

ITC4085R Fashion Brand Management  
Brand Audit Report

TUT002 Group 2

**Brooks Brothers Brand Audit**

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## 1. Executive Summary

Brooks Brother, a traditional American fashion company, which has used to be the top model and named as the 'president suit' in the fashion industry for the last twenty decades. However, Brooks Brother has announced a financial crisis under the pandemic of COVID-19. Hence, our group would like to investigate the reasons that caused the breakdown of Brooks Brothers.

This is a brand audit report of the fashion company "Brooks Brother". It provides context & capability (2Cs) analysis on background, brand attributes, customers, and macro trends. Two identical competitors of Brooks Brothers, Ralph Loran and Hugo Boss, would be analyzed to compare the market segment with Brooks Brother. Brooks Brothers' brand equity and CBBE pyramid would be evaluated to identify Brooks Brothers' strategic potential advantages and disadvantages.

Moreover, we have identified three critical problems relating to Brooks Brothers which includes unclear brand positioning, poor brand credibility and weak brand awareness. Based on its capability and audit analysis, we have proposed the following strategy choices for Brooks Brothers to maximize its brand elements and improve its competitiveness in the long-term: 1) Strengthen brand positioning with a slogan, 2) Achieve digitalization to improve production transparency by blockchain, 3) Re-brand personality by embracing innovation, and 4) Reinforcing brand identity by a new logo design.

### 1.2. Objectives

The objectives of this brand audit report are as follows:

1. Assess brand health of Brooks Brothers
2. Evaluate Brooks brothers' performance
3. Define the market position of Brooks brother in fashion industry
4. Analyze the impact of strategic based on brand identity and brand value
5. Dissect Brooks brother's differentiation & potential challenges in market
6. Propose a new campaign to increase brand equity in a sustainable way

### 1.3. Scope of audit

#### Brand internal operation audit

The purpose of the brand internal operational audit is to rate the brand performance by the effectiveness and accuracy of Brooks Brothers' management of operation, which helps the brand to improve their brand reputation and create higher value. For example, product and service quality control, marketing strategies and production technology control.


Brand external operation audit

The purpose of the brand external operation audit is to find the position of Brooks Brothers in the fashion market to help the company to develop branding. Furthermore, the TOWS of Brooks Brothers is evaluated to suggest solutions to its weaknesses and threats, give advice on maintaining and enhancing its strengths, and generalize more potential opportunities. The situation and general trend of fashion business under the pandemic of COVID-19 is analyzed in the brand external operation audit to suggest methods to reach better long-term brand equity and sustainability. Also, the innovation of Brooks Brothers’ brand and products are measured to see if the brand has enough spots in the current situation.

Therefore, brand operation audit is to identify the strength and weakness of Brooks Brothers in internal and external operation to help the brand to improve their performance and cope with different problems that lead to its failure.

**1.4. Brand history**

Brooks Brothers, originally called H. & D.H. Brooks & Co., was founded by Henry Sands Brooks on April 7, 1818 in New York City. The brand provides an original authority on American style with stylish modern clothing and heritage designs. In these 200 years, it is popular among fortune seekers, businessmen, college students, and even presidents.

1818	The first store of Brooks Brothers.
1849	<p>It introduced the first to embark on the <b>ready-made suits</b>. In 1850, the "<b>THE GOLDEN FLEECE</b>" symbol was used as the company's trademark.</p>  <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Figure 1. "THE GOLDEN FLEECE" Symbol (Brooks Brothers, 2021)</i></p>
1896	Brooks Brothers introduced the <b>original button down polo shirt</b> which is identified as the most imitated piece in fashion history. It also served as Brooks Brothers classic item.
1902	Brooks Brothers was the <b>first one to offer madras</b> which is a kind of colorful Indian fabric and repp tie to American customers.
1979	Brooks Brothers launched the <b>first international location in Japan</b> which is its first step to expand the brand to the international level.
<i>Until the 21st century</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Opened <b>more than 250 retail stores in the United States</b> and more than 250 stores <b>worldwide</b>.</li> </ul>	


2007	Brooks Brothers launched a new high-end menswear and womenswear collection, named <b>Black Fleece</b> . 
2008	Brooks Brothers opened a stand-alone Black Fleece boutique on Bleecker Street and launched a new line to sell luxury home furnishings.
<p><i>Unfortunately, the situation began to stagnate in 2017</i></p>	
2017	The online and offline competition in the market became intense, Brooks Brothers' sales stagnated at around \$1 billion.
Mid-2020	<p><i>Facing with COVID-19 pandemic and declining sales</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Brooks Brothers filed for <b>bankruptcy</b> and sought buyers</li> <li>• Closed 51 of its stores in North America</li> </ul>
August 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Brooks Brothers was <b>sold to SPARC Group</b> (a partnership between Authentic Brands Group and Simon Property Group) for \$325 million</li> <li>• The new owner committed to <b>continue the operation</b> in the US and worldwide</li> </ul>

Figure 2. Black Fleece Collection (Brooks Brothers, 2021)

### 1.5. Core brand attributes

Core Brand Attributes	
Product	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The innovator of many classic styles which includes a ready-made suit, button down shirt, and the rep tie</li> <li>• Wide range of colors, high quality fabrics and finest materials</li> <li>• Offer fashion apparel &amp; home accessories</li> </ul>
Service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Global shipping, orders tracking and return and exchange policy</li> <li>• Makes good use of its social media account to release information</li> </ul>
Personnel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employees' attributes: courteous, considerate and credibility attributes</li> <li>• Quick respond to customers requests &amp; problems</li> <li>• Provide tailored services to customers</li> </ul>
Channel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Good coverage of location</li> <li>• Provides services via WhatsApp, by email, phone or to book an appointment online</li> </ul>
Image	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Logo: a sheep suspended on a ribbon which represents a symbol of fine wool → Signifying its great measure of excellence &amp; legendary brand identity</li> </ul>

Table 1. Summary of Brooks Brothers' Core Brand Attributes.

#### Product differentiation

Brooks Brothers is the destination for classic American clothing. For nearly two centuries, it

has been the innovator of many classic styles which includes a ready-made suit, button down shirt, and the repp tie. It provides a relatively wide range of colors, high quality fabrics and finest materials while there are several fit types for customers to choose. Brooks Brothers' craftsmanship is built to impress and last while it is suitable for both formal and casual occasions. And specially, apart from apparel, it offers a collection of home accessories.



Figure 3 & 4. Brooks Brothers' Innovative Items & Home Accessories. (Brooks Brothers, 2021)

### **Services differentiation**

Brooks Brothers offer online and offline services. View from the online website, it offers global shipping, orders tracking and return and exchange policy. Brooks Brothers has a great ease of ordering, consumers are able to order and receive products without access to the store. The ordering process and delivery can be done efficiently by online payment and platform. It also accepts refundable goods with original receipt within 60 to 90 days from the date of purchase, except the tailored goods. Moreover, Brooks Brothers makes good use of its social media account, latest information and seasonal promotion would be released to the media.

### **Personnel differentiation**

Brooks Brothers' culture is rooted in its values of relationships, innovation, history, justice and celebration. The brand targets employees with courteous, considerate and credibility attributes. Brooks Brothers aims to provide an intimate and advanced shopping experience. Through professional training, employees are able to respond quickly to customers requests and problems and provide tailored services to customers. Brooks Brothers enjoys an excellent reputation in large part because of its services.

### **Channel differentiation**

Brooks Brothers is equipped with both an online and offline platform for customers to visit. It adopts an omni-channel retailing approach which is a seamless retail method that provides an unified shopping experience for all retail channel formats. It has more than 250 locations in the United States and more than 250 international locations, there are even 13 locations in Hong Kong. Therefore, the coverage of location is adequate. Moreover, under the COVID pandemic, Brooks Brother provides services via WhatsApp, by email, phone or to book an appointment online.

**Image differentiation**

Brooks Brothers' brand logo is signifying its great measure of excellence and legendary brand identity. The logo image is a sheep suspended on a ribbon which represents a symbol of fine wool. This classic logo brings brand recognition, and contains the historical significance and aesthetics of the brand. The symbol of sheep was one of the most coveted objects in medieval Europe as it was the emblem of the Knights of the Golden Fleece. Therefore, Brooks Brothers' ribbon sheep icon is reflecting its association to the symbol of quality, heritage and excellence in the European tradition. The figure below is showing the evaluation of its logo.



Figure 5. Evaluation of Brooks Brothers' logo (Brooks Brothers, 2021)

**1.6. Brand Product Portfolio**

Brooks Brothers is targeting customers who are well educated professionals and between the age of 25 to 45. For the product, Brooks Brothers has divided their items into **5 categories** which are menswear, womenswear, childrenswear, home accessories and Red Fleece.

