Technology and Customers’ Experiences in Fashion Physical Stores: The Case of Sweden

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Abstract

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Aim: The aim of this study is to analyze whether in-store digital technology in fashion retailers are used to change the customers’ shopping experience and behavior.

Method: This study chooses qualitative research and used both primary and secondary data collection as method.

Results and conclusions: This study have reached to conclude that: with the current advances in technology, physical stores can use in-store technology to give customers a new experience; physical stores perceive that using in-store digital technology will change customers shopping experience. Also, marketing mix inputs and technology affect customers’ behavior.

Suggestions for future research: For future research, how smart fitting rooms may influence the customer experience in the physical store will be important to study. Researchers can also consider understanding customer responses to in-store technology. Finally, a customer’s perspective to both suggestions should improve the knowledge on whether digital solutions are preferred in in-store shopping or not.

Contributions of the thesis: This thesis contributes to the current state of theories on in-store technology by showing atmosphere has effect on customers’ experiences and behavior in addition to the marketing mix. On the managerial perspective, analyzing the installation of this technology will enable to identify its effect on customers’ experiences and behavior. In addition, on the societal perspective, the behavior of customers will help in motivating younger generation to utilize this in-store technology.
Keywords: Online shopping, Physical store, In-store technology, Customer experiences, Customer behavior and Sweden.
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1 Introduction

This chapter presents the identified problems, motivation of the study, the aim of this study, the research questions investigated and disposition of the study.

1.1 Problematization

According to Perry, Blazquez & Padilla (2013), developments in digital technology and new user interfaces allow the customers to manipulate product images on a retailer's website, translating the in-store experience to the online environment. As Blázquez (2014) states, to meet the increased online competition, the physical stores experience it as necessary to create superior digital experiences for the customer. This in turn prevails in store shopping as the most popular route to buy new clothing. For example, H&M online sales and their newer brands performed well but the weakness was in the physical stores where the changes in customer buying behavior are being felt most strongly with sale decrease and more sales online (H&M, 2017). In addition, some imbalances in certain aspects of the H&M brand’s assortment and composition also contributed to this weaker result.

According to Bonetti & Perry (2017), customers can shop in the comfort of their homes at any time, enabling retailers to overcome physical barriers to establish an international online presence. In addition, the growing use of digital technology has made customers to be active internet users who are always connected. Rose, Clark, Samouel & Hair (2012) indicate that to build customer loyalty in online contexts, e-retailers must provide a compelling online customer experience (flow) continuously over time. Many companies pay special attention to develop their websites to enhance customers overall experience because customers' interactions with companies' online environmental settings influence customers responses as well as their behaviors (Lee & Jeong, 2012).

Significant advancement in mobile technology makes customers to enhance their online buying experience, which in turn put pressure on physical product/service companies to improve opportunities to engage with their customers (Wagner, Schramm-Klein & Steinmann, 2013). Inability to touch or try on products during the purchase decision-making process is a critical
challenge of fashion companies. Because, for online fashion companies, the intangibility is the main principal determinant of risk in purchase rather than security, privacy and system security concerns. This lack of sensory input prevents customers from making informed purchase decision. (Perry, et al., 2013).

Customers need new experience for in-store shopping
Priporas, Stylos & Fotiadis (2017) suggest that retailers should use options like smart technology to improve in-shop customer-shopping experiences and to stay competitive. However, Bäckström & Johansson (2017) argue that efforts by retailers to remain competitive in this complex environment is not just about having cutting-edge technology but also how to use traditional store attributes in new ways.

Bäckström & Johansson (2017) study shows interesting result that the retailers commonly emphasize the importance of traditional in-store values more than using cutting-edge technology. These retailers work strategically with other store aspects to enhance customers’ in-store experiences. Store aspects could be composed of eight different elements of the retail marketing mix: location, merchandise, store atmosphere, customer service, price, advertising, personal selling and sales incentive programs (Bloemer & Odekerken-Schroder, 2002). However, the study by Grewal, Roggeveen & Nordfält (2017) review suggest that retail is evolving at an accelerated rate due to changes made possible by technology thereby evolving customer behaviors. Fashion customers’ behavior is a multisensory experience involving sight, touch, kinesthetic, smell, hearing, and taste to gain information for evaluating fashion products (Workman, 2010).

In-store technology and marketing strategies
The ongoing digital revolution comes with several current trends in the fashion retail and marketing landscape, including the increasing tendency for fashion retailers to adopt consumer-facing digital technology across their online and physical in-store formats (Bonetti & Perry, 2017). Such technology improve the in-store environment by giving a more engaging and stimulating shopping experience for consumers, as Bonetti & Perry (2017) suggest.
Technology enables integration of channels and gives new relevance to physical stores therefore; it must be a means to enhance high-quality customer experience. In-store technology can also help retailers target appropriate customers; it also enables customers to make informed decisions about which products or services to consume (Grewal, et al., 2017). Through in-store technology like Wi-Fi networks, firms can communicate with their customers through their mobile devices and track their behavior (Verhoef, Kannan & Inman, 2015). This requires consumers to be ready to change their buying behavior by accepting new ways of shopping.

1.2 Motivation of the study

Nowadays, many technological channels are emerging, challenging customers to change their habits and shopping behavior (Juaneda-Ayensa, Mosquera & Sierra, 2016). With the advent of the mobile channel, tablets, social media, and the integration of these new channels and devices in online and offline retailing, the landscape has continued to evolve, leading to profound changes in customer buying behavior (Verhoef et al., 2015).

According to Kumar, Bezawada, Rishika, Janakiraman & Kannan (2016) and Jung & Seock, (2017) research on customers' change in purchasing behavior is limited with three exceptions. Two of them mentioned by Kumar et al., (2016) are customer spending and customer cross-buying. Customer spending captures the transactional value of the customer relative to the firm. The customer’s cross-buying behavior is expressed in terms of the number of different product categories that a customer purchases which signals the intensity of the relationship between the customer and the firm. (Kumar, et al., 2016).

A third reason to change customer behavior mentioned is customer satisfaction (Jung & Seock, 2017), which refers to their emotional, favorable, and subjective evaluation. This discussion derives from the psychological state relating to customers’ purchasing behavior. Satisfaction is closely related to customer attitudes and intentions, which are part of customers’ behavior and directly influence customers’ positive behavioral intentions, such as repurchasing and loyalty. (Jung & Seock, 2017).
Retail is evolving at an accelerated rate due to changes made possible by technology. As this development influences on the customers in different ways, this technology affect customers’ in-store experiences and buying behavior. Therefore, retailers have to analyze how this in-store technology influence consumers’ experiences in physical stores (Bäckstöm & Johansson, 2017; Bonetti & Perry, 2017 and Grewal, et al., 2017). So far, however, few studies have addressed how in-store technology is used and how store managers perceive how this development affects customers’ buying behavior. Based on the stated problems, this study aims to fulfill the gap.

1.3 Aim and Research questions
The aim of this study is to analyze whether in-store digital technology in fashion retail stores are used to influences the customers’ shopping experience and behavior.

Based on the studies by Bäckstöm & Johansson (2017); Bonetti & Perry (2017) and Grewal, et al. (2017), we come up with the following research questions to fill the gap:

1. Do physical stores use in-store technology to stimulate customers?
2. Do physical stores perceive that the use of in-store digital technology can change customers shopping experience?
3. How does technology and marketing mix affect customers’ behavior?

1.4 Disposition of the study
This paper is organized in six chapters. The first chapter deals with introduction of the study by including problematization, motivation of the study, aim of the study, research questions and disposition of the study. The related literatures on fashion physical stores, in-store technology, customers’ experiences, the Black box model and theoretical framework are reviewed in the second chapter. The third chapter discusses the method part, which includes research approach, research design, research design, data collection and analysis methods and quality criteria. Discussion on the empirical findings is discussed in the fourth chapter while fifth chapter analyzed the results. Finally, the sixth chapter will present the conclusion and further study reflections based on the findings. Limitations are also included in Chapter 6.
2 Literature Review

This chapter discusses the literature reviews about fashion retailers’ physical stores, the technology they can use and the in-stores customers’ experiences. The Mehrabian–Russell Black box model is used as analytical illustration to discuss previous research related to technological changes and its impact on buyer behavior. Relevant concepts of the model are selected to develop a theoretical framework used to analyze the research questions.

2.1 Fashion physical stores

Due to growing competition in the customer market, companies are increasingly devoting resources to product marketing. An important aspect of such marketing efforts is ensuring that customer goods are presented appropriately in retail stores. From the perspective of retail stores, the overall goal is to create an environment that both attracts and retains customers buying behavior (Babin & Attaway, 2000). The retail-store design process involves the definition of store exteriors and interiors under the restrictions imposed by relevant stakeholders like designers, storeowners, brand owners, customers, legislators and competitors. (Münster & Haug, 2017).

According to Van Rompay, Tanja-Dijkstra, Verhoeven & Van Es (2012) it is difficult to study retail store design from a general perspective because of the highly context-dependent environmental factors associated with individual stores. However, Münster & Haug (2017) argue that in a creative design perspective, the fashion stores are particularly interesting, since, compared to other types of retail stores, they address a relatively homogeneous target group, have a large emphasis on aesthetic qualities, and involve many considerations related to fashion aspects.

2.2 In-store technology

According to Kim, Lee, Mun & Johnson (2017) in-store technology includes tablets, smartphones, WiFi, augmented reality (smart mirrors), apps, screen videos, virtual catalogues and smart tags. In-store technology has to be focused on creating a new integrated customer experience, using technology that is practical, enjoyable and interesting in order to ensure that customers perceive that it facilitates and expedites their shopping journey (Juaneda-Ayensa et al., 2016).
The rapid acceptance of modern information and communication technology in daily business activities is the most important long-term trend in the business world. Consequently, retailers are increasingly considering innovative options for delivering services to their customers. (Weijters, Rangarajan, Falk & Schillewaert, 2007).

Furthermore, technology is the key to creating an integrated experience between communication channels. Technology redefines the store experience and store layouts through click-and-collect services or more advanced technology such as interactive fitting rooms that connect with social networks. However, it is important to note that retailers must focus on the technology that is relevant for customers and really provides value for them. (Blázquez 2014).

According to Bonetti & Perry (2017), stores can be installed with technology such as magic mirrors and interactive screens to engage with the shoppers and improve in-store customer experience. In today's competitive fashion retail environment, retailers must find innovative ways to connect with their audience and offer them a relevant proposition. Technology enables integration of channels and gives new relevance to physical store experiences. The most important thing mentioned is that technology must not be an end, but a medium to enhance high-quality customer in-store experience. (Blázquez, 2014).

### 2.3 Customers’ experiences

The customer experience construct is holistic in nature and involves the customer’s cognitive, affective, emotional, social, and physical responses to the retailer efforts (Verhoef, Lemon, Parasuraman, Roggeveen, Tsiros & Schlesinger, 2009). This experience is the internal and subjective response the customers have due to any direct or indirect contact with a company. It encompasses every aspect of a company’s offerings like the quality of customer care but also advertising, packaging, product and service features, ease of use, and reliability. (Meyer & Schwager, 2007).

According to Blázquez (2014), the store experience is key in generating value perceptions in retailing, which necessitates creating a superior experience for the customer. Kandampully, Zhang
Jaakkola (2017) suggest that customer experience reflects the customer’s journey through all interactions with the firm from pre-consumption to consumption and post-consumption.

In-store atmospherics have a direct effect on the customer experience, influencing various psychological and behavioral shopping outcomes, such as an increase in willingness to buy and in customer share (the amount of business each customer does with a company), as well as the influence on the value perceived by customers in their shopping experience. Since technology is part of the in-store experience, it can be used to improve this experience and meet customer expectations. (Blázquez, 2014).

2.4 The Black box model

Figure 1 below explains the components of the Black box model (S-O-R model) that is used in the study as illustrative source to identify previous research and to develop an analytic theoretical model. The model consists of three parts; the environmental factors as stimuli, buyer’s Black box as organism and buyer’s response as response. These parts are discussed after the model with reference to previous researches by Mehrabian & Russell (1974); Eroglu, Machleit & Davis (2001) and Kumar & Kim (2014).
This study adopts Mehrabian & Russell’s (1974) Stimulus-Organism-Response (S-O-R) framework of environmental psychology to illustrate the different parts having effect on customer buying behavior.

