

Anatomy of a Brand: Warby Parker

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BUSI 265

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Winter 2025



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Introduction



“The Warby Parker of.” This is the statement that companies use to describe new brands that completely dominate pre-established categories within the business world (wsj.com-The Wall Street Journal). This is also a statement that speaks volumes to not only the Warby Parker brand but also their devotion to creating a brand that people can respect, trust, and feel loyal to. While the Warby Parker brand is somewhat new in the business world, only being around for 15 years, it has come in and completely taken the glasses industry and consumers by surprise. With their desire to make shopping for glasses not only easy but affordable/fun paired with their desire to produce stylish and trendy glasses designs, the Warby Parker brand has not only been able to give consumers access to a clear new world but also give people in need that access and privilege as well. The foundation of their brand, which was built from day one, remains to this day as Warby Parker is pioneering to completely change the way people see things in all forms and aspects. Through this brand analysis paper, we will explore how Warby Parker not only became the glasses brand phenomenon that it is today but will also explore the tactics in which Warby Parker implored to give consumers so many reasons not just to be loyal to the brand but ultimately a reason to love the brand, making them a significant brand of the heart for so many. But before their name was being used to describe other businesses that proved themselves to be a disrupter in the business industry with the statement “The Warby Parker of...” they were first known as JAND, Inc.



Brand History

- JAND, Inc.(Warby Parker) was founded in 2010 by 4 Wharton School of Business students- Jeff Raider(Co-Founder), Andy Hunt(Co-Founder), Neil Blumenthal(Co-CEO and Co-Founder), and Dave Gilboa(Co-CEO and Co-Founder). They received a \$2,500 seed investment from their school's Venture Initiation Program and combined it with \$30,000 from each of their savings to start their brand.
 - One month after the company was launched, they were recognized by Vogue and GQ.
 - In just 3 weeks the company hit their 5-year sales target.
- In 2011, the company had already sold 100,00 pairs of glasses, had around 60 employees, and had raised a Series A round of approximately \$12.5 million.
- In 2013, the company opened its first brick-and-mortar store in Soho.
- In 2017, the company opened a \$16 million optical lab to be able to manufacture their glasses in-house.
- In 2019 the brand launched their first-ever product line extension for daily contacts called Scout by Warby Parker.
- Publicly Traded by the New York Stock Exchange in September 2021
- Currently, Warby Parker has acquired \$670 million in revenue, operates 276 stores, donated over 15 million pairs of glasses to people in need through their "Buy a Pair, Give a Pair" program, and has a current market value of over \$2.92 billion.





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Background Information



Warby Parker Co-Founders Dave (far left), Andy (center left), Jeff (center right), and Neil (far right).

“To inspire and impact the world with vision, purpose, and style”- Warby Parker

Neil Blumenthal(co-CEO and co-founder), Dave Gilboa(co-CEO and co-founder), Andy Hunt(co-founder), and Jeff Raider(co-founder) are the four businessmen who founded the company Warby Parker and still have ownership of it today. While Andrew and Jeffrey have gone on to focus on other business ventures, Neil and Dave have become co-CEOs of the brand and serve as the brand's two main spokesmen. The brand's mission statement started as an idea of the four co-founders and still serves as one of the focal points of the company today. Their mission statement states that they work “To inspire and impact the world with vision, purpose, and style”(investors.warbyparker.com), and the brand has worked incredibly hard to do exactly that. They have even interlaced this mission statement as a unifying thread within the brand's strategies and objectives.





