



# Research on the Development Path of Apparel Start-Ups Under the New Consumption Trend

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**Abstract.** With the booming economy and technology, people's demand for clothing has also shown a trend of diversification and personalization, which has led to the emergence of many innovative start-ups in the market. This paper aims to provide reference and inspiration for the development of emerging clothing start-up companies by studying the growth process of well-known clothing brands from zero to one, as well as the opportunities and challenges faced by recent high-profile start-up brands. This paper analyzes the development history of well-known enterprises such as Nike, ZARA, Anta, Lululemon and other brands in the early stages, and discusses the key factors and strategies for their success in the market competition. Meanwhile, it also pays attention to the problems faced by start-ups such as MAIA Active and SHEIN, including supply chain management, marketing, brand positioning, etc., and proposes some solutions. Finally, it discusses the industry trends and future development directions, and provides guidance and suggestions for their long-term development planning.

**Keywords:** Clothing industry, New consumption trends, Start-ups, Brands, Supply chain

## 1 Introduction

In today's era of rapid economic and technological development, the apparel industry is ushering in a new trend of consumption. As people's demand for clothing has become increasingly diverse and personalized, start-ups have emerged in the market. These innovative start-ups are attracting more and more young consumers with their unique design concepts, sustainable production methods and personalized shopping experiences. Under this new consumption trend, the development path of start-ups has become a subject of much research attention.

Peng Chen analyzed the reasons for the success of the Lululemon brand from four aspects: product positioning, product strategy, marketing strategy and meaning system, disassembling the key strategy of the Lululemon brand in the development stage from 0 to 10, and revealed the underlying marketing logic of the brand. The

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conclusion is obtained: the cornerstone meaning is the bottom core of all brand marketing, and the brand needs to establish meaning and provide meaning for users. Each product has a strong first value to drive production and win the market. Building and getting through the "marketing journey" in the marketing strategy is a very important link in brand marketing. Word-of-mouth marketing is the least costly and effective marketing method at present. They are interrelated and jointly promote the development of brands and market success [1].

Jie Star through the analysis of the Adidas brand in China in recent years performance is not optimistic, it is concluded that the product appeal to consumers is not strong, less R & D investment, and the brand again strong if no product support brand will slowly degenerate conclusion, also pointed out that Adidas said, hope with the words "China" with the tide characteristics of sportswear to win the hearts of Chinese consumers. Chinese consumers pay more and more attention to the functionality of products, and Adidas still needs more time to further strengthen technological research and development. "With the technological barriers of products, the brand position can be more stable" [2].

With the release of Anta Sports and Xtep International semi-annual reports, China's four major sports shoe clothing brands in the first half of the performance disclosure officially closed. Under the background of the steady recovery of total retail sales of consumer goods, the revenue and profit growth of Anta Sports, Li Ning, and Xtep International, 361 degrees have outperformed the market and achieved rapid growth. Anta Sports and Li Ning in the "Chinese battlefield" respectively completed the "super". The competitive pattern of China's sports shoe clothing market has undergone a qualitative change: China-fashion brands has changed from a runner to a leader, and the leading advantage has gradually expanded. In the view of a number of industry veterans interviewed by the reporter, Chinese consumers' demand for sports shoes and clothing will become more and more diversified, showing the "four modernizations" trend of consumption circle, scene segmentation, functional specialization and personalized expression. Niche brands with distinct and differentiated positioning will be loved by many consumer groups, and their growth rate will surpass that of mass brands [3].

With the rapid rise of China's economy and the enhancement of cultural confidence, brand cultural creativity has gradually become an important trend. After the in-depth discussion of the integration of traditional cultural elements into Chinese Li Ning brand and brand cultural creation, it can be found that the combination of traditional culture and brand cultural creation is a win-win cooperation mode. Through the integration of traditional cultural elements, the brand can not only increase the connotation and value of the product, meet the needs of consumers for cultural identity, but also strengthen the brand image and core competitiveness, and realize the brand transformation and upgrading. However, in the process of integrating traditional cultural elements into brand design, we need to avoid misunderstanding and misdirection, respect the essence of traditional culture, and pay attention to retaining and inheriting its essence. The successful practice of China Li Ning in brand cultural creation provides examples for other brands to learn from, and

also shows the great value and potential of Chinese traditional culture in contemporary brand construction [4].