Stimuli (S) comprising of both marketing and environmental stimuli, refer to all the physical and nonphysical elements of a store, which are within the retailer’s control to enhance customers’ shopping experience (Kumar & Kim, 2014). Stimulus can be conceptualized as external factors associated with the store environments. It also refers to the influence that stimulates the individual and is the factor that affects internal and organism states. (Eroglu, Machleit & Davis, 2001).

Organism (O) comprising the buyer characteristic and decision process, refers to the internal processes between stimuli external to the person and the final actions or responses emitted (Bettman, 1979, after, Kumar & Kim, 2014). Two types of individuals’ internal evaluation states that are induced by the physical environment have been identified as cognitive and affective.
evaluation. Based on this cognitive evaluation is associated with a customer perception process; a physiological activity in which sensory stimulation cues is converted into meaningful information. In addition, affective evaluation is associated with emotions and feelings toward an object and is a judgment whether an object is pleasant, attractive, valuable, likable, or preferable. (Kumar & Kim, 2014).

Response (R) refers to behavioral reactions of customers such as satisfaction, patronage intention, number of items purchased, and amount of money spent in the store. Response to store stimuli is either referred to as approach or avoidance behavior. Approach is the desire to remain in the store, continue to shop and stay longer while avoidance behavior is the negative reactions, which may include a desire to leave the store and not return. In addition, store atmosphere influence behavioral reactions indirectly through cognitive and affective evaluations (Kumar & Kim, 2014).

As shown by Figure 1, the Black box construct is a complex instrument for analyzing how in-store executives perceive changing customer behavior. The study is therefore deepened in those Black box factors perceived as most relevant for analyzing changing purchasing behavior through new in-store technology. Hence, we do not discuss all the components of the Black box model but rather take interest in those components that are relevant to our research topic. Because the Black box model is a broad model with many components, below are the components we have specifically selected as most relevant for our study.

### 2.4.1 Stimuli

*Marketing mix inputs*

Bäckström & Johansson (2017) argue that factors such as promotion, products and price perception are important factors to determine the overall personality of a store. According to Johnson, Kim, Mun & Lee (2015) study place attachment was found to be a significant predictor of store loyalty and positively related to loyalty and future visit intentions. According to Park, Jeon & Sullivan (2015) display tactics such as promotional graphic designs and display of merchandise or store windows affect shoppers’ impulse buying behavior.
Fashion clothing is a high involvement product category, related to personal ego and products that need to be seen, felt, touched and tried on because they are difficult to evaluate (Blázquez, 2014). They are designed to capture the transitory mood of the moment (Chan, Ngai & Moon, 2017). According to Park, et al. (2015) effective visual merchandising appeals to the customers’ five senses, allowing them to feel and interact with products. According to Aviv, Wei & Zhang (2018) the benefits of responsive pricing, in comparison to a benchmark case of a fixed-price policy, depend sharply on the nature of the consumers’ behavior.

Environmental inputs: Technological input
According to Bonetti & Perry (2017), several current trends in the fashion retail are associated with the ongoing digital revolution. The tendency to adopt customer-facing digital technology across retailers’ physical store formats help to improve the store environment by conferring an engaging and stimulating shopping experience for customers. However, technology cannot achieve anything by itself (Edvardsson, Enquist & Johnston, 2005).

Dennis, Brakus, Gupta & Alamanos (2014) suggest digital signage is an ‘atmospheric tool’ that may affect customers’ in-store experiences and behaviors. Digitally enhanced stores are physical spaces featuring a strong digital technology element as Bonetti & Perry (2017) suggest. In addition, fashion retailers increasingly use the digital in-store element, where customer facing in-store technology represents an important component of the in-store shopping experience. According to Pantano (2015), this contributes to enhancing the shopping experience by conferring benefit with interactive touch points, in-store digital signage screens and the possibility to access online information through screens and tablets in store.

Blázquez (2014) suggest technology such as store-ordering hubs, Ipads, and display screens can create an attractive environment making the shopping experience engaging and memorable and a new merchandise layout by making products more accessible and convenient to buy in-store. According to Verhoef, et al. (2015) in-store technology like tablets or screens enable shoppers to independently acquire information about the product range and also to order them directly. In-store technology is also manifested using touchscreen technology that offer a variety of functions,
from product customization in-store, checking availability or location, to style advice and the possibility of ordering products (Bonetti & Perry, 2017).

2.4.2 Organism

I. Buyer characteristics

According to Robert & John (1982) the retailer determines the stimulating variations that produces changes in the intervening variable and hence (predict) changes in the customers behavior.

Attitude

According to Bohner & Dickel (2011) attitudes are relatively time-consistent individual evaluations of an object of thought, including physical artifacts, people, groups, and ideas, they are means of expressing individual values and ideologies.

Ease of use, enjoyment and usefulness are important determinants of attitude in the technology acceptance. Two of these dimensions, ease of use and enjoyment are also relevant for technology-based self-service (Dabholkar & Bagozzi, 2002). It is accepted that aspect of innovativeness would influence attitudes toward technological products (Parasuraman, 2000). Customers who tend to look favorably on technology and the use of technology are not concerned whether the new technology are easy to use, or reliable, and would want to try them anyway. Therefore, the relationship between attitude and intention will be attenuated for these customers. (Dabholkar & Bagozzi, 2002).

Perceived usefulness can be defined as the degree to which a person believes that using a certain technology will enhance his/her performance and it is related to the utility value emerging from the system usage. Perceived ease of use represents the degree to which a person believes that using the technology will require no effort. Both these variables affect the attitude and the subsequent behavioral intention. Attitude represents user’s assessment toward the technology, whereas the behavioral intention represents the degree to which the user is willing to perform certain behavior. (Pantano & Di Pietro, 2012).
The arousal of in-store emotions has several impacts on customers’ attitudes toward the store, which in turn affect shopping behavior. First, emotional experiences may create positive or negative beliefs that in turn influence customers’ attitudes. Likewise, positive or negative emotional experiences in the store may create a mood that generalizes to their evaluation of the store. (Yoo, Park & MacInnis, 1998).

**Perception**

The perception of customers about there in-store experience has important consequences for the channel (Blázquez, 2014). If they do not find an experience that fits their expectations, or if they perceive their experience as something more utilitarian (practical) than hedonic (pleasurable), they will use their limited time for other leisure activities considered more enjoyable and satisfying (Lam & Chu, 2007).

Pantano (2015) suggest customer-facing in-store technology is used from the initial phase of the customer decision-making process to stimulate the perception of a want or need in customers’ minds. This may be achieved by style advice and recommendations provided by magic mirrors or interactive screens such as tablets, suggesting items that match chosen ones. However, Jayawardhena & Farrell (2011) argue that customer contact (in-person or face-to-face) has been recognized as a key determinant of customers’ perception of overall service quality. When evaluating physical objects such as clothing, haptic perception plays a primary role because the dominant attribute of such objects is texture: roughness, hardness, weight, and temperature (McCabe & Nowlis, 2003).

According to Park, et al. (2015) a conceptual approach to visual merchandising considers store design and product display as strategies to stage product experiences and capture customers’ attention in fashion stores. In addition, customers’ perceptions of visual merchandising can pique their interest and motivate additional in-store merchandise exploration. Specifically, shoppers update their perceptions of fairness, value, satisfaction, trust, commitment, and attitudinal loyalty and evaluate the potential intrusiveness of the technology on their personal privacy. These perceptions then mediate the effect of the technology on shopper behavioral reactions. (Inman & Nikolova, 2017).
Knowledge
Burke (2002) suggest that when shopping in the retail store, customers want knowledgeable sales assistants who could look up product information on a computer, and kiosks that could provide access to manufacturers’ web sites and expert ratings of product quality.

The Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) identifies two fundamental constructs for forecasting the acceptance of digital technology in an organizational setting: perceived ease of use and perceived usefulness. Ease of use refers to the process leading to an outcome while perceived usefulness reflects the utilitarian view on shopping, according to which customers are concerned with buying products in a timely and efficient manner. (Weijters, et al., 2007).

II. Decision process
Information search
According to De Kerviler, Demoulin & Zidda (2016) in-store information search consists of collecting information about products (e.g., scanning quick response [QR] codes, comparing prices), collecting and sharing opinions with others (e.g., accessing online reviews, sending pictures to friends), or finding a specific product in the store (e.g., navigating aisles using the retailer's interactive map).

Purchase decision
Grewal, et al. (2017) stated that retailers that can draw effective insights from big data (customer, transactional and environmental data) can make better predictions about customer behavior, design more appealing offers, target their customers in a better way and develop tools that encourage their customers to make purchase decisions that favor their products. According to Bonetti & Perry (2017), customer behavior is a dynamic ongoing process involving problem recognition, evaluation of alternatives, choice, purchase and postpurchase outcomes. During the purchase stage of the customer buying process, retailers use customer-facing in-store technology to inspire and engage with customers, thus creating a better shopping experience that influences customer behavior (Verhoef, et al., 2015).
2.4.3 Buyer’s response

Advances in technology have led to increasingly significant changes in customer behavior (Cantallops & Salvi, 2014). All the responses to an environment are either approach or avoidance behavior and have four aspects. The first one is physical desire to stay in (approach) or to stay out (avoid) of the environment. Desire to look around and explore the environment (approach) verses avoid moving through, tendency to remain inanimate or not interact with the environment (avoidance) is set as the second aspect. The third is desire to communicate with other in the environment (approach) versus a tendency to ignore communication attempted from others (avoidance) while degree of enhancement (approach) or hinderance (avoidance) of performance and satisfaction with task performance comes as fourth. (Mehrabian & Russell, 1974, after, Robert & John, 1982).

According to Rezaei, (2015) customers are faced with a substantial amount of retail and product choices, and as retailing becomes more global (Mitchell, 1998), the product selections are influenced by certain decision-making.

In customer-based cultures, people often try to identify themselves via the products they buy. Thus, it becomes a challenge for retailers and brands to represent themselves within their own communicable image. The so-called visual identity of a brand as well as the actual personality of a brand is a long-known characteristic when it comes to conveying a certain shopping experience and increasing sales. To convey a clear brand identity to the customer, consistent design concepts for retail outlets help a company to form a uniform image. (Schielke & Leudesdorff, 2015).

Task-oriented customers prefer dealer stores that are spacious, whereas recreational customers enjoy and prefer the arousing properties of color (Van Rompay, et al., 2012). Carefully considered design and brand communications, such as signage, in the in-store environment differentiate a retailer from their competitors (Park, et al., 2015). Customers prefer brand-specific retailers carrying their own private label products. Brand loyalty and brand consciousness are among the important shopping styles influencing dealer choice (Kurtulus & Ertekin, 2015).
Customers are strategic in selecting the timing of their purchases by comparing the expected surpluses associated with either buy now or wait decisions. Customers in the market are all myopic; they do not consider future pricing in their purchasing decisions. (Aviv, et al., 2018).

According to Haq, Khan & Ghouri (2014) fashion involvement tendency influences customers purchase amount directly and indirectly, by positive emotion. Messaoud & Debabi (2016) suggest that the relationship between the different environmental factors (atmosphere, design and social environment) and the amount of purchases made is not significant.

2.5 Theoretical framework

Based on the theories from Bäckström & Johansson (2017) and Johnson, et al. (2015) about marketing mix inputs that are discussed above, we have included product, price, promotion and place in our newly developed theoretical framework. Blázquez (2014) said technological input, in addition to these inputs, make products convenient to buy and more accessible for decision-making. This in turn changed customers’ buying behavior (Cantallops & Salvi, 2014). All these theories enable us to develop our theoretical framework as shown below in Figure 2.
**Figure 2:** Effect of inputs on customers’ experiences and behavior to make them respond

The above figure shows our theoretical framework established from selected Black box contents based on discussed theories and previous researches by Mehrabian & Russell (1974); Eroglu, Machleit & Davis (2001) and Kumar & Kim (2014). It reflects that in-store technology (technological input) and marketing mix inputs in fashion physical store retailing can be used to affect the buyer’s buying behavior, their decision process and outputs that in turn lead customers to respond and buy.

Source: Own construction
3 Method

This chapter explains the structure of method used in this study, what problems we faced during data collection, how we worked around them and the demography of personnel representing sample fashion retail physical stores.

Research model

The figure below represents our research model where the research approach, design and strategy; data collection and analysis methods; and quality criterion used in this study are explained.

Figure 3: The research model

Source: Own construction, adopted from Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill (2009, p. 102)
The research approach used is inductive qualitative approach. Although, using the Black box as theoretical model, this is not tested but used as illustrative framework for collecting data from previous researches. This data is then used as an analytical framework for our study.

