

M&S Marketing Campaign

Group theme: sustainability

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I, Jiyeon Ahn, certify that this is an original piece of work. I have acknowledged all sources and citations. No section of this essay has been plagiarized.

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1. Executive summary

This marketing campaign initiative is designed for M&S Home, which sells bedding, furniture, and other interior items. Through this campaign, M&S Home will help people pursue an eco-friendly lifestyle and improve their spending habits. A key advantage of this project is that M&S Home can introduce sustainable products and show how it deals with environmental issues.

Competing brands like IKEA, Zara Home, and John & Lewis surround M&S Home. These brands produce environmentally conscious products and show each company's environmentally concerned behavior through various media or reports. Survival will not be easy if brands approach customers from the same perspective as other brands. Strategies are needed to attract consumer attention.

The main target of this campaign is customers aged 35 to 45 who are currently stable and can continue to invest in M&S. Through this campaign, M&S will establish strong customer base by informing customers of the exact information and value of their M&S activities. It will provide workshops to recycle what customers have and extend their product life through upcycling. Participants can rearrange household furniture and decorate it with sustainable spaces with Airbnb super hosts. After the workshop session, attendees can get discounted coupons for accommodation booking run by the co-working super hosts, and it might help to increase Airbnb users.

As trust between consumers and brands becomes important to address businesses, activities that consumers can feel experience firsthand are becoming more important. In the short term, simple workshop can be nothing more than fun activities for customers, but in the long term, these small positive experiences can be combined to build stronger brand and customer bonds.

2. Introduction



The purpose of this campaign

- Strengthen trust and image in the sustainability and quality of M&S Home products.
- Through workshops, announcing importance of upcycling and recycling and helping people avoid overconsumption.
- Through workshops, reducing concerns about greenwashing and ensure that M&S is positioned as a sustainable brand.

Recently, as environmental pollution has become more severe, many consumers are aiming for consumption that considers both the environment and their health. According to WGSN Insight Team (2024), 78% of Europeans think that environmental issues have a direct effect on their daily life and wellbeing. In this way, people pursue responsible consumption by considering not only the purchase of products but also the materials of the environmental products in which the products are made. To keep up with this trend, various fashion brands run their own sustainable business. Marks & Spencer (M&S) gives customers more confidence by providing specific figures through ESG reports and a sustainable product line.

In line with this trend, the purpose of this campaign is to provide an opportunity for customers to experience the sustainability of M&S Home directly through the collaboration between M&S Home and Airbnb. Beyond simply selling products, it aims to promote the importance of sustainability while also promoting new customer inflow and strengthening the brand's image through the campaign.

According to an M&S official, the 35-55-year-old customer base is the most difficult age group to secure brand loyalty, but at the same time, they have the greatest purchasing power. Some research argues that Millennials aged 35 to 45 (Dimock, 2019) go to the store in person and look around and get ideas about inspiration or what they want to buy (Gwyther, 2024).

To embrace them, this campaign intends to conduct the campaign with a concept that combines Airbnb's lodging experience with M&S Home's sustainable products to provide a space for millennials to experience.

