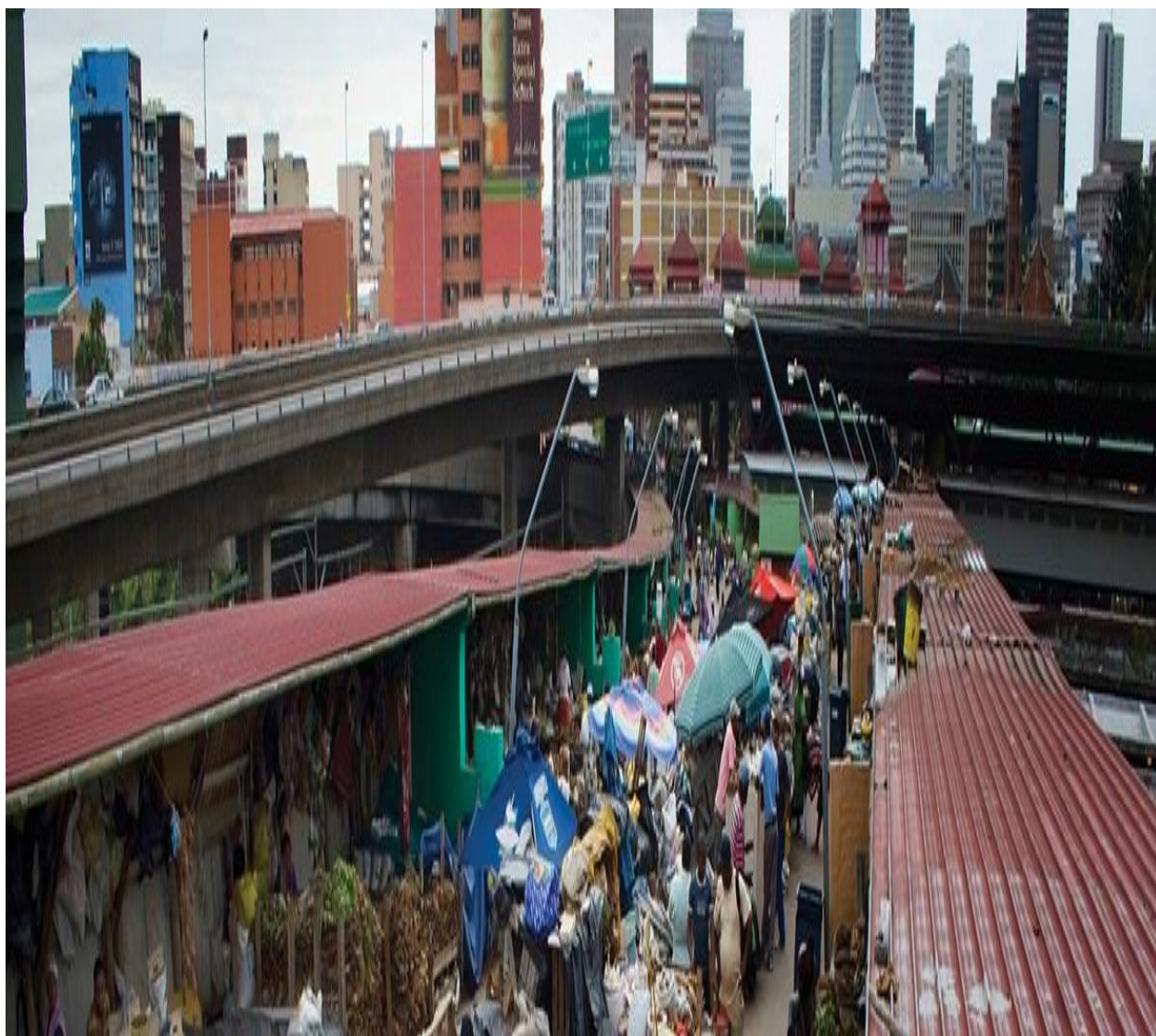


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RESEARCH ARTICLE

Case Study of Strategic Planning Practices in High-End Fashion Tech Organisations

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The integration of advanced digital technologies into the fashion industry has fundamentally reshaped strategic planning practices in high-end fashion-tech organisations. This study investigates how firms such as Zara and H&M incorporate digital transformation, data analytics, and agile supply chain systems into their strategic decision-making processes. Adopting a qualitative research design based on secondary data, the study applies the Resource-Based View (RBV), Dynamic Capabilities Theory, and Digital Transformation Theory to analyse evolving strategic practices. The findings reveal that strategic planning in fashion-tech organisations is increasingly characterised by real-time responsiveness, digital integration, and customer-centric innovation. Additionally, sustainability has emerged as a key strategic priority, supported by digital tools that enhance transparency and efficiency. The study contributes to the literature by demonstrating how traditional strategic frameworks can be adapted to digital environments. It also provides practical insights for managers seeking to enhance competitiveness through technology-driven strategies in a highly dynamic and uncertain market.

