique selling proposition section.)

Competition

Competition comes from well known and start-up companies and brands. In the case of brands, the companies have been seen to position their upcycled activewear as an afterthought and without adequate focus within the corporate site, as can be seen with Patagonia.com. Although Patagonia has a great deal of content on their site about sustainable fabrics, the site is extremely difficult to navigate and the visitor cannot use the search feature to find only activewear made of sustainable fabrics. Dirtball.com, a brand using products produced by Eco-fi, has a website dedicated to the sale of menswear made from sustainable fabric, and this site presents the most direct competition, though with pricing about 20% less than Morph and Thro, they have an established advantage. Teeki.com, a line of womenswear made from sustainable fabrics, also represents considerable competition (with pricing similar to Morph and Thro), has an established brand, and is focused on psychographics in equal relation to their product offerings.

Dirtball.com represents the most direct competition. With pricing about 20% less, it has an established advantage in an area where Morph and Thro cannot compete.

Competitors

Company name	Eco-Fi (carried by Patagonia and Sierra Club)
Location	
Years in business	
Market share	
Price/Strategy	
Product Features	Eco-fi, formerly known as EcoSpun, is a high-quality polyester fiber which has been developed by the U.S. company Wellman Inc. Many different fabrics are made using Eco-fi, including fleece fabrics which are warm, durable, weather resistant, lightweight and comfortable.

Company name	DGrade (Dirtball)
URL	http://www.dirtballfashion.com/recycled-clothing-made-in-usa
Location	7 14th St SW, Hickory, North Carolina 28602
Years in business	
Market share	
Price/Strategy	\$24 to \$200
Description	Dirtball's selection of recycled content clothing is always sustainable. Each of our American-made apparel products are created utilizing only recycled materials and by producing our products in the United States we employ American workers while reducing carbon emissions by lowering our shipping distances.

Company name	Teeki
URL	https://teeki.com/shop/
Location	
Years in business	
Market share	
Price/Strategy	\$32 to \$82
Description	We dance to a different beat, stretch with the yogi, run to the highest peaks, hike

	<p>in unexplored territories, and swim where the ocean becomes one. We are teeki. We take water bottles and turn them into clothes, giving them purpose again through an eco-friendly process. We support you with your active lifestyle and adventures; yoga, gym, workout, surf, sports, dance, flow and constantly moving forward with your body, mind, and spirit.</p>
--	--

Influencing factors

Economic

Manufacture of Morph and Thro’s products currently occurs in California, but a new hike in the state’s minimum wage has increased the cost of production. With already small profit margins, these unforeseen expenses produce sizeable risk for the company. However, it is possible this has been offset by recent economic growth. If so, the ability to increase prices slightly to overcome increased production costs may be possible. It becomes even more feasible if the economy continues to improve and energy costs continue to be held at low levels.

With the holiday shopping season now at hand, we will soon learn year-over-year growth statistics. With more people employed, the target audience (median income level and higher) should grow.

Legal

As is discussed at length in the SWOT analysis, legislation surrounding the manufacturing process is of substantial concern.

Environmental

As is discussed at length in the SWOT analysis, legislation surrounding the manufacturing process is of substantial concern.

	Positive	Negative
Internal	<p>S</p> <p>Strengths</p>	<p>W</p> <p>Weaknesses</p>
External	<p>O</p> <p>Opportunities</p>	<p>T</p> <p>Threats</p>

SWOT

SWOT analysis—strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats to Morph and Thro compared to their competition on the basis of brand recognition, online presence, location, size of resources, reputation, services, personnel, and the like.

Strengths

Compared to competitors, Morph and Thro is unique in that it is the only provider with extremely high access to in-house professional athlete endorsements and connections. It is presumed the owners can further extend this advantage by parlaying personal professional relationships into extended online (e.g., social networking) and offline (in-person) endorsements.

Weaknesses

Businessmen with actual concern for the environment, but without adequate marketing background and no staff, lead Morph and Thro. Since 2008, the investments into the company have been spent on production and marketing—the latter resulting in less than satisfactory results. The company's age without noteworthy success makes it vulnerable, and without an immediate uplift in sales, the company may be forced to close due to lack of profitability or ability to acquire additional funding. As stated earlier, high manufacturing costs prohibit price competition, so Morph and Thro must become more lean and more successful in marketing and sales in order to succeed.

Morph and Thro is unique in that it is the only provider with extremely high access to in-house professional athlete endorsements and connections—a position coveted by other brands entering this market.

Opportunities

Despite the age of the company, because the field of competitors is so small, Morph and Thro still has a sizeable opportunity in this market, supported by the growing concern for the environment amongst people of all economic classes and the rising interest in fitness. With a change to the marketing strategy to focus on the environment with inbound content, a secondary goal of selling product, and a tertiary goal of promoting fitness, Morph and Thro can create *new buyers*.

The implementation of an automated-marketing campaign can keep the company top of mind when buyers go beyond concern and interest for the cause and enter the buying phase.

Additional opportunities exist in partnering with other companies to promote and resell like-minded products—such as Sassy Strapps outfitted with environmental-design charms or Morph and Thro slogan charms.

Threats

The biggest threat comes in the form of reports concerning the recycling process and recycled product from which the performance wear is manufactured, but other threats loom as well: depletion of funding, lack of staff, exhaustion of the management team, and more.

Research shows microfibers—tiny synthetic threads less than one mm in size—could be the biggest source of plastic in the ocean, and if verified, *recycled plastic clothes could* be doing more harm than good.

Dr. Mark Browne, an ecologist and postdoctoral fellow at the National Center of Ecological Analysis and Synthesis in Santa Barbara, California, cautions that synthetic garments—made of manmade rather

than natural fibers—shed a large number of plastic fibers as they go through the spin and rinse cycle in a washing machine. As water drains from a washing machine, plastic filaments are swept through the sewers and eventually end up in the ocean.

Research shows microfibers—synthetic threads less than one mm in size—could be the biggest source of plastic in the ocean, and if verified, recycled plastic clothes *could* be doing more harm than good.

In 2011, Browne published a paper in *Environmental Science & Technology* stating that a single synthetic garment can produce more than 1,900 fibers per wash; fleeces seem to lose the largest number of filaments, but even sleek synthetic fabrics such as nylon shed. Browne and other researchers collected effluent samples from marine and freshwater sites around the world, and discovered that every single water sample contained microfibers from polyester, nylon, acrylic, and other synthetic fibers, and that microfibers made up 85% of the human-made material within each specimen.

Plastic is toxic and can cause harm to marine life and animals when ingested; plastic can absorb other toxins such as pesticides or organic pollutants such as polychlorinated biphenyls. In the marine environment, filter feeders and other organisms eat these, and as plastic works its way up the food chain, toxicity escalates to alarming levels.

Browne approached prominent clothing brands and asked for their support of his research project in which he seeks to determine the existence and threat of microfibers, and remove features of textiles with negative impacts on humans and the environment. Only Eileen Fisher offered Browne funding, and brands such as Patagonia, Polartec, and Nike showed no interest.