Menswear	<p><b>Collections:</b>The Wedding Shop, Linen, Seersucker, Madras, The Work Shop, Casual Comfort Shop and Performance Series  <b>Apparels:</b> Dress Shirts, Sport Shirts, Ties, Suits, Outerwear, Sport Coats &amp; Blazers, Sweaters, Tuxedo Trousers, Casual Pants, Polos, T-shirts &amp; Henleys, Shorts &amp; Swimwear, Underwear &amp; Socks and Sleepwear  <b>Shoes &amp; Accessories:</b> Shoes, Belts, Wallets &amp; small accessories, Briefcases &amp; Luggage, Hats, Gloves &amp; Scarves, Pocket Squares &amp; Handkerchiefs, Tie &amp; Collar Accessories, Cufflinks, Fragrance, Gifts, Sunglasses, Umbrellas, Books and Face Masks</p>
Womenswear	<p><b>Collections:</b> Work From Anywhere, Linen &amp; Seersucker and Oxford Shirts  <b>Apparel:</b> Petites, Shirts &amp; Tops, Sweaters, Dresses, Jackets, Pants, Skirts &amp; Shorts, Suit Separates, Outerwear, Sleepwear  <b>Shoes &amp; Accessories:</b> Shoes &amp; Belts, Handbags &amp; Wallets, Hats, Scarves &amp; Wraps, Jewelry, Fragrance, Hosiery &amp; Socks, Books and Face Masks</p>
Childrenswear	<p><b>Boys</b>  <b>Apparels:</b> Shirts, Ties, Sweaters &amp; Vests, Polos &amp; T-shirts, Pants, Shorts &amp; Swimwear, Suits, Sport Coats &amp; Formal Wear and Outerwear  <b>Shoes &amp; Accessories:</b> Shoes, Belts and Underwear &amp; Socks</p>
	<p><b>Girls</b>  <b>Collections:</b> The School Uniform Shop  <b>Apparel:</b> Blouses &amp; Knits, Sweaters, Pants &amp; Shorts, Dresses &amp; Skirts and Jackets &amp; Outerwear  <b>Accessories:</b> Shoes &amp; Accessories</p>
Home Accessories	Bedding, Bath and Home Decor
Red Fleece	<p><b>Menswear</b>  <b>Collections:</b> Shoes &amp; Accessories and Performance Series Collection  Shirts, Sportcoats, Ties &amp; Pocket Squares, Sweaters, Polos &amp; T-shirts, Pants, Shorts &amp; Swimwear, Outerwear</p>
	<p><b>Womenswear</b>  <b>Collections:</b> Shoes &amp; Accessories  Shirts &amp; Tops, Sweaters, Dresses, Jackets, Pants &amp; Shirts, Sleepwear and Outerwear</p>

Table 2. Summary of Brooks Brothers' Product Portfolio.



## Menswear

Menswear is the most well-known product line of Brooks Brothers. It is providing apparels for the customers from formal to casual, from day to night. The biggest and iconic collection of Brooks Brothers is the series of formal suits, such as Dress Suits, Ties, Suits, Tie & Collar Accessories and Cuff Links. Providing different fits and sizes of shirts to ensure every customer finds their perfect size. Customers can choose with collections, patterns, fittings, vent style, jacket style and fabrics for their suits. For example, patterns can be in checks & plaids, solids, stripes; double breast, two-button and three-button for the jack; center and side vent etc. Besides formal wear, Sportswear, Sleepwear and Casualwear are also offered.



Figure 6. Image of Brooks Brothers' Menswear (Brooks Brothers,2021)

## Womenswear

Brooks Brothers is providing alternatives for workplace women. Other than working dresses, working suits are also provided, which help their customers to create the image of fashionable and professional at the same time. Brooks Brothers offers their apparels in different shapes. For example, under the category of dresses, there are options of cap sleeves, long sleeves, short sleeves, sleeveless and three-quarter sleeves. Moreover, Brooks Brothers also offers casualwear and sleepwear for their customers.



Figure 7. Images of Brooks Brothers' Womenswear. (Brooks Brothers, 2021)

## Childrenswear

Brooks brothers provides a variety of choices in childrenswear. Similar with menswear and womenswear, Brooks brother aims to provide service from head to toe. Brooks Brothers would like to spread the idea of quality uniform. Both girls and boys school uniforms are

available which can experience the extensive use of American Style. The combination of polo shirts with chino pants or chino skirts can fully express the idea of traditional American dressing of casual formal. For boys, two-button and three-button blazers such American formal dressing are provided, featuring the iconic and representative bow ties. Brooks Brother is representing the traditional American dressing style.



*Figure 8. Image of Brooks Brothers' Childrenswear. (Brooks Brothers, 2021)*

### Home Accessories

Brooks Brothers provides home essentials that creates an elevated atmosphere for their customers. American traditional style is penetrating the whole product line from the pattern, color and printing of bedding, bath and home decor. Brooks Brothers offers a simpler pattern than a complicated pattern to present the essence of American tradition such as checks, plaid, solids and stripes.



*Figure 9. Image of Brooks Brothers' Home Accessories (Brooks Brothers, 2021)*

### Red Fleece

Red Fleece is a series that presents new perspectives of traditional American Style which is a low-priced line to attract younger customers. Brooks Brothers includes more leisure wear in this series such as Sportswear, Sweaters, Polos and T-shirts. Implying more light color and pattern to the apparels. Instead of fitting size, losing fit is dominating Red Fleece as it is focusing on the comfort and casual.





Figure 10. Image of Brooks Brothers' Red Fleece (Brooks Brothers, 2021)

## 2. Market/Competitive/ Consumer Analysis

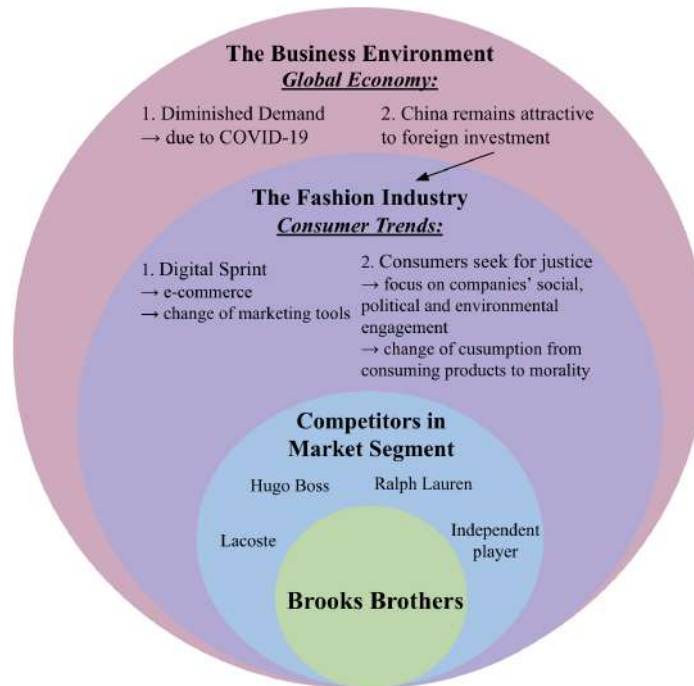


Figure 11. The Layers of Strategic Context.

### 2.1. Global Economy

#### 2.1.1. Deminished Demand

It is predicted that the economic situation is deteriorating due to the COVID-19 pandemic. According to McKinsey's report, the revenues of the entire fashion industry has fallen by 93% compared to 2019. It affects Brooks Brothers in various ways. Hence there is a decrease in employment of suppliers, increase in raw materials subsequently, increase in cost of goods. Along with the decrease in sales, there is a decrease in gross profit. Businesses should exploit new prospects and double down on underperforming markets, platforms, and regions, as demand for fashion is unlikely to rebound due to restrained purchasing capacity amidst unemployment and increasing inequality.

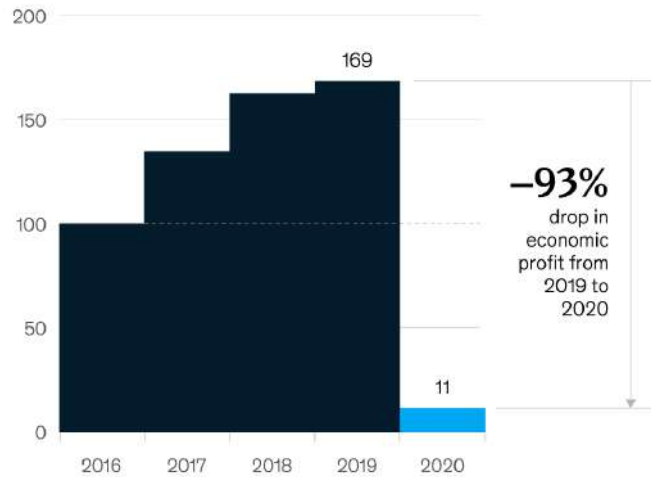


Figure 12. The Economic Profit in the Fashion Industry from 2016-2020. (McKinsey Global Fashion Index, 2021)

### 2.1.2. China remains attractive to foreign investment

According to the BoF--McKinsey Report (2021), China as an attractive market is one of the global economic trends. According to Statista (2020), China topped in the revenue comparison in the fashion industry USD 330,633, which is more than double that of the United States. According to Figure 13, the fashion sales in China are expected to cover in 2020, while the recovery in the other places of the globe still struggles. Brooks Brothers mentioned that China is growing very strongly and he believes it is the biggest opportunity for the next 10 years, which China might actually be their number-one country. Brooks Brothers wanted to increase the brand recognition in China.