Keywords: strategic planning, digital transformation, fashion technology, dynamic capabilities, supply chain, sustainability, customer-centric strategy

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1. Introduction

The global fashion industry has entered a transformative era characterised by the rapid convergence of fashion and advanced digital technologies. Traditionally, fashion firms relied on seasonal production cycles, long planning horizons, and intuition-driven decision-making. However, the emergence of high-end fashion technology (fashion-tech) organisations has significantly altered these conventional approaches. The integration of digital tools such as artificial intelligence (AI), big data analytics, blockchain, and the Internet of Things (IoT) has not only reshaped operational processes but also redefined strategic planning practices across the industry (Brydges, 2021; Rachinger et al., 2019).

Strategic planning, which involves the formulation, implementation, and evaluation of organisational strategies, has historically been grounded in stable market assumptions and linear forecasting models (Ansoff, 1965). In contrast, the contemporary fashion-tech landscape is marked by volatility, uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity (VUCA), requiring firms to adopt more flexible and adaptive strategic frameworks. High-end fashion-tech organisations must continuously recalibrate their strategies in response to rapidly changing consumer preferences, technological disruptions, and global competition (McKinsey & Company, 2023).

One of the defining features of fashion-tech organisations is their reliance on data-driven decision-making. Unlike traditional fashion

houses that depended heavily on designers' intuition, modern firms leverage real-time data analytics to anticipate trends, optimise inventory, and personalise customer experiences. For example, companies such as Zara and H&M utilise digital platforms and AI algorithms to monitor consumer behaviour and adjust production accordingly, thereby minimising waste and enhancing responsiveness (Arrigo, 2021; Li et al., 2024). This shift toward data-centric strategies has profound implications for strategic planning, as it enables organisations to move from reactive to predictive and even prescriptive decision-making models.

Another critical aspect of strategic transformation in the fashion industry is the digitalisation of supply chains. High-end fashion-tech organisations have implemented integrated supply chain systems that facilitate real-time coordination between design, production, and distribution. This digital integration allows firms to reduce lead times, increase flexibility, and respond swiftly to market trends. The concept of “fast fashion” exemplifies this approach, where companies can design, manufacture, and deliver new products within weeks rather than months (Tokatli, 2008). Strategic planning in such contexts must account for the need for speed, efficiency, and continuous innovation.

Moreover, sustainability has emerged as a central concern in strategic planning within the fashion-tech sector. The environmental and social impacts of the fashion industry have attracted significant scrutiny, prompting organisations to incorporate sustainable practices into their strategic agendas. Digital technologies play a crucial role in enabling

sustainability by improving supply chain transparency, reducing waste, and facilitating circular economy models (Niinimäki et al., 2020). Consequently, strategic planning in high-end fashion-tech organisations increasingly involves balancing economic objectives with environmental and social responsibilities.

The rise of omnichannel retailing further complicates the strategic landscape. Consumers now interact with brands through multiple touchpoints, including physical stores, e-commerce platforms, and social media. High-end fashion-tech organisations must develop integrated strategies that ensure a seamless customer experience across these channels. This requires sophisticated data management systems and advanced analytics capabilities, which in turn influence strategic planning processes (Verhoef et al., 2021).

Despite the growing importance of digital transformation in the fashion industry, there remains a gap in the literature regarding how strategic planning practices are evolving in high-end fashion-tech organisations. While numerous studies have examined digital transformation and supply chain innovation, fewer have focused specifically on the strategic planning dimension and its theoretical underpinnings. This study seeks to address this gap by providing a comprehensive analysis of strategic planning practices in high-end fashion-tech organisations through a case study approach.

The primary objectives of this research are threefold. First, it aims to examine how digital technologies are integrated into the strategic planning processes of high-end fashion-tech organisations. Second, it seeks

to identify the theoretical frameworks that best explain these practices. Third, it aims to analyse the key strategic capabilities that enable these organisations to achieve and sustain competitive advantage in a highly dynamic environment.