3. Marketing concepts

3-1. Timeline

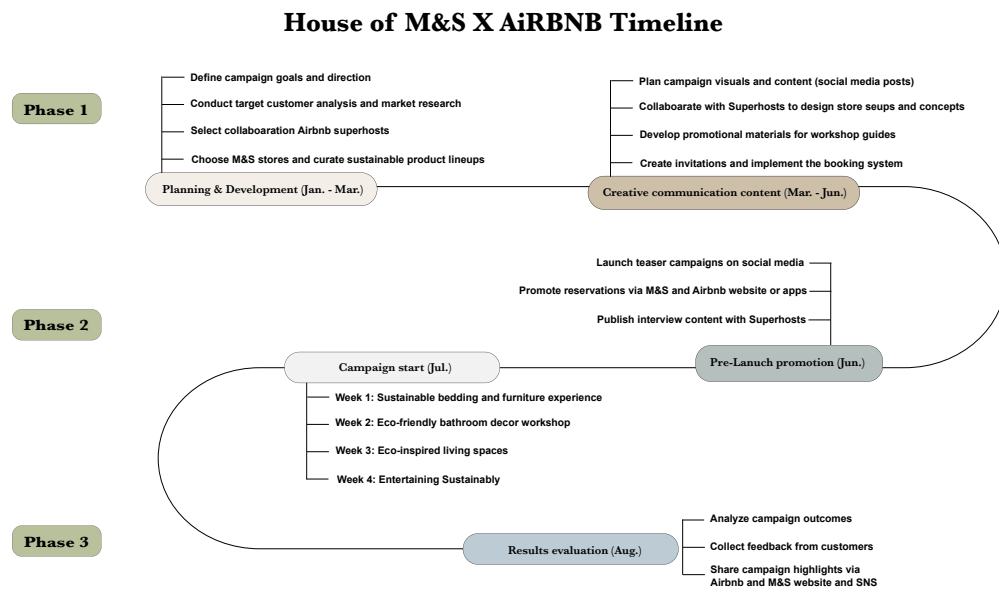


Figure 1: Author's own

Phase 1: January - March

This phase defines the campaign's goals and direction, analyzes its target audience, and lays the strategic foundation through market research. It also strengthens the brand's message by selecting Airbnb super hosts to collaborate with based on Airbnb customer reviews or recommendations from Airbnb and curating a sustainable product lineup within M&S home products.

At the same time, campaign visuals and content are designed, with super hosts contributing to the development of store displays and concepts. The process concludes with practical preparations, including the creation of invitations and the implementation of a user-friendly reservation system.

Phase 2: June - July

Reservations activate through the M&S and Airbnb websites and apps, while interview content with super hosts highlights the campaign's background and meaning.

The second week focuses on eco-friendly bathroom decoration. In the third week, activities revolve around designing living rooms inspired by nature. The final week concludes with a program on sustainable entertainment spaces. Each week delivers rich and exciting content through unique concepts.

Phase 3: August

Gathers customer feedback and draws future improvements. Key achievements from the campaign are shared through Airbnb and M&S home websites and social media platforms, emphasizing the ongoing relationship between the brands and their customers. This will summarize the overall performance of the campaign and lay the groundwork for the next campaign.