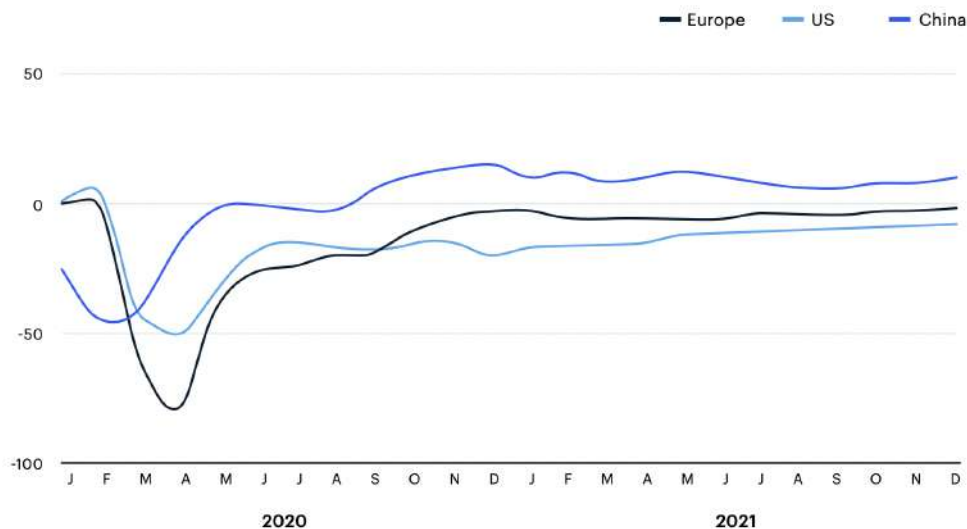


Figure 13. the expected fashion sales in the earlier recovery scenario, compared to 2019, % (extracted from Mckinsey Fashion Scenarios)

## 2.2. Consumer Shift

The most lucrative market for prospects during the pandemic, according to the BoF-McKinsey State of Fashion 2021 Survey, would be in the fields of digital and sustainability. There are 30 percent and 10% of executives vote for these two topics respectively.

### 2.2.1. Digital Sprint

Digitalisation increases the presence of e-commerce. E-commerce booms dramatically after COVID. The overall online retail sales increased by 40%. According to the BoF-Mckinsey Report 2021, the share of online fashion sales is expected to remain high in 2021, which is shown in Fig 14. The trend is associated with our brand, brooks brother too as it developed several e-commerce platforms, like social media and their own mobile app. However, brooks brother is bad at online customer services as they are inefficient in customer complaint handling. Regarding the story telling element, it is related to creating the brand image, interactivity and customer loyalty. Brooks brothers is not good at storytelling. They are too product oriented and overlook the messages behind the product.

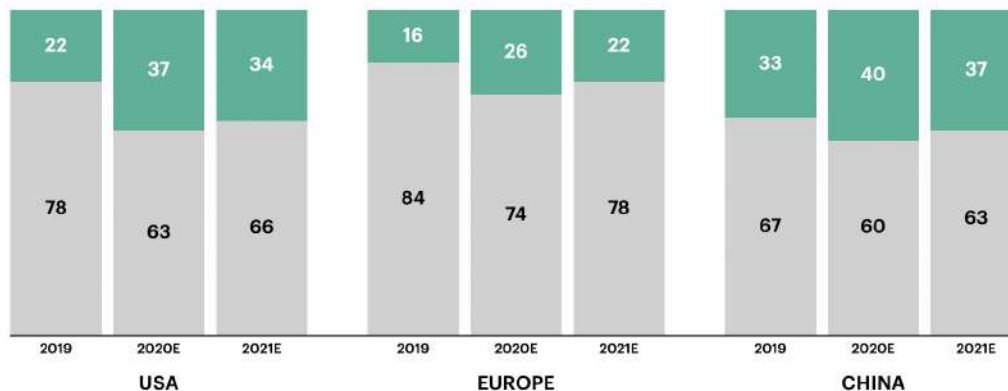


Figure 14. Share of Fashion Sales from Online Channels (earlier recovery scenario), %

### 2.2.2. Consumers start to seek justice

Customers are now expecting more from brands in terms of their commitment to social and political ideals and also environmental engagement. According to Kantar Monitor study (2020), 54 percent of consumers think brands have a significant role to play in social discussions, but consumers will criticize brands when they fail. Consumers care about the social engagement and their contribution to the environment. Over 80% of them expected the brands to show supportiveness on the concept of sustainability (Townsend, 2018). Besides, there is a shift of attitude from materialistic to morality approaches in consumers. Sustainable fashion and a socially engaged brand image are preferred. Speaking of Brooks Brothers, the public criticize them applying minimum effort on implementing sustainability. As an international brand, producing sustainable products & policy may benefit in attracting a wider consumer base that pay attention to sustainable fashion. It is considered as a potential development in Brooks Brother to enhance their brand image and credibility.

## 2.2. TOWS Matrix

<b>TOWS Matrix</b>	Internal Weaknesses	Internal Strength
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. poor customer services</li> <li>2. <u>inability</u> to understand the need of customers</li> <li>3. rather <u>narrow</u> group of target customers</li> <li>4. the high price charged may be not justified from consumers' perspectives</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. geographic presence</li> <li>2. wide product portfolio</li> <li>3. high product quality</li> </ol>
External Opportunities <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. the emergence of <u>e-commerce</u> and <u>social media</u> marketing</li> <li>2. customers prefer morality</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Generate the positive <u>word of mouth</u> on different social networking sites - improve customer service</li> <li>2. <u>projects management</u> can be improved - more research in the new trend - exploit the new emergence of market segment and new product development</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <u>strong geographic presence</u> helps getting into the international market and dispersed customer base</li> <li>2. larger refreshness when <u>rebranding</u> is implemented</li> <li>3. focus on <u>digital marketing</u> to increase the <u>brand awareness</u></li> </ol>
External Threats <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. deteriorating economic condition affects spending pattern and <u>decreases purchasing power</u></li> <li>2. increasing number of <u>direct and indirect competitors</u></li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <u>new pricing strategy</u> -maximise the value for money and overcome challenges imposed by deteriorating economic conditions -attract new customers -stayed competitive</li> <li>2. increase direct selling by improving customer service, expand customer base and outcompete the competitors</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. by launching different products line to gain more market share and market power</li> <li>2. making use of collaboration with the competitors by reaching a broader customers base</li> </ol>

Table 3. TOWS Matrix Analysis of Brooks Brothers.

## 2.3. Competitive Advantages and Threats

Competitive Advantages	Competitive Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unique premise of differentiation</li> <li>• Strong brand image</li> <li>• Flexible market development</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Product and supply chain cannot catch up with the trends</li> <li>• Competitive market</li> </ul>

Table 4. Summary Table of Brooks Brothers' Competitive Advantages and Threats.

### 2.3.1. Competitive advantages

#### 1. Unique premise of differentiation

To begin, Brooks Brothers has a distinct point of differentiation: consistency and luxury taste. It only offers high-quality items, allowing it to charge a top-notch and premium price. It has taken the most extraordinary steps in terms of the quality of the raw materials it uses to make its goods. Brooks Brothers makes an admirable effort at each stage to ensure that the product meets the most stringent quality standards.

#### 2. Strong brand image

Secondly, it has a strong brand image. Brooks Brothers is one of the world's most premium, well known and most famous brands. It has a rich heritage, with 200 years of history. Brooks brother has a developing populace of steadfast clients, which adds to the soundness of the business.

### 3. Flexible market development

Third, it has a flexible market development. With the broad product portfolio, it allows Brooks brothers to undergo vertical and horizontal expansion, Which can enhance market share and potential profit. Moreover, Brooks Brothers can make responses to new demand, for example they launched a face mask product line under the covid pandemic.

#### 2.3.2. Competitive threats

##### 1. Product and supply chain cannot catch up with the trends

Brooks Brothers misunderstood the customers' needs and they are unable to catch up with the latest trend. They are unable to provide freshness to the customers and not able to provide. Moreover the price war in the market is strong. As mentioned, Brooks Brothers has a premium price and the charge may be not justified from the consumers' perspective. When competitors may adopt a lower pricing strategy and lose customers.