UpGyres, an organization working to develop a lint filter for washing machines fine enough to catch synthetic microfibers is also researching ways to upcycle synthetic lint into clothing and other accessories.

Despite the dangers of synthetic microfibers, the conversion of recycled plastic into clothing has benefits. One organization is working to develop high-durability fabrics that shed fewer microfibers than other synthetic textiles, and researching other ways to minimize the environmental impact.

“Despite the dangers of synthetic microfibers, the conversion of recycled plastic into clothing has benefits.”

California and other states have already adopted legislation to ban plastic microbeads, used in many household products. California’s law includes a prohibition against biodegradable microbeads, which other states with similar legislation allow.

As research continues to verify Dr. Browne’s findings, the biggest threat to the success of Morph and Thro may come in the form of legislation blocking or severely limiting the manufacture of the yarns.

SECTION II: ANALYSES

Market analysis

Approach

The current approach to marketing Morph and Thro's activewear is through the use of a small number of social-media networking accounts—with very few and intermittent posts—and personal appearances and networking by the company's leadership.

Competition

The market of clothing made from recycled plastics is quite small—there are only approximately six other companies easily found through web searches. Patagonia carries a number of different products made from different fabrics for both men and women, Dirtball is both a company and a brand producing menswear, and Teeki creates womenswear. Morph and Thro does not appear in Google searches for at least the first 20 pages.

Product analysis

Description

Morph and Thro sells men's and women's activewear/performance wear/workout gear made from yarn spun from recycled bottles.

Value

The product line brings value to the buyer in two ways: quality activewear and sustainability.

Sourcing

Products are currently manufactured in California, and recently a raise in the state's minimum wage negatively affected production costs.

No other information is known by the author about sourcing issues.

Pricing

Products range in price between \$48 and \$100. These prices cover production costs, but are not at a rate generous enough to allow for third-party distribution or reselling. The pricing is in line with similar competitors' products and also in line with the product's image.

Advantages

Morph and Thro's products are high quality, though also priced at the high end of the traditionally manufactured activewear products scale. Highly visible and respected professional athletes, with a wide network of personal and professional connections, lead the company.

Disadvantages

The company is without a staff, without a marketing plan or budget, nearing depletion of current funding, and without prospects for acquiring additional funding. The online store is based upon outdated technology and not formatted for mobile devices. Little work has been done in the area search-engine optimization or other traditional marketing efforts.

Marketing and promotion analysis

Positioning

The products have been positioned as high-quality activewear/performance wear. Information about sustainability and environmental impact is promoted on pages within the website, but does not seem to have been used as newsworthy content or for social sharing.

Logo text

The Morph and Thro logo text is readable and a pleasing design, though difficult to produce with clarity at very small sizes.



Logo

The Morph and Thro logo is a pleasing design. The colors are appropriate for the message surrounding sustainability. It produces well at sizes except for the very small. It is appealing in either the green color, white on a background, or grey on a white background.



Slogan

The Morph and Thro slogan is appropriate, memorable, and a pleasing design. The double entendre makes it ideal for promotional-branded items, such as T-shirts.



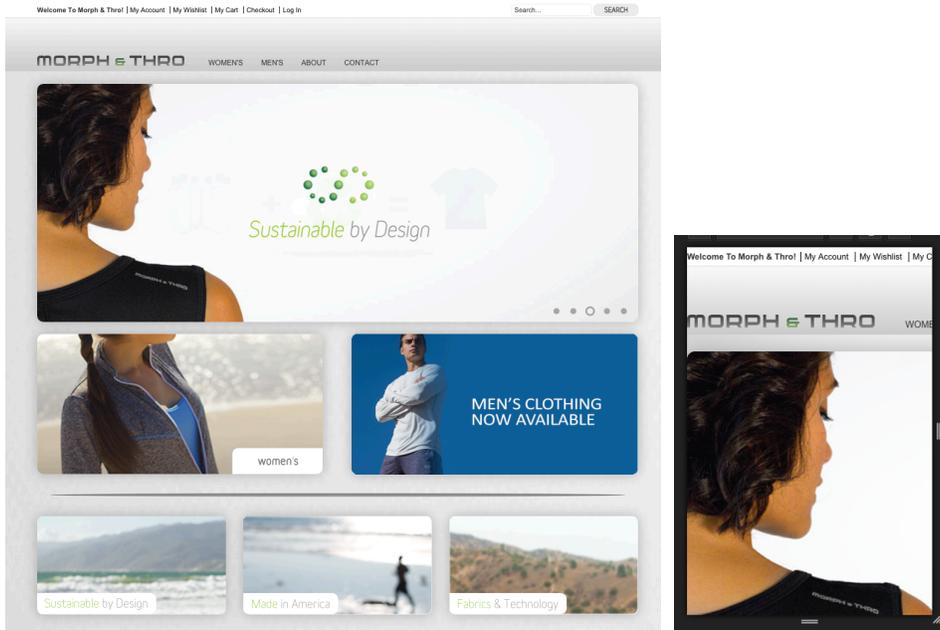
Domain name

The domain name, because it is a unique phrase, is easily misunderstood and often the speaker must repeat the name several times, and then spell the name, in order for the listener to comprehend. This difficulty provides a substantial barrier to visitors finding the site and because the site's search-engine ranking (SER) is so low, a potential visitor must be extremely persistent in order to work out the correct spelling—most will not bother.

Website

The Morph and Thro website is built upon the Magento platform. Though a popular shopping-cart application, the site is not responsive to the device on which it is being viewed. In the images following, the website is shown on a desktop device and on a mobile device. Note the mobile view has not been dynamically reconfigured in order to fit the smaller screen. The menu options are also too small for touch interaction, and many of the menu options are outside the main screen.

SECTION II: ANALYSES



Social media

The contributions to and engagement numbers within social-media channels are extremely low—to the point of being detrimental—especially given the high visibility and respected positions of the company’s leadership and potential size of their networks. Following is a brief review:

Facebook

The Morph and Thro Facebook account has 560 likes, but there has been no recent activity whatsoever. The company has made very few posts to the network, and there are a few posts by third parties.

LinkedIn

There is an incomplete LinkedIn account for Glenn Earl, and no account for Scott Hairston. LinkedIn provides a validation for company leaders and their lack of visibility on this network is damaging. People want to know qualified, respectable people lead the companies with which and from which they choose to partner, follow, interact, and purchase. This has not been demonstrated by the current lack of information.

Twitter

The company account was established in 2010, and since then has posted only 59 times. About 75 accounts follow Morph and Thro, and the company in turn follows about 77.

Instagram

There are perhaps 52 posts to this network and the company account has 236 followers. The account is approximately two years old. The most recent post is 26 weeks old.

Vimeo

There is one publicly viewable video.

CrunchBase

Pinterest

There were no pins attributed to the Morph & Thro account, though a number of members have pinned Morph and Thro merchandise.