3. Marketing concepts

3-2. STP

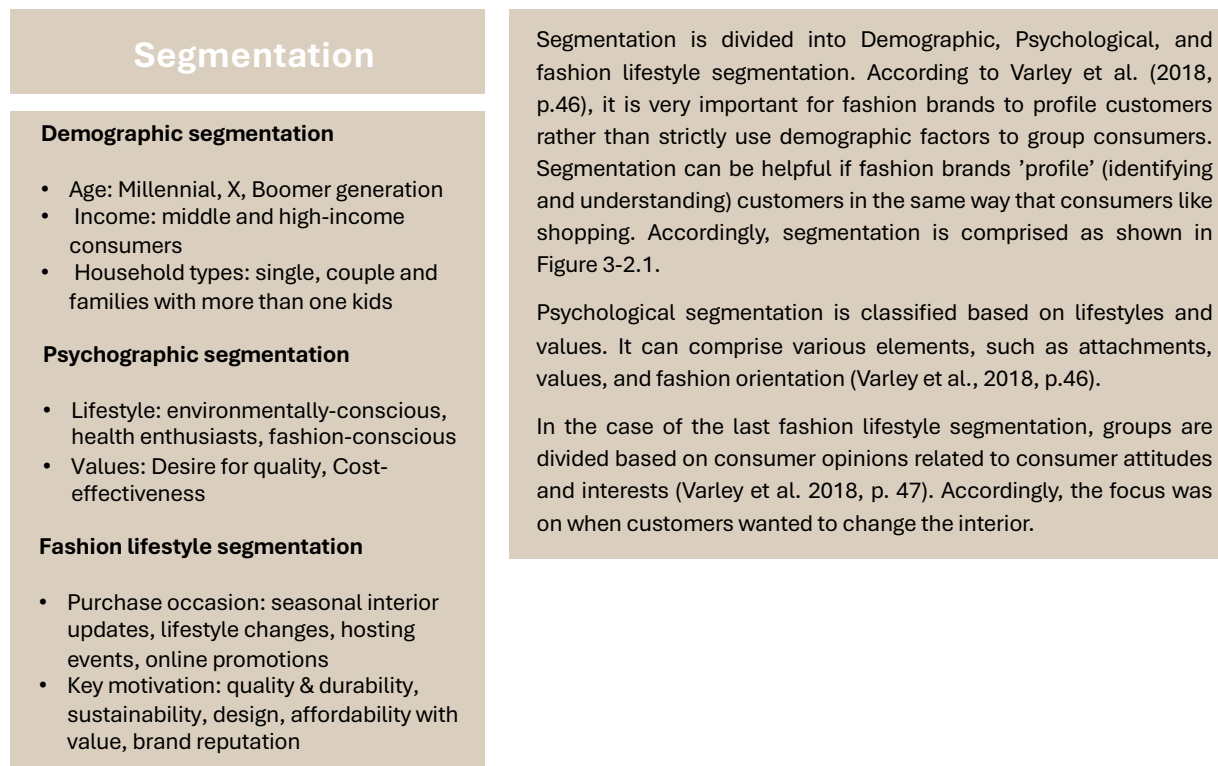


Figure 2: Author's own, adapted from Varley, R., 2018, pp.44-48

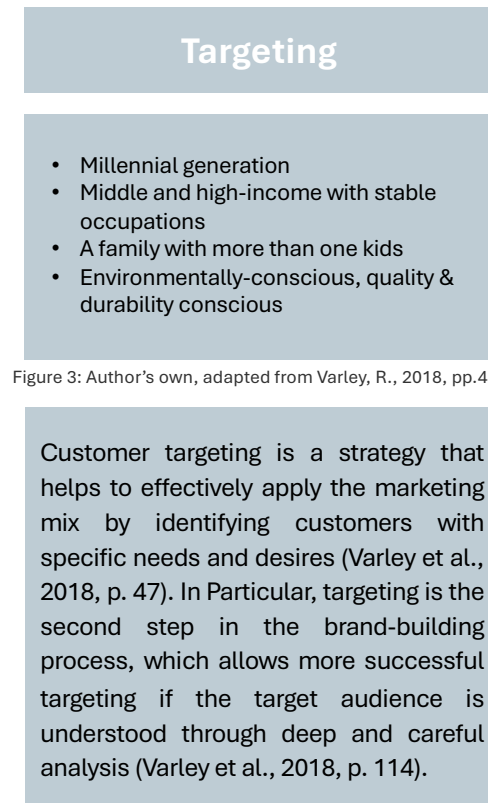
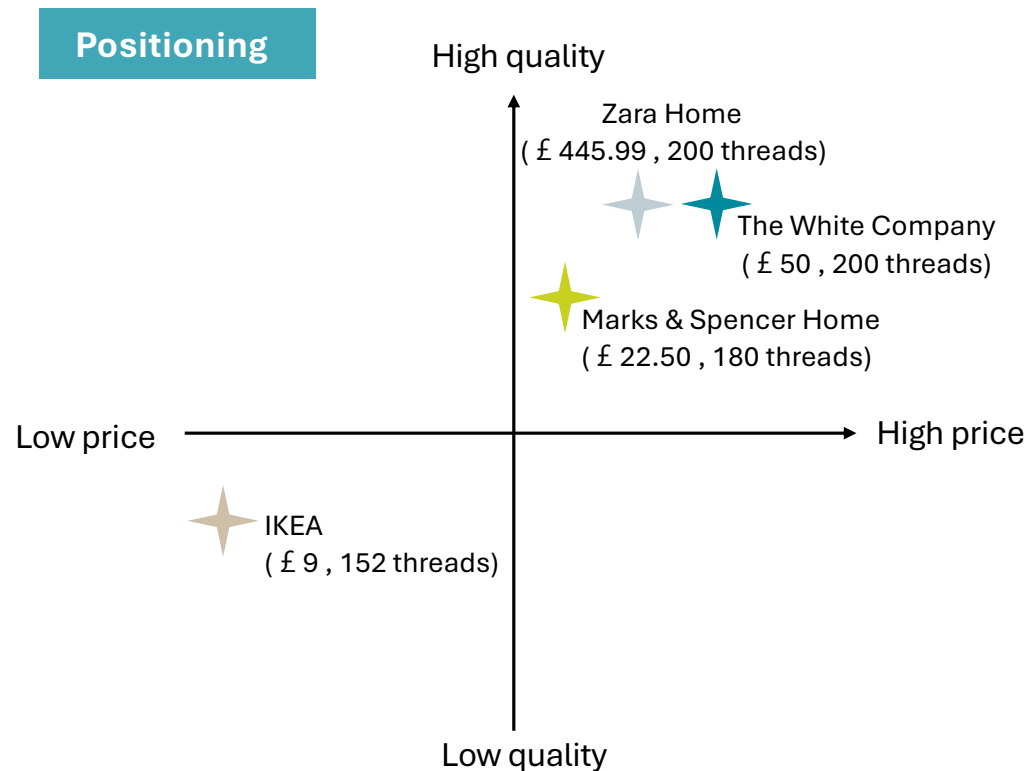