To achieve these objectives, the study employs a qualitative research methodology based on secondary data, including academic literature, industry reports, and case studies of leading fashion-tech organisations. By synthesising insights from multiple sources, the study provides a nuanced understanding of the evolving nature of strategic planning in the fashion-tech sector.

In conclusion, the transformation of the fashion industry through digital technologies has necessitated a rethinking of traditional strategic planning practices. High-end fashion-tech organisations operate in an environment that demands agility, innovation, and customer-centricity. Understanding how these organisations navigate this complex landscape is essential for both academic research and managerial practice. This study contributes to the existing body of knowledge by offering a comprehensive analysis of strategic planning practices in the context of digital transformation, thereby providing valuable insights for scholars, practitioners, and policymakers.

2. Literature Review

Strategic planning has evolved significantly over the past several decades, reflecting changes in the business environment and organisational needs. Early strategic planning

models, such as those proposed by Ansoff (1965), emphasised formalised processes, long-term planning, and rational decision-making. These models assumed relatively stable environments in which organisations could predict future conditions and develop strategies accordingly.

However, the increasing complexity and dynamism of modern business environments have challenged these assumptions. Mintzberg (1994) criticised traditional strategic planning for its rigidity and inability to accommodate uncertainty. He argued that strategy should be viewed as an emergent process rather than a predetermined plan. This perspective is particularly relevant in the context of fashion-tech organisations, where rapid technological changes and shifting consumer preferences require continuous adaptation.

Contemporary strategic management literature emphasises the importance of agility and flexibility. Concepts such as agile strategy and real-time strategic planning have gained prominence, highlighting the need for organisations to respond quickly to environmental changes (Doz & Kosonen, 2010). In the fashion-tech industry, where trends evolve rapidly, these approaches are essential for maintaining competitiveness.

2.1 Digital Transformation and Strategic Planning

Digital transformation has become a central theme in recent strategic management research. It refers to the integration of digital technologies into all aspects of an organisation, fundamentally changing how it operates and delivers value to customers

(Rachinger et al., 2019). Digital transformation is not merely a technological change but also a strategic one, requiring organisations to rethink their business models, processes, and capabilities.

In the fashion industry, digital transformation has led to the emergence of new business models, such as fast fashion and direct-to-consumer (DTC) platforms. These models rely heavily on digital technologies to enhance efficiency and responsiveness. For example, AI-driven analytics enable firms to predict consumer preferences and optimise inventory management, while digital platforms facilitate seamless customer interactions (Brydges, 2021).

The integration of digital technologies into strategic planning processes allows organisations to leverage data for decision-making. This shift from intuition-based to data-driven strategies enhances accuracy and reduces uncertainty. Moreover, digital tools enable real-time monitoring and feedback, allowing organisations to adjust their strategies dynamically (Verhoef et al., 2021).

2.2 Resource-Based View (RBV) and Competitive Advantage

The Resource-Based View (RBV) provides a theoretical framework for understanding how organisations achieve competitive advantage. According to RBV, firms gain a competitive edge by possessing valuable, rare, inimitable, and non-substitutable (VRIN) resources (Barney, 1991). In the context of fashion-tech organisations, digital capabilities such as data analytics, AI, and integrated supply chains can be considered strategic resources.

These digital capabilities enable organisations to improve efficiency, enhance customer experiences, and innovate continuously. For example, the ability to analyse large volumes of data allows firms to identify emerging trends and respond proactively. This capability is particularly important in the fashion industry, where consumer preferences are highly dynamic.

Furthermore, RBV highlights the importance of organisational capabilities in leveraging resources effectively. High-end fashion-tech organisations must develop the skills and processes necessary to utilise digital technologies strategically. This includes investing in talent, fostering a culture of innovation, and aligning organisational structures with strategic objectives.

2.3 Dynamic Capabilities Theory

While RBV focuses on the possession of resources, Dynamic Capabilities Theory emphasises the ability of organisations to adapt and reconfigure their resources in response to changing environments (Teece et al., 1997). This perspective is particularly relevant in the fashion-tech industry, where rapid technological advancements and market fluctuations require continuous adaptation.

Dynamic capabilities include sensing opportunities, seizing them through strategic investments, and transforming organisational processes to maintain competitiveness. High-end fashion-tech organisations demonstrate these capabilities through practices such as rapid product development, continuous innovation, and agile supply chain management.

For instance, the ability to quickly design and launch new products in response to emerging trends reflects strong dynamic capabilities. Similarly, the integration of digital technologies into supply chains enables organisations to enhance flexibility and responsiveness.