The research design is an exploratory one seeing we do not intended to provide conclusive evidence, rather we want to understand better the problem presented in chapter 1, under aim. Data has been collected from both primary and secondary sources. Our primary data sources are interviews (from the respondents) and observations (of the physical stores) while our secondary data sources are internet sources, company annual reports and company websites. The theoretical framework used as the data analysis method.

3.1 Research approach

Inductive research lets reality tell its story on its own terms and not on the terms of extant theory (Gummesson, 2005). This study uses a qualitative approach, which is uniquely suited to opening organizational processes and provides an opportunity to explore new phenomena worthy of investigation. It tries to address the how, of individual and collective organized actions as it unfolds in the analyzed context. (Doz, 2011). This approach is chosen because online shopping over physical shops is a new problem on which little research has been done. We want to get an in-depth understanding on whether how fashion retailers can use in-store technology to influence the customers’ shopping experience and behavior.

3.2 Research design

According to Rowley (2002) research design is the logic that links the data to be collected and the conclusions to be drawn to the initial questions of a study; it should ensure that there is a clear view of what is to be achieved by the study. Based on this an exploratory research design is chosen for this study, because we want to have a better understanding of the use of in-store technology by fashion retailers in physical stores to enhance customers experience and change their behavior.
3.3 Research strategy

Figure 4 below illustrates the sequential research process of this study. The theory part is constructed in a way that helps to answer the research questions. From the theories, a theoretical framework has been developed as the central analytical tool of the study. More elaboration from the retailer’s experiences and perceptions is made in chapter 4, the empirical part. This information is gathered between 16th, April 2018 to 18th, April 2018. The analysis part has compared empirical data with the theories, thereby making the conclusion, which answered the research questions to fulfill the aim of the study.

Figure 4: The research strategy

![Research Strategy Diagram]

Source: Own construction

3.4 Data collection

Sometimes the best affordable method to optimize data collection procedures and reduce on error within the available time and budget may be a mixed-method design. Face-to-face interviews can be used to maximize response and telephone interviews, or E-mails can be used for follow-up data collection (De Leeuw, 2005). To collect our data at first, we had written Emails in March 2018, to over 40 different fashion retailers contacting them through their head offices and store customer services but received very little feedback.

Convenience sampling is a type of nonprobability or nonrandom sampling were members of the target population meet certain practical criteria, such as easy accessibility, geographical proximity,
availability at a given time, or the willingness to participate (Etikan, Musa & Alkassim, 2016). In March 2018 after deciding to write on fashion retailers, we sort to have a sample of fashion retailers. We then decided that we would only consider those that are dealing in just clothing and these retailers should be dealing in teenagers and elderly clothing.

Many other factors were considered when choosing these sample fashion retailers. First, we chose fashion retailers where in-store technology can mostly be used, those who are well established and have strong enough capital to use them and eliminate those dealing in footwear and kids’ only clothing. Among the remaining retailers, we again filter those that we thought have the potential to use in-store technology more in the future. For example, one of our respondents was the first to use online shopping technology showing that they are responsive to technological changes. In addition, these selected fashion retailers are well known in Sweden and have many branches in different countries, so they have a global perspective on the direction of retailing concerning in-store technology. The accessibility to these retailers, which is more clearly outlined in the subsequent paragraphs, was also considered.

In April 2018, because of low feedback from our potential respondents even after sending them follow up email, we took it upon ourselves physically to visit each store and time was not on our side. This was not an easy task as it required us to speak to the managers without appointments and most of them were busy with season sales as they were getting rid of winter clothes and making ready for spring while others were attending internship programs.

The first day, we managed to send 10 interview questions for those who could not sit with us for interview and we have three interviews. In addition, we secure appointments for the next two days from about 12 other stores. The interviews we had that day were short lasting 10 minutes to 17 minutes because these managers were busy helping out in the store with one to three assistants. However, in three days we managed to have thirteen interviews with physical store managers of the sample fashion retailers. In addition to the interviews, we have used observation to collect our primary data. Realizing that we may not receive Emails from those we sent questionnaires; we have observed 20 stores from 19th April 2018 to 20th April 2018 to collect additional data. Getting information from these fashion retailers’ websites and other supportive documents about their
background history and current performance of their physical stores represent our secondary data sources.

According to Oppong (2013) while conducting a qualitative research, convenience sample, judgment sample and theoretical sample are the three sampling methods. Sampling is a process of selecting subjects to take part in a research investigation claiming they provide information considered relevant to the research problem (Oppong, 2013). In this regard, we use 12 companies that have accepted our data collection request, and which are all fashion retailers within Sweden, particularly from Uppsala city. The numbers of sample respondents for this study are 13 persons from fashion retailers’ physical stores.

Our respondents’ demographic details are shown below in Table 1 and companies profile stated under Table 2. All the names are anonymous, so the details about companies are attached as Appendix 2 in alphabetical order regardless of their code.

**Table 1: Respondents’ demography**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondents</th>
<th>Age group</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Status/Position</th>
<th>Work experience</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>R1</td>
<td>30-45</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Store Manager</td>
<td>3 ½ years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R2</td>
<td>30-45</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Store Manager</td>
<td>5 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R3</td>
<td>&gt;45</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Store Manager &amp; owner</td>
<td>&gt;20 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R4</td>
<td>30-45</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Store Manager</td>
<td>8 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R5</td>
<td>30-45</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Store Manager</td>
<td>25 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R6</td>
<td>&lt;30</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Store Manager</td>
<td>½ year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R7</td>
<td>&gt;45</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Store Manager</td>
<td>20 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R8</td>
<td>&gt;45</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Store Manager</td>
<td>36 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R9</td>
<td>&lt;30</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Store Manager</td>
<td>7 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R10</td>
<td>30-45</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Store Manager</td>
<td>7 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Company name</td>
<td>Established year</td>
<td>Established in</td>
<td>Owned by</td>
<td>No of countries operating</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>----------</td>
<td>---------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Private (individuals)</td>
<td>Share (franchises)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bergmans</td>
<td>1929</td>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BikBok</td>
<td>1973</td>
<td>Norway</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brothers</td>
<td>1992</td>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carlings</td>
<td>1980</td>
<td>Norway</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cubus</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>Norway</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H&amp;M</td>
<td>1947</td>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jack &amp; Jones</td>
<td>1990</td>
<td>Norway</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Johnells</td>
<td>1893</td>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kappahl</td>
<td>1953</td>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lindex</td>
<td>1954</td>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NewYorker</td>
<td>1992</td>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rolans Herrmode</td>
<td>Around 1970</td>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Own construction
3.5 Data analysis method

According to Rowley (2002), developing a descriptive framework and gathering evidence related to it by analyzing and comparing concepts enable to achieve a description of the study that can be confirmed from multiple sources of evidence. So the data, which is collected via interviews, documents and observation, is coded into different components of our theoretical framework. The theoretical framework is divided into three major components namely Input, Process and Output; which in turn are further divided for easy understanding and explanation. The data collected through interviews is coded into marketing mix input, technological input, attitude, perception, knowledge, information search, purchase decision and buyer’s response. The coded data linked to the theoretical framework to answer the research questions and achieve the aim of the study. As stated in Chapter 1, the research questions are three where each question analyses a major component of the theoretical framework.

3.6 Quality criteria in qualitative research

Validity

According to Brod, Tesler & Christensen (2009) content validity is the extent to which one can generalize ideas from a collection of data. In addition, adequate assessment of content validity provides evidence that the theoretical framework, content of items and overall measurement approach are consistent with the perspective, experience and words of the sample group. To validate the content of this study, we have checked empirical data and analysis are in accordance to our developed theoretical framework and the established research questions. The interview questions we used to collect data allow us to know respondents viewpoint on different types of digital technology and factors that affect customers experience and behavior in addition to the application of in-store technology.

Construct validity is about establishing correct operational measures for the concepts being studied. It is concerned with exposing and reducing subjectivity, by linking data collection questions and measures to research questions and propositions. (Rowley, 2002). In this case, our study used interview questions to measure what we are intended to measure, which is in-store technology and
customers experience. In addition, all the respondents being physical store managers and have work experience in fashion retail helped us to collect valid data.

**Reliability**

Reliability is about demonstrating that the operations of a study, such as the data collection produced can be repeated with the same results and is achieved through documentation of procedures and appropriate recording keeping (Rowley, 2002). Therefore, we have checked this study reliability while we analyze, and code information gathered from sample respondents. As shown in Appendix 2, our interview questions were structured in such a way that collected responses, when compared one to another, show similar patterns. The quality of the questions asked was perfected to ensure that they are contextualized to give good quality information. Initially we had 23 questions, but these were perfected into our final 16 questions as shown below in Table 3. These questions were asked to 13 respondents from 12 different fashion retailers in order to have meaningful quality of response.

**Table 3: Interview questions in accordance to theoretical framework**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Concept</th>
<th>Authors</th>
<th>Interview questions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Background</td>
<td></td>
<td>Can you tell us about yourself and your company?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online shopping</td>
<td>Perry, et al. (2013); Bonetti &amp; Perry (2017); Rose, Clark, Samouel &amp; Hair (2012) and Wagner (2013)</td>
<td>What do you think about online shopping technology competing with your physical store? How is it affecting your business?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Blázquez (2014) and Lee &amp; Jeong (2012);</td>
<td>Is it a threat to your physical store business? How are you handling it?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RQ1 - Do physical stores use in-store technology to stimulate customers?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marketing mix inputs</td>
<td>Bäckström &amp; Johansson (2017); Park, et al. (2015) and Aviv, et al. (2018)</td>
<td>What other ways do you use to give a new experience to your customers?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Kim, et al. (2017)</td>
<td>Do you know any in-store technologies used in today’s fashion retailing? Which ones are you familiar with?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technological input</td>
<td>Juaneda-Ayensa et al., 2016; Blázquez (2014); Chan, et al. (2017); Bonetti &amp; Perry (2017) and Verhoef, et al. (2009)</td>
<td>Have you ever considered using in-store technologies in your stores to give a new shopping experience to your customers?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Weijters, et al. (2007) and Blázquez (2014);</td>
<td>Do you think using these in-store technologies will bring more customers to the store?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Is there any kind of digital technology you are using in this store?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**RQ2 - Do physical stores believe using in-store digital technologies will change customers shopping experience?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attitude</th>
<th>Bohner &amp; Dickel (2011); Dabholkar &amp; Bagozzi, (2002); Parasurama (2000) and Dabholkar &amp; Bagozzi, 2002</th>
<th>Do you think customers will accept these technologies?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Perception</td>
<td>Pantano (2015)</td>
<td>What is your target market?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge</td>
<td>Burke (2002)</td>
<td>What makes you unique, why would people come here?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information search</td>
<td>Kerviler, et al. (2016)</td>
<td>Do you think using these technologies in the store will simplify customers’ searching for what they want?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purchase decision</td>
<td>Grewal, et al. (2017) and Bonetti &amp; Perry (2017)</td>
<td>Do you think the use of these technologies will affect customers purchase decision?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**RQ3 - How does technology and other factors affect customers’ behavior?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Buyer’s response</th>
<th>Cantallos &amp; Salvi (2014)</th>
<th>If you have considered using in-store technologies in your stores, what changes will these technologies bring to the store with regards to customer behavior?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Schielke &amp; Leudesdorff (2015) and Kurtulus &amp; Ertekin (2015)</td>
<td>Do you think using technologies will create a constant image of the brand in your customers mind?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rezaei, (2015); Van Rompay, et al. (2012) and Messaoud &amp; Debabi (2016)</td>
<td>Are there any other factors that you think will affect customers stay in your store?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Own construction
4 Empirical Part

Here we discuss what our sample fashion retailer’s respondents tell us about the following issues: How in-store digital technology influence customers’ experiences in physical stores of fashion retailers. Further, we consider how the fashion retailers perceive that a changed customer buying behavior can affect their motivation to use various forms of in-store digital technology. Based on the respondents’ experience, presented is how other solutions can help the stores to meet the online threats. Finally, we present general issues about online shopping technology discussed, which concern whether it is a threat or not for in-stores future development.

4.1 Online shopping and physical stores

We asked the 13 respondents about how they perceive online shopping technology’ increasing competition with physical stores and how it is or can affect their business. Out of these respondents, two are not sure on whether online shopping is affecting them or not. They only mentioned online shopping is very big and their physical stores are old fashioned. The other five said online shopping is not affecting them, it goes well with in-store shopping as a compliment and customers can order online and pick up from the physical store.