Figure 3: Author's own, adapted from Varley, R., 2018, pp.44-48

3. Marketing concepts

3-2. STP



The positioning map is the final step in STP, a vital process in fashion marketing. Analyzing competitors' visible and invisible components is complex, but comparing price and quality can establish a more precise positioning strategy (Varley, R., 2018, p.48). Figure 3.2 is designed by analyzing each brand's cheapest Duvet cover by price and quality.

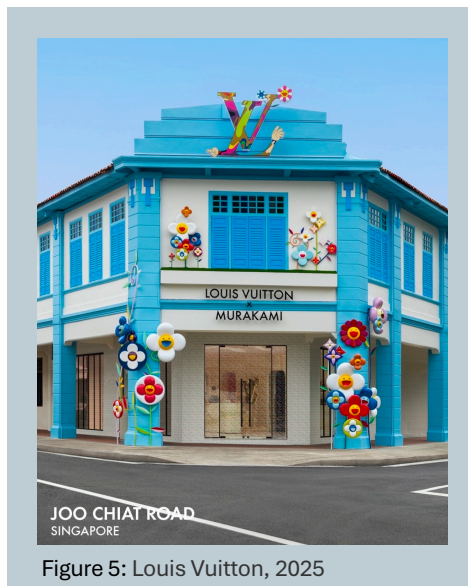
IKEA is the right brand for customers who value cost-effectiveness, emphasizing low price and quality. Marks & Spencer Home, on the other hand, offers higher quality and maintains a reasonable price point than IKEA, marking it an attractive option for customers looking for a balance between quality and price.

The White Company has a higher price and quality position than Mark & Spencer Home and is considered a reasonable luxury alternative for customers who prefer high-priced brands. While Zara Home targets premium markets with high prices and high quality, Marks & Spencer Home offers similar products at an accessible price compared to Zara Home, providing a more competitive alternative for cost-effective customers. Under these circumstances, it will remain competitive if Mark & Spencer Home balances cost and quality.

Figure 4: Author's own, adapted from Varley, R., 2018, p.49

4. Inspiration

4-1. Market context



In recent times, as the problem of environmental pollution has reached alarming levels, various homeware brands have enhanced their sustainability on products and use materials which are ecologically made. For instance, IKEA sells small spare parts, and it helps people to use their furniture for a long time. Moreover, H&M Home's carpets are made of eco-friendly materials, such as recycled cotton or recycled PET bottles. Like this, most brands are actively promoting eco-friendly approaches, and simply using environmentally concerned materials has made it difficult to attract consumer attention anymore.

Against this backdrop, collaboration is emerging as a new marketing breakthrough. Customers are getting used to the various efforts of brands for sustainability, and expectations are rising accordingly. According to Medeiros (2024), partnerships between companies in different categories provide a new approach to the brand and, at the same time, provide opportunities to create new added value for companies on both sides of the aisle working together. This collaboration can strengthen the brand's authenticity to sustainability while strengthening its relationship with consumers through differentiated customer experiences.

4. Inspiration

4-2. Theme development

Customers can explore a variety of workshops designed for theme development. Firstly, use M&S Home products to decorate the store with super hosts, show the store to customers and give inspiration to the home interior. All products use M&S Home's sustainable products. In addition, if customers submit photos of their homes before participating in this workshop, they will design a new home while applying M&S Home products with the help of super hosts during the workshop. The campaign can demonstrate the overall marketing concept of "Old To Bold" and actually raise customers' awareness of sustainability in the long term, giving them a new life for the products they use every day.