##### 2. Competitive market

Brooks Brothers is in a very competitive market as there are many substitutes in the market. With the many new joiners, the customer base might be distracted by them.

- Direct competitors: Ralph Lauren, Hugo Boss, Burberry
- Indirect competitors: G2000, Tommy Hilfiger independent players etc.

### **3. Market Segmentation Analysis**

#### **3.1. 3P Strategy of the Brand: Promotion, Pricing and Place Strategies**



	Brooks Brothers	Hugo Boss	Ralph Lauren
<b>Promotion</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Email marketing</li> <li>Social Media Platform <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Instagram</li> </ul> </li> <li>M-commerce <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Blog</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Social Media Platform</li> <li>Brand Ambassador Program</li> <li>Collaboration <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>NBA</li> <li>Porsche</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Representable Brand Logo</li> <li>Social Media Platform <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Storytelling Promotion Strategy</li> <li>Instagram Hashtags</li> </ul> </li> <li>Collaboration <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the US Olympic Team</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Price</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Premium pricing strategy</li> <li>Promotional strategy</li> <li>Mark price at decimal place <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>HKD646.64</li> </ul> </li> <li>Highly rely on promotion</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Premium pricing strategy</li> <li>Psychological pricing strategy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>HKD875 instead of HKD900</li> </ul> </li> <li>Promotional strategy</li> <li>Mark price at integers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Premium pricing strategy</li> <li>Psychological pricing strategy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>HKD 2,990 instead of HKD 3,000</li> </ul> </li> <li>Promotional strategy</li> <li>Mark price at integers</li> </ul>
<b>Place</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>On-site channel: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Headquartered in USA</li> <li>Global retail closures</li> <li>Classical &amp; premium American style</li> </ul> </li> <li>Off-site channel: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>official website</li> <li>online retailers</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>On-site channel: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Headquartered in German</li> <li>More than 1,113 stores</li> </ul> </li> <li>Off-site channel: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>official website</li> <li>online retailers</li> <li>virtual shopping on Wechat</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>On-site channel: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Headquartered in USA</li> <li>Directly operated stores &amp; concession stores</li> </ul> </li> <li>Off-site channel: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>official website</li> <li>online retailers</li> <li>Instagram shop</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

Table 5. Summary Table of Brooks Brother's 3P Strategies.

### 3.1.1. Current Promotion Strategies

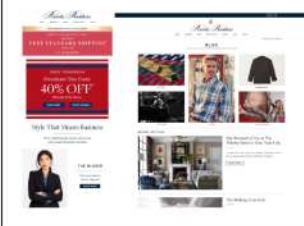


Brands	Brooks Brothers	Ralph Lauren	Hugo Boss
Examples pictures			
Promotion Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Email marketing</li> <li>Social media platform</li> <li>M-commerce <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>official blog</li> </ul> </li> <li>Collaboration <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>COMME des GARÇONS</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Representable brand logo</li> <li>Social media platform <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>hashtags</li> <li>storytelling promotion method</li> <li>celebrity endorsement</li> </ul> </li> <li>Collaboration <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the US olympic team</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Social media platform <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>celebrity endorsement</li> </ul> </li> <li>Hugo Boss Ambassador Program <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Chris Hemsworth (<i>Thor in the Avengers</i>)</li> </ul> </li> <li>Collaboration <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>BOSS x Porsche</li> <li>BOSS x NBA</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
KPIs on Instagram	330k followers	12.2m followers	8.6m followers

Table 6. Promotion Comparisons with Ralph Lauren and Hugo Boss.

#### Brooks Brothers

- Applied the most effective marketing channels (i.e., email marketing & social media platforms)
- Successful m-commerce strategy
- Inefficient brand collaboration
- Ineffective social media campaign




Brooks Brothers has applied the most effective marketing channel — email marketing and social media platforms, as its primary promotional channels. These two platforms are mostly

used to remind customers of new arrivals, sales notifications, promotions, and promo coupon codes. In addition, Brooks Brothers also has a successful m-commerce strategy. It has published a blog on the mobile web page. The content focuses on the Brooks Brothers culture, the release of new collections, and its influencers. It is an efficient and effective way to provide detailed brand information to customers.

However, from Table 6, it is indicated that the brand collaboration strategy of Brooks Brothers is inefficient. Compared with other fashion brands like Ralph Lauren and Hugo Boss, Brooks Brothers is having a collaboration with COMME des GARÇONS, which both brands are in the same industry. However, Ralph Lauren and Hugo Boss are working on a cross-industry brand collaboration. For example, the sports industry. Ralph Lauren has collaborated with the US Olympic Team since 2008. And Hugo Boss has launched a collection with the NBA. As the Olympic Games and NBA games attract global attention, it is recommended that Brooks Brothers to conduct a cross-industry collaboration to effectively increase brand awareness.

In addition, the data in Table 6 shows that although Brooks Brothers allocates a certain percentage of promotional resources on social media platforms, it only attracted 330,000 followers on its official Instagram account. This result indicates that Brooks Brothers' marketing campaign on Instagram is ineffective. It is suggested that Brooks Brothers should launch its social media campaign in a more attractive and innovative way. Referring to Ralph Lauren, it attracts over 12 million followers on its official Instagram account. Ralph Lauren is promoting the products in a storytelling way and coming up with their own hashtags. For example, it invited the family of Edison Chen to express their thoughts about Christmas while simultaneously promoting its Christmas collection. This implies that this marketing campaign is effective on social media platforms.

### **3.1.2. Current Pricing Strategies**

Brands	Brooks Brothers	Ralph Lauren	Hugo Boss
Examples pictures			
Category	Chino pants	Chino pants	Chino pants
Target Customers	25 to 45 years old and well-educated professions	High end premium consumers	High income groups
Price Range	Relatively Low - HKD 646.64	Relatively High - HKD 1390	Relatively High - HKD 1250
Pricing Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Premium pricing strategy</li> <li>● Promotional strategy</li> <li>● Mark price at decimal place <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ HKD646.64</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Highly rely on promotion</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Premium pricing strategy</li> <li>● Psychological pricing strategy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ HKD875 instead of HKD900</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Promotional strategy</li> <li>● Mark price at integers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Premium pricing strategy</li> <li>● Psychological pricing strategy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ HKD 2,990 instead of HKD 3,000</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Promotional strategy</li> <li>● Mark price at integers</li> </ul>

*Table 7. Price Comparisons with Ralph Lauren and Hugo Boss.*

### Brooks Brothers

- Applied premium pricing strategy and promotional strategy
- Mark price at decimal places
- Highly rely on promotions
- Lack of cultural diversity
- Unclear pricing position

Brooks Brothers targets mainly around 25 to 45 years old and well-educated professions who are willing to pay a higher amount for its merchandise. The company provides a wide range of products from men's wear, women's wear, kids, shoes and accessories and red fleece with an inexpensive price and high quality. Brooks brothers applies premium pricing strategy and promotional strategy to have a high profit margin and annual sales for attracting different segments of customers respectively.

According to Brooks Brothers official website, men's and women's clothing typically costs between HKD 288.66 and HKD 1154.50, with blazers and jackets costing between HKD 2316.78 and HKD 4649.10. The shoes and leather accessories charge between HKD 309.03 and HKD 1738.58. In contrast, the price shown on Brooks Brothers' official website is based on currency, which results in ambiguous pricing and disregards the diversity of customers. Furthermore, consumers can purchase products from a variety of sources with significant price variations. Including Zalora and Amazon, they offer free shipping and bundle sales to entice more consumers to shop on their websites.

## Brand Positioning Map

Current Position	Reposition
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Brooks Brothers aims to position in a classical and American style to offer formal suits and ties.</li> <li>Brooks Brothers offers finest quality with a fair profit to the customers.</li> <li>Brooks Brothers aims to present an affordable luxury brand image to the audience.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>New position: luxury brand image with classical style</li> <li>Apply psychological pricing strategy</li> <li>Prices between HKD 1275 and HKD 1375 of a Chino pants</li> </ul>

Table 8. Current positioning and Repositioning of Brooks Brothers.

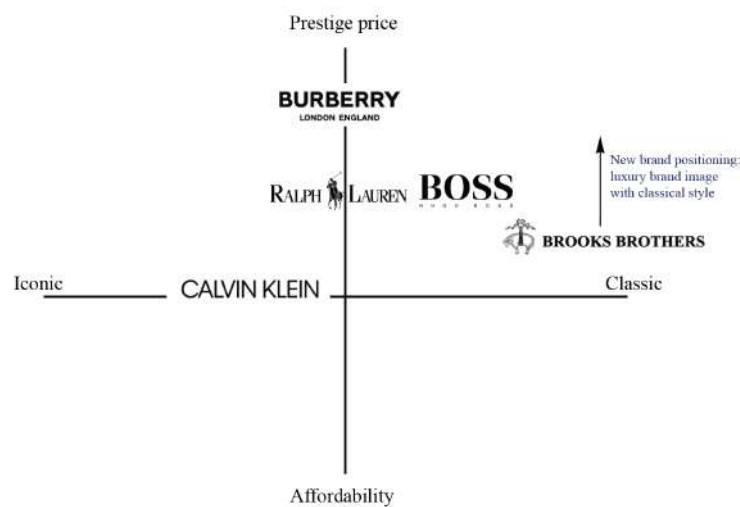





Figure 15. Brand Positioning Map.