Dong Guorong analyzed the current problems existing in the production and operation of Anta from the four aspects of opportunities, threats, advantages and disadvantages, so as to put forward improvement suggestions for the problems and point out the direction for the development of the enterprise. While doing strategic design, the enterprise should not only consider external factors, adapt to the development of The Times, strengthen internal control, maintain the vitality of innovation, and prevent risks, but also establish the correct business philosophy and values [5].

On the biggest track, Xtep is riding the momentum to detonate its long-standing professional potential energy. Behind the product power is Xtep's growing R&D investment over the years. As early as 2015, Xtep established X-Lab Sports Science Laboratory, which is the first exclusive running research and development center for shoe testing, design and development in China's sports industry. In addition to the product technology strength, Xtep has also formed a unique brand equity in the building of the running ecosystem. Xtep currently has 1.5 million members and is one of the largest and most active brand running groups in China. Xtep is also the sports brand with the most marathon sponsorship in China. Since 2007, it has sponsored more than 1000 matches and is recognized as the first road running brand in China [6].

Zeng Xinying and Du Bingbing analyze the challenges of content marketing of local sportswear brands: excessive content quantity, serious homogenization; excessive content range, uncertain value; content marketing platforms and users are scattered; content marketing effect is difficult to measure and the return cycle is long. The conclusion on the improvement strategy of content marketing of local sportswear brands: create unique content and improve content marketing by consumers; conduct content marketing for different platforms; conduct online and offline simultaneously and enrich content marketing; focus on long-term construction and improve the evaluation system of content marketing effect [7].

In the era of brand competition with a highly developed market economy, increasingly frequent commodity circulation and increasingly fierce industry competition, clothing brands can use new media platforms to do brand promotion so as to adapt to the current environment and improve promotion efficiency. By analyzing the changes of publicity scope, publicity speed, publicity form and publicity objectives brought by the development of a new media platform to clothing brand promotion, it is demonstrated that the use of a new media platform is conducive to brand promotion. According to the research, the use of new media platform publicity is conducive to enhancing brand awareness, brand awareness, and enhancing the degree of brand communication. The emergence of new media provides a more convenient and efficient way of publicity for clothing brand promotion. Paying close attention to the evolution of new media can effectively expand the path selection of

clothing brands in the promotion time, so as to more effectively predict the future communication trend and undercurrent of clothing brands [8].

According to the three-level model of brand composition, the brand joint design activities are carried out. On the one hand, through the brand image activation, dialogue with consumers in the new era, and strengthens the connection between brand cultural identity and consumer behavior. Seize the cultural content of domestic brands and realize the continuation of the value of the old brand in the new era through the traditional heritage of domestic brands; on the other hand, the prevailing eyeball economy, we media platform, fashion trends and cultural hotspot will always influence the design activities of the brand. The activation design and co-branded activities of domestic brands tend to the design planning of the whole process, insight into the appropriate joint opportunity, choose the appropriate co-branded objects and design paths, so as to carry out co-branded design activities and activate the brand image. Therefore, in addition to building the three-layer design path of "visual appearance-design style-brand connotation", brand co-branding should pay more attention to the timing of co-branding, and be alert to the gimmick marketing or excessive design under the background of consumer society. Secondly, the co-branded design should match the appropriate co-branded object and reduce the blind pursuit of trends and hot spots. Combined with the brand culture to build a new idea of joint design, while reviving the old Guohua and activating the classic domestic brand image, the design should have a brand attitude, integrate the cultural spirit into the brand construction, and reshape the cultural value [9].

China is a big manufacturer in the garment industry, but it is urgent to improve rapidly in famous brand products and core technologies. In recent years, the influx of "fast fashion" brands has caused a great impact on China's local clothing brands. "Fast fashion" clothing brands have their unique competitive advantages, such as being able to give full play to the advantages of products and services, constantly launching new products, expanding the scope of brand influence, and improving the market competitiveness. "Fashion first, commodity second, price third" is the best summary of the "fast fashion" clothing retail brand. In order to build a Chinese-style "fast fashion" brand and enhance its core vitality, Chinese service enterprises need to do the following. First, strengthen the training of original design talents. Second, we should attach great importance to scientific and technological innovation. Third, attach importance to user experience and build a Chinese characteristic brand. Increase the promotion and promotion efforts, let the "fast fashion" faster, first, do a good job in the early publicity work of clothing. Second, conduct online joint promotion. Third, the innovation of the promotion mode [10].