Executive Athlete Pro

This site—which describes its purpose as: To explore and develop business opportunities of interest to the Executive Athlete company, its members and student athletes working toward a future in business and/or entrepreneurship—has a feature page for Glenn Earl. Without access to Morph and Thro’s Google Analytics, it is unknown if this site contributes to market visibility.

Outbound marketing

To the author’s knowledge, no outbound marketing has been used.

Professional endorsements

To the author’s knowledge, there have been no professional endorsements made either by the company’s leadership or by their network.

Sponsorships

There are a number of charity event sponsorships attributed to Morph and Thro.

Traditional media (articles)

There are very few articles or mentions on the web about Morph and Thro, either the company or brand. Here again, given the high-profile positions of the company's leaders, this is ridiculously low and contributes to lowering the brand's position in SER. There are no press releases or news announcements to be found.

ToPs Textile Innovation

Blog article: <https://emilyartsinnovation.wordpress.com/2013/10/24/morph-thro/>

PeerFit

Blog article: <https://www.peerfit.com/2013/03/recycle-water-bottles-into-fitness-gear/>

Hidden Design

Blog article: <http://hiddendesign.com/en/breast-talk/blog/>

The Nest

Blog article about Morph and Thro's model: <http://woman.thenest.com/exercise-firm-chest-muscles-18662.html>

Given the notoriety of the company's leaders, the level of social engagement is ridiculously low, which contributes to the poor ranking of the brand within search-engine results.

Where Are They Now: Gerome Sapp

Article about Gerome Sapp: <http://nocoastbias.com/where-are-they-now-gerome-sapp/>

Unique Photography and Design

Photography submission: <http://uniquephotographyanddesign.com/conceptual/morph-thro-11>

Notre Dame News

Business plan competition: <http://news.nd.edu/news/15436-winners-announced-for-2010-mccloskey-business-plan-competition-and-social-venture-competition/>

Jason Drumheller

Logo design: <http://www.jasondrumheller.com/morph-and-thro/>

Offline events

Celebrity appearances

To the author's knowledge, there have been no celebrity appearances for the specific purpose of promoting Morph and Thro.

Distribution and reselling channels

Given the current pricing model, it is not surprising there are so few mentions of Morph and Thro products listed with third party distributors or resellers, but it is disadvantageous.

Sears

Reselling yoga pants for \$75

Shop Your Way

Reselling yoga pants for \$65

Shape.com

Morph and Thro products are [no longer available on this site](#).

Sales Spider

Link to [product features on Amazon](#), but no longer available:

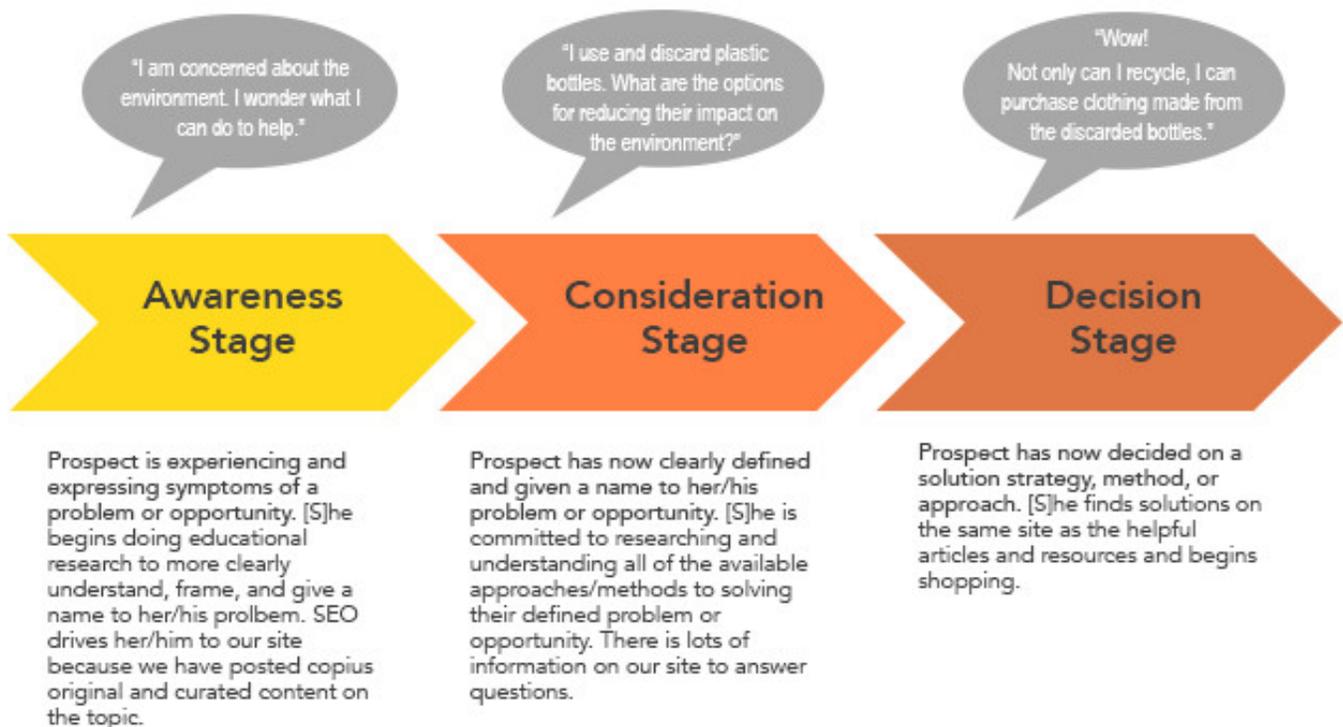
The lack of distribution channels is disadvantageous to brand awareness.

SECTION III: MARKETING PLAN

Approach

In the following sections we contemplate a dramatic change in the previous marketing approach—one in which we place a decidedly higher focus on sustainability and the notion of upcycle. This **shifts the emphasis of marketing efforts from demographics to psychographics**—and it is an important distinction.

THE BUYER'S JOURNEY



We propose a marketing-message shift from demographics to psychographics—an important distinction.

Quantifiable goal

At this time, without having yet begun discovery, the marketing goal is to reach \$1 million in online sales by 31 December 2016; 65% of which shall come from womenswear and 35% from menswear. (This disparity is in consideration of which products are currently available.)

As marketing efforts and buyer understanding unfolds, we will be in a position to revise this quantifiable goal up or down to ensure it is realistic and attainable.

Measurement and testing against goals

In order to adequately address search-engine optimization requirements, buyer needs, and ability to accurately measure engagement, a new website is proposed with a domain name of [upcycle.clothing]⁴. The current website will be redirected to the new website so past engagement and bookmarking by visitors is not lost.

Focus groups

Focus group—a demographically diverse group of people assembled to participate in a guided discussion about a particular product before it is launched.