2.4 Digital Supply Chain and Value Chain Integration

The concept of the global value chain (GVC) provides insights into how organisations coordinate activities across different stages of production and distribution. In the fashion industry, value chains are often geographically dispersed, involving multiple stakeholders. Digital technologies facilitate the integration and coordination of these value chains, improving efficiency and transparency (Butollo et al., 2022).

Digital supply chains enable real-time information sharing, allowing organisations to monitor production processes, manage inventory, and coordinate logistics more effectively. This integration is critical for implementing fast fashion strategies, where speed and flexibility are essential.

Moreover, digital technologies enhance supply chain resilience by enabling organisations to respond to disruptions quickly. For example, during global crises such as the COVID-19 pandemic, firms with digitally integrated supply chains were better able to adapt to changing conditions.

2.5 Sustainability and Strategic Planning

Sustainability has become a key consideration in strategic planning,

particularly in the fashion industry, which is known for its environmental impact. The adoption of sustainable practices is driven by regulatory pressures, consumer demand, and ethical considerations (Niinimäki et al., 2020).

Digital technologies play a crucial role in enabling sustainability by improving transparency and efficiency. For instance, blockchain technology can be used to track the origin of materials, ensuring ethical sourcing. Similarly, data analytics can help reduce waste by optimising production processes.

Strategic planning in high-end fashion-tech organisations must therefore incorporate sustainability objectives alongside economic goals. This requires a holistic approach that considers environmental, social, and governance (ESG) factors.

2.6 Customer-Centric Strategy and Omnichannel Integration

The shift toward customer-centric strategies is another important trend in the fashion industry. Digital technologies enable organisations to collect and analyse customer data, providing insights into preferences and behaviour. This information can be used to personalise products and services, enhancing customer satisfaction and loyalty (Verhoef et al., 2021).

Omnichannel integration further enhances the customer experience by providing seamless interactions across different platforms. High-end fashion-tech organisations must develop strategies that integrate online and offline channels, ensuring consistency and convenience.

3. Theoretical Framework

The transformation of strategic planning practices in high-end fashion-tech organisations necessitates a robust theoretical foundation that captures both traditional strategic management principles and contemporary digital dynamics. This study integrates three complementary theoretical perspectives: the Resource-Based View (RBV), Dynamic Capabilities Theory, and Digital Transformation Theory. Together, these frameworks provide a comprehensive lens for analysing how fashion-tech organisations achieve and sustain competitive advantage in a rapidly evolving environment.

3.1 Resource-Based View (RBV)

The Resource-Based View (RBV) posits that organisations achieve sustained competitive advantage through the possession and effective utilisation of valuable, rare, inimitable, and non-substitutable (VRIN) resources (Barney, 1991). Unlike industry-based theories that focus on external market conditions, RBV emphasises internal organisational capabilities as the primary drivers of performance.

In the context of high-end fashion-tech organisations, digital assets such as advanced analytics platforms, artificial intelligence (AI) systems, and integrated supply chain technologies constitute critical strategic resources. These resources enable firms to process vast amounts of data, identify emerging fashion trends, and respond rapidly to consumer demands. For example, data-driven design processes and predictive analytics allow organisations to reduce

uncertainty and enhance decision-making accuracy (Rachinger et al., 2019).

Moreover, intangible resources such as brand equity, design expertise, and organisational culture also play a significant role. High-end fashion brands often possess strong reputational capital, which, when combined with digital capabilities, creates a unique competitive positioning. The integration of technology with creative design capabilities exemplifies how tangible and intangible resources interact to generate value.

However, possessing resources alone is insufficient. Organisations must develop the capabilities to deploy these resources effectively. This includes investing in human capital, fostering innovation, and aligning organisational structures with strategic objectives. Thus, RBV provides a foundational understanding of how fashion-tech organisations leverage their internal strengths to support strategic planning.

3.2 Dynamic Capabilities Theory

While RBV focuses on resource possession, Dynamic Capabilities Theory extends this perspective by emphasising the organisation's ability to adapt, integrate, and reconfigure resources in response to changing environments (Teece et al., 1997). In highly dynamic industries such as fashion, where trends evolve rapidly and technological disruptions are frequent, the ability to adapt is critical for survival.

Dynamic capabilities are typically conceptualised in three dimensions: sensing, seizing, and transforming (Teece, 2007). Sensing involves identifying opportunities and threats in the external environment, often

through data analytics and market intelligence. In fashion-tech organisations, this may include monitoring social media trends, consumer preferences, and competitor activities.