Brand Strategy and Objectives

Like most business ventures, Warby Parker grew from a problem that needed a solution. Right before starting his MBA program, co-founder Dave Gilboa forgot his \$700 eyeglasses in the back seat pocket of a plane. With frustration about why the cost of glasses was so expensive, Dave and Neil began thinking of solutions for ways that they could design the stylish glasses that they wanted but for wholesale prices and have an online DTC business model. This would eventually become the brand's core strategy. Dave and Neil then teamed up with Andy and Jeff to start forming what we know today as Warby Parker. The team surveyed potential consumers to figure out the best starting price point for glasses, which would be \$95, which is still in effect today, and they even managed to scramble together individually a total of \$30,000 per co-founder, raising a total of \$120,000 combined to get the brand up and running. Through this collaboration, the brand would come up with a multitude of values and non-negotiables that would serve as the brand's core objectives. Those core objectives included making glasses that are stylish and innovative, more accessible and affordable, delivering immense value and quality to consumers, and ultimately promoting sustainability and social impact for the betterment of a diverse and inclusive society. This core strategy and objectives have not only acted as the pillars of the foundation of the Warby Parker brand, but they have acted as funnels for the brand to change and grow over time.

Brand Description and Changes Over Time

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When Warby Parker started, they only sold DTC eyeglasses and sunglasses online. While they had a wide range of diverse styles within their product lineup, they didn't sell anything else, but since then, the brand has worked tirelessly to evolve and grow the brand to the omnichannel experience that it is today. The first major change they made came just a few months after opening their company. Even though consumers enjoyed the online experience that Warby Parker gave them, others wondered what an in-store Warby Parker experience would feel like. This led to the founders of the brand opening up their apartment to act as a showroom so consumers could come and try on glasses, but this didn't last long as demand for this experience grew tremendously, leading to them opening up their first store in 2013 in New York City's SoHo area and today they operate over 276 storefronts. After the brand made this huge change to operate both online and in-store, the brand seemed to not be able to stop its growth. From there, The brand started offering in-store eye exams, technology that allowed consumers to try on glasses virtually through their digital devices, introduced a product extension of contact lenses, started collaborating with social media influencers to create design collaborations that diversified their product lineup, created more donation/social impact programs and even worked with insurance providers to provide heightened accessibility for consumers to be able to obtain the eyeglasses and care that they need. Warby Parker, over the years, has made many different changes, but what they have never seemed to alter is the quality provided within the features and benefits of their eyewear.





Features, Benefit, and Value Proposition

While Warby Parker has not exclusively released their value proposition, based on the different information embedded within their annual and impact report along with their brand values, I have created one for them, which would be “To efficiently and effectively provide consumers with affordable, stylish, and high-quality glasses, sunglasses, and contacts.” While this value proposition may appear simplistic, embedded within this proposition are the many layers that speak to how Warby Parker runs their brand, and it is most evident within the features and benefits that are provided to consumers.

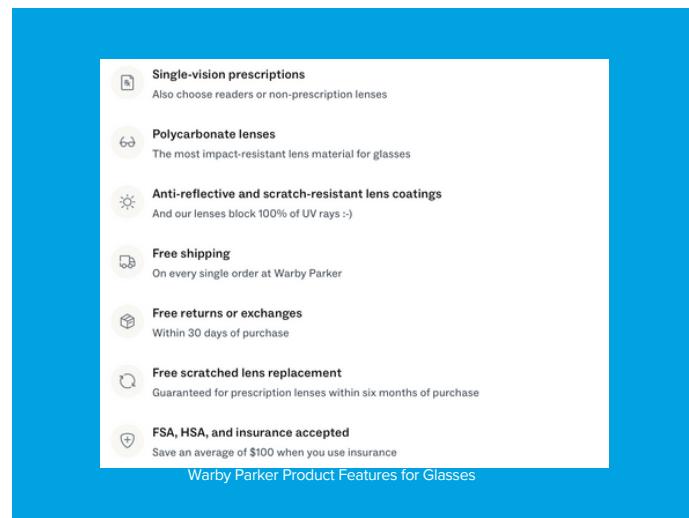
When ordering a pair of Warby Parker glasses, the base price for most of their eyewear starts at only \$95. But this base price isn't just for the frames but for all the unique features that come with them. Based on research from the features section of the Warby Parker site, the first feature that comes with your Warby Parker frames and the price for them is that this price covers the type of lenses put in them based on your vision needs. So, no matter if you need a prescription lens for single vision, readers, or non-prescription, the price is going to still be \$95, and this benefits the consumer majorly as they are not surprised with any additional fees upon ordering glasses. The next feature they have is that every pair of glasses comes with polycarbonate lenses. These types of lenses are known to be the most impact-resistant frames for glasses. This benefits the consumer as they can wear their glasses comfortably without fear of being too rough with them or fear their lenses will crack or break easily. Another feature that they offer in addition to these impact-resistant lenses is that they also come with an anti-reflective and scratch-resistant lens coating. This feature allows consumers to not have to experience eye strain from reflections/glares on their lenses, and it also ensures that the quality of the consumer's glasses lasts long with little to no damage to the lens from the scratch-resistant coating. Warby Parker even states that if consumers do experience any kind of lens scratching within six months of purchasing, Warby Parker will replace the lenses for free. This lens coating also blocks 100% of UV rays, which benefits the consumer as it protects them from the risk of eye damage and improves their eye protection/health.