In order to understand what features the typical buyer seeks, what price the buyer is willing to pay, and what factors could motivate his or her purchase when none is being contemplated, one or more focus groups will be held. With the extended network of the business’s leadership, it is presumed they could assist in assembling focus groups for this purpose.

⁴This domain name has already been purchased, but it is not necessarily the domain name that will be used.

Buyer-persona development

Buyer persona—a representation of Morph and Thro’s ideal customer based upon market research and real data about existing customers. Buyer persona(s) include demographics, psychographics, behavior patterns, motivations, and goals.

Reviewing the social-media profiles of previous buyers, we will be able glean insight into the types of persons who have already purchased from Morph and Thro, and from this, define buyer personas. These will be adjusted over time as more data is collected. Combined with the information learned in focus groups, we will create website and marketing content specifically targeting the interests of our buyers—before they have entered the buying phase.



Source: Nielsen, Connected Life Report



Copyright © 2014 The Nielsen Company

In the chart on the previous page, Nielsen has collected and published data about the type of persons using fitness applications on their mobile devices. There are numerous articles and reports of this type already published, so using this in addition to data we collect internally, we will be able to create accurate profiles even before the focus group results have been analyzed.

Unique selling proposition

Unique selling proposition (position)—A detail of how Morph and Thro’s products are different, what makes Morph and Thro’s products the better choice, and why buyers should choose Morph and Thro’s products.

Making clothing from recycled materials is not new; Patagonia claims to have been manufacturing and marketing their products since 1993. Other companies and brands have similar claims. Therefore, the current USP of selling upcycled clothing is not an adequately unique selling proposition.

By repositioning Morph and Thro’s clothing line as a way to increase awareness, and support the cause of sustainability, we believe it is possible to compete against established brands and garner attention with an as-yet untapped approach in this industry.

By changing Morph and Thro’s messaging to focus on the *cause of sustainability*, we believe it is possible to compete against established brands by garnering attention—and sales—in an as-yet untapped audience.

USP: product description

Morph and Thro sells high-quality activewear made of yarn spun from recycled bottles.

USP: buyer

The typical buyer is a man or woman who is fit or is attempting to get fit. He or she may be married or single, may have children or not, may be educated or not, may be of any race or ethnicity, and so on. In short, the products appeal to a broad range of demographics—which equates to a broad market.

All buyers share a common psychographic of concern for the environment. Without this particular psychographic, an individual would choose a less-expensive and more readily available activewear product. Morph and Thro's primary goal is to sell high-end workout gear, but their interest is to sell sustainable workout gear.

Based upon marketing experience rather than in-depth analysis, focus groups, and surveys of Morph and Thro's past buyers, the buyers (target audience) can be categorized as such:

1. Men and women of adequate income in search of sustainable products and information⁵ (and to some degree, less-than adequate income by those willing to reallocate monies within their budget in order to contribute to sustainability);
2. Men and women with higher income in search of workout gear; and
3. Men and women willing to purchase products promoted and endorsed by athletes, with little or no consideration toward actual need or amount of adequate income.

Messaging and marketing efforts should be tailored to address the needs of all three target audiences—without competing on price.

All buyers share a common psychographic of concern for the environment.

⁵ The desire to purchase sustainable products becomes the primary driving factor for purchase because it is this interest that would lead a buyer to pay a premium price for workout gear. A buyer in the market for workout gear without concern for sustainability is unlikely to pay the higher cost of products from Morph and Thro, except in the case of factor three.

USP: competition

Morph and Thro is a member of a very small group of retailers of activewear made from upcycled materials. Less than half a dozen other companies promote the same type of product, but some are well known companies/brands, such as Lululemon and pose considerable competition—if the focus remains on simply selling activewear.

USP: solution

Morph and Thro, unlike others in this field, has a solution in the form of a wide product line, which is still expanding, and there are clothing lines for both men and women priced from \$48 to \$100. Other direct-to-consumer companies offer more products, but they are focused on either men or women, not both.

USP: promise

"[upcycle.clothing] is your source for information about environmental issues facing us today. Our website provides a platform from which our collective voices can be heard. Our line of high-quality, comfortable, and durable performance wear products—made from recycled bottles—is a step in the right direction."

Other direct-to-consumer companies offer more products, but they are focused on either men or women, not both.

Strategy/focus**Marketing features**

To target the appropriate audience, we must know their shared characteristics. For Morph and Thro, and broadly speaking, the typical buyer has been identified as:

1. A person in search of sustainable products;
2. A person of higher income in search of workout gear specifically; or
3. A person in search of an endorsed product.

SECTION III: MARKETING PLAN

Given this, the features of this marketing plan are (in order of priority):

1. Original inbound content and *curated content* on the topic of sustainability issues;
2. Original inbound content and curated content on the topic of fitness;
3. An online store of high-quality performance wear made from recycled bottles;
4. Original content about the activities of the company's principles; and
5. Original content about the activities of the personal network of the company's principles.

Curated content—collected, organized, and displayed information relevant to a particular topic or area of interest.

Price

With a focus on inbound content concerning the environment and how Morph and Thro's products contribute to this, current pricing models will be used unless and until data discloses a need for a pricing review.



In this chart from a 2014 Nielsen report, we can see a profile begin to emerge of Morph and Thro's target market. (See attached copy of full report.)

Buyer targeting

According to the International Institute for Sustainable Development, selling in the *green market* can be challenging. They point out four primary considerations:

1. **Price:** Regardless what consumers say about their behavior or commitment to the environment, **few will pay extra for greener products**. Premiums of more than +/- 2% can be charged **only if the consumer perceives additional product value**.
2. **Quality:** Many people believe *green products* are less effective or of lower quality than existing brands, and these buyers are even less likely to sacrifice quality than they are price. Assurances of quality are critical, and must be communicated convincingly. Quality is judged on many features, including performance, look, feel, fit, comfort, and durability.
3. **Convenience:** Consumers of green products will tolerate only minimal inconvenience.
4. **Availability:** Very few consumers go out of their way to purchase green products.

In short, Morph and Thro must:

- Have products proven to be significantly better, in environmental terms, than the competitors', or risk questions of credibility; and
- Provide clear, persuasive, and comprehensive information on what sets the Morph and Thro products apart in terms of fashion, quality, and environmental concerns. (Monitoring competitors' products and claims will enable us to evaluate whether they are developing products of the same sustainability measure, but with price and quality trade-offs.)

Selling in the *green market* can be challenging.

By product line

There are two product lines and thus, two top-level buyer types:

1. Men
2. Women

By geographic area

There are no geographic boundaries; though initial focus will be within the continental US in order to manage shipping couriers and costs.