Seizing refers to the organisation's ability to capitalise on identified opportunities by making strategic investments and decisions. For instance, firms may invest in new technologies, launch innovative product lines, or enter new markets. In the fashion industry, rapid product development cycles and agile manufacturing processes are examples of seizing capabilities.

Transforming involves the continuous renewal and reconfiguration of organisational resources and processes. This may include restructuring supply chains, adopting new business models, or integrating digital technologies into existing operations. High-end fashion-tech organisations demonstrate strong transforming capabilities by continuously innovating and adapting to market changes.

The relevance of dynamic capabilities in this study lies in their ability to explain how fashion-tech organisations maintain competitiveness in a volatile environment. Strategic planning in such contexts is not a one-time activity but an ongoing process of adaptation and renewal.

3.3 Digital Transformation Theory

Digital Transformation Theory provides a contemporary framework for understanding how digital technologies reshape organisational strategies, structures, and processes. It emphasises that digital transformation is not merely a technological

upgrade but a fundamental shift in how organisations create and deliver value (Vial, 2019).

In high-end fashion-tech organisations, digital transformation manifests in various forms, including the adoption of AI-driven analytics, digital supply chain systems, and omnichannel retail platforms. These technologies enable organisations to enhance efficiency, improve customer experiences, and develop innovative business models.

One of the key aspects of digital transformation is the integration of data into strategic decision-making processes. Data-driven strategies allow organisations to move beyond intuition-based planning and adopt more evidence-based approaches. This enhances the accuracy and effectiveness of strategic decisions (Verhoef et al., 2021).

Another important dimension is the impact of digital technologies on organisational structures and cultures. Digital transformation often requires organisations to adopt more flexible and collaborative structures, as well as a culture that encourages experimentation and innovation. In the fashion-tech industry, this may involve cross-functional teams, agile development processes, and continuous learning.

Furthermore, digital transformation facilitates the development of customer-centric strategies. By leveraging data analytics and digital platforms, organisations can gain deeper insights into customer preferences and behaviour, enabling personalised products and services. This aligns with the broader shift toward customer-centric strategic planning.

3.4 Integration of Theoretical Perspectives

The integration of RBV, Dynamic Capabilities Theory, and Digital Transformation Theory provides a holistic framework for analysing strategic planning practices in high-end fashion-tech organisations. RBV explains the importance of internal resources and capabilities, Dynamic Capabilities Theory highlights the need for adaptability, and Digital Transformation Theory captures the role of technology in reshaping strategic processes.

Together, these frameworks suggest that successful strategic planning in fashion-tech organisations depends on the ability to:

- Develop and leverage unique digital and organisational resources (RBV),
- Continuously adapt to changing environments (Dynamic Capabilities), and
- Integrate digital technologies into all aspects of strategy (Digital Transformation).

This integrated framework serves as the foundation for the empirical analysis conducted in this study.

4. Research Methodology

This study adopts a qualitative research design to explore strategic planning practices in high-end fashion-tech organisations. Qualitative research is particularly suitable for this study because it allows for an in-depth understanding of complex phenomena within their real-world context (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Given the exploratory nature of

the research questions, a qualitative approach provides the flexibility needed to capture the dynamic and multifaceted nature of strategic planning in the fashion-tech industry.

A case study methodology is employed as the primary research strategy. Case studies are widely used in management research to examine contemporary phenomena within their natural settings (Yin, 2018). This approach is appropriate for analysing strategic planning practices, as it enables the researcher to investigate how organisations integrate digital technologies into their strategies.

4.1 Data Collection

The study relies on secondary data sources, which are particularly useful for qualitative research when primary data collection is constrained by time, resources, or accessibility. Secondary data also allows for the analysis of multiple cases and the triangulation of information from different sources.

The data sources used in this study include:

- Peer-reviewed academic journals
- Industry reports (e.g., McKinsey, Deloitte)
- Company reports and official websites
- News articles and case studies

These sources provide rich and diverse information on the strategic practices of high-end fashion-tech organisations. The use of multiple data sources enhances the credibility and validity of the findings through triangulation (Bowen, 2009).

4.2 Case Selection

The study focuses on selected high-end fashion-tech organisations, including Zara and H&M, which are widely recognised for their leadership in digital transformation and strategic innovation. These cases were selected based on the following criteria:

- **Industry relevance:** The organisations are prominent players in the global fashion industry.
- **Digital maturity:** They have demonstrated significant adoption of digital technologies.
- **Availability of data:** Sufficient secondary data is available for analysis.

The selection of these cases allows for a comparative analysis of different strategic planning approaches within the fashion-tech sector.