This study aims to explore the growth process of well-known clothing brands and provide references for emerging clothing start-ups. Through in-depth analysis of the entrepreneurial process, market positioning and brand building strategies of well-known brands, the key elements of success are revealed. It also examines the opportunities and challenges faced by recent high-profile start-up brands, providing insights and references for the development of emerging companies.

## 2 The Early Stage Development Process of Well-Known Enterprises

### 2.1 Technology Breakthrough and Fan Culture - Nike

The early development story of the Nike brand is full of legendary entrepreneurial history. From Phil Knight's passion for long-distance running, and insight into the Japanese sports shoe market. Phil Knight and his running coach Bill Bowerman formed a joint venture, Blue Ribbon Sports, which was the predecessor of Nike. When Knight initially faced difficulties, he gradually promoted the development of the company and gained a place in the American track and field market, relying on his accurate grasp of the performance and value of sports shoes.

NIKE's technological breakthroughs and fan culture together formed an important pillar of its early development and laid a solid foundation for its success. Nike's technological breakthroughs stemmed from founder Bill Bowerman's unrestrained and unwavering spirit of innovation. In 1970, Bowerman skillfully used a waffle pan for the sole production, creating the lightweight, bendable and grippy "Moon Shoe circa 1972" running shoe, which created the Nike Waffle Trainer series. This creative breakthrough was not only successful at the 1972 Olympic trials, but also led to the birth of subsequent products such as the Cortez series of Forrest Gump shoes. According to *the Mirror* on July 24, 2019, a pair of 1972 Nike "moon shoes" set a world record at auction for 350,000 pounds. Nike's innovative DNA is reflected in the continuous product development, such as the introduction of Nike Air technology was first applied to Air Tailwind shoes in 1978, which provided more space for the midsole and outsole design of sports shoes and opened a new era. In 1984, Michael Jordan was signed as the spokesman for Nike Air and launched the Air Jordan series of basketball shoes. With the continuous upgrading of Air cushion technology, Nike has also achieved many innovations in design, shape and materials, such as Air Max 1, which was first introduced in 1987 as a visual design of air cushion, and the subsequent full-palm Air cushion configuration. From 1987 to 1996, Nike's sales increased from \$880 million to \$6.47 billion, with a CAGR of 24.8%. This innovative thinking runs through the development process of the Nike brand. Through in-depth understanding and close communication of the needs of athletes, it continues to introduce forward-looking sports technology products, which have become the iconic feature of the Nike brand.

NIKE's fan culture originates from the NIKE brand running challenges, basketball parades and music parties that combine technology and fashion to inspire fans to participate in passion and other diverse activities. The event is characterized by intelligent technology, star interaction and teamwork. It is widely disseminated through official websites, social media, brand flagship stores, etc., deepening the emotional connection between brands and fans, and emphasizing NIKE's dynamic, innovative and fashionable global leading sports brand image. While focusing on the product, NIKE fans are also actively involved in sports and club activities, forming a united community that inspires fighting spirit and constant innovation. This culture

highlights the status of NIKE as a lifestyle and cultural symbol, not only for the love of sports, but also a reflection of life attitude.

## **2.2 Rapid Product Iteration and Supply Chain Control-Zara**

The uniqueness of the Zara brand is manifested in its excellent product rapid iteration and efficient supply chain management. Founded in 1974 as a Spanish fashion brand, Zara is part of the Inditex Group and has more than 2,000 stores worldwide. An important factor that stands out in the industry is that Zara has distinctively abandoned the traditional fashion industry's model of designing and producing new clothing months in advance.

Zara's rapid product iteration is reflected in their ability to make quick decisions and produce the hottest fashion styles through in-depth market observations and trend analysis. This flexibility allows Zara to launch new products in a very short time to meet the needs of the global market. This is in stark contrast to the slow design and production process of traditional brands, highlighting Zara's unique competitive advantage in rapid product iteration.