Figure 15 presents the current positioning map of Brooks Brothers. Brooks Brothers provides classical and traditional American clothing style to customers. Brooks Brothers mainly offers formal suits, shirts and ties to its target customers like well-educated professions. Compared with the other fashion brands like Hugo Boss and Ralph Lauren, Brooks Brothers offers finest quality as the other fashion brands with a fair profit to the customers. Hence, Brooks Brothers can present an affordable luxury brand image to the audience. The arrow from the figure xx. shows the new positioning of Brooks Brothers which gives the luxury brand image with classical style to the audience. Brooks Brothers can apply a psychological pricing strategy which prices between HKD 1275 and HKD 1375 of a Chino pants, which is similar to Ralph Lauren and Hugo Boss. Hence, the higher price would enhance the luxury brand image and positioning of Brooks Brothers.

### 3.1.3. Current Place Strategies

Brands	Brooks Brothers	Ralph Lauren	Hugo Boss
Physical stores examples			
On-site Channels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Headquartered in New York City, USA</li> <li>More than 250 retail and factory stores in the United States and other countries including Spain and Russia, etc.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Headquartered in New York City, USA</li> <li>More than 1,113 retail stores in the globe</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Headquartered in Baden-Württemberg, German</li> <li>More than 1,569 retail stores including directly operated stores &amp; concession stores in the globe</li> </ul>
Off-site Channel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Official website</li> <li>Other online retailers (i.e. Amazon)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Official website</li> <li>Other online retailers (i.e. LAZADA, ZALORA&amp; THE COLLECTIVE)</li> <li>Products are offered in Instagram shop (@poloralphlauren)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Official website</li> <li>Other online retailers (i.e. ZALORA)</li> <li>Virtual shopping available on WeChat</li> </ul>

*Table 9. Place Comparisons with Ralph Lauren and Hugo Boss.*

#### a. On-site channel

Brooks Brothers owns more than 250 retail and factory stores in the United States and other districts including Australia, Korea, China, France, Spain, Russia, etc. In 2020, the company was forced to close 51 locations in North America due to the pandemic situation. In the same year, after Brooks Brother was sold to Authentic Brands Group and SPARC Group LLC, it was planning to operate more than 125 retail stores in the United States in order to restart the operation of the business and seek for new development at the same time.

The store layout of Brooks Brothers is classical and premium American style with attractive window displays. As Brooks Brothers is known for pieces like the original button-down collar and seersucker suits, it tends to introduce more traditional American style to customers through visual merchandising in the store.

#### b. Off-site channel

Apart from the physical stores, Brooks Brothers also offer their products through the official website and other online retailers such as Amazon and ZALORA. Worldwide delivery is available for online purchase. However, compared to Ralph Lauren and Hugo Boss, the off-site of Brooks Brothers lacks diversity as Ralph Lauren has already launched virtual shopping in WeChat while Hugo Boss has already offered merchandise via its Instagram shop. Therefore, the off-site channel of Brooks Brother needs to be improved and optimized.



## 4. Brand Equity

### 4.1. Brand Elements

Brand Elements	Brooks Brothers
Brand Name	Originally named as H. & D.H. Brooks & Co.
Typography	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Similar to Edwardian Scr Alt ITC typeface</li> <li>• Handwritten in retro style</li> </ul>
Logo	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Part I: character (sheep)</li> <li>• Part II: text (oblique and vintage touch )</li> </ul>
Symbols and Colors	Navy and gold
Stores	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Classical British style</li> <li>• Visual merchandising : elegant</li> <li>• Store atmosphere: formal, plush</li> </ul>
Packaging	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Iconic navy</li> <li>• The brand logo and White House printed on the packages and shopping bags</li> <li>• Tie with brown ribbon</li> </ul>
Slogan	N/A
Advertising	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Brooks Brothers Magazine</li> <li>• Social Media (Instagram)</li> <li>• Brand Collaboration (Comme des Garcons)</li> </ul>
Uniform Resource Locators	<a href="https://www.brooksbrothers.com/">https://www.brooksbrothers.com/</a>

*Table 10. Summary Table of Brooks Brothers' Brand Elements.*

#### 4.1.1. Brand Name

“H. & D.H. Brooks & Co.” was the original name for Brooks Brothers. Since the four sons of the founder, Henry Sand Brooks, inherited the family business, the brand name was renamed as "Brooks Brothers".

#### 4.1.2. Typography

- Typeface: similar to Edwardian Scr Alt ITC typeface
- Handwritten in retro style (add a vintage touch)
- Letters: oblique, sweeping, connected except the first characters
- Capital letters : the shape is similar to steep ram's horns



*Figure 16. Current Brand Logo (Brooks Brothers, 2016).*

#### 4.1.3. Logo

- A sheep suspended in ribbon with full brand name in retro style
- Redesign the Brooks Brothers logo to enhance brand recognition

Daniel, John, Elisha, and Edward Brooks took over their father's company, H. & D. H. Brooks & Co., in 1850. (Brooks Brothers, 2016). The company was formally renamed Brooks Brothers, and the Golden Fleece symbol was adopted as the company's trademark. Figure 16 from part 5.1.2 has shown that the logo is in a 2-part structure, the first part is the character sheep in ribbon and the second part is text in oblique and vintage touch. The sheep suspended in ribbon served as a symbol of fine wool. The golden fleece represents a standard of quality, heritage and excellence at early identity in Europe.

The second part is the full brand name in oblique and vintage touch. However, the text and font might not present the brand name clearly to the customers, therefore, Brooks Brothers should redesign the arrangement of the sheep and brand name to enhance the brand recognition effectively.

#### 4.1.4. Symbols and Colors

- The color combination of navy and gold
- Only applies on website and packaging



Figure 17. Brook Brother's Website (Brooks Brothers, 2016).

Navy and gold are the representative colors of Brooks Brothers. This color combination is used in its website, as shown in Figure 17. Brooks Brothers also apply this combination onto its designs of gift card and packaging (as shown in Figure 19). However, it is indicated that this iconic color combination (i.e. navy and gold) is not found in Brook Brother's products.

#### 4.1.5. Stores

- Classical & premium American style
- Store atmosphere: formal, plush, elegant, luxurious



*Figure 18. The store layout of Brooks Brothers.*

Brooks Brothers offer an excellent store environment by using some visual elements including the classical interior design and furnishings, lighting and vintage graphics revealed in the store. As shown in the Figure 18, Brooks Brothers apply wooden wardrobes with vintage illustrations and tools for creating the traditional American style. Besides, the tidy display of merchandise with the appropriate lighting gives a sense of premium and elegant style to the store atmosphere. Therefore, the overall retail shopping atmosphere will be increased with suitable store layout and brand image and brand equity will be increased visually and effectively.

#### 4.1.6. Packaging

- Navy box tied with gold ribbon
- Sending a gift box to customers to evoke emotional connection

The products of Brooks Brothers are packaged in a small, plain box with a ribbon, as shown in Figure 19. The box is navy on the outside and the ribbon's signature gold color, matching the logo. The brand logo of Brooks Brothers was printed on the top of the box. When customers open the box, their products are delicately wrapped in a garment sheet. Brooks Brothers presented the packaging as a gift box to consumers who had an emotional connection. Customers are more likely to purchase from Brooks Brothers again consequently.

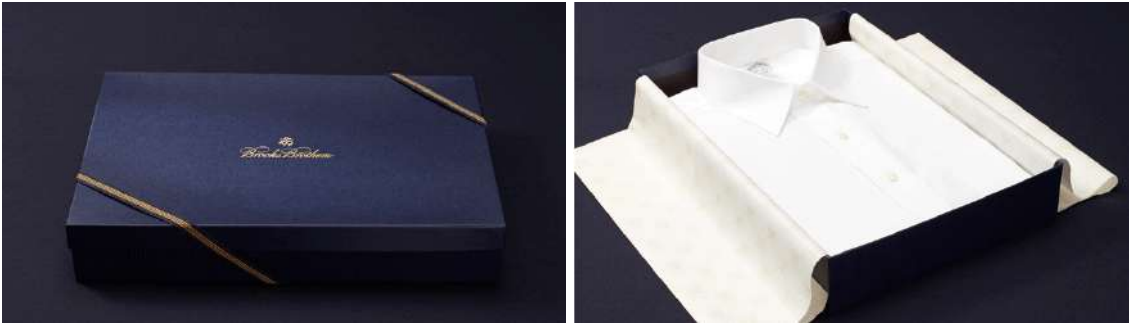


Figure 19 & 20. Packages of Brooks Brothers (2016).