In addition, Airbnb discount coupons are provided to customers who participated in the workshop, which is a discount coupon from Airbnb operated by partner super hosts. Consumers can increase their value by choosing environmentally friendly accommodations run by super hosts themselves, and not just a trip but a responsible trip.

Through this campaign, customers can get practical tips and inspiration that can apply in real life. Especially, through the workshop, consumers can learn about importance of upcycling and recycling and the way of avoiding overconsumption. This allows M&S to establish itself as a sustainable brand, not just selling products and reduce concerns about greenwashing and deliver a sincere message.

Under this circumstances, M&S raising their popularity as a sustainable brand in the global market and Airbnb's influence in the UK allow M&S to maximize brand exposure in the local market. Eventually, the two brands will be able to clearly communicate their vision for sustainability, creating a successful case for expanding the market and improving the brand's value.

5. Marketing strategy

5-1. Macro analysis - PESTEL

P	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The UK government policies and regulatory incentives are favorable for sustainability practices such as, the government imposed environmental taxes to businesses (GOV.UK., no date).
E	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rising living costs make discounts and promotions more appealing to cost-conscious consumers. Amid economic uncertainty the higher costs of sustainable shopping could be set off by long-term savings and loyalty.
S	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gen Z and Millennials especially value sustainability. Because of overconsumption trends in the social media, a countermovement is ensuring in the form of “underconsumption core” and “deinfluencing” (Webb, 2024) .
T	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Through RFID technologies, companies can work more time-wise and offer fast delivery tracking to consumers (Bain, 2023). Consumers can be targeted and educated via social media and on digital platforms
E	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The EU requires large companies to report about environmental and human rights violations in their supply chain (Kent, 2023) . Adapting to environmental regulations early avoids penalties
L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Brands are facing of the upcoming regulation that requites them to be open about the inner side of their supply chain, decarbonisation (Shoaib, 2024)

Figure 7: adapted from Varley et al., 2018, p. 22 (sources adapted from group work)

5. Marketing strategy

5-2. Micro analysis - SWOT

<p style="text-align: center;">S</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong sustainability efforts through the “Plan A” initiative e.g., reducing M&S carbon impact, making sustainability easier etc. (M&S, 2024 a, 0:47; M&S, 2024 a, 1:05)
<p style="text-align: center;">W</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High operating costs e.g., in 2024, 1,058 stores in UK (Statista, 2024 a) • Heavy reliance on the UK domestic market e.g., UK food 8,158.8 million GBP, UK-clothing & home 3,910.7 million GBP and International 1,039.8million GBP (Statista, 2024 b)
<p style="text-align: center;">O</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As much as people care about environmental issues worldwide, M&S provides consumers with transparent sustainable management information through Plan A or ESG reports (M&S, 2024 b) • Stable consumer preference for online shopping (Statista, 2024 c)
<p style="text-align: center;">T</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economic uncertainties e.g., second Trump presidential term (Fleming, Storbeck 2024) • Political uncertainties in other countries causing supply chain disruptions e.g., Russia-Ukraine war, US-China trade tensions (Fleming, Storbeck 2024) • Many competitors in positions like M&S Home e.g., IKEA, Zara Home, and John Lewis etc.

Figure 8: adapted from: Susan, 2017, p171 (sources adapted from group work)

5. Marketing strategy

5-3. PESTEL & SWOT summary

As Gen Z and Millennials, major customers now and in the future, are showing great interest in sustainability, M&S' Plan A increase the environmental credibility of the brand itself. According to Dan-Cristian et al. (2019), Gen Z seriously concerned about whether business do sustainable business. The study shows that 77% Gen Z think that companies' eco-conscious operations have a positive impact on the environment. In addition, almost three-out-of-four millennials responded that they are willing to pay for companies that positively impact society and the environment (Naderi, Van Steendurg,2018, p.282). As a result, through the workshop in this campaign, customers can participate in practical activities, and it can help them to realize how M&S handles sustainable business.

Millennials value authentic products and social responsibility and seek personal connections with brands that match their lifestyles. With the development of the Internet and social media, this preference has naturally been combined with digital platforms . This campaign can effectively promote corporate transparency and social responsibility by leveraging millennials' traits to encourage them to share reviews and photos on social media (Naumovska, 2017, p. 126).