The remaining six respondents said online shopping is affecting business in their physical stores. These respondents highlighted that they have lost customers shopping from the physical stores and the revenue from physical stores has reduced. This has led to reduced profit to some retailers. While these respondents agreed that online shopping is a threat for their stores, the reason why they said so and the way that it is handled is different. Because out of six, R3 and R11 think it is not that much big to affect them directly even though they agree it is a problem. R3 said it might be big threat for those young generation fashion stores and R11 said:

“Yes, online shopping is a threat to the business, the latest two years there has been a big difference, the sales have reduced. This can be seen during times like Christmas and Black Friday.”

The rest of 4 respondents who agreed online shopping is a threat said online sellers use lower prices to gain market share and are taking off customers while they do not get enough profit.
According to them online shopping is a big challenge now and from online you can pay for your staffs and get them from physical store, leading money shortage in the store even though the company would have its profit unchanged.

These physical stores are trying to handle online shopping winning over in-store shopping. R6 said having good customer service like helping people feel the clothes, telling them about it and keeping the store clean and working on it through their technology department is a way of their online shopping threat handling. Taking care of the people that come into their physical stores by providing a loyalty program that will enable customers to become their friend and member is way of handling online shopping for R9. As this store manager said, they cannot do that much.

4.2 Use of in-store technology and customers’ shopping behavior

Physical stores use marketing strategies like product, customer service, price, promotion and place to give customers a new experience. Six of the respondents agreed that promotion is a basic way of creating new experience for their customers. According to them including people as club member, using music and different motion screen displays, arranging customer evenings and having new store atmosphere are used as promotion for these physical stores. In addition, five of the respondents said communicating with customers would help people that still want to feel the stuff, try them on and expect sellers know their right sizes. Further, as they said, it will enable customers to get information about campaigns, offers and sales offered by the store.

While 4 of the respondents said having a center location, quality and proper products and discount offers in times like Black Friday are other ways to change customers’ shopping behavior, 10 of the respondents agreed that customer service mean a lot to them. As they explained, customer service might be making customers feel good, offering discounts and including them as club member, which is all about giving customers what they want and the best service ever. According to these respondents, good customer service, promotion and communication might use separately or in combination as other ways of giving customers a new shopping behavior.

When asked about in-store technology, and if they are familiar with any, eight of the respondents had no idea about in-store technology. However, the rest 5 of them know what it is and have had
an experience to use some of this technology. Among the technology, they mentioned screen videos, smart mirrors, digital fitting rooms, virtual catalogues and smart tags. R3 mentioned that they have seen smart mirrors and digital fitting rooms in other countries, but they do not have it while another admitted to using big screens with motion pictures. In addition, R6 said:

“*Yes, I have heard some stores in London have these mirrors where you can swipe on the clothes like you are wearing them so that's one thing a lot of stores will have develop.*”

Considering the use of in-store technology in the store to give a new shopping experience to customers, 5 respondents agree that installing these emerging technology will give their customers a new shopping experience. According to them, technology is moving forward so having in-store technology would be nice and interesting to overcome shortage of money due to online shopping. However, R5, R6 and R8 said in-store technology is for the future and is not accepted now. According to these respondents, they are far away from such technology and no one has shown them, also they do not know the cost of it. In addition, from 13 respondents, the last five of them think there is no need to install in-store technology for customers’ new shopping experience. The reasons for this are shown below in Table 4.

**Table 4: Reason for not accepting in-store technology**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondents</th>
<th>Reason for not accepting in-store technology</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>R3</td>
<td>I think if people wants to come in here, they want to try a sweater or a shirt or a suit or a trouser.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R4</td>
<td>We are trying to get the customers to go to the stores via social media.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R7</td>
<td>No, smart in-store technology will not change customers experience.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R10</td>
<td>I do not know why but we have no intention of having it here.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R11</td>
<td>I think if a customer goes to the store, it shows there is need to talk to someone. Personally, I would want to get a third opinion unlike standing in front of a mirror and trying to decide on your own.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Participants’ responses
Concerning the use of in-store technology to bring more customers to the store, eight respondents agreed that customers would go to physical shops because in-store technology is interesting. According to these respondents, technology will bring in more customers to their store, because their customers are young and living with technology surrounding them would be interesting to use it in their shopping. However, five respondents think their customers are old who are found in 40-60 age range so technology will not influence or affect them since these customers have no time to work on in-store technology.

In addition to data collected from respondents, while observing, we are able to see Wi-Fi services, video screens and smartphones used as in-store digital technology. Out of our 13 respondents, nine of them do not use any kind of digital technology in their physical stores, except the ordinary POS (point of sale) machine. One of the respondent have plan to start soon using IPad for customers support service and the rest 3 use motion screens and smart phones in their stores while R7 offer free Wi-Fi service for its customers.

4.3 Physical stores, in-store technology and customers’ shopping experiences

According to eight of the respondents, customers will accept installation of in-store digital technology. They said customers want to see such technology if other shops have it because customers would love in-store technology and could save their time. R9 also said:

“Yes. The younger generation would like it, I think, but not the older generation.”

However, the rest 5 of them think customers would not accept it. They explained their reasons by saying that their customers are aged in between 40-60 representing the older generation. Furthermore, they are not sure whether in-store technology can bring in more customers and how many of their customers would use it. For example, when explaining about generation issue R3 said:
“No. We are men shops so they want to show their wives who is sitting outside the dressing room. Because she is the one to chief, to make decisions. But maybe it is different with ladies, they are more open minded and they decide by themselves on what they want to buy, the men does not.”

According to the respondents, the physical stores have different target markets focusing on different sex and age groups that could be classified under four major groups as men-younger generation, men-older generation, female-younger generation and female-older generation.

Each physical store has something that makes it unique. However, one aspect that was pointed out the most is good customer service and the need to have a good relationship with the customer. Among other things mentioned was providing good quality with a range of clothes a customer can choose from, knowledgeable and skilled employees to offer credible advice and affordable prices. For our sample physical stores, answers of respondents is shown as below in Table 5.

**Table 5: Physical stores uniqueness**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondents</th>
<th>What makes you unique?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>R1</td>
<td>We believe if the employees are kept happy, then they will keep the customers happy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R2</td>
<td>Relationship, knowing customers’ size of jeans and what they like</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R3</td>
<td>People come here because they like the service and I sell big sizes up to 5 or 6 extras large</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R4</td>
<td>People cannot find us online, so they need to come to the stores</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R5</td>
<td>We have been working with suits for about 90 years, we know what we do, and we have the skills. The people that work here have been here for 10, 20 or 30 years so the quality of service never lives the door.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R6</td>
<td>We have good knowledge of clothes and styles, we employ anyone and get taught here on how to look after customers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R7</td>
<td>Our pricing and all you need in fashion; we also have cosmetics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R8</td>
<td>We have better designs of clothes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Regarding the idea of using in-store technology to simplify customers’ searching for what they want, 5 of the respondents agreed that it would enable customers to find their needs easily by simplifying their searching. The rest 8 respondents said these in-store technology do not help customers to find what they want. Main reason given is that: a third person’s opinion is needed in shopping unlike standing in front of a mirror or on the store IPad trying to decide on your own. It is all about relationship, to give customers what they need and it is not easy to use such technology for the older generation customers.

Out of 13 respondents, eight of them said customers purchase decision would be affected by the use of in-store technology. According to them, most people are comfortable with buying things from the store because they can easily return it and technology is pushing in making things easier. The rest 5 respondents said customers purchasing decision might not be affected by this in-store technology. Because, according to some respondents, their customers are old to concern for technology and they believe employees can affect the customers more than the technology do. If customers do not want to use it, how could their shopping be affected by such technology (R3)?

4.4 Technology and marketing strategy inputs effect on customers’ behavior

For physical shops that have considered using digital technology in their stores, five respondents perceive this technology have effect on customers’ behavior currently at this time. According to them, customers’ behavior will be changed because customers are now in a hurry, so it may assist
them in saving their time and younger people are quick to accept technology than older ones. In addition to this, R1 said:

“It will give the store new look and customers will have new experience. In addition to these experiences, the shop assistant being the stylist, promotions and having the right music increases customer experience. It will allow customers to be satisfied and choose us among others.”

According to other three respondents, such technology is for future and they are not sure if this technology can change customers’ behavior now, but in the future all stores will have it. The rest 5 respondents said nothing though they do not agree to accept in-store technology.

Concerning fashion retailers perspective of in-store technology as a means to create a constant brand image in the minds of customers, seven of the respondents agreed that installing this technology would make people remember them for it. According to these respondents, at the same time it will help customers to enjoy their time and keep a constant image of the brand. However, according to the rest of six respondents, using in-store technology has no power to create a constant image of the brand in their customers mind. According to these respondents, having goodwill, being an old-fashioned store, social media (Facebook and Instagram), posters, location and interaction with customers can create this brand image in the customers’ minds.

According to seven respondents, having good and best service is the main thing that will make customers stay longer in their physical stores among other reasons. In addition, keeping customers happy as much as possible and being able to assist them with passion are other reasons. Having interesting atmosphere, good shop location and special offers are the remaining reasons stated by the respondents. R4 stated that:

“The fact that we do not have an online store it is somehow strength because our customers cannot find our clothes elsewhere so they come to the store. R4 has always worked towards having the lowest prices on the market. R4 tries to keep the prices as low as possible, than the competitors.”
4.5 Empirical findings

Based on the research questions we developed in Chapter 1, we have summarized all the empirical findings as shown below in Table 6.

Table 6: Summary of empirical findings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Online shopping and physical stores shopping</th>
<th>Respondents Answers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Online shopping is reducing our sales and number of customers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Online shopping does not affect us, it is like a supplementary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>We do not exactly know online shopping effect on us</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Input

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Marketing strategies used</th>
<th>Promotion, price, product, customer service and place</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Environmental inputs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Technological)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Known in-store technology</td>
<td>Screen videos, smart mirrors, digital fitting rooms, virtual catalogues and smart tags</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consideration to install in-store technology</td>
<td>Yes, having in-store technology would help to overcome online shopping</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No, we perceive customers want to try on clothes and also want to get advice from us</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>For future, now we are far away from such technology and no one has shown us</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Customers’ in-store technology usage</td>
<td>Younger generation want to use in-store technology for their shopping</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Older generation do not want to spent time on in-store technology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Any kind of digital technology being used</td>
<td>Wi-Fi services, video screens and smartphones (IPad)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Process</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Attitude</strong> on technology acceptance</td>
<td>Young generation customers would accept technology to save time because it is easy to use and simplify shopping. Customers would not accept technology because they are old generation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Perception</strong> in terms of target market</td>
<td>Younger generation (aged &lt;=40), men</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Younger generation (aged &lt;=40), women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Older generation (aged &gt;40), men</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Older generation (aged &gt;40), women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Knowledge</strong> in terms of uniqueness</td>
<td>- Good customer service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Relationship with customers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Knowledgeable and skilled employees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>In-store technology effect on information search</strong></td>
<td>Using in-store technology simplify younger generation customers’ searching for their needs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Using in-store technology is not easy for older generations and customers need a third person’s opinion.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>In-store technology effect on purchase decision</strong></td>
<td>Using in-store technology would make people comfortable to buy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Customers are old to concern for technology and employees can affect customers’ purchase decision more than the technology do</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Output</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Changes in customers behavior</strong></td>
<td>- In-store technology changed customers’ behavior by saving their time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Younger generation behavior changed because they accepted technology quickly, but not older generation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- In-store technology could change customers’ behavior in future, not now</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Creating constant brand image</strong></td>
<td>Using in-store technology will make customers remember the brand for it</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Rather than using in-store technology, goodwill, promotion and communication with customers create constant brand image

| Factors that will affect customers stay in physical stores | Customer service, promotion, location, assisting and making customers happy, special offers |

Source: Own construction

Table 7: Similarities and differences in empirical findings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key words</th>
<th>Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Online shopping affects physical stores</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Similarities | - Physical shops sales are reducing  
- Number of customers in physical shops is decreasing |
| Differences | - Still do not see whether online shopping affect physical shops or not |

**Inputs**

**Marketing mix inputs** that give new experience for customers

| Similarities | Fashion retailers use:  
- Customer service  
- Promotion  
- Communication  
- Atmosphere |
| Differences | While some fashion retailers use these marketing mix others are not keen about them:  
- Price  
- Product  
- Place |

**Technological input**

| Similarities | - Fashion retailers do not know so much about in-store technologies  
- In-store technology used by physical stores commonly is point of sale (POS) |
| Differences | - Physical shops might consider (install) in-store technologies in the future but not now  
|            | - Using in-store technologies will give new shopping experience  
|            | - Using in-store technologies will not give new shopping experience  |

**Process**

**Attitude** towards in-store technology acceptance

**Similarities**  
- Younger generation accept technology more than older generation

**Perception** in terms of target market

**Similarities**  
- Age have impact on customers’ perception of in-store technology  
- Younger generation have positive perception for in-store technology while older generation do not

**Knowledge** in terms of uniqueness

**Differences**  
- Price  
- Quality, design and variety of products  
- Good service  
- Relationship with customers  
- Having no online shop

**Information search**

**Differences**  
- Customers use in-store technology to search for information they need  
- Customers do not need in-store technology for information searching

**Purchase Decision**

**Differences**  
- In-store technology have effect on purchase decision of customers  
- Customers’ purchase decision cannot be affected by in-store technology

**Outputs**

**Buyers response**

**Similarities**  
- In-store technology alone cannot create constant brand image
Differences
- In-store technology can change customers’ experiences and behavior
- In-store technology cannot change customers’ experiences and behavior

Source: Own construction

To simplify our analysis in Chapter 5, we have placed coded keywords of the empirical findings into our theoretical framework as shown below in Figure 5. Based on this framework, we focus on the marketing strategy and technological inputs, then on the process of buyer characteristics and decision process and finally on the output to analyze the empirical findings from Chapter 4.