SECTION III: MARKETING PLAN

By sale type

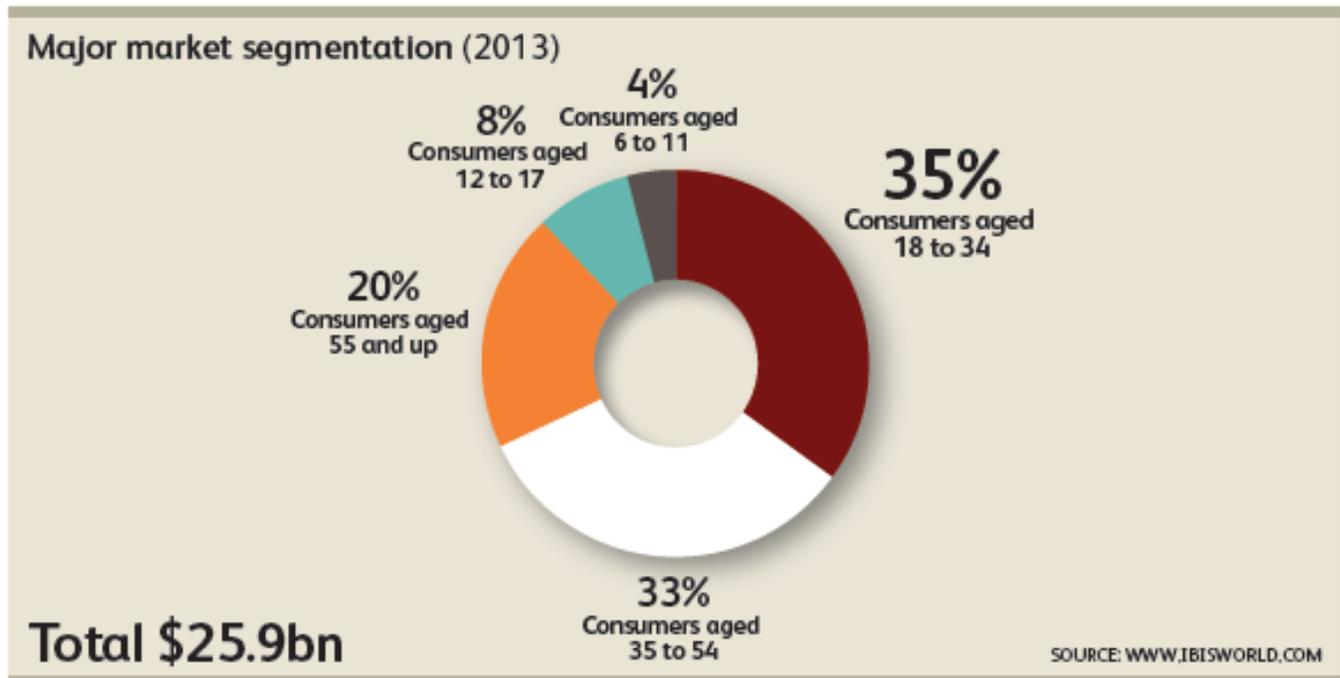
Sales will be direct to consumer.

By industry type

Marketing efforts will focus on the persons who relate to or are interested in sustainability and fitness industries and topics.

By demographics

Marketing content and campaign will initially target the largest market shares: 18 to 54 year old males and females, with median to high income, educated, and employed. Data collection and analytics will be gathered and adjustments made to marketing content as needed.



By psychographics

Initially marketing and campaign content will focus on our target demographics with the added interest of environmental concerns and fitness.

Online-sales services

The new website will feature numerous options competitive to both online news sites and online shopping sites. It will feature or enable:

SECTION III: MARKETING PLAN

- Visitors to comment on content and products
- Buyers to rate products they have purchased.
- Buyers to submit testimonials about their purchase, both in text and video format.
- Buyer to purchase by credit card, PayPal, mail-in check, or wire transfer.
- Buyers to return products within 30 days for a full refund. (Buyer will be responsible for return shipping.)
- Buyers to use online chat to ask questions about Morph and Thro's products. (This will be sourced to a third party.)

Branding

Logo text

The current logo text for Morph and Thro products will be superseded by logo text for [upcycle.clothing⁶]. The Morph and Thro logo will be maintained as the company logo.

Logo

The current logo symbol is appropriate for proposed messaging and marketing changes.



Slogan

The current slogan⁷ and symbol are appropriate for proposed messaging changes.



⁶This is one idea and based upon the product and focus, but other ideas could/should be discussed.

⁷The domain name for in.green is taken.

Domain name

The domain name, because it is a unique phrase, is difficult to understand, especially when spoken. The speaker is asked to repeat the name several times, and then spell the name, and then asked to provide a point of reference or mnemonic. This process does not lead to a better understanding of the domain name, and unless the listener is typing the domain name at that moment, it will soon be forgotten. This is a substantial barrier to growing site visitation from offline sources. What’s more, because the site’s search-engine ranking (SER) is so low—it does not appear on the first 20 pages of a Google search on the term *clothing from recycled materials*—so even if someone is truly interested in your products [s]he is unlikely to find the site. A new domain name is needed.

There is a substantial barrier to growing site visitation from offline sources with the current domain name.

In the recent past, the internet has gained new gTLDs (Generic Top Level Domains). No longer are companies relegated to .com, .net, .org or other long-established TLDs, today there is a wide selection. For this industry, there are a number of suitable gTLDs, such as:

.BOUTIQUE	.BUZZ	.CHANNEL	.CLOTHING	.COMPANY	.COOL
.DESIGN	.DIRECTORY	.EARTH	.EDUCATION	.ENERGY	.EVENTS
.FASHION	.FITNESS	.FOUNDATION	.FYI	.GLOBAL	.GREEN
.LIFESTYLE	.MARKETING	.MEDIA	.MOBI	.ORG	.ORGANIC
.SCIENCE	.SITE	.SOCIAL	.TECH	.TECHNOLOGY	.VENTURES
.WEBSITE				.COM	.NET

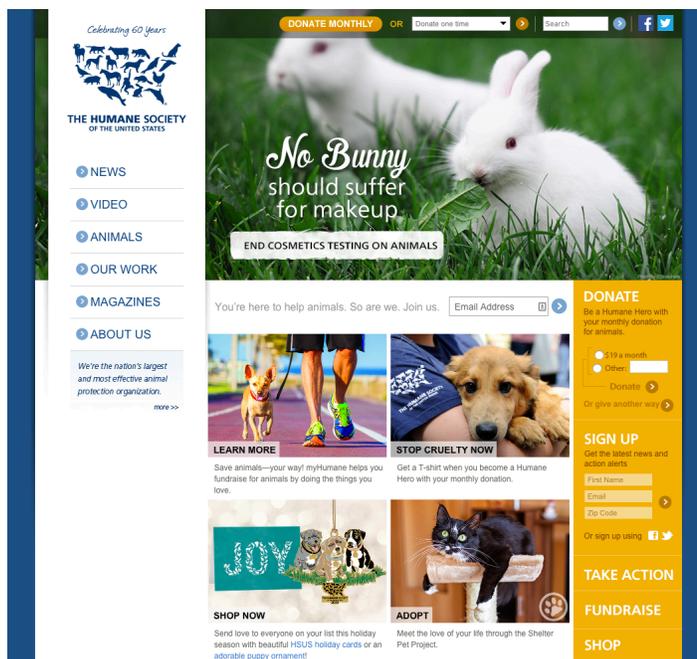
Upcycle.clothing has already been purchased in advance of delivery of this document, and in order to ensure the domain name is not pirated by a third party who becomes aware of our intent.

upcycleclothing.com is taken, but the owner has offered to sell the domain for \$1700. With further negotiations, the price could drop even further.