As most countries continue to strengthen environmental rules (Kent, 2023), many brands are preparing for this. As most brands move quickly, simply raising regulations related to the in-house environment is challenging to differentiate them from competitors. Therefore, it is crucial to differentiate while providing new experiences to customers. The workshop provided by this House of M&S Home and Airbnb can strengthen M&S' identity.

In addition, the economic recession that has not recovered since Covid-19 has led to many people reducing their consumption. In this situation, the discount coupon can stimulate customers' consumption and help the start of the economic cycle. Blackhawk's research found that gift card purchases are up 12% year-over-year, and value loaded on the card is up 7%, indicating that gift cards play an important role in consumer spending (Vogt, 2024). This research shows that getting a surprise gift card gives them unplanned purchasing power.

6. Marketing communication strategy

6-1. Online communication



Figure 9: IKEAKR, 2024



Figure 10: IKEA, 2024 a

Figure 11: IKEA, 2024 b



Figure 12: IKEA, 2024 c

#houseofM&bnb

#oldtobold

Instagram

- Teaser & Stories: Short super host interview teasers (link to full videos on both M&S and Airbnb YouTube channel)
- Introduce super hosts' profile: Highlight super hosts' sustainability stories and M&S product integration
- #: Promote '#houseofM&bnb', 'Old to Bold' to encourage user-generated content
- Store previews: photos and videos of selected stores styled by super hosts (see Figure 6-1.2,3,4)
- Link to M&S products: using Instagram shopping system and adding tag on preview pictures for direct purchase (see Figure 6-1.1)

6. Marketing communication strategy

6-2. Offline communication

- **Workshops**



Figure 13: OpenAI ChatGPT, 2025

**“Consumers expect brands to strengthen bonds with customers or bring together people with similar views”
(Sprout social, 2018)**

Depending on this phenomenon, crafting and DIY workshops can be an ideal way to connect with customers (WGSN Interiors Team, 2019).

The workshop, whose concept is to decorate customers' own sustainable spaces with super hosts, focuses on trying new arrangement or redesigning spaces using props or furniture that customers already have. They bring props that fit every week's theme that customers do not use themselves so that they can relocate or redesign them with super hosts.

In addition, this activity helps replace the M&S Home products displayed in the store with products similar to those owned by the customer. If developing a suitable design for a customer-owned product is complicated, super hosts will guide them through completing a new layout by considering M&S Home's products. At this time, the QR code, which can lead to a purchase right around the products, encourages customers to lead to a purchase right away. This workshop will help them learn how to decorate the space by recycling existing products and get practical ideas for pursuing sustainable consumption.

This activity will contribute to spreading practical tips and a sustainable consumption culture to customers beyond just purchasing products. The main goal is to naturally expose M&S Home's sustainable products to customers while helping them reorganize their space creatively and economically.

6. Marketing communication strategy

6-2. Offline communication

- **Discounts coupon**

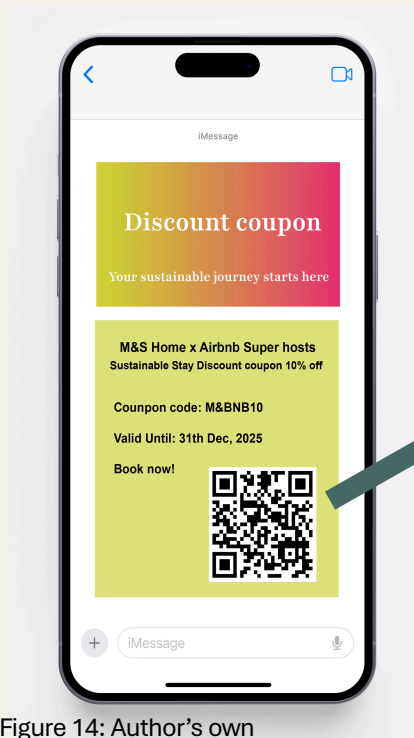


Figure 6-2.3: Airbnb, 2025

Customers can make a reservation through this QR code

This campaign offers discount coupons for accommodations run by super hosts only for workshop participants. Airbnb's discount coupons encourage customers to use Airbnb once again. Instead of making paper, coupons are offered in digital form so that they can demonstrate the concept of the campaign once again.