Features, Benefits, and Value Proposition (cont.)

The next features and benefits that come with a purchase of Warby Parker glasses all regard the obtainment of the glasses. When ordering your Warby Parker frames online, the company offers the feature of free shipping on every single Warby Parker order and free returns within 30 days of purchase. This again ensures that consumers aren't coming out of pocket for any surprise or additional fees, making the accessibility of glasses high and returns smooth and efficient with no extra cost. One of the biggest features that they have recently incorporated is that consumers can now use insurance to help purchase their glasses. With the use of FSA, HSA, and any other accepted insurances, consumers can now have the benefit of saving, on average, around \$100 when shopping with Warby Parker. Warby Parker even ensures that people in need get accessible eyewear with their "Buy A Pair, Give A Pair" feature, which also is their donation program. This program/feature states that for every pair of Warby Parker glasses sold, a pair will be donated to someone in need. This is a benefit to consumers as when they purchase these glasses from Warby Parker, they not only buy style and quality eyewear for an affordable price but also ensure that someone in need gets those factors of value as well. Warby Parker didn't create these features solely to figure out ways to best help themselves and their profitability; they did it to truly and solely benefit the consumer. Instead of the focus being how Warby Parker can get ahead, the focus has always been on how Warby Parker can help their consumers get ahead.



Distribution Channels, Operations, and Sales

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The Warby Parker brand was founded on a DTC business model that remains intact to this day. The brand originally started only selling their glasses online, but as stated previously, as the company grew, they had to expand to also sell their frames through their brick-and-mortar storefront. Because of the values on which Warby Parker was built on in terms of pricing strategy and accessibility, Warby Parker opted out of having a middleman be a part of their operation as a way to cut costs and be able to sell their glasses for wholesale prices. This value led to Warby Parker being able to handcraft their glasses in-house and sell their consumers premium eyewear. According to an assembling video on the brand website, at the start of the Warby Parker operations is their in-house design team that essentially lays the foundation for the creation of their glasses. This included mood boards, product sketches, and even product details for prototyping. Once the initial glasses designs are cleared, a mix of handcrafted elements with advanced technology is used to start building their glasses from scratch, all while using plant-based materials. Once the glasses have been cut and partially attached with hinges and screws, the glasses are then placed back in the care of the design team to finish being assembled and hand buffed multiple times. After the glasses are assembled, they are compared to the original design and then quality tested multiple times by humans and technology to ensure no mistakes have been made. Something to note about Warby Parker's operations is that when a consumer orders their glasses, only then are the glasses made, showcasing this made-to-order style process. Once your glasses are made through the operations process detailed previously, consumer lenses are made personally for them and assembled into the glasses with all their personal features. Once the glasses are fully finished, they then go through one more final individual inspection to ensure nothing but quality is being provided to consumers. This sense of detailed attention and observation of craft then trickles down into the sales portion of their operation.

Depending on whether consumers decide to shop in-store or online, the way in which glasses are sold to consumers may slightly differ in process but remain consistent in quality. When their glasses are sold online via their brand website, consumers are greeted with a small video and many information sections that reveal the quality of what the consumer is about to buy. When selling glasses in-store, Warby Parker sales associates are trained to expose and proclaim to consumers each step of this operations process to ensure that consumers not only understand how they differentiate themselves from other glasses brands but also the value in which the consumer is about to receive when they make the final purchase. This value is then further communicated in the sales process by the different additional things that come with the glasses like packaging and branding elements.