4.3 Data Analysis

Thematic analysis is used as the primary data analysis technique. Thematic analysis involves identifying, analysing, and interpreting patterns or themes within qualitative data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). This method is suitable for this study because it allows for the systematic examination of complex data and the identification of key themes related to strategic planning practices. The data analysis process follows several steps:

- **Data familiarisation:** Reviewing and organising the collected data.
- **Coding:** Identifying relevant segments of data and assigning codes.

- **Theme development:** Grouping codes into broader themes.
- **Interpretation:** Analysing the themes in relation to the theoretical framework.

This structured approach ensures a rigorous and transparent analysis of the data.

4.4 Reliability and Validity

Ensuring reliability and validity is essential in qualitative research. In this study, several strategies are employed to enhance the trustworthiness of the findings:

- **Triangulation:** Using multiple data sources to verify findings.
- **Transparency:** Clearly documenting the research process.
- **Theoretical grounding:** Linking findings to established theories.

These measures help ensure that the results are credible and robust.

4.5 Ethical Considerations

As the study relies on secondary data, ethical concerns related to data collection are minimal. However, all sources are properly cited to ensure academic integrity and avoid plagiarism (Mannan & Farhana, 2026). The study adheres to APA (7th edition) guidelines for referencing and citation.

4.6 Limitations of the Methodology

Despite its strengths, the methodology has certain limitations. The reliance on secondary data may limit the depth of insights compared to primary data collection methods such as interviews or surveys. Additionally, the findings may be influenced by the availability and quality of existing data.

Another limitation is the focus on a limited number of case organisations, which may affect the generalizability of the findings. However, the purpose of this study is not to generalise but to provide in-depth insights into strategic planning practices.

4.7 Justification of Methodological Approach

The chosen methodology is justified by the exploratory nature of the research and the complexity of the phenomenon under study. The combination of qualitative research, case study methodology, and secondary data analysis provides a comprehensive approach to understanding strategic planning practices in high-end fashion-tech organisations.

5. Findings and Analysis

This section presents the key findings derived from the qualitative analysis of secondary data on high-end fashion-tech organisations, particularly focusing on Zara and H&M. The findings are organised into major thematic areas aligned with the theoretical framework: digital integration, strategic agility, customer-centric innovation, supply chain transformation, and sustainability-driven strategy.

5.1 Digital Integration as a Core Strategic Capability

One of the most prominent findings is the centrality of digital integration in strategic planning. High-end fashion-tech organisations have embedded digital technologies across all functional areas, including design, production, marketing, and distribution. This integration is not merely

operational but deeply strategic, shaping how organisations formulate and execute their long-term plans.

Zara, for instance, has developed a highly digitised supply chain system that enables real-time communication between retail stores and production units. Store managers use digital devices to transmit sales data and customer feedback directly to headquarters, allowing designers to quickly adapt products based on market demand (Li et al., 2024). Similarly, H&M employs advanced analytics and AI algorithms to forecast demand and optimise inventory levels (Arrigo, 2021).

From the perspective of the Resource-Based View (RBV), these digital systems constitute valuable and inimitable resources that provide a sustained competitive advantage (Barney, 1991). The integration of digital tools enhances decision-making capabilities, reduces uncertainty, and improves operational efficiency. Moreover, the ability to process and analyse large volumes of data enables organisations to anticipate trends and respond proactively.

5.2 Strategic Agility and Real-Time Decision-Making

Another key finding is the shift from traditional, long-term strategic planning to agile and real-time decision-making processes. High-end fashion-tech organisations operate in an environment characterised by rapid changes in consumer preferences and technological advancements. As a result, they must adopt flexible strategies that can be continuously adjusted.

Zara exemplifies strategic agility through its fast fashion model, which allows the

company to design, produce, and distribute new products within a matter of weeks. This rapid cycle is supported by digital technologies that facilitate real-time data collection and analysis (Tokatli, 2008). In contrast, H&M adopts a more data-driven approach, using predictive analytics to inform strategic decisions and reduce uncertainty.

Dynamic Capabilities Theory provides a useful lens for understanding this phenomenon. The ability to sense, seize, and transform in response to environmental changes is evident in the strategic practices of these organisations (Teece, 2007). For example, sensing is achieved through data analytics and market monitoring, seizing through rapid product development, and transforming through continuous innovation and process optimisation.

The findings suggest that strategic agility is not only a response to environmental uncertainty but also a deliberate strategic choice. Organisations that prioritise agility are better positioned to capitalise on emerging opportunities and mitigate risks.