#### 4.1.7. Slogan

- Brooks Brothers do not have a slogan.

A slogan will have a significant impact on how the brand is resonated, developed and remembered. However, Brooks brothers does not have a strong slogan which may lead to weak brand resonate and memorable brand image to the public.

#### 4.1.8. Advertising

- M-commerce — Brook Brother Magazine
- Social Media — @brooksbrothers
- Collaboration — COMME des GARÇONS

For Brooks Brothers' promotional campaign, it runs the brand blog (i.e., Brook Brother Magazine) on its official website. Brooks Brothers culture, new catalog releases, and influencers are all featured in the content. Moreover, it also establishes an official Instagram account and owns 300 thousands followers, which mainly used for product and sales promotion. Besides, Brooks Brothers also collaborated with COMME des GARÇONS, as shown in Figure 21. Brand collaboration is an efficient way to increase market share; however, as mentioned in the 3Ps strategy of Brooks Brothers, the content of this collaboration is ineffective, as both brands in the fashion industry.

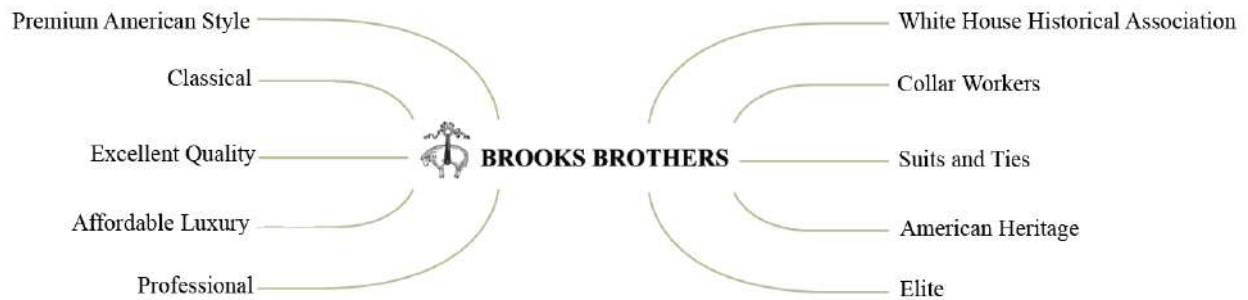


Figure 21. Brooks Brothers x COMME des GARÇONS. (Instagram, 2021).

#### 4.1.9. Uniform resource locators (URLs)

The URLs of Brooks Brothers is <https://www.brooksbrothers.com/>, and was signed under their brand name in order to prohibit anyone from using the domain names without permission.

#### 4.2. Mental map



*Figure 22. Mental Map of Brooks Brothers.*

The mental map in figure 22 indicates the associations with Brooks Brothers that come to the consumers' minds. Brooks Brothers have dressed 40 of the 45 presidents of the United States, from suits and ties to a custom-tailored coat. Hence, Brooks Brothers have a strong connection with White House history and American heritage. Also, Brooks brothers offers clothings to professional, elite and collar workers with strong premium American and classical style in excellent quality. Compared with other luxury fashion brands, Brooks Brothers shows an affordable luxury brand image to the consumers.



## 5. Capability CBBE Pyramid

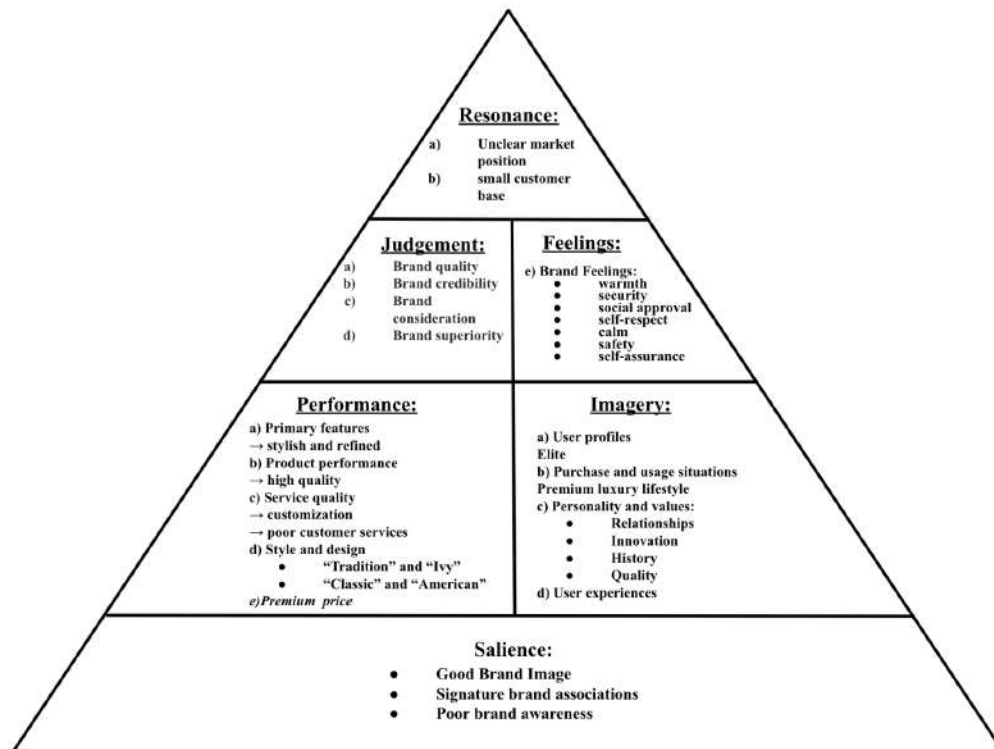


Figure 23. Summary Chart of Brooks Brothers' CBBE Pyramid.

### 5.1. Salience

Breadth and depth of brand awareness

Brooks Brothers was established in 1818 with a single store in New York City and now has over 250 stores in the United States and over 250 branches worldwide. The venerable tailor is known for bringing many western fashion classics to the United States, including the ready-to-wear suit and the button-down polo shirt.

#### 5.1.1. Brand image

Brooks Brothers has created a distinct and distinct brand name, which serves as a point of distinction and allows the company to advertise, sell, and market its products and brand more effectively than its competitors in both the domestic and foreign markets.

#### 5.1.2. Brand association

The Golden Fleece badge, suits and shoes, Ivy League, The Great Gatsby, and Thom Browne are the latest Brooks Brothers associations. These connections, such as symbols, product characteristics, or famous spokespersons, helps companies stand out in the minds of consumers and establish a close bond with them.

### 5.1.3. Brand awareness

Brooks Brothers is a well-known clothing retailer. Consumers around the world are generally aware of the types of goods sold by these businesses and that they represent reliability and good quality. This recognition increases the value of these products and increases their total market equity. However, recently, compared to the other direct competitors, the brand name being searched in Google was far below than its counterparts. As shown in the below figure. Brooks Brothers may have a strong brand awareness before and in the older generation. However, the brand awareness has dropped a lot now.

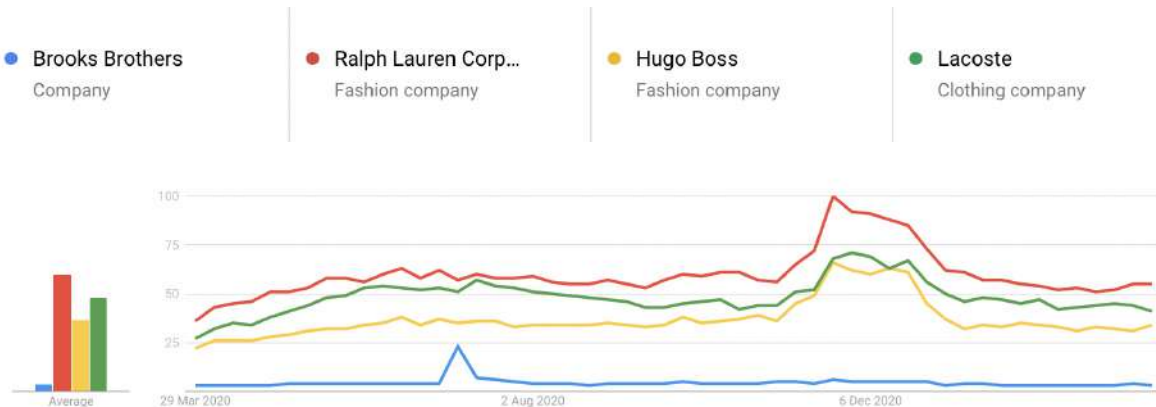


Figure 24. The number of searches of the companies extracted from Google Trend. (GoogleTrends, 2021)

## 5.2. Performance & Imagery

### 5.2.1. Performance

#### a) Primary features

Brooks Brothers has made countless contributions to the clothing industry since 1818. Their goal is to make high-performing garments using the best materials from around the world.