Packaging and Brand Assets

In terms of brand assets, the Warby Parker brand is very minimal. Instead of a brand logo which depicts a unique symbol of the brand, Warby Parker lets their logo be their brand name. The typography of the brand name Warby Parker was created specifically by a branding agency but is close to the font styles of Gotham Rounded or Proxima Nova in a pure white or grey colorway. Accompanying their brand name/logo is the presence of a vivid cerulean blue and a deep navy blue that serves as the brand color palette used throughout any of their marketing content, social media posts, and website. Other than that, the brand doesn't use any unique shapes, symbols, or icons to express the brand name or logo.



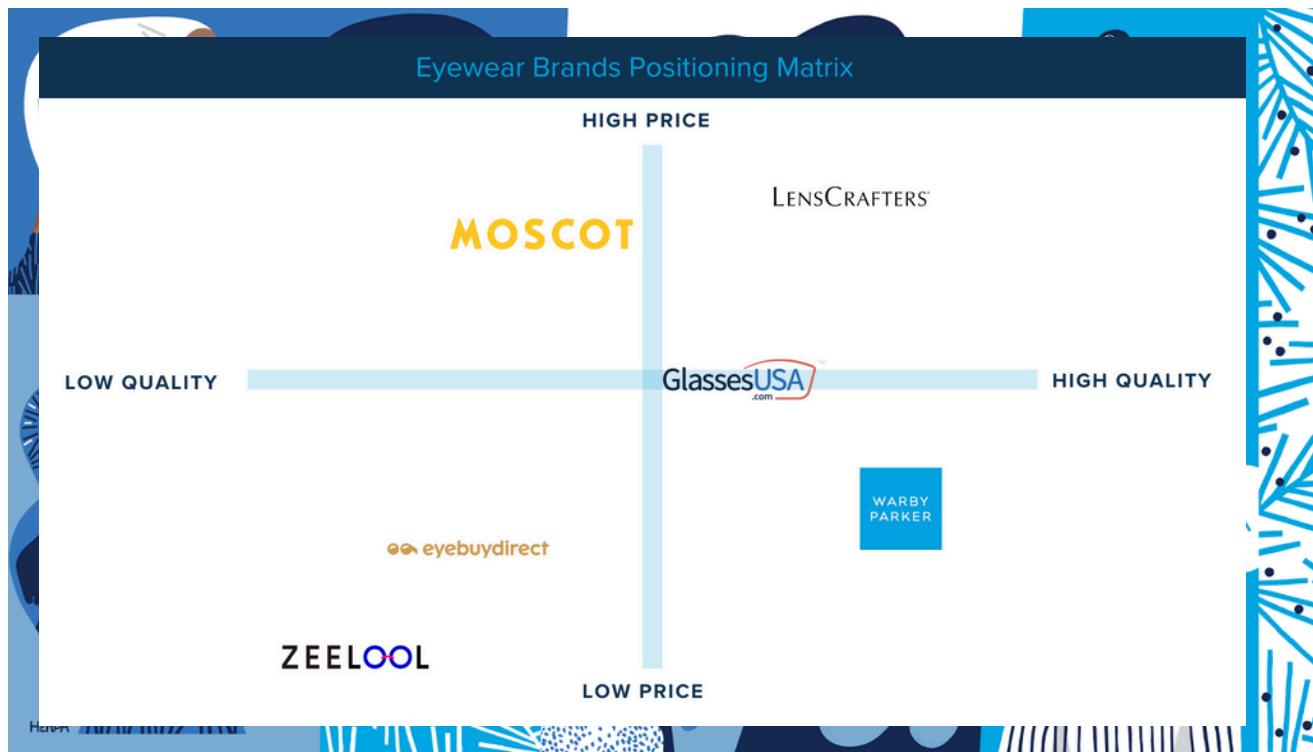


Packaging and Brand Assets (cont.)