5.3 Customer-Centric Innovation

The analysis reveals a strong emphasis on customer-centricity in strategic planning. High-end fashion-tech organisations leverage digital technologies to gain deep insights into customer preferences and behaviour, enabling them to develop personalised products and services.

For instance, H&M uses AI-driven recommendation systems to personalise the online shopping experience, while Zara collects real-time feedback from customers to

inform product design. Social media platforms and e-commerce data provide valuable information on consumer trends, allowing organisations to align their strategies with customer expectations (Verhoef et al., 2021).

This shift toward customer-centric innovation reflects a broader transformation in the fashion industry, where consumers are increasingly empowered by digital technologies. Organisations must therefore adopt strategies that prioritise customer engagement and satisfaction.

From a theoretical perspective, customer-centricity can be linked to both RBV and Digital Transformation Theory. The ability to leverage customer data as a strategic resource enhances competitive advantage, while digital transformation enables organisations to deliver personalised experiences at scale.

5.4 Digital Supply Chain Transformation

Supply chain transformation emerges as a critical component of strategic planning in high-end fashion-tech organisations. Digital technologies have enabled firms to develop integrated and responsive supply chains that enhance efficiency and flexibility.

Zara's vertically integrated supply chain allows the company to maintain tight control over production and distribution processes. This integration enables rapid response to market changes and reduces lead times significantly (Tokatli, 2008). In contrast, H&M relies on a more decentralised supply chain but uses digital tools to coordinate activities and optimise performance.

The Global Value Chain (GVC) framework highlights the importance of coordination and control in geographically dispersed production networks (Butollo et al., 2022). Digital technologies facilitate this coordination by enabling real-time information sharing and communication among stakeholders.

The findings indicate that digital supply chain capabilities are essential for implementing fast fashion strategies. Organisations that invest in digital supply chain systems are better able to manage complexity, reduce costs, and improve responsiveness.

5.5 Sustainability as a Strategic Priority

Sustainability has become a central theme in the strategic planning of high-end fashion-tech organisations. The environmental and social impacts of the fashion industry have led to increased pressure from regulators, consumers, and stakeholders to adopt sustainable practices.

Both Zara and H&M have implemented various sustainability initiatives, such as using eco-friendly materials, reducing waste, and improving supply chain transparency. Digital technologies play a crucial role in enabling these initiatives by providing data on resource usage and environmental impact (Niinimäki et al., 2020).

The integration of sustainability into strategic planning reflects a shift from purely economic objectives to a more holistic approach that considers environmental and social factors. This aligns with the concept of the triple bottom line, which emphasises the

importance of balancing economic, environmental, and social performance.

5.6 Comparative Strategic Approaches

The comparative analysis of Zara and H&M reveals distinct strategic approaches despite their shared emphasis on digital transformation.

- Zara focuses on speed and agility, leveraging its vertically integrated supply chain to respond quickly to market trends.
- H&M emphasises data-driven decision-making and predictive analytics to optimise operations and enhance customer experience.

These differences highlight the diversity of strategic planning practices within the fashion-tech sector. While both organisations leverage digital technologies, they do so in different ways to achieve their strategic objectives.

Overall, the findings suggest that strategic planning in high-end fashion-tech organisations is characterised by:

- Deep integration of digital technologies
- Emphasis on agility and adaptability
- Strong focus on customer-centric innovation
- Transformation of supply chain processes
- Increasing importance of sustainability

These elements collectively define a new paradigm of strategic planning that is

dynamic, data-driven, and technology-enabled.

6. Discussion

The findings of this study provide significant insights into the evolving nature of strategic planning in high-end fashion-tech organisations. This section discusses these findings in relation to the theoretical framework and existing literature, highlighting their implications for theory and practice.

6.1 Reinterpreting RBV in the Digital Era

The Resource-Based View (RBV) has traditionally emphasised the importance of internal resources in achieving competitive advantage. However, the findings of this study suggest that the nature of these resources is changing in the digital era.

Digital capabilities, such as data analytics, AI, and integrated supply chain systems, have emerged as critical strategic resources. These capabilities are not only valuable and rare but also difficult to imitate due to their complexity and the organisational processes required to implement them (Rachinger et al., 2019).

Furthermore, the integration of digital and intangible resources creates new forms of competitive advantage. For example, combining brand equity with data-driven insights enables organisations to deliver personalised experiences that are difficult for competitors to replicate.

Thus, RBV remains relevant but must be reinterpreted to account for the role of digital technologies and data as strategic resources.