At the same time, ZARA 's supply chain control is also a major winning factor. Through precise supply chain management, ZARA ensures that new clothing reaches stores and online malls in time, so as to achieve rapid production and distribution. This efficient supply chain system enables ZARA to maintain competitiveness in the fierce fashion market, and can flexibly respond to market changes, reduce inventory risks, and increase inventory turnover. All products are first shipped back to the Spanish logistics center and then distributed in specialty stores around the world. Europe implements land transportation, with 24 hours time limit; Other markets use air transport, such as 48 hours of air transport in China and the United States, and 48-72 hours of air transport in Japan. The final distribution is done by a third-party logistics company. In this mode, ZARA's inventory turnover rate is as high as 80%, there is almost no inventory backlog and the logistics center is also dominated by transshipment, rather than warehousing.

Overall, Zara is known for its rapid product iteration and efficient supply chain control, the combination of which is its successful business model that has enabled it to meet the ever-changing needs of consumers while remaining agile and competitive in the fashion industry.

## **2.3 Brand Effect, Complete Sales Model, Merger and Acquisition (M&A) Expansion- ANTA**

Anta has achieved great success in brand effect and sales model. Through continuous merger and acquisition expansion, its brand value has been further improved. Founded in 1991, Anta is a typical Chinese sports brand moving from OEM to a self-owned brand. It quickly occupied the market through the traditional channel network in the early stage.

First of all, thanks to Anta's continuous and effective market promotion over the years, Anta has successfully created a strong brand effect. By hiring well-known athletes such as table tennis champion Kong Linghui for endorsement, and signing NBA players for promotion, on the basis of combining its own brand image and sports star image, to enhance brand popularity and influence in the minds of consumers. Therefore, Anta's position in the industry has been further consolidated.

ANTA uses a diversified sales model to achieve product sales through brand stores and agency networks in various fields such as direct sales agency sales e-commerce, so as to increase opportunities for direct interaction with consumers, improve the brand's impression and relationship in the eyes of consumers, and expand market influence through agents to increase brand awareness in society. In addition, in order to cater to the online shopping needs of the younger generation, ANTA also actively cooperates with e-commerce platforms, using differentiated pricing strategies and a wide range of product coverage from high-end to low-end to increase brand competitiveness and market share. For channel development and customer relationship management, ANTA in the fierce competition in the market constantly opens up new sales channels to improve customer loyalty so as to enhance the overall competitiveness of the brand.

Since its establishment in Jinjiang, Fujian Province in 1991, Anta has achieved brand upgrading and expansion through mergers and acquisitions. In 2009, it acquired the Italian sports fashion brand FILA, from a loss of 30 million to a revenue of more than 10 billion, with a gross profit margin of nearly 70 %, which became the pillar of Anta's revenue. In 2016, Anta acquired the British leisure sports brand Sprandi, and in 2017, it acquired the Korean high-end outdoor brand KOLON SPORT, further expanding the brand's international influence. In 2018, Anta acquired Arc'teryx's parent company, Amer Sports. This nearly 40 billion deal has brought huge benefits to Anta, and Amer Sports revenue reached 13 billion+ in the first half of 2023, surpassing Fila in the same period. In addition, Amer Sports plans to apply for a listing in the United States in 2024 with a valuation of \$10 billion, and Anta holds 57.9% of its shares, which has brought considerable financial benefits to Anta in this transaction. Through this series of acquisitions, Anta has successfully created a multi-brand matrix including mid-to-high-end brands. Through the ingenious acquisition strategy, Anta has demonstrated excellent management ability and excellent channel construction. At the same time, it has not only stabilized its position in the domestic market, but also won wide recognition in the international market, which has improved the brand image of Anta and laid a solid foundation for Anta to maintain its competitiveness in the fiercely competitive sports goods market.

#### **2.4 Improve Product Strength Details and Community Marketing Model-Lululemon**

The initial stage of the Lululemon brand (1998-2006) was a critical period for its successful development. Founder Chip Wilson has built a growth myth based on his insight in the field of sports and respect for consumer opinions.