**Figure 5:** Empirical findings of factors, customers and their responses

**Key:** ○ Input  □ Process  ○ Output  ➔ Unidirectional effect

Source: Own construction
Based on the above Figure 5, we come up to Table 8 below to show empirical findings key words in relation to the authors presented in literature review.

**Table 8: Links between theory and empirical findings**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phenomena in the theory part</th>
<th>Empirical part keywords</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Product (Blázquez, 2014)</td>
<td>Quality, design and variety</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Price (Aviv, et al., 2018)</td>
<td>Lowest prices and club members discount</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Place (Johnson, et al., 2015)</td>
<td>Central location</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promotion (Bäckström &amp; Johansson, 2017)</td>
<td>Big smile, Christmas and Black friday sales and customers events</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Atmosphere (Park, et al., 2015)</td>
<td>Painting the store, rearranging the store in new look</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Customer service (Bloemer &amp; Odekerken-Schroder, 2002)</td>
<td>Keeping customers happy and helping customers feel products</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication (Park, et al., 2015)</td>
<td>Social media (Instagram, Facebook) and posters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge (Burke, 2002)</td>
<td>Knowing their sizes, personal contacts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perception (McCabe &amp; Nowlis, 2003)</td>
<td>Young and older generation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attitudes (Dabholkar &amp; Bagozzi, 2002)</td>
<td>Digital technology acceptance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information Search (De Kerviler, Demoulin &amp; Zid, 2016)</td>
<td>Simplified searching and third persons opinion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purchase decision (Verhoef, et al., 2015)</td>
<td>Comfortable shopping</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buyer Response (Robert &amp; John, 1982)</td>
<td>Constant and image, customers experience and behavior change</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Own construction
5 Analysis

This chapter presents and analyses the findings from the empirical investigation. It is presented in a way of comparison of theoretical outcomes with empirical results. These empirical findings are analyzed in the light of summary Figure 5 developed under Chapter 4.

5.1 In-store technology and marketing mix as an input

5.1.1 Marketing mix inputs

According to Spence, Puccinelli, Grewal & Roggeveen (2014) consumers’ in-store experiences largely are created by the same aspects today as ten years ago. These are store design, service level, the salespeople, promotion, reputation, price perception and the products, which are important factors to determine the overall personality of a store (Bäckström & Johansson, 2017).

Physical stores that are not using in-store technology are rather using traditional ways such as promotions, pricing and place to bring more customers to their physical stores. This is being done by having discount sales like Big-smile, loyalty clubs, having a great service and communication through social media like Instagram and Facebook. Some respondents also suggested that location of the store also matters on the number of customers they attract into the store, as more busy places see more people coming to the store than less busy ones. Atmosphere is also important to attract customers when a physical store is rearranged in a new look.

5.1.2 Technological input

Fashion retailers can stimulate the in-store customer experience by installing new and interactive technology in the physical store, such as digital signage and smart mirrors (Bonetti & Perry, 2017). Digital signage can be strategically installed and used to evoke customer sensory aesthetic experiences that then create brand appeal and brand differentiation which will enhance consumers’ intentions of revisiting the store (Dennis et al., 2014).

Some physical stores have an idea or have seen in-store technology like smart mirrors and virtual catalogues while many physical stores do not know much about in-store technology. This lack of information on digital technology could be the reason why physical stores are not willing to use
or install such technology to give their customers new experiences. Having older generation customers who are not interested in technology is a characteristic for few physical stores. So to keep these old generation customers who have the capacity and willing to purchase more, physical stores do not want to install in-store technology.

Other reason for not using in-store technology is because of its perceived cost that might be more than the income they generate. Furthermore, online shopping is forcing physical stores in the market to be close and installing digital technology is an additional problem that will cause increased expense. However, other physical stores, especially those characterized with a younger generation of customers, believe this technology can give their customers a new shopping experience other than the traditional ways like promotions. This has lead them to use in-store and digital technology like video screens, smartphones and free Wi-Fi.

5.2 Process inside customers

5.2.1 Buyers characteristics

Attitudes
As earlier defined by Bohner & Dickel (2011) attitudes are relatively time-consistent individual evaluations of an object of thought. A higher need for interaction with a service employee strengthened the relationships between ease of use and attitude, and between fun and attitude (Dabholkar & Bagozzi, 2002).

Some physical stores agree that customers will accept in-store technology while other stores do not. According to those who accept this technology, older women are better in technology acceptance than older men; most of the time men allow their wives to choose what they will shop while women seems to be independent decision makers. In addition, customers will change their attitudes towards digital technology because it is easy to use, simplify their shopping and could be thought as fun. However, this in-store technology will not be accepted by those old generation who do not want to spent time on technology.
Perception

Consumer perceptions are multimodal with each sense providing optimal information in specific categories. Products with primarily material properties, such as clothing are likely to be preferred in shopping environments that allow physical inspection unlike environments that do not. (McCabe & Nowlis, 2003).

Physical stores have market targets based on different age ranges. The majority, being the older generation, have better capacity to buy, sense of feeling and easily inspecting products and way of understanding than the younger generation. Regarding perceiving in-store technology, younger generation is fast to use and easily attached to technology much better than older generation. So, the way these two generations perceive in-store technology would be totally different.

Knowledge

According to Burke (2002) customers shopping in physical retail stores felt that it is essential for the store to provide knowledgeable, helpful sale assistants as they wanted to speak to a live customer service representative.

Physical stores emphasize the need of providing good customer service to their customers. This can be achieved by having knowledgeable and skilled assistants to help customers in their shopping. When assistants are passionate for their work, willingness to create relationship with the customers would be easy. In addition to this, physical stores provide customers with information about the store and the products through their communication tools like Facebook, Instagram and simple posters.

5.2.2 Decision process

Information search

Customers have become quite experienced with using their smartphone to perform internet searches and gather information (De Kerviler, et al., 2016).

Most physical stores think in-store technology are not helpful for customers information searching, people are still doing it by asking the shop assistants. However, this in-store technology can
simplify the customers search for information by making it easily to access information in a short period of time. Instead of asking the shop assistants, this can be done from in-store screens and IPad or by sending alert messages on special offers for customers who are within the radius of the store. However, for older generations who are not much experienced in using technology compared to younger generation, information search through in-store technology is not easy.

**Purchase decision**

Technological channels are interchangeably and seamlessly used during the search and purchase process and it is difficult or virtually impossible for firms to control this usage (Verhoef, et al., 2015).

In-store technology will affect customers’ purchase decisions either positively or negatively. Positive effect is when customers decide to purchase after they are inspired by in-store technology and feel comfortable. On the other hand customers’ purchase decision is not affected by these in-store technology when they are too old for using technology and do not care for them. In addition, customers’ purchase decision is affected when store employees affect them more than in-store technology does.

**5.3 Customers’ experiences and behavior as an output**

The behavior of customers has changed due to advances in information technology and the introduction of new methods of communication; these changes have produced a shift of focus in companies’ marketing strategies (Cantallops & Salvi, 2014).

Customers can respond by exhibiting an approach or avoidance behavior. By using in-store technology, they find new experience and change the behavior. The younger generation will approach this in-store technology to be able to save time while the older generation may avoid it because of its difficulty to use it. By using this in-store technology, a brand image is created in the minds of the customers and even in those who do not accept it. However, there are strategies other than technology fashion retailers use to change the behavior of the customers in the store for example, customer service, promotion, location, and special price offers.
Table 8 below summarizes the similarities and differences found among the literature review, empirical findings and analysis part. It has discussed Input (Marketing strategies, Environmental), Process (attitude, perception, knowledge, information search and purchase decision) and output (buyer’s response).

Table 9: Similarities and differences among literature review, empirical findings and analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Input - Marketing strategies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Theory</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Empirical findings</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Analysis</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Input - Environmental (Technological)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Theory</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Empirical findings</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Analysis</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Process - Attitude</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Theory</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Empirical findings</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Analysis
The young generation have an attitude to embrace in-store technology unlike the older generation. However, these technologies are weakening relations between the customer and the sales agents in the physical stores.

### Process - Perception

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theory</th>
<th>Consumer perceptions are multimodal with each sense providing optimal information in specific categories (McCabe &amp; Nowlis, 2003).</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Empirical findings</td>
<td>Physical stores’ target market is divided into 4 major groups based on customers’ age range.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analysis</td>
<td>The age difference in between customers lead them to have different perception on in-store technologies.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Process – Knowledge

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theory</th>
<th>Customers shopping in physical retail stores felt that it is essential for the store to provide knowledgeable and helpful sale assistants, as they wanted to speak (Burke, 2002).</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Empirical findings</td>
<td>Physical stores are unique by their customer service, employees’ skill and ability to create relationship with customers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analysis</td>
<td>Physical stores having knowledgeable staff and employees strong relationship with customers will help a lot in assisting customers with the information they need and the use of some in-store technologies.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Process - Information search

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theory</th>
<th>Customers have become quite experienced with using their smartphone to perform internet searches and gather information (De Kerviler, et al., 2016).</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Empirical findings</td>
<td>Younger generation can use in-store technologies to search what they want but not easy for older generation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analysis</td>
<td>Many physical stores who have older generation customers do not perceive in-store technologies help customers in their information search. However, others perceive these technologies can simplify information search and younger generation customers can easily access information in a short period of time.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Process - Purchase decision

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theory</th>
<th>Technological channels are interchangeably and seamlessly used during the search and purchase process (Verhoef, et al., 2015).</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Empirical findings</td>
<td>In-store technology help customers buy comfortably but store employees can influence customers more than such technologies does.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analysis</td>
<td>In-store technology will affect customers’ purchase decision when they decide to purchase, or it has no influence on them if they do not use it.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Output – Buyer’s response

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theory</th>
<th>The behavior of customers has changed due to advances in information technology (Cantallops &amp; Salvi, 2014).</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Empirical findings</td>
<td>Younger generation, not older generation behavior changed because they accepted technology quickly, but not older generation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analysis</td>
<td>Response can be approach behavior or avoidance behavior. The young generation may exhibit approach behavior technology while the old generation may avoid it. Retailers may use strategies other than technology to change the behavior of customers. For example, special pricing, good customer service, location etc.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Own construction

Based on the above Table 9, by selecting key words, we have summarized the analysis as shown below in Figure 6.
Figure 6: Factors affecting customers’ responses

Input

Marketing Mix Inputs:
- Product
- Price
- Atmosphere
- Customer service
- Communication
- Age
- Promotion

Process

Buyer Characteristics:
- Knowledge
- Perception
- Attitudes

Decision Process:
- Information search
- Purchase decision

Output

Buyer’s Response:
- Product choice
- Purchase amount
- Purchase timing

Key: ○ Input
□ Process
○ Output
→ Unidirectional effect

Source: Own construction
6 Conclusion

In this chapter the conclusion, reflections for future studies and limitations of this study are presented. The conclusion is based on the research questions and the empirical part that have answers from 13 sample physical store managers linked with the analysis part. In addition, the reflection suggests theoretical, managerial and societal aspects of the study. Finally, the limitations of the study have been outlined.