Customers can access Airbnb's application directly by scanning the QR code at the bottom of the coupon. If customers do not have an Airbnb application, it can encourage consumer to download it and increase the number of application users.

Although the discount coupon is for super hosts' accommodations only, these approaches expect to have an advertising effect as customers naturally encounter other hosts' who are not invited to the campaign accommodations while visiting the accommodations.

In addition, Airbnb provides reservation services for accommodation and places to experience around travel destinations. Customers can learn about Airbnb's various services and gain insights into the activities involved when booking accommodations.

6. Marketing communication strategy

6-2. Offline communication

- *Bus and Tube station advertisements*

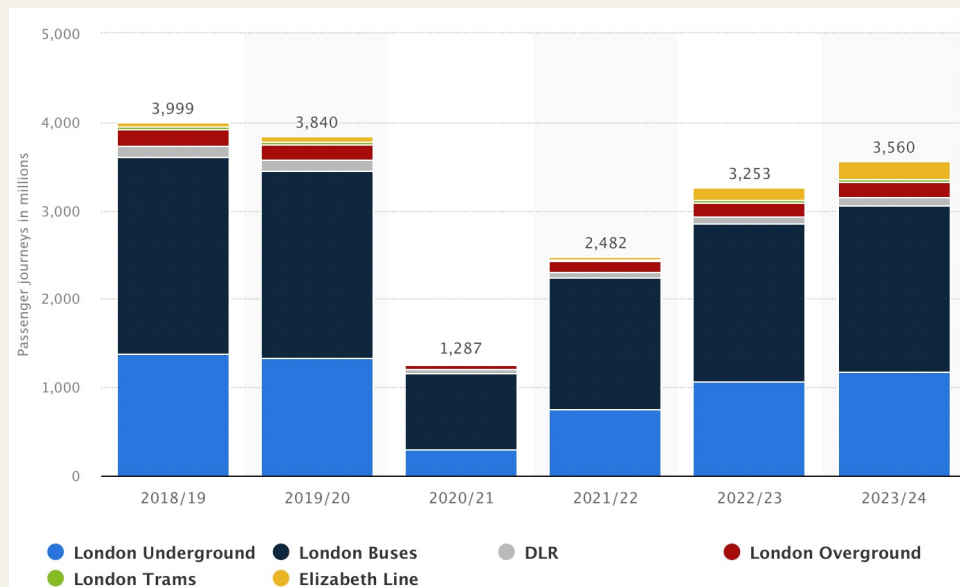


Figure 15: Statista Research Department, 2024

According to Statista Research Department (2024), London's public transport system saw a drop in ridership during the pandemic, but during other periods, an average of over 3 billion passengers used the system.

Based on this data, using public transport in London as a campaign promotional tool could allow hundreds of millions of passengers to access it efficiently.

7. Conclusion

This campaign will help strengthen the image of a company that practices sustainability beyond just selling. Through the workshop, customers can experience firsthand how M&S Home works to solve environment problems.

It provides to induce customers to feel the efforts of the company. In particular, this campaign could help stop greenwashing activities that simply convey messages and greatly help form long-term relationships between brands and customers through experiential activities that customers can experience in their daily lives. The campaign might be an opportunity to raise awareness of customer's sustainability and show M&S' transparent management.

At a time when sustainable consumption is no longer an option but a necessity, this campaign could make M&S a leader among companies that pursue environmentally conscious management.

The campaign is designed to significantly impact sustainability and customer engagement, but some potential challenges could be considered in the implementation process.

Two questions could be raised about the campaign.

- The target of collaboration

Since the workshop is interior-related, it may be questioned whether it would be better to invite experts to proceed. However, if companies with the same orientation collaborate rather than between individuals and companies, it is more likely to create synergy. These partnerships make it easier for customers to build solid relationships through their communities.

In addition, collaboration with Airbnb will provide customers with a fresh experience because interior professionals mainly focus on aesthetic elements, and super hosts design spaces with consideration of practicality and convenience.

- The campaign's sustainability

This campaign is not just an event that ends in July but a starting point for M&S Home's sustainable products. After the campaign ends, M&S can analyze customer reviews or sales growth data to explore new collaboration opportunities, enabling M&S to curate their products more effectively.

The campaign will be a vital opportunity to raise brand awareness of M&S Home products and increase sales.

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