6.2 Dynamic Capabilities and Strategic Agility

The findings strongly support the relevance of Dynamic Capabilities Theory in explaining strategic planning practices in fashion-tech organisations. The ability to sense, seize, and transform is evident in the agile strategies adopted by firms such as Zara and H&M.

Strategic agility emerges as a key capability that enables organisations to navigate uncertainty and complexity. This aligns with the work of Doz and Kosonen (2010), who emphasise the importance of agility in dynamic environments.

Moreover, the integration of digital technologies enhances dynamic capabilities by providing real-time data and enabling rapid decision-making. This suggests that digital transformation and dynamic capabilities are closely interrelated.

6.3 Digital Transformation as a Strategic Imperative

The study highlights digital transformation as a central driver of strategic change in the fashion industry. Unlike traditional technological upgrades, digital transformation involves a fundamental rethinking of business models and strategic processes (Vial, 2019).

The findings indicate that digital transformation enables organisations to move from reactive to proactive and predictive strategies. This shift has significant

implications for strategic planning, as it allows firms to anticipate changes and respond more effectively.

Furthermore, digital transformation facilitates the development of customer-centric strategies by providing insights into consumer behaviour. This aligns with the literature on digital marketing and customer experience management (Verhoef et al., 2021).

6.4 Integration of Sustainability into Strategy

The incorporation of sustainability into strategic planning reflects a broader shift toward responsible business practices. The findings suggest that sustainability is no longer a peripheral concern but a core strategic priority.

Digital technologies play a crucial role in enabling sustainable practices by improving transparency and efficiency. For example, data analytics can be used to optimise resource usage and reduce waste, while blockchain can enhance supply chain transparency.

This integration of sustainability aligns with the concept of shared value, which emphasises the importance of creating economic value while addressing social and environmental challenges.

6.5 Implications for Strategic Planning Models

The findings of this study have important implications for strategic planning models. Traditional models, which emphasise long-term planning and stability, are no longer

sufficient in the context of fashion-tech organisations.

Instead, strategic planning must be viewed as a dynamic and continuous process that integrates digital technologies and real-time data. This requires organisations to adopt more flexible and adaptive approaches, such as agile strategy and continuous planning.

6.6 Managerial Implications

For practitioners, the findings highlight the importance of investing in digital capabilities and developing dynamic capabilities. Managers must also prioritise customer-centric strategies and sustainability to remain competitive.

6.7 Contribution to Literature

This study contributes to the literature by integrating multiple theoretical perspectives and providing empirical insights into strategic planning practices in the fashion-tech sector. It bridges the gap between traditional strategic management theories and contemporary digital transformation research.

7. Conclusion

This study has examined the strategic planning practices of high-end fashion-tech organisations within the context of rapid digital transformation and evolving market dynamics. By integrating insights from the Resource-Based View (RBV), Dynamic Capabilities Theory, and Digital Transformation Theory, the research provides a comprehensive understanding of how organisations such as Zara and H&M develop and implement strategies in a highly

competitive and technology-driven environment.

The findings indicate that strategic planning in the fashion-tech sector has shifted from traditional, long-term, and static approaches to more agile, data-driven, and adaptive processes. Digital technologies, including artificial intelligence, big data analytics, and integrated supply chain systems, have become central to strategic decision-making. These technologies enable organisations to collect and analyse real-time data, anticipate consumer trends, and respond rapidly to market changes. As a result, strategic planning is increasingly characterised by flexibility, speed, and continuous innovation.

Furthermore, the study highlights the critical role of digital capabilities as strategic resources. From an RBV perspective, these capabilities provide a sustainable competitive advantage by enhancing efficiency, improving customer experiences, and enabling innovation. At the same time, the importance of dynamic capabilities is evident in the ability of organisations to sense opportunities, seize them through strategic actions, and transform their operations in response to environmental changes.

Another key conclusion is the growing significance of sustainability in strategic planning. High-end fashion-tech organisations are increasingly integrating environmental and social considerations into their strategies, driven by regulatory pressures and changing consumer expectations. Digital technologies facilitate this integration by improving transparency and enabling more efficient resource utilisation.

In conclusion, the study demonstrates that successful strategic planning in the fashion-tech industry requires a holistic approach that combines digital innovation, organisational agility, and sustainability. The research contributes to both theory and practice by bridging traditional strategic management frameworks with contemporary digital transformation perspectives. Future research could extend this work by incorporating primary data and examining additional organisations to further validate and generalise the findings.

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