6.1 Fulfillment of aim and research questions

In this study, we have discussed the gap we found as problem, customers need of a new experience for in-store shopping, the introduction of in-store technology and changing customers buying behavior in Chapter 1. In that chapter, we also discuss the research questions and aim of the study. We have supported this problem identification and concepts discussed in theoretical literature part of our Chapter 2 using our theoretical framework. The method chapter explains about the whole research design and our data collection tools while findings from our sample physical stores are presented under Chapter 4. These findings are analyzed according to our coding in Chapter 5 and concluded here in this chapter by providing implications.

Use of in-store technology

Our study indicates physical stores only use commonly known point of sale machines as digital technology and most of them do not know about current in-store technology. However, installing this technology will stimulate more customers in the physical stores if they accept to use it. Installing such technology is good for those who have a younger generation customer while for those with older generations it would not be applicable. Currently all physical stores are using customer service, promotion and communication as marketing strategy inputs because they think installing this technology will take away their employees’ jobs.

Physical stores, in-store technology and customers’ shopping experience

For physical stores, as our study shows, specifying their target market will enable them to identify among their customers who accept in-store technology or not. Customers’ attitude towards in-store technology acceptance will be affected positively or negatively depending on their sex and age
range differences. Because the younger generation perception for technology is different from that of the older generation, the younger generation has better knowledge and interest to use technology. This in turn affects customers’ overall in-store shopping experience by affecting customers’ information search and purchase decision inside the store. It is said customers’ information search is affected positively if in-store technology enable them to find what they want. In addition, such technology will affect customers’ purchase decision when they are able to identify what they need, to choose among alternatives and finally purchase.

*Technology and marketing strategy inputs effect on customers’ behavior*

Using in-store technology will change customers experience and behavior. While improving customer service, knowledge of employees, good location and interesting atmosphere are necessary, brand image can be created using in-store technology. Because in-store technology will allow customers to choose products and services, to make good decisions and use their time properly by affecting customers’ behavior.

### 6.2 Implications

#### 6.2.1 Theoretical implications

This study expands the current state of theories on in-store digital technology and on managerial perspective by analyzing digital technology and their effect on customers’ experience and behavior. We recommend a revision in the sequence of Figure 1, Model of factors affecting buyer’s experiences and behavior by Kotler (1988) especially those that have been considered in this study (attitude, perception and knowledge) to knowledge, perception and attitude respectively. Customers must have the knowledge first; they are made aware of the in-store technology. They need to understand what it is, how it works and how it will help them. With such knowledge, the customers can now form a perception on this technology. Finally, with a perception customer can have an attitude towards or against this technology.

#### 6.2.2 Managerial implications

It will provide managers with the necessary tools to encourage customers to continue shopping from their physical store. Our recommendation to the fashion retailers is that, according to Grewal
et al., (2017) retailing is gradually developing at an accelerated rate due to technology advancements and evolving consumer behaviors. Eventually most of the fashion retailers will be using sophisticated in-store technology. As a result, fashion retailers need to go along with this development otherwise they risk being pushed out of business.

6.2.3 Societal implications

Finally, on the societal perspective, changing the experience and behavior of customers will help in motivating them to utilize this in-store technology.

6.3 Critical reflection on our study and suggestions for future studies

One of the limitations of this study is that it has not considered the customers’ perspective on technology and their experiences in fashion physical stores, but has rather only focused on the retailers’ perspective. In addition, this study has taken a broad respect of in-store technology without focusing on one specific kind. While conducting the study, we had also faced several limitations amongst of which were, finding respondents who were willing to give the information; some had referred us to their main offices and others gave limited time to do our data collection.

To the future researchers, considering the advances in these in-store technologies, there will be needing to study on how smart fitting rooms, virtual catalogs, smart tags and many more in-store technology influence on customer experience and consumer responses. This will allow an in-depth study of how emerging in-store technologies will influence the customers’ experience and behavior. To do this, it is best if researchers consider selecting sample only from those fashion stores that are using this in-store technology. Additionally, in this study only fashion retailers were considered. However, a study from customers’ perspective may be interesting to understand how this in-store technology affects the customers.
Appendices

Appendix 1 - Interview questions and respondents’ answers

1. Can you tell us about yourself and your company?
2. What do you think about online shopping technology competing with your physical store? How is it affecting your business?

R1 - Online does not affect us that much we are still selling a lot.
R2 - Online shopping goes well and can go together with in-store shopping, it is not a treat. The people shopping are different.
R3 - We are a bit lucky because our customers are over age; around forties, thirties and fifties and they do not buy suits on internet, so they need to come to the store. Elderly people of course they may buy t-shirts online but trousers, suits, special underwear and pajamas are things that you need more physical touch.
We have lost customers and but then again Uppsala is a town with students so we always get new customers. We have this old fashioned style and I think we are lucky because young people with a fashion interest they like old clothes really funny things that you cannot find on internet.
R4 - I think we should get the social Medias inside the stores, but as earlier said the store is old fashioned. Maybe this can also increase the sales. It seems the owners do not understand the weight of it (technology).
R5 - It has led to fewer customers and sales are going down but still there are more customers in physical stores than online.
R6 - It is fewer customers than before because the internet shops are taking off.
R7 - Online shopping is bigger.
R8 - Online shopping is a threat we have lost about 10% of our customers. We are very centralized and every store does the same.
R9 - Online shopping is affecting us very much. Especially the last year, our web shop was the only one that increased in big percent like a lot. So it is a big threat and also from online you can pay for your staffs and get them here, so we do not have money for the store, for the company of course but not for us; they just come in and pick. So it is a big challenge now.
R10 - Online shopping is very good, we have just began with that so I cannot tell if it is going to be really good or something bad. But now we can take the things to the store so the customers can buy and an order comes directly to the store.

R11 - Online buying is more and more taking over the physical stores we see that in R11 too. It's much more customers buying at R11.com but myself I don't buy online because I have to touch and see it maybe it is because of my age am not from that generation. The new generation, they are buying on their Ipad and iPhone.

R12 - Online shopping is good because you can sit at home and buy things on the internet without going out but you get the whole experience when you come to the store. You can get another service at the store you can be helped find the right size etc. you don’t get that service as people get at the store.

R13 - R13 was first in Sweden to do online shopping and it's a compliment to the store. Customers can order online and pick up from the store.

3. Is it a threat to your physical store business? How are you handling it?
R1 - To some extent it is a problem but not to us especially the last 2 years since we started an online shop.

R2 - It is not a treat for us, I think you can have both. For R2, both online and in-store shopping are going well while a lot of people are shopping online. It feels like we are working on this service as different thing.

R3 - Online buying is a threat. But it is not that big like for some young generation fashion store. Because there my daughter might buy clothes on internet, because it is easy.

Our sale is affected by online buying but I tried to have I have windows with real cloth and I tried to have them as inspiring as I can. I often get goodwill because of the windows, it looks good although there is an old store, and we have been in this house for about fifty years. So we try to keep it so that you get an experience, you will buy only by standing there and looking in the windows, you can find it now you want to come in and buy.

R4 - Yes, online shopping is a threat to the business, the latest two years there has been a big difference, the sales have reduced. This can be seen during times like Christmas, Black Friday.

R5 - Yes it is a threat because they are selling for low prices all the time and they are not making any money. So they are trying to buy the market.
R6 - We are handling this with good customer service and helping them feel on the clothes and
telling them about it and keeping the store clean.
R7 - I do not know. I cannot answer this question; there are others who know this well than me.
R8 - Online shopping is a threat we have lost about 10% of our customers. We have people who
are responsible for technology. We are very centralized and every store does the same.
R9 - To handle it we just take care of the people that come in to us. We have a loyalty program so
you can become our friend and member. We cannot do that much, we just have to really take care
of the people that come here.
R10 - I do not think online shopping as a threat because I do not think, you cannot get there as a
service the same way here. If you see here one customer, she bought now two jackets because I
helped her; you cannot get help on internet so it is not the same.
R11 - Online buying is not really a problem to R11 but we can see even from times like Christmas
it was not much more than it used to be because customers are buying online. But R11 has started
something new where customers can buy online and pick what they buy from the store so
customers still come to the stores. This is so new like only 3 stores have this in Sweden. The
numbers are not really going down in this store we are doing fine in this store but you can see that
more customers are buying on the internet. So i don't know if we didn't have R11.com maybe we
could have been selling much more here.
R12 - Maybe can be a problem, but if we get the good service then people know they can get a
good service. And maybe they shop in the store instead of the internet.
R13 - The online store is doing really fine and it seems this has not affected the numbers of
customers coming to the store.

4. Do you know any in-store technology used in today's fashion retailing? Which ones are you
familiar with?
R1 - We have the buy online and pick from the store. Otherwise we do not have any in-store
technology; I have no idea about this technology.
R2 - I don’t know before, that sounds crazy. Does this technology really exist? The future seems
near here.
R3 - We do not have such in-store technology but I have seen some sort of computers installed in
Germany, when we went to meet the Germany factories in Deggendorf, twice a year. Last time
there was a big shopping mall in new mall they had computers in the entrance, but not here in Sweden yet.

R4 - We do not have any in-store technology most of the things are manually done and am not familiar with any. R4 is kind of old fashioned and just now we are coming up with a newsletter our customers can sign up to and get discounts.

R5 - No I do not know such technology. We work with music. We are using music; it's the progress all the time with environment in the store we work on that all the time. And how you display things, what music you play and how you treat the customer.

R6 - Yes, I have heard some stores in London have these mirrors where you can swipe on the clothes like you are wearing them so that's one thing a lot of stores will have develop.

R7 - No I am not familiar with in-store technology and we do not have it here.

R8 - I am not familiar with other in-store technology apart from the big screens inside the store.

We use Instagram and an app

R9 - Can you give us an example for in-store technology? I never heard about it. That sounds like really good but for us I think that will be a money issue.

R10 - I think I know in-store technology, but we have a thing that we need to follow. I have seen smart mirrors and digital fitting rooms other countries but we do not have it. We have our phones, we use it if we have the thing, we have a system that we can go and help the person like “Oh, we have it in city or the other store”.

R11 - A little bit not so much, we don't have it here.

R12 - No, I have never heard of such technology.

R13 - No we are not familiar with in-store technology being used in fashion retailing.

5. Have you ever considered using this technology in your stores to give a new shopping experience to your customers?

R1 - We have not considered such kinds of technology but it would be interesting to install such technology. I have not thought about such because I am not the one responsible to install such. It would be nice and interesting to have such technology.

R2 - Technology is moving forward so of course if other stores have such things we need to go for it. But I think we are kind of special as said before, we are working really hard for it.
R3 - We have no plan or thinking of installing in-store technology. I think if people want to come in here, they want to try a sweater or a shirt or a suit or a trouser.

R4 - I do not think we have any plans of installing such technology. R4 officially has an Instagram account and Facebook page were they post a lot of outfits and new incoming items, summer sales and such things. So they try to get the customers to go to the stores via social media but that's the only strategy they have.

R5 - Nothing yet its far away for that because no one has shown us that technology and we don’t know the cost of it, so it’s nothing we are thinking of right now.

R6 - No we are not using that here that’s the future.

R7 - No, smart in-store technology will not change customers’ experience.

R8 - I do not know in the future maybe.

R9 - We do not have anything digital. It is only live papers, those big ones and small ones so that is the only thing and we use our Instagram. So social media is just getting bigger and nothing more than that. I know a few stores have like bigger screens, that commercial stuff. We have the commercial and also in buses but nothing more in our store right now. We want to use these in-store technology but also money issue. Our company is tightening up everything right now. So we do not have especially because you know all the stores are getting worth and worth right now so we cannot do anything. It is like we cannot order costly stuff, we have to use other things, so it is in that way right now.

R10 - We have no intention of having it here, I do not know why.

R11 - I think if you are a customer and you go to the store there is need to talk to someone maybe it is because of my age.

R12 - I am not sure there are considerations of changing technology.

R13 - We are thinking for the future.

6. If so, what changes will this technology bring to the store with regards to customers behavior?

R1 - It will give the store new look and customers will have new experience. In addition to these experiences, customer experience is increased by the shop assistant being the stylist, promotions and having the right music. It will allow customers to be satisfied and choose us among others.