#### b) Product performance

Overall Quality of product and service

Brooks Brothers has developed a distinct and engaging customer interface by differentiating its goods and goods based on their quality. Efficiency and premium flavor are the cornerstones of Brooks Brothers' differentiation strategy. It only offers high-quality items, allowing it to charge a top-notch and premium price. It has taken the most extraordinary steps in terms of the quality of the raw materials it uses to make its goods. Brooks Brothers makes an admirable effort at each stage to ensure that the product meets the most stringent quality standards.

#### c) Service quality

A Brooks Brothers customer is well-dressed and well-heeled. Brooks Brothers' Crafted tailoring is a one-of-a-kind concept that caters to sophisticated men and women. Many customers pay a premium price to enjoy what Brooks Brothers has to offer. Brooks Brothers apparel provides hundreds of suiting styles, allowing customers to express themselves in their own unique way.

Brooks Brothers ensures that every customer is interested in the process of tailoring a made-to-measure suit, with customers having a variety of options to select from. Apart from the customization, Brooks Brothers service quality is poor. As shown in Figure 25. Brooks Brothers has a measly rating of only 1.7 There are many reviews complaining about the customer services provided by Brooks Brothers which has proven that Brooks Brothers has put little effort in the CRM.



Figure 25. Brooks Brothers Reviews. (Brooks Brothers, 2016)

#### d) Style and design

1. "Tradition" and "Ivy"
2. "Classic" and "American"

As mentioned, Brooks Brothers target customers are from the professional fields. Their professions require clean, neat and simple lines. Brooks Brothers' style and design was described by posh classic American elegant tailoring, as well as luxury and thoughtful design in general. The slim-fit, trendy, and vibrant sack suit, with its comfortable, understated silhouette, was unveiled at the turn of the twentieth century. It was a big blow to the highly starched shirts common at the time, with its loose collar and cuffs. Brooks Brothers believes that men should be both well-dressed and relaxed in their clothing. By the mid-twentieth century, Brooks Brothers has been one of the most well-known clothing companies in the country. Its design is known as the Ivy League look, or simply the "Brooks Brothers Look." The brand's elegant philosophy is best shown by its straightforward and detailed design as shown in Figure 26.



Figure 26. Brooks Brothers' Menswear. (Brooks Brothers, 2016)

e) price

Brooks Brothers' price range is above what would be expected from a similar product at a different store. Brands associated with high quality luxury products and style can sell otherwise ordinary items at a higher price. For example, at Brooks Brothers, customers should expect luxurious cotton polo shirts priced at \$800, compared with the \$200 polos at the Gap.

Brands	Brooks Brothers	GAP
Examples pictures		
Category	Polo Shirt	Polo Shirt
Price Range	\$500-\$800	\$200-\$400

Table 11. Price Comparison with GAP.

Brooks Brothers relied on discounting much too far. Discounting has a negative impact on the popularity of a well-known company. In the eyes of investors, quality and price are not separate ideas. They're all mixed up. Deep promotions, according to research, lead customers to suspect that something is wrong. Frequent discounts serve to lower the brand's appeal by eliciting an almost involuntary response that the product has been reduced as well. Alternatively, in a "value rebound," customers tend to see the daily price as an excuse to put off making a buy. The brand is then only purchased for sale.



Figure 27. Image of the promotion code and page of Brooks Brothers.

## 5.2.2. Imagery:

### a) User profiles

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Traditional ready-to-wear fashion in American style</li> <li>• Suitable for both formal or casual occasions</li> </ul>
<p>Mainly outfitted the <i>American elite</i>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Presidents, preps, members of the professional-managerial class</li> <li>- Influential in the arts, business, politics, media, or medicine.</li> </ul>

Table 12. User Profile of Brooks Brothers.

### b) Purchase and usage situations

Brooks Brothers present the premiere luxury lifestyle destination for ladies and gentlemen in every generation. Customers make purchases to pursue the exquisite and steady lifestyle in recent years. Compared to other luxury brands such as Ralph Lauren and Burberry, Brooks Brothers is more affordable for the white-collar worker and fresh graduate. Items like formal suits, ties, outerwear, sport coats and blazers are the primer products for them to take the first step entering the upper class of the society and make changes on their current lifestyle.

c) Personality and values

Values in Brooks Brothers:	
Brooks Brothers has been criticized for being an irrigated Italian casualwear brand. Brooks Brothers was once a retailer of fine-quality, American-made products, as well as all things traditional and Ivy. Brooks followed too frequently with trends and consistently cut the cost of their merchandise, according to Ivy Style devotees.	
1. Relationships	Consolidate customer retention and maintain the strong loyalty among the brand and consumers
2. Innovation	Invest business innovation and technology development to facilitate future growth
3. History	Conduct strong historical background which strengthening the brand reputation
4. Quality	Providing products with high quality to represent the heritage in America

Table 13. Personalities and Values of Brooks Brothers.

d) User experiences

For their promotion strategy, when the company advertises, it is often men and women who look stylish and professional with a direct to the main picture. When a person shops at Brooks Brothers, they realize their needs will be handled well and will get the best standard of clothes. For Brooks Brothers advertising isn't a very big part for the company, the advertisements aren't flashy or in-your-face or making it seem as if you need to shop their Brooks Brothers advertisements are very sharp, to the point, stylish and very detailed oriented.

5.3. Brand Judgements & Feelings

- **Brand quality: *Product with high quality, but requires improvement on services***  
Brooks Brothers contributed to the democratization of fashion by making clothing more available, affordable, and wearable for the general public. They're known for their high quality and conservative aesthetic, as well as spending the majority of their history manufacturing in the United States. Customers who seek for clothing with high durability and classic style may select Brooks Brothers. They also offered customization for customers to experience the tailor-suits services to fulfill various customers needs. However apart from customized services, it is observed that Brooks Brothers conduct deficiency on others customer services which is required to obtain improvement.

- **Brand credibility: *Lack of concentration on community issues***  
Brooks Brothers conduct a poor brand credibility. The public is indicated that they had implemented minimum effort on processing the environmental and labour policies. Since consumers pay more attention to the brand contribution on the community issues, they expected the brand to provide high transparency on manufacture progress and relative



policies. However Brooks Brothers could not offer insufficient information on reducing the influences towards communities which lowered their brand image and credibility.

- **Brand consideration: *Regarded as low social traffic among internet***

Brooks Brothers has a poor brand consideration as well. In terms of the KPI of social mentions, Brooks Brothers has low internet traffic. From Figure 28, the sources of traffic of Brooks Brothers mainly rely on direct and search marketing. However, both the marketing strategies only have around 43% of the traffic. While social media marketing has only 4%, which is extremely low traffic rate. This means consumers seldom receive the latest activities or information from Brooks Brothers. Moreover, Brooks Brothers seldom holds the activities or events that engage with customers. This shows that the general public does not have remarkable experience and impression on the brand. Thus, consumers have a low chance to consider for possible purchase or use.



Figure 28. Traffic Sources for Brooks Brothers. (Similarweb, 2021)

- **Brand superiority: *Invent traditions to resonate consumers and create values***

As a heritage brand, Brooks Brothers invent their own traditions to create signs with a strong emotional and symbolic meaning to represent their values. From the initiation rites like purchasing the first Brooks Brothers suits, leads to the innovation in American menswear and customers' resonance. Customers respond favorably to the images and stories depicted by these traditions since they elicit emotional reactions. The commitment to quality products and individual preference for “classic” style implies the sense of superiority among Brooks Brothers.

- **Brand feelings: *Deliver the feeling of American heritage***

Brooks Brothers aims at providing the feeling of American Heritage for customers by defining itself based on the historic roots, fine quality and value, a classic image, and a traditional American lifestyle. Customers are emotionally evoked by their classic products by being proud of the sophisticated, well-dressed brand image and high product quality. During product consumption or use, the brand image and product quality can bring warmth, security, social approval and self-respect, to the customers, which make them feel a sense of calm,

safety, self-assurance, a belief that others look favourably on their appearance and behaviour and feel better about themselves.

#### 5.4. Resonance

Brooks Brothers has relatively low resonance with its customers. The quality of the product and the sophisticated brand image from Brooks Brothers can motivate and excite their adult customers who pursue American professional style to purchase repeatedly and attached with their products. However, Brooks Brothers is the icon of American classic culture which they emphasize on their historical background, each reading the American cultural landscape differently as it is abstracting and unclear. Thus, their association towards Brooks Brothers is low. Moreover, Brooks Brothers does not develop a large and loyal customer base. This is because their products are targeting mature and more traditional demographics. It does not have enough freshness to customers. Thus, Brooks Brother has already lost the market status and position. Customers are shifting to others similar brands and decreasing its customer base

In order to better resonate with Brooks Brothers, Brooks Brothers can re-appropriate and invent elements that resonate with the brand's own vision and objectives to create intense and active loyalty relationships with customers.