(See spreadsheet for comprehensive list of all gTLDs.)

Marketing and promotion activities

Morph and Thro was first launched in 2008 and since then the marketing message has been focused on their high-quality activewear/performance wear; information about sustainability and environmental impact has been mostly limited to pages within the website, and not used extensively as newsworthy content to drive traffic. Other cause sites have taken a reverse approach and been successful by focusing marketing efforts on the cause and using product sales to *support the cause*, as seen in the example below.



Note the focus of this website is on the *cause* (humane treatment of animals), and the *shop* link is a supporting effort relegated to the lower-right corner.

While this is an extreme example and not an exact example of recommended changes to the Morph and Thro website, it depicts the approach being advanced by this document: a website and marketing strategy with clear, distinct focus on the cause, and a store of retail products to support cause.

LIVE THE PROCESS

ABOUT THE PROCESS CONTRIBUTORS SHOP



Robyn Berkley launched her activewear line with this website. The website is not focused on her product line, but rather on **content** (this topic is discussed in-depth later in this document).

Robyn's site is "a guide to wellness and holistic health from a curated group of experts in Beauty, Fitness, Meditation, Nutrition, Energy Therapies and Quantum Physics, as seen through a modernist lens. Live The Process offers succinct, sage and simple tips for people at every stage of a wellness journey to integrate daily. It's a destination for those who aspire to wholeness, but who — while navigating this lightning fast, complicated world — can't dedicate every moment of everyday to that pursuit."

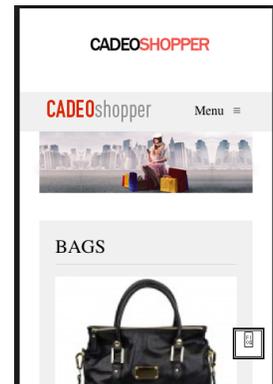
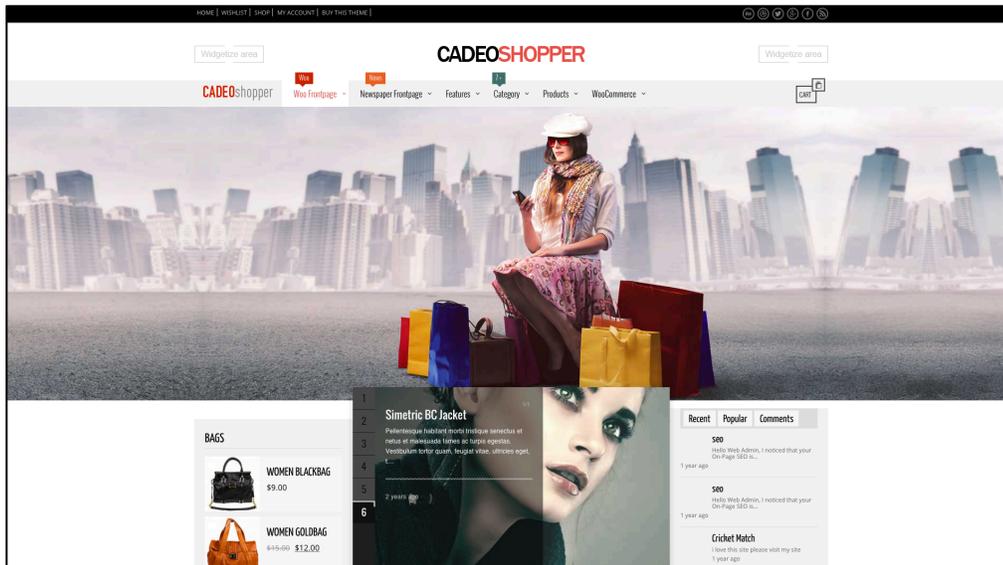
Website

The website is the foundation of the marketing efforts. First with an inbound-content approach, it is required the company have online real estate in which to house the content. Secondly, the website provides the platform for search-engine optimization and recognition.

With recent modifications to Google's search algorithm, websites not fully responsive are losing top positions in search-engine results in favor of those that are.

In the concept shown below, a news website theme has been combined with a shopping cart option. Using appropriate imagery, media, and text, the home page will be customized to include green articles, product shots, testimonials, resources, and video in a way that feels less like asking for the business and more like earning the business.

SECTION III: MARKETING PLAN



This website theme is fully responsive and presents an ideal experience for both the desktop and mobile device user. With recent modifications to Google’s search algorithm, websites not fully responsive are losing top positions in search-engine results in favor of those that are.

More discussion on the workings of search engines is provided in the following sections.

Online activities

There are a multitude of channels available for marketing Morph and Thro’s product line and the sustainability cause. Not all mass media or micro media channels will prove to be appropriate, but as we learn more about the target audience through focus groups, surveys, and an examination of past purchases, we will be able to draft a tiered-marketing approach and allocate limited resources appropriately.

(See spreadsheet for comprehensive list of advertising and promotion channels.)

Understanding search engines

Relevancy. Search engines evaluate website content based upon the *relevancy* of the site’s content as a response to the words or phrases a searcher types. A successful website efficiently—and accurately—conveys their site’s relevancy to the search phrase when it contains substantial content related to or matching those keywords and keyphrases. The more matches to the keywords and keyphrases, the higher the site will rank in the returned list of matching sites. It is therefore critical a site goes well beyond relevant product names and page descriptions—which in most cases only match

those people who have typed shopping terms—and provide content relevant to the topic in the form of articles, partnerships, links, images, and more. A site such as this will attract visitors who have an interest in the cause, but were not necessarily shopping for products in support of the cause. It is a ***new type of customer*** and the process for attracting them is known as inbound marketing

Inbound marketing—activities attracting visitors, as opposed to going out to demand prospects' attention. Inbound marketing earns the attention of customers, makes the company easy to find, and draws customers to the website by producing interesting content.

Authority and trust. In addition to relevancy, search engines monitor engagement. Time spent on the site, time spent on a page, number of pages viewed, and many other points are considered before returning a site as a match to a searcher. In order to lengthen time and page engagement time, a site must provide interesting content the searcher. This is achieved by including articles and large amounts of in-site text and resources related to the topic. This is yet another area where competitor sites have created a gap. While most of the sustainable-products websites contain content about the upcycle/recycle processes, the content has been created internally. In other words, they have a story to tell, but no one is validating their story. This is easily achieved by creating relationships (such as memberships in like-minded organizations), writing unique and captivating content, publishing opinion articles, linking and quoting third-party content, and connecting with people in your personal network to add credence and support the Morph and Thro cause/story.