LULULEMON takes the way of yoga competition as the starting point, starts product design, and continuously strengthens people's cognition of yoga with the Lululemon brand. Lululemon 's product design focuses on the combination of functionality and aesthetics. Different fabrics and processes are used to cope with different sports scenes and needs. For example, Nulu fabrics are suitable for intense yoga exercises, while Everlux fabrics are more suitable for training scenarios. In addition, the Luxtreme fabric is designed to take into account the visual effects of women 's wear, while emphasizing extensibility and nudity, using seamless crotch cut and diamond lining design. Lululemon 's product design has certain visual characteristics, such as the design of car suture exposure, which not only avoids skin friction, but also plays a certain plastic role. In addition, it also pays attention to diversity and inclusiveness, and pays attention to artistic presentation in color and pattern design. As a brand positioned in the high-end clothing brand, Lululemon's pursuit of artistry is also very important, so it will cooperate with artists to launch a series of hand-painted prints and limited cooperation series to show the unique charm of oriental art, such as cooperation series with London artist Ed Curtis and cooperation series with Japanese artist Katasushi-ka Hokusai, etc., which all show the unique charm of Oriental art. According to the third quarter performance report of the 2023 fiscal year released by Lululemon, its sales increased by 19 % year-on-year to \$ 2.2 billion in the three months ended October 29, 2023, and the overall gross margin increased to 57 %.

The success of Lululemon can be attributed to the unique consumption scene design and community operation strategy. Starting from the initial gym, lululemon realized the importance of establishing close ties with consumers, and built a strong brand community based on this. It adopted the offline KOL ( Key Opinion Leader) model and used yoga coaches as brand ambassadors. These coaches wear Lululemon's yoga clothes and show the functionality and comfort of Lululemon products to consumers in a personal way. Consumer education is carried out in the activities, so as to establish an emotional connection with consumers and form a brand image that plays an important role in the fitness industry today. Community activities are an important part of lululemon' s marketing strategy. It is Lululemon' s use of stores to hold various activities, such as yoga classes and health lectures, to bring more value and experience to consumers while promoting interaction and communication between brands and consumers. It is the further strengthening of the relationship between the Lululemon brand and consumers and the inevitable move of Lululemon brand development. With the development of the Lululemon brand, lululemon' s official applets continue to launch a variety of activities, from segmenting the sports field to the comprehensive "Summer Sweat Games", from enhancing consumer engagement and stickiness, to further strengthening the relationship between the brand and consumers. In addition, in the domestic market, lululemon's community activities are "localized", and the location is connected with the humanistic characteristics or history and culture of the city, which not only enhances the sense of participation of consumers, but also further enhances the connection between lululemon brand and consumers. This regionalized community activity not only makes the brand more closely linked with consumers, but also makes the brand more



deeply integrated into the local culture, thus enhancing the brand's influence and recognition in the local market, and making the brand more competitive in the local market.

### **3 The Current Problems and Countermeasures of Start-Ups**

#### **3.1 Problems**

##### **Maia Active.**

MAIA Active, a designer brand focused on providing high-quality sportswear and services to Asian women, has opened its first flagship store in Shanghai Xintiandi Style II, with "Power Hub" as the core concept and sustainability as the main highlight. It has made achievements in the balance of community operation and business areas, as well as a unique consumer experience.

The problems of MAIA Active are mainly manifested in the following three aspects:

(1) Inappropriate promotional language and attitudes: The language and expressions used in the tweets about March 8 Women's Day have triggered widespread dissatisfaction and criticism. The brand was perceived as being too negative in its expressions, critical of feminism, and even using insulting terms, thus triggering strong resentment and skepticism from consumers and contradicting the image of respecting women's diversity that the brand has always advocated.

(2) Insincere apology and response: There are also some problems in the brand's handling of disputes. Although the brand issued an apology letter, the response in the comment section was one-sided in support of the brand, and even disparaging and criticizing voices appeared, which makes the brand's apology appear to be not sincere enough, but it has aroused the dissatisfaction of some consumers and intensified the crisis.