R2 - But this technology will stop customers’ communication with us if people start to find out which one is nice for them; like the Black one or White one.
R3 -
R4 -
R5 - Am not sure if such technology can change the customers experience, the brands we work with have high technology, and we can buy the clothes using a computer. Maybe if it is cheaper we can consider it.
R6 - Yeah there will be change in customer experience, but that's very useful, but it’s in future all the stores will have it but that’s like 50 years or maybe sooner like 10 years. The technology will change the customers’ behavior but maybe not in a good way because then we don't get to help the customer that much.
R7 -
R8 - I do not think it will change our customers experience and behavior in this store.
R9 - I think younger people experience and behavior will be changed because they are quick to accept technology, but elderly might not feel comfortable.
R10 - If we install this technology, it is hard to know how it affects customers’ behavior. Because we have different groups of people.
R11 -
R12 - Maybe good I hope because …. I am not sure but I think in here maybe it will be in the future not now.
R13 - It will perhaps have an effect on the customers experience because customers are now in a hurry so it may assist customers save time.

7. Do you think customers will accept this technology?
R1 - Yes. Customers can accept that.
R2 - Yes. If other stores have it, I think, customers want to see it here also.
R3 - No. We are men shops so they want to show their wives who is sitting outside the dressing room. Because she is the one to chief, to make decisions. But maybe it is different with ladies, they are more open minded and they decide by themselves on what they want to buy, the men does not.
R4 - Yes.
R5 - Yes. Things are changing to technology; I think people will love this technology.
R6 - No.
R7 - No. Doubts how many will use it.
R8 - No. Our customers are between 45-60 years.
R9 - Yes. The younger generation would like it, I think, but not the older generation.
R10 - Yes. I think it is a good technology for customers to do that small thing.
R11 - No. I am not sure if technology will bring in more customers.
R12 - Yes.
R13 - Yes. It will save their time.

8. What other ways do you use to give a new experience to your customers?
R1 - Having employees who can help people and having the right sizes for the customers.
R2 - We work really close with the service thing, so we always bring in other colors. This is how we work here, therefore I am here. I feel like that.
R3 - We have some customer evening after closing time. They can be here by themselves and they can have some drinks and eat and I will have one or two or three of my suppliers here. I had this for about a month ago and that was a group of retired people there around three hundred but there were only fifty coming here. They like to hear the man talking about those shirts, or the Germans talk about the trousers. We have just redecorated the store now: we made the roof new and the lights, we changed the carpets over there and the cashiers I have two now I used to have one before, well I am quite satisfied.
R4 - Well in this store we try to communicate a lot through this center so that customers in e.g. Uppsala can get information about campaigns, offers and sales through the Centre.
R5 - We focus on now is better service than what we have now, the personal meeting.
R6 - We are using screen display to those that are passing.
R7 - We are using good service such as our club and discount offers.
R8 - We work with customer service, customers are members of a club
R9 - We have a good location so we need to think about what people see when they walk outside, that is very important for us. So recently we just get our store a new built, so it is mostly white right now. We had a monitors before in the big window but right now it is just a white wall so people want to come in you know. We try to solve the issue apart instead to attract them in.
R10 - To change customer experience we have something called ‘Big Smile’, it is a philosophy to make the customers happier when they go from here and when they did come from the start. So it is about relationship and giving customers what they need.
We have two times in one year. We have something as called “Big Smile day” that offer thirty percent off on everything. And it comes very increasing and that is a ‘Big Smile’ thing that we are texting out. Now we are having that day, then as for the customers who are our friends is coming here then.

R11 - We work hard to give customers a good service and give them a good feeling. Our customers are the first priority, once you give them a service they will tell it to others and will come back to the store. Service to the customers is number one, place clothes in the right places. Reading what the customers need.

R12 - We are working a lot with service, we have to give the best service ever and we think people like that.

R13 - Inside the store we use music and display and we are fast at adapting with technology. But customer service is our number one strength.

9. Do you think using this technology in the store will simplify customers’ searching for what they want?

R1 - Of course yes, it would be much easier for the customers.

R2 - No, I do not think so if I am not here who else will bring them what they want?

R3 - I think they need a personal help of, they want me to go round and get the color they want to try and they want to show their wives who is sitting outside the dressing room. Because she is the one to chief, to make decisions.

R4 - Younger group use more technology so it will simplify their cloth searching and maybe will enable them to know what goes well on them.

R5 - Of course it is good when the customer stays longer, but our customers are not stupid they know what they want. Our customers are usually businessmen and they do not have time.

R6 - If they make their own choice, things can be very different because the customers don't get to talk to the shop assistants that much they just have to choose by themselves go the cashier and pay.

R7 - Customers will choose to go round and see what they want instead of using this technology.

R8 - It is not easy to use such technology for our customers, they might prefer asking us.
R9 - I think it will take a lot for this to happen but we never know. You know maybe soon people can just come in and pay by themselves scan all the things you know like in grocery stores so we never know, it is hard to tell.

R10 - Here it is about relationship and giving customers what they need. If they start using this technology there will be no relationship, so it would be hard for them to get what they want.

R11 - I would want to get a third opinion unlike standing in front of a mirror and trying to decide on your own.

R12 - I think it will simplify searching for both of our customers and us.

R13 - If there are screens that show people what products we have in the store, it will save their day.

10. Do you think the use of in-store technology will affect customers purchase decision?

R1 - Most of the people want to get out unlike buying it every time and most people are comfortable with buying things from the store because they can easily return it. Unlike order something; receive it and then sending it back.

R2 - Technology is pushing in making things easier you know like going out and buying your own food in a store and paying for it yourself is kind of nice.

R3 - My customers purchase decision would not be affected by such technology. As I told you before if they do not want to use it, how could their shopping is affected?

R4 - I think we are especially this year we have seen changes in the marketing strategies they are more out there on social media and internet as a marketing place to show themselves, but maybe they are not using it as much.

R5 - Yes it will affect the customers purchase decision process.

R6 - No, I think this maybe technology is for the future and our customers currently may not be ready for such.

R7 - No I don't think such technology can affect our customers.

R8 - No, our customers are old and are not concerned with technology.

R9 - Yes, I think nowadays people are always using technology and if we install technology it will affect the behavior of our customers.

R10 - Yes, they will change especially when others also start installing them.

R11 - No, we believe our staff can affect the customers more than the technology
R12 - Yes, I think they will.
R13 - Yes, our customers are very responsive to technology and the love the fact that we are quick in terms of technological change.

11. Are there any other factors that you think will affect customers stay in your store?
R1 - We believe if the employees are kept happy then they will keep the customers happy.
R2 - I hope they will come here just for the atmosphere and to feel the products. The hard part of online shopping is that you cannot try it so when you buy it, they will provide you free shipping. But you know you will not return it back, you continue buying things you never return so you end up with things that do not fit you. You might see pictures of a girl wearing some weird dress that sounds good but you might look just like weird.
The other thing is there are a lot of people moving around this mall so every people in the city lives here, works here, and goes by here every day. That brings our customers here when they go to the city. We were upstairs before and when we move down here, there is a big difference from upstairs to downstairs. Because upstairs a lot of people did not even know we exist or open shop here even though we are operating here for almost ten years. So by moving down here we get a lot of new customers.

We have good customer service which is really very important to us. We talk about it like every day in every moment with all the people standing here as seller and with the store and Swedish managers also. I think that is the main thing. Also we do special things for customers like allowing artists and musicians to use the store for clips. So R2 are more friendly to people.
R3 - We have changed a few things to our store. Our display of clothes has changed as you can see we have cleared the front with big windows and arranged the clothes in a way that would appeal to our customers.
R4 - The fact that we do not have an online store it is somehow strength because our customers cannot find our clothes elsewhere so they come to the store. R4 has always worked towards having the lowest prices on the market. R4 tries to keep the prices as low as possible as the competitors.
R5 - We work with personal contacts, we have higher service if you come in today we fix the right shirt or jacket if you get it online you don’t know. It comes in a few days and then you have to send it back so that is the difference with our work.
We have different events where we meet people and since Uppsala is a small town of a customer is satisfied they will tell the next person like a friend and it will go on and on. The satisfied customer is the best, we have customer clubs and we send those letters and emails and there are special bonuses for those. We are dealing with about 40 brands.

R6 - Our staffs are well trained and have knowledge about what we do, we are always happy to assist our customers.

R7 - We have a wide range of products (clothes), we have the best service.

R8 - We provide our customers with the best service, we know what they want and we ready to help them.

R9 - There are people that still want to feel the stuff, try them on, you know, so we need to be like the fiendish fashion store ever. That is what we try to do; we cannot do more than that and for the people that are here, we try to get them buy more.

R10 – This store is a family store or a family business and they are so passion and they spread this passion to us. We want their paying our salary so as customers are spending our salaries we want to be good to the customers. Because the otherwise thing to internet is if it comes to take everything, we do not have jobs so we need to be good I think.

R11 - R11 is working had to give customers a good service by making the customer welcome and knowing their thing. I personally do not like to go to the store and not be noticed but customers don't like too much attention because they may just be there to look around.

R12 - We are working a lot with service. We have to give the best service ever.

R13 - We provide our customers with many types of clothes to choose from offering them a chance to try out different clothes and choose from.

**12. Do you think using this in-store technology will bring more customers to the store?**

R1 - It would be interesting to have such technology.

R2 - I think yes.

R3 - I do not think the elderly which is about 80% of my customers will use this technology that is because it is new. I think they need a personal help of, they want me to go round and get the color they want to try.

R4 - I think the installation of such technology will increase number of customers because it is a younger group of people who shop here.
R5 -
R6 - Maybe in the beginning customers will stay longer in the store because it is fun.
R7 - Customers do not have time to work on those technology to stimulate a new experience.
R8 - Customers are not so much keen to using technology.
R9 - You know older people they do not like change, they want to have the same. But we want to keep the older people as well because they shop more, you know younger people just have a few hundreds to spend or just unable, issues something like that. So I will say fifty fifty on their response there, I am not sure but of course better I think.
R10 - I think it will cost very much to do it.
R11 - Maybe not more customers.
R12 - If people here have choices like online shopping, they will come to the physical store to get the whole experience.
R13 -

**13. Do you think using technology will create a constant image of the brand in your customers mind?**

R1 - Yes, I guess it will.
R2 - Maybe yes. Nowadays people are moving with technology and maybe if that technology comes and is installed people will remember us for that.
R3 - No. I often get goodwill’ because of the windows, it looks good although there is an old store, and we have been in this house for about fifty years. So we try to keep it so that you get an experience, you will buy only by standing there and looking in the windows, you can find it now you want to come in and buy.
R4 - No, R4 is an old fashioned store and our customers may not really make use of this technology.
R5 - Of course it is good when the customer stays longer, but our customers are not stupid they know what they. Our customers are usually businessmen and they do not have time.
R6 - Yes definitely, I saw that technology in London a few years ago and I still remember how it was. So I think if we install them our customers will always have us in mind.
R7 - We use social media, posters in buses and train stations to keep our image in people's minds.
R8 - No, our customers are the older generation and things like technology do not so much appeal to them.
R9 - Yes, especially for the young am not sure about our older customers.
R10 - No, firstly we have no intentions of installing it here we use location and other social medias like Facebook and Instagram to get to our customers.
R11 - No, here we believe in interacting with our customers and that is why we give them attention immediately when they enter the store.
R12 - Yes, I think such technology will keep a constant image in our customers’ minds
R13 - Yes, not only will it save time, it will but it will help customers enjoy their time, like that they will keep a constant image.