As visitors read content they spend more time on the site, view more pages, download more resources, complete more forms, bookmark more pages, and—generally speaking—engage at a higher level. Search engines will reward Morph and Thro's extended engagement with additional lift in search-engine results (SER).

With inbound marketing a site earns the business and with outbound marketing a site asks for the business.

Legitimacy. In this market, there is a call for legitimacy. Buyers seem drawn to brands validated by athletes who actually wear the product and can vouch for its durability, wearability, and in the case of Morph and Thro and similar competitors, its sustainability.

H&M launched H&M Sport, designed with input from the Swedish Olympic team, to challenge Lululemon and Nike; and Uniqlo hired tennis player Novak Djokovic as a spokesperson for its performance wear line.

Given the importance of a *face on the product*, a need indicated by Lululemon, Nike, and Uniqlo, Morph and Thro is much further ahead in the market than others. Parlaying the name and face recognition of founders, Scott Hairston and Glenn Earl, and their extended social and personal network, marketing efforts will be bolstered by built-in legitimacy recognized not just by buyers, but also by search engines.

“Earning the business through inbound marketing is found to produce more sales, higher value sales, and more return customers.”

Content marketing (inbound marketing)

Research conducted by Kapost found that per dollar, content marketing contributes to **three times more leads** than traditional online advertising, such as paid search. Thus, the creation of quality content—content marketing—will be used to enhance Morph and Thro’s brand image, commitment to sustainability, and overall marketing efforts. Content marketing will benefit the brand in three primary ways:

1. Create inbound traffic to [upcycle.clothing];

SECTION III: MARKETING PLAN

2. Build brand awareness through engagement; and
3. Generate natural link popularity—a critical component of SEO—in pursuit of elevated SER.

Text and image content. Content marketing will generate inbound traffic to [upcycle.clothing]. It can be used to promote Morph and Thro’s expertise, cause, niche, and/or unique selling proposition. With appropriate calls to action, your audience will engage with your content and be more likely to visit the website.

These types of visitors are unique and a so-far untapped visitor. Upon reaching [upcycle.clothing], we will inform and educate them as we address common questions and enlighten them on issues of relevance. The visitor’s engagement with your content fuels the relationship and builds trust—buyers are more likely to purchase from brands they trust. Quality and relevancy are paramount and the content will be a reflection of Morph and Thro’s business and brand.

In addition to original content, [upcycle.clothing] will provide links to aggregated content on respected websites, thus creating validating outbound links. With special focus on companies/brands with whom a partnership or relationship exists, Morph and Thro can further benefit from the SEO rankings of third-party sites. Directories, event listings, and sponsorship/promotion of crowd petitions will be used as well.

Video content. Videos are an ideal vehicle for communicating and engaging with a potentially massive audience. By optimizing videos for search-engine exposure, the content marketing potential becomes limitless.

The website should always feature a relevant video, whether internally created or licensed. The video below is a great example of a video promoting a product, but done so through a cause: girl power.



Click video to play in YouTube.

Personal websites

Search engines look for validation in addition to content relevant to a search phrase. In order to effectively validate Morph and Thro’s position on sustainability, personal websites for Scott Hairston and Glenn Earl will be created⁸. These personal websites will focus entirely on each man’s commitment to the company’s mission in sustainability issues, and this content will be further validated by content at LinkedIn and personal social-media accounts. In this way, Morph and Thro will gain improved search-engine placement as Glenn and Scott are positioned as thought leaders in the industries of sustainability and manufacture of performance wear.

If there are other high-profile partners, the same approach should be taken with their online presence.

LinkedIn

Though LinkedIn is one of the top ten social networks, its primary focus is of a business nature rather than a social nature. For this reason, it will be used as a professional validation vehicle as well as a social-networking vehicle.

Other social networks

Participating in social networks is paramount to any company. In the chart below, we have listed the top nine social networks by number of unique monthly visitors. Each of these networks certainly has the Morph and Thro target audience amongst its members, but until buyer personas can be defined, it is unknown which are appropriate platforms for the sustainability message on which we will focus with inbound content.

Network	Estimated unique monthly visitors
Facebook	900,000,000
Twitter	310,000,000
LinkedIn	255,000,000
Pinterest	250,000,000
Google+	120,000,000
Tumblr	110,000,000
Instagram	100,000,000

⁸ScottHairston.com and GlennEarl.com domain names have been registered.

Flickr	65,000,000
Vine	42,000,000

Amazon and eBay stores

Setting up house stores on both Amazon and eBay would increase the presence of the Morph and Thro product line exponentially. Amazon has nearly 85 million unique visitors per month, and sellers report an average 50% increase in sales when they join. By limiting which products are sold on Amazon and eBay, we can attract those buyers to the [upcycle.clothing] site in order to view additional styles.

For an in-depth look at the pros and cons, refer to this article:

<https://www.shopify.com/blog/6399562-the-pros-and-cons-of-selling-on-amazon-and-ebay>

Automated outbound marketing

Outbound marketing encompasses all marketing placed in front of the buyer, be it paid search, email campaigns, TV ads, or any other online or offline channel. To date, automated outbound marketing has not been used. In order of importance, outbound marketing follows the website and inbound marketing.

Outbound marketing—emails and various paid and natural search-engine marketing efforts that lead potential customers to websites.

Email

Automated email campaigns come in two forms: drip and nurture. These are often used in conjunction with blast email campaigns—which is our recommendation for Morph and Thro.

Drip marketing is typically a newsletter or some other email sent to the general audience on a predetermined schedule using a predetermined message and design.

SECTION III: MARKETING PLAN



ASHTON TWEED
The Life Sciences Talent Bank Company

Call Now
(610) 725-0290





Ashton Tweed life sciences positions in your area



Quisque risus sem, luctus et interdum in, pellentesque sed lacus eleifend tempus lorem quis bibendum. Etiam tempor, lacus a consequat commodo, ligula mauris ultrices velit, a ornare augue ipsum in mi. Praesent nisi lacus, blandit sit amet laculis et, dictum consequat diam.

Vestibulum ut trincidunt elit. Curabitur mattis, lacus et tempus tempus. Suspendisse potenti. Nunc at turpis ut ante tempor euismod justo rutrum.

Fusce viverra luctus volutpat. Morbi eget mi velit metus in condimentum feugiat, sem odio tristique erat, quis pellentesque urna pharetra risus.

[Read More](#)

Quick links



Sed suscipit dapibus odio, et commodo odio placerat ac mollis augue sit amet purus imperdiet adipiscing. Nunc vel augue a ante pharetra. Quisque id felis vel sem fringilla fringilla et eget eros mi sed facilisis massa non diam. In hac habitasse platea dictumst portitor nulla enim augue felis sed nulla aliquam odio lectus.

[Read more...](#)

www.ashtontweed.com



A nurture campaign is a series of highly personalized messages sent to a single person or small group in response to their action or interaction with the brand, such as a confirmation email when a person completes a form, watches a video, or makes a purchase.

Unreadable? View this email in your browser.