(3) The confusion of positioning and market strategy: Before MAIA Active, the brand has always been based on respect for women's diversity for the purpose, of vigorously promoting a variety of body and a variety of images. However, in this incident, the brand seems to be contrary to the previous brand image, asking women to "shut up" on specific occasions, which has raised doubts among users about the brand's true goals and values, and may also cause the brand to lose the support of its original audience.

MAIA Active has obvious problems in terms of promotional language, crisis response, and market positioning, and needs to re-examine and adjust its brand image to rebuild user trust and establish a positive brand image.

##### **Shein.**

Founded in July 2008, Shein is the largest cross-border fast fashion company in the country. Due to its low price, it quickly entered the international market. SHEIN's questions can be summarized as follows:

(1) Product quality and intellectual property issues: Consumers' doubts about product quality and reports involving harmful substances affect consumers' trust and purchase intention. In addition, accusations of intellectual property infringement and design plagiarism have brought legal risks and consumer questions to the brand.

(2) Tax and market exit risks: As a cross-border e-commerce company, SHEIN operates in different countries and regions and needs to adapt to changes in tax policies in various countries. The uncertainty of tax issues may lead to the brand being forced to withdraw from the local market, affecting the continuity of operations and market share. In recent years, SHEIN has faced tax reviews and questioning in Indonesia, the United Kingdom, Australia and other countries, which shows that tax issues may have a negative impact on its business.

(3) Rising costs and supply chain pressure: China's rising labor costs and the increase in global logistics and transportation costs have caused SHEIN to face rising supply chain costs and squeezed profit margins. This may affect its competitiveness in the market and its price advantage to consumers. In 2022, SHEIN's operating revenue reached \$22.7 billion and net profit was \$700 million. However, although it has achieved profitability for four consecutive years, its net profit has declined, in 2021, net profit was \$1.1 billion, while in 2022 it fell to \$700 million, a drop of 36%. SHEIN said the decline was mainly due to increased logistics and production costs.

SHEIN's business model and business strategy have been challenged. SHEIN needs to actively respond, take corresponding measures to manage risks and meet the increasingly diversified needs of consumers through continuous innovation and improvement of the brand's core competitiveness.

### **3.2 Countermeasures**

#### **Maia Active.**

In order to solve the problems faced by MAIA ACTIVE, the following are three aspects of countermeasures:

(1) Improve the propaganda language and attitude: Re-examine brand slogans, avoid using insulting language, and use respectful and inclusive language as much as possible. At the same time, pay attention to the principle of female diversity, establish a corresponding review mechanism, listen to user feedback in time and make corresponding adjustments. Improve the overall quality of the use of brand slogans and respect for women's attitudes.

(2) Sincere apology and response: Issue a more sincere and profound apology, admit the mistake, and make it clear that the brand will take measures to avoid similar problems from happening again. Actively respond to user criticism in the social media

comment area, show an open communication attitude, and avoid belittling user opinions.

(3) Redefine positioning and market strategy: Clearly express the core value of the brand, highlight the respect and support for women 's diversity, and establish users' trust in the authenticity of the brand. In the future market strategy, it will strive to maintain the consistency of the brand, avoid the occurrence of behaviors that are contrary to the consistent image of the brand, and establish the credibility of users on the values represented by their brands.

By taking the above measures, MAIA Active' s brand image will be reshaped, relationships with existing users will be repaired, and its future promotion and behavior will be consistent with the brand's core values, thus laying a solid foundation for the brand's development.

### **Shein.**

In view of the problems faced by SHEIN, the following are the corresponding countermeasures:

(1) Product quality and intellectual property issues: Improve product quality control and supervision mechanisms to ensure that products meet quality standards and display product test results in an open and transparent manner. And strengthen the protection of intellectual property rights, establish a dedicated team responsible for monitoring and responding to design plagiarism problems, to ensure the brand's reputation and legal status.

(2) Tax and market exit risks: Establish a more flexible tax strategy, pay close attention to changes in tax policies in various countries, and actively cooperate with relevant authorities to reduce tax risks. Further strengthen the international compliance team to ensure compliance with national tax regulations and prevent and resolve potential tax issues.

(3) Rising costs and supply chain pressure: Optimize the supply chain, seek more efficient production and logistics methods that reduce costs and increase profit margins. As well as the diversification of supply chain sources, reduce the excessive dependence of single regional risk on China's labor costs and reduce shocks. Strengthen cooperation with suppliers, seek opportunities in the overall supply chain, jointly reduce costs and enhance resilience.