### **6. Strategic choices Recommendations**

#### **6.1. The major reasons for the decline of Brooks Brothers**

In July 2020, Brooks Brothers filed for bankruptcy as retail store businesses were disrupted by lockdowns during the pandemic and resulted in a great reduction in revenue (CNN business, 2020). It revealed that Brooks Brothers suffered from a failure to adapt to changing trends. The major reasons for the decline of Brooks Brothers are explained as follows:

##### a) Unclear brand positioning

First, Brooks Brothers do not have a clear brand positioning in the market in which consumers have a blurred idea of the brand. It is observed that Brooks Brothers attempted to maintain a luxury yet classic style, but reflected by its pricing position, it is relatively low and ineffective to present a prestige perception. Moreover, its promotion strategies and campaigns are insufficient to create a strong impression on consumers. Consumers do not have information about the brand attributes and tend to switch to other well-known options.

##### b) Poor brand credibility & resonance

Consumers become more supportive of sustainable development. But, the public criticizes Brooks Brothers for merely applying effort on implementing sustainable practices. For instance, Brooks Brothers does not provide information about how its production process reduces impacts on the environment and animals, particularly wool and leather products, these are the issues that consumers concern. None of this information is provided by Brooks

Brother. It shows Brooks Brothers is unable to understand the need of consumers and lack of transparency in production, resulting in poor brand credibility.

Despite Brooks Brothers wanting to emphasize American history and cultures, the style or taste of their products only favours mature and traditional demographics which is unable to provide freshness to consumers. It fails to expand its consumer base, especially young consumers. As a result, Brooks Brothers loses contact with consumers because it fails to catch up with the latest trend. The brand resonance remains weak.

c) Weak brand awareness

There are many substitutes in the menswear market. The direct competitors of Brooks Brothers such as Ralph Lauren, Hugo Boss and Burberry, these brands are more noticeable and have a higher reputation than Brooks Brothers. Therefore, consumers have limited awareness of the Brooks Brothers brand. Besides, Brooks Brothers has poor storytelling in which mostly are product-oriented, seldomly focus on the atmosphere and story delivered to consumers. The brand experience and interaction of consumers are relatively less especially in the e-commerce and m-commerce market.

## 6.2. Recommendations

a) Strengthen brand positioning with a slogan

To strengthen the brand positioning of Brooks Brother, it is suggested to establish a strong brand positioning statement such as a slogan. Since Brooks Brothers do not have a clear brand slogan or tagline currently, it is hard to define its market positioning in consumer's mind. To differentiate from competitors with strong branding, Brooks Brothers should emphasize its American culture and rich history in intended to mark up a higher price for building a luxury image. Hence, slogans would be a suitable marketing strategy that helps Brooks Brother to communicate its luxury values proposition and brand promise. Specifically, emphasizing luxury and dignified comfort while continuing to build on its strong heritage would be the message the slogan conveys.

b) Achieve digitalization to improve production transparency by blockchain

Digitalization can improve production transparency. As mentioned, Brooks Brothers have poor brand credibility and weak brand resonance in terms of its efforts on sustainable development. To tackle the problem, Brooks Brothers may utilize blockchain technology to improve the transparency of production. Blockchain forms a decentralized and peer-to-peer network that connects all the parties of the complete supply chain, such as manufacturers, farmers, raw material suppliers, retailers, consumers and etc. Each production process is registered and tracked on the blockchain, from harvesting at alpaca farm to the end-user. Figure 28 illustrated the concept of product tracking using blockchain technology. Each item will have a specific QR code and NFC tag that allows the consumer to scan with a mobile device. The app will verify each step of production and gather all the information including

farmers' location data and product content to create a digital history story that is presented to consumers through an interface.

Consumers are more conscious these days, they are looking for brands that make fashion sustainable. The proposed app of product tracking allows consumers to track the production process and source of materials with a mobile device. It can restore brand resonance and credibility on sustainable practices of Brooks Brothers. With complete transparency and traceability of products, it gives consumers confidence in what they are purchasing. Consumers can know the story behind their clothes. Referring to the nature of the blockchain, it has secure information storage, decentralised data and publicly accessible characteristics, which will potentially become storytelling on social media of product origin.

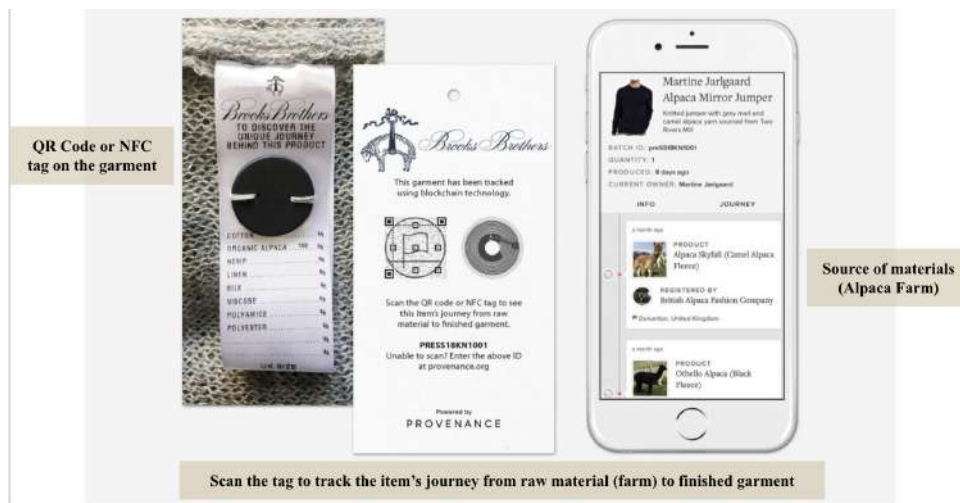


Figure 29. The Concept of Product Tracking Using Blockchain Technology

c) Re-brand personality by embracing innovation (Augmented Reality)

To attract the young generation's market, Brooks Brothers may embrace innovation by promoting an Augmented Reality shopping app for retail. It allows online and mobile shoppers to view products in 3D in the context in front of them. Shoppers can access digital media on in-stock merchandise using AR app in physical retail to redefine the online and in-store experience. Via this AR app, Brooks Brothers may potentially add more product lines such as watches, tie and belt, with less formality to keep up with the younger generation's market. This strategy can increase brand awareness and attract consumers who are tech-savvy.



Figure 30. The proposed AR app for Brooks Brothers - A Virtual Try-On experience

d) Reinforce brand identity by a new logo design

Brand logos play an important role for consumers in recognising the brand and associated it with quality and reputation. Fonts can be key to effective brand recognition. To tackle the weak brand awareness of Brooks Brothers, it is recommended to enhance its logo design by making it more identifiable and visible. For instance, Brooks Brothers may change the font of the logo from the current cursive characters to a bold look with a sans-serif treatment. Contemporary typography is more distinctive and noticeable, particularly with good readability and makes a brand feel cultured and sophisticated while maintaining luxury. Figure 31 has shown the transformation from current to new logo design. The signature golden fleece icon is preserved and placed in front of the font instead.

It is obvious that the suggested new logo design brings a more clean and modern presentation by serif fonts. Particularly, thick sans serifs are usually perceived as strong, traditional and trustworthy, which is associated with Brooks Brothers' masculine brand identity, classic apparel and heritage designs. Ridgway and Myers (2014) agreed that a brand logo is non-verbal communication that creates relationships with the audience. Hence, Brooks Brothers can reinforce brand identity and increase brand awareness of consumers by enhancing its logo font design.

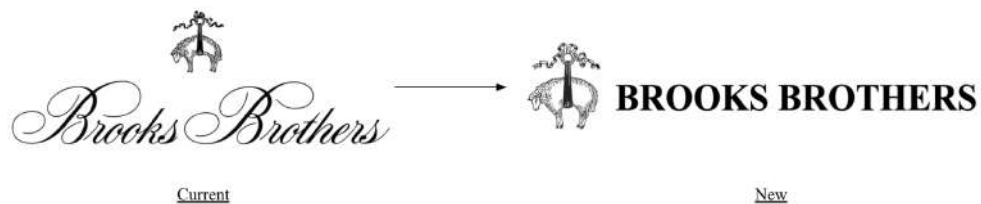


Figure 31. The transformation from current to new logo design

## 7. Conclusion

The objective of this brand audit report is to examine Brooks Brothers' position in the market and ascertain its performance and effectiveness. Based on our brand analysis and observations, several weaknesses have been discovered and the corresponding

recommendations have been proposed to Brooks Brothers to restore its competitive advantages in the industry. It is believed that Brooks Brothers have tremendous possibilities for revival and survival by concentration on changing trends and maximizing its brand elements.

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