Thank you for participating in the

WORLD'S SHORTEST SURVEY

Curious about how your firm compares?
Keep an eye on your inbox for the results infographic.
(Add sales@bqe.com to your safe sender's list.)



Don't Let Work Tie You to the Office

Get a free walk-thru of ArchiOffice and learn how your firm can bill and collect more.

START NOW



ArchiOffice

BQE Software, Inc.
2801 Airport Drive, Suite 380 |
Torrance, CA 90505 USA

855-945-1525
sales@bqe.com
www.bqe.com






© 2012 BQE Software. All rights reserved.

SECTION III: MARKETING PLAN

With drip, the goal is to keep the brand/cause in front of the recipient on a consistent basis so when the person considers a purchase they remember their relationship with the brand. With nurture, the goal is to gather information about the interaction and respond, building trust so the person returns to the site for a purchase, increases the size of their purchase, or returns for another purchase.

Blast email campaigns are one-off designs sent to small or large groups with a strong call to action. In the case of Morph and Thro, the CTA should alternate between action for the cause and action within the store.



Public relations: press and news announcements

Press releases—content created for printed publications—and news announcements—content created for online publications, including blogs—are used to make noteworthy announcements about the company, the cause, and the products. This PR content, when published online, further validates the message, establishes SEO, and elevates SER.

Social media marketing (SMM) and search-engine marketing

Of all online efforts, the least focus will be placed on paid advertisements—of any sort. Paid advertisements cannot be successful until a company fully understands their buyer, understands their

buyer's shopping habits, and understands the keywords/keyphrases these people are using to find the company's website and products in order to make a purchase.

Further, this is the most expensive channel and given the current financial status of the company, probably not a wise choice at this time.

(For information on other channels, see the spreadsheet.)

Professional endorsements

Parlaying Scott and Glenn's high-profile status as professional athletes, a social effort will be made to reach their friends, family, and fans and garner their reviews, testimonials, and comments about the cause, the site, and product line.

Within their network are friends and associates—high-profile athletes with causes of their own—in search of like endorsement. Shared content and joint efforts will elevate both Morph and Thro's rankings as well as the rankings of the products endorsed by their network. This is a spiraling cycle of two-way endorsements in which everyone benefits.

Shared content and joint marketing efforts between Morph and Thro and their network will elevate the SEO rankings of both parties.

Offline activities

Though marketing today does primarily take place online, offline is still a valuable and worthwhile channel.

Celebrity appearances

Glenn and Scott are both recognizable professional athletes, and as owners of the company, with their celebrity status, the products should capitalize on in-person exposure. Both should be outfitted with promotional materials and giveaways, and opportunities for in-person appearances should be identified and scheduled. In some cases, companies will pay for these appearances, which could further increase the marketing budget.

Celebrity networking

As high-profile athletes, Glenn and Scott will connect with friends, family, and fans and make requests for feedback, participating in focus groups, and commitments to promotional offline activities such as fundraisers, launch parties, and sponsorships.

Sponsorships

Morph and Thro is already sponsoring worthy causes, but information and PR about these sponsorships are lacking. A concerted effort will be conducted to announce past participation as well as garner recognition for new sponsorships. Report and research paper sponsorships are other opportunities—especially given Morph and Thro’s mission.

Partnerships

The number of potential partners is limitless, but these types of arrangements garner widespread attention and media, so identifying partnerships/memberships in the two industries of sustainability and fitness will be paramount to ongoing promotion and higher visibility.

Associations and memberships

Associations and memberships differ from partnerships in that there is usually a due paid to the organization for entry and ongoing member benefits. Like partnerships, the opportunities are many, but limited by the amount of budget that can be used for this purpose. Of note is an opportunity to become involved in current studies of the impact of these materials on the environment and what can be done to minimize their effect.

Become involved in current studies of the impact of these materials on the environment and what can be done to minimize their effect.

Branded promotional items

To make the most of Glenn and Scott’s celebrity status, a number of promotional items should be created and kept on hand at all times, in addition to samples of the product line. Suggestions are



SECTION III: MARKETING PLAN

mousepads, recycled-plastic water bottles, workout towels, shoelaces, backpacks, fanny packs, sports armbands for cell phones, and other items targeting those with an interest in fitness or sustainability.

Petitions

Online sites such as change.org, thepetitionsite.com, and sumofus.org enable people who share concerns about a topic to band together in an online petition. There are currently hundreds of petitions on these sites with a focus on environmental sustainability. Signature requests are acquired through social networks, making this channel particularly suitable for Morph and Thro, given the celebrity status of the owners.

Budget

To date, there has been substantial marketing spend in areas where analytics and metrics are not available or have not been used, thus measurement of the success of those efforts is not possible by any means other than total sales. With marketing events such as those outlined in this document, there is always a path to measuring engagement and with most, also resulting sales. Even offline events can be measured through the use of QR codes, unique URLs, and discount codes and these will ensure Morph and Thro has visibility into the effectiveness of every effort.

The budget outlined here is cost and does not include labor of marketing director, which shall be discussed separately.



SECTION III: MARKETING PLAN

Activity	Annual budget
Website rebuild with search-engine optimization and online store	\$3,500
Personal websites	\$1,500
LinkedIn account profiles	\$0
Local-search registration and claiming	\$0
Content creation: writing of original content and blogging, curating online content	\$12,000
Amazon and eBay: setting up and maintaining stores (plus fees charged by hosts)	\$2,000
Automated outbound marketing: creating drip, nurture, and blast email campaigns	\$12,000
Automated email-marketing software license	\$7,200
Social-media: posting five to ten times every day to each account	\$12,000
Public relations: writing and distributing press releases and news announcements	\$6,000
Press release distribution software subscription (ten releases per year)	\$3,690
Branded promotional items	\$15,000
Professional endorsements	\$0
Celebrity appearances	\$0
Celebrity networking	\$0
Partnerships	\$0
Petitions	\$0
Subtotal	\$74,890

Optional channels	Annual budget
Sponsorships	\$30,000
Associations and memberships	\$30,000
Subtotal	\$60,000
Total	\$134,890

SECTION IV: CONCLUSION

Morph and Thro have successfully built a company for the retail distribution of clothing made of yarn spun from recycled plastic bottles. There has been some success in product awareness and sales, but not sufficient to continue to fund the company. Investments are depleted, but a new production cycle has been prepaid and new products are forthcoming, specifically men's wear and a few new items for the women's line. Without concentrated efforts on marketing the current line and new products, the future of the company is at risk.

Adopting a new tack for the marketing message and focusing more on peoples' concerns for the environment with the sale of clothing as a supporting effort, new buyers can be found and driven to the store in a way unique to Morph and Thro. What's more, coupled with automated marketing, these new visitors can be encouraged to make a purchase, increase the size of their order, and return at later dates to purchase new items.

Morph and Thro has all of the makings of a successful company. With the addition of a cohesive, consistent, and aggressive marketing plan, positive cash flow is within reach.