By taking the above measures, By taking these measures, SHEIN can better cope with challenges in product quality, taxation, supply chain and other aspects, ensure that the company is competitive in the market and can continue to grow.

## **4 Opportunities and Prospects**

MAIA ACTIVE successfully utilizes a direct-to-consumer sales model, which enables them to better control product quality, reduce costs and improve user

experience. The brand can continue to optimize its DTC strategy, using data analysis and market feedback to further improve sales channels and customer experience to maintain a competitive advantage. Continue to introduce star products through product innovation, and meet consumer needs through continuous product iteration and improvement. Brands can continue to invest in research and development and innovation, constantly introducing new products in line with market trends and consumer preferences, and remain competitive. Community operation is one of the important factors for the success of MAIA ACTIVE. Brands can further strengthen the interaction with consumers, provide more valuable content and activities, and establish a closer relationship. Through continuous community building and activities, brands can enhance user participation and loyalty. Based on its domestic success, MAIA ACTIVE can consider expanding into international markets, especially outside Asia. Through customized marketing and product promotion according to the market characteristics and consumer needs of different regions, further expand the brand influence and market share. MAIA ACTIVE still has many opportunities to take advantage of based on its success. By continuously optimizing the DTC strategy, enhancing product innovation, deepening community operations, consolidating brand image, and expanding the international market, the brand can further achieve growth and development.

SHEIN's success stems from its unique flexible supply chain system, which has won an unparalleled growth momentum and brand charm for the brand in the global market. Based on this advantage, SHEIN's future opportunities include: Continue to lead the global fashion market: SHEIN has taken the lead in the global shopping APP download, showing its leading position in the global market. By continuously optimizing the flexible supply chain system, SHEIN is expected to continue to lead the global fashion market and maintain its brand's competitive advantage. Strengthen global supply chain cooperation: In the first half of 2023, SHEIN promised to inject CNY 500 million in five years to deepen supplier empowerment initiatives and set up the first clothing manufacturing innovation center. This indicates that SHEIN will strengthen its cooperation with supply chain partners and promote the development and promotion of flexible supply chain standards, thereby further consolidating its position in the global market. Continuous innovation and digital transformation: SHEIN is committed to promoting the transformation of the traditional clothing manufacturing industry to a digital and intelligent direction, and building a sustainable development ecosystem. Through continuous innovation and digital transformation, SHEIN is expected to continuously improve its competitiveness and meet the changing needs of consumers. Brand internationalization and global expansion: SHEIN has successfully ranked among the top four fashion brands in the world, sharing the industry leading position with ZARA, H & M and UNIQLO. In the future, SHEIN can continue to promote international development, expand its influence in the global market, and further consolidate its leading position in the global market. SHEIN has a huge opportunity to continuously optimize the flexible supply chain system, strengthen global supply chain cooperation, continuous innovation and digital transformation, and brand internationalization and global

expansion. It is expected to become a leading brand in the global fashion industry and set a new template for the success of Chinese enterprises in their global journey.

## 5 Conclusion

This paper discusses the growth process, opportunities and challenges from well-known brands to start-ups of clothing industry, which adopts Nike, ZARA, Anta, Lululemon and other brands, the development process of their early stages is analyzed. At the same time, it also pays attention to the problems and countermeasures faced by recent start-ups such as MAIA Active and SHEIN, as well as future opportunities. The article found that the successful brands focus on building unique brand concepts and high-quality products in the early stages, while recent start-ups need to face challenges such as market competition and supply chain management, but they can seize future opportunities through innovation and effective marketing. For start-up brands and brands that are about to enter the apparel industry, it is recommended to first establish clear and unique brand concepts and stories, shape brand images through in-depth market research, pay attention to product quality and design, and formulate comprehensive marketing strategies, including online and offline channel promotion, while establishing an effective supply chain management system, maintaining flexibility and innovation, focusing on the inheritance of brand culture and values, in order to promote cohesion and stability within the organization.

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10. Ding Chao. The enlightenment of foreign "fast fashion" fashion brand marketing strategy

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