14. What makes you unique, why would people come here?
R1 - We believe if the employees are kept happy then they will keep the customers happy.
R2 - Relationship. When people come I know who they are, they are here every day looking our faces. When they come in I know the size of their jeans and what they like so I will show them that. This relationship is very special.
R3 - People come here because they like the service, they like to see we have the same staff almost 30 years. They like the service, they like that I have all the sizes. If they come a long way, they can sit down and have some coffee. Not many stores sell big sizes, I sell big sizes but for me it is normal. In most of the stores maybe just sell up to extra-large and I sell up to five or six extra-large. So that customer, he is really, when he comes to the store, but he does not have to be elder, he can be young he buy a lot then it is good.
R4 - The marketing department is working harder in getting people to the stores. They are trying to make the R4 brand like you need to go to the stores. People cannot find us online so we are trying to be unique in that way.
R5 - Our strength is that we have been here for so long and we know what we do because we have been working with suits for about 90 years, we know what we do and we have the skills. The people that work here have been here for 10, 20, and 30 years so the quality of service never lives the door.
R6 - We have a good customer service they are very talkative not just about the customers but we like to get our customers, so maybe that's a factor and customers would like to come back and talk to the same person. We have good knowledge of clothes and styles. We employ anyone and get taught here on how to look after customers.
R7 - The pricing is what makes R7 unique and we have all you need in fashion and we also have cosmetics.
R8 - We have better designs of clothes.
R9 - To keep our brand image in the minds of customers or to be unique, we have good prices and materials. And now we work very much with the environment, so we have a lot of things that are with bettering a “Coughtol initiative” so we work a lot with the use of less water for jeans and such staff. And a lot of things is one hundred percent ecological capture, so that is very good. And we also take money for the bags, you can also buy a bag or polyester but it is recyclable.
R10 – We are special because of our philosophy that we are working. To keep existed customers and newcomers, I think we have a good service, people who comes here will talk about that like “Oh I bought this at that store, they have this and that things”. I think it is very good to have good relationships. They talk like “she was very good and helpful when I shop a jacket last time, I am going to shop a jeans there again”, and as this new customers come in.
R11 - We have more variation of the clothes, different things for different customers. We are always working at displaying clothes on walls according to their categories, the sporty kind, the elderly, the cute kind etc.
R12 - I think we are medium priced and we have good quality and we stock famous brands.
R13 - R13 has everything a customer may need.

15. Is there any kind of digital technology you are using in this store?
R1 - We do not have any digital thing here.
R2 - There is no technology other than the ordinary paying machine. Everything is original here, a fitting room mirror that shows your original size and color.
But apart from this we have Facebook and Instagram accounts.
R3 - No, I do not need any digital technology here.
R4 - R4 has an old system in doing things the only technology used is security and points of payment.
R5 - The only thing here is the paying machine.
R6 - We have giant screens with motion pictures showing the clothes we have and fashion shows from different brands.
R7 - We have free Wi-Fi services for our customers and our paying machines are a lot within each store. In addition we have huge photo screens.
R8 - There are big screens inside the store.
R9 - We do not have anything digital.
R10 - No, we only use our ‘Big Smile’ philosophy.
R11 - There is no technology in this store.
R12 - We should have IPad, so we can order in-store to the customers, that's good then you can help.
R13 - There will be IPad for shop assistants to help customers make online orders and make payments without going to the counter.

16. What is your target market?
R1 - We have things for every age range of men.
R2 - People from 18 to 40 are our main focuses
R3 - About 80% of my customers are elders.
R4 - A younger group of people.
R5 - We start with students from 20s but our main target group is the 30s and above.
R6 - We have everything for 14 years old teenagers to men up to 60 to 70 years and women of all ages.
R7 - Everyone including kids, youngers, elders, men and women.
R8 - Our customers are between 45-60 years.
R9 - Before target market was more for younger people but now my mother and grandmother shop here. So we have a kind of large I would say may be 16 to 60, so it is very large. But in our store it is basically underwear so like the best. Also in this store we just have ladies things, so usually it is just this. Maybe a father comes to buy present for his kid.
R10 - Our target market is collection of both younger and older people.
R11 - Our goal is 20 to 30 years. Since we have more customers here than in the city, the focus is more on the teenagers.
R12 - Our target market is 30 to 60 years
R13 - The target market is women and children wear.
Appendix 2 – Companies’ profile

Bergmans

Since 1929 we have sold men’s clothes to the Uppsala residents and for a few years also women’s clothing. Whatever you are looking for, you will find most of our quality clothes at Bergmans in Uppsala. We opened the gates of the so-called political knot in Uppsala. A place we stayed at, since we moved a few meters to the other side of the street. From carefully chosen suppliers, we choose what they are best at, for example: Oscar Jacobson, Tommy Hilfiger, Calvin Klein, Stenströms and Tiger. Our knowledgeable staff is at your disposal to find what you are looking for.

http://www.bergmanskonfektion.se/.

Bik Bok

Bik Bok was started in 1973 by two Norwegians, with an intention of create a fashion jeans brand for young girls. Bik Bok quickly became a popular brand, and was sold in many stores throughout Norway and Sweden. Soon after, Bik Bok had created an entire collection, and in 1978 Bik Bok opened its first store in Oslo, today there are 200 stores across Norway, Sweden, Finland, Denmark and Austria. Bik Bok's seasonal collections are ideal for creating beautifully individual looks mixed with a hint of attitude combined with a smile. From the best basics and denim to hero pieces and those perfect dresses, it’s time to make Bik Bok the style setter and star of your wardrobe!


Brothers

Brothers is a Swedish men’s fashion chain with over 70 stores in Sweden and Finland, 26 of which are run by franchisees. The first Brothers stores opened their doors in 1992 and since then we have collected almost 25 years of experience in the Swedish market. Brothers has about 400 employees driven by offering fashion and service. The combination of our own and external brands as well as passionate sellers makes it possible for you as a customer to rely on finding your entire wardrobe in one and the same place. We are located all over the country but our headquarters are located in modern and nice premises in central Stockholm where our common features for design, purchase, sales and market are combined.
Carlings

In 1908, the Swedish immigrant, Fridolf Carling, opened men’s outfitters in Storgata, Oslo. Little did Fridolf know that this would be the origin of the jeans chain Carlings. In the sixties a man named Frank Varner opened his first store, in Thorvald Meyer’s gate, Grünerløkka in Oslo. The store that bore the name Frank Varner became a great success. In a few years there were several Frank Varner stores, and this was the beginning of what we today known as the Varner group textile company. In 1980 Frank Varner acquired the menswear store Carlings in Storgata, and in 1982 he transformed it into a jeans store. 1986 Carlings as a store chain was born, as we opened 4 stores bearing the same name, in Norway. The first stores were located in Skien, Stavanger, Arkaden adn Bogstadveien 31, both in Oslo. Carlings is part of the Varner Group Textile Company, with central administration located at Billingstad outside of Oslo. In addition to this we have regional offices in Ørebro, Sweden, Helsinki, Finland, and Vienna, Austria.

Cubus (Two branch stores interviewed)

Cubus offers fashion at great prices for children, men and women. We have the seasons' key fashion items, basics, accessories and cosmetics, meeting every customer’s requirements. Our inspiring shops and enthusiastic sales staff ensure the very best shopping experience. We are one of Scandinavia’s largest fashion chains having 330 stores found in Norway, Sweden, Poland, Germany and Finland.

H&M

The H&M group reaches fashion fans across the globe and has come a long way since the first Hennes store opened in the Swedish city Västerås in 1947. We want to offer fashion and design to the world in an exciting and sustainable way. In the 40’s and 50’s, a new fashion chain for women opens in Sweden with a new and progressive concept: frequently updated fashion at affordable prices. During the 60’s and 70’s, the ’M’ is added and product range grows to cover fashion for men, babies, kids and youth. Also, the first steps of a worldwide expansion are taken. The
European expansion continues in the 80’s and 90’s and H&M’s fashion becomes available online for the first time. 00’s was where H&M goes both west and east, new brands are added to the family and Karl Lagerfeld makes a surprising announcement to the world of fashion. Since 2010 and onwards, H&M opens the first stores in the Southern hemisphere, old garments are given a new life and & Other Stories is launched, followed by ARKET.

**Jack & Jones**
The story of Jack & Jones began in 1990 when Bestseller sent a young, fiery soul to the Oslo fashion fair with a modest, but carefully chosen collection aimed at young men. In the following years Jack & Jones manifests itself as one of the strongest jeans brands on the market and within a few years, the brand has several hundred stores. Today Jack & Jones is one of Europe’s leading producers of menswear with more than one thousand stores in 38 countries and Jack & Jones clothes are sold by thousands of wholesale partners all over the world. Jeans are still regarded as the backbone of Jack & Jones’ business. We continue to have a high level of expertise when it comes to the craftsmanship, quality and design of jeans, but Jack & Jones is nowadays defined and represented by five unique brands: Jack & Jones Vintage Clothing, Premium by Jack & Jones, Originals by Jack & Jones, Core by Jack & Jones and Jack & Jones Tech. The brands are designed by independent design teams, each one of them with their own ideas, concepts and designs. They all offer a full range of clothes, accessories and footwear for every man and every occasion.

**Johnells, Since 1893**
Johnells is one of Sweden's oldest and best-established multi brand chains for high quality brand wear like Gant, Hugo Boss, Eton, Tiger and others. At Johnells, we are constantly working to search and pick up garments from new trends while maintaining traditions, qualities and classical incisions. Johnells was established in 1893 and today has several stores around Mälardalen and a web shop. Anders Johnell was trying to open his store, there in spring, in Nyköping in 1893. He brought in amazing fabrics and garments from all over the world and was also the first in Nyköping to install a phone, which is still available in Nyköpings store. When Anders sold the shop in 1953 at the age of 90, he left behind a large fashion heritage that our current owners, Gustav and Krister
Thorstensson, have managed and refined for over 50 years. Ever since 1893 we have chosen to work only with the world's leading brands. All in order for you to care for your own personal brand. https://www.johnells.se/kundservice/om-johnells/.

Kappahl

KappAhl's history begins over 60 years ago in a basement in Gothenburg. This is where Per-Olof opens a coat store with the motto "We will give many people the opportunity to be well dressed". It is an instant success. Today we have about 400 stores and we are one of Scandinavia's leading fashion retailers. But one thing remains the same, our insight and care for our customers. For us fashion is about one thing: you. We want to give you affordable fashion with quality, produced with respect and care for people and the environment. We have come a long way, but we also know that there's lots left to do. We have a wide selection for women, men and children and we cater especially for women in the prime of life. Everything we do is about confidence through fashion and we want to help you find the right look for you no matter your age, size, shape and personality is. At KappAhl we think everyone should be able to be themselves. That's why we design clothes that suit you and make you feel great. https://www.kappahl.com/en-US/about-kappahl/about-us/about-us/history/.

Lindex

In 1954, two gentlemen from Sweden founded an era that would impact the lives of a multitude of women. Ingemar Boman and Bengt Rosell open the lingerie store Fynd in Alingsås. Shortly thereafter, the Lindex company of Gothenburg is acquired, and this is the name then given in time to all the subsequent stores. In the 21st century, Lindex launches a major effort to develop the Lindex concept. Fashion in Sweden was strongly influenced by fashion model Emma Wiklund’s Fashion Report in the new millennium. Lindex looks east and starts its expansion in Central Europe, opening stores in the Baltic States as well as the Czech Republic. In 2007, Lindex Shop Online was launched in Sweden, which allows Lindex customers to also purchase Lindex fashion on the internet. Shop Online was launched in Denmark two years later. In 2010 there were several strategically important store openings in Europe, for example in the capital cities of Prague and Bratislava. The Lindex franchise entered the markets of Bosnia Herzegovina and Dubai, which is also Lindex’s 400th store.
**New Yorker**

Since opening its first branch in the northern German town of Flensburg in 1971, New Yorker has never looked back. New Yorker has more than 1000 stores in 40 countries, making it one of Europe's largest fashion businesses. A staff of 16,000 – full-time and part-time – serves over 4 million paying customers each month. This success can be attributed to effective market positioning and strong expansion in Europe.

All in all the New Yorker collection makes a clear fashion statement and is entirely made up of the company’s own labels. The collections reflect the individual seasons as well as the very latest fashion trends and all workmanship is of high quality. The company’s international purchasing activities enable the stores to always have the very latest in stock. Central logistics, an efficient distribution network and flat hierarchies are factors that enable New Yorker to position its products on the market successfully and react to changes flexibly. Its flat hierarchies enable New Yorker to be efficient and profitable in all sectors and realize the network principle in the company, providing the foundation for its stable and forward-looking development.

https://www.newyoker.de/se/company/ueber-uns/.

**Rolans Herrmode**

Rolan Herrmode is a clothing retail company selling both male and female clothing with a target market of 30 years and above. It was established about 50 years ago and currently has about 4 employees. At Rolan's men's fashion you will always find a wide range of costumes, shirts and party clothes for all occasions. Prices are in the upper layer, but also the quality is consistently high. The staff at Rolans constantly look after the customer's interests and do everything to ensure you are satisfied with what you were looking for. Rolans is based in Uppsala, Sweden.
References