When it comes to the brand packaging, Warby Parker is very consistent. Depending on whether a consumer orders their frames online, which they will receive in a box, or in-store, which they will receive in a bag, the contents of how the actual glasses are presented does not change. When consumers receive their Warby Parker glasses, they can not only expect quality but efficiency. All Warby Parker glasses come packaged in a complimentary magnetized glasses case and with a cleaning cloth that features the story of Warby Parker in only 100 words. This case is then placed in a protective box which acts as the glasses' secondary packaging. This protective box is fairly minimalistic and also contains a pamphlet that speaks to how consumers should care for their glasses. Within all these elements of packaging, the presence of the brand name and the signature blue color palette is strongly prominent. It should also be noted that brands' desire to be socially responsible is evident in their packaging. Almost all of their packaging is made from recycled or eco-friendly materials, and there is not a lot of excess waste that consumers have to throw away or trash. Everything provided is meant to be kept and used for the benefit of the glasses and the consumer. This value in brand assets and packaging, while very influential, does not alter the price in which they charge their glasses, and this is intentionally done in order to compete with their competition.



Positioning Matrix



In terms of the position matrix above, each brand was placed based on an assessment of the price point and quality of materials of 2-3 pairs of glasses from that brand in relation to 2-3 pairs of glasses from Warby Parker at their price point and quality of materials.

Price and Profitability Analysis

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Warby Parker's starting price of glasses being \$95, which covers not only the frames but the lenses and extra elements interlaced within their packaging, has essentially been an element that has been ingrained in their brand DNA. It is the price they started with and continues to use to this day. As consumers desire extra/add-on features in their glasses or even desire a more complex design of glasses, only then does the price increase, making the price range of their glasses between \$95 to as high as around \$400. Even with the highest potential price of a pair of Warby Parker glasses being \$400, this is only for certain circumstances of complex design with every possible add-on to glasses, making this a rare circumstance. Most Warby Parker consumers usually don't pay this much, as the average order value is \$263(wikipedia.com). This price highly juxtaposes most of their competitors, which are depicted in the positioning matrix, and sells their glasses at an average of \$300 to \$400 without the lenses being factored into the total cost.



Price and Profitability Analysis (cont.)

WARBY PARKER



In 2023, Warby Parker's net profit was recorded at \$365.22 million(statista.com). While a few years back, the brand wasn't as profitable as it should have been, Warby Parker has grown, which has led the company to become more profitable and valuable. The specific reason for this performance in profitability is not clearly outlined, but it can be believed that the expansion of their brick-and-mortar storefront locations is the reason behind their profitability recorded. This is evident, especially in the comparison to their 2022 gross profit, which was recorded at 341.06 million dollars with only 20 stores being opened, jumping to 40 additional stores being opened in 2023, which led to their gross profit I listed at the beginning of this paragraph(investors.warbyparker.com). Warby Parker's DTC business model could also play a role in their high profitability as the brand's decision to make their glasses in-house instead of using a high-priced eyewear factory/retailer would not only help consumers save money but Warby Parker as well. Even the brand's efforts to be socially responsible potentially played a huge role in its profitability. While their brick-and-mortar store expansion, DTC business model, and social impact efforts all played a role in their profitability, these factors also aligned perfectly with their target audience.



Target Audience

After researching Warby Parker's target audience I was able to gain many layers of insight into exactly who the brand is going after. While one of the co-founders of Warby Parker, Neil Blumenthal stated in an article for Forbes that they don't share the details of customer segmentation, he did state that their target audience "sweet spot" has been men and women between the ages of 17-34 years old. Niel Blumenthal stated that they are "..folks who appreciate beautiful design and are sick and tired of paying \$500 for a product that should be $\frac{1}{5}$ of the price (Forbes Magazine)." But their target audience isn't just young men and women looking for "beautiful frames" but they are urban, trendy, educated, and ultimately price-conscious consumers. Warby Parker's target consumer is going beyond just trying to buy a pair of frames rather they seek frames that help them inspire and influence elements of purpose and style within the world.

In terms of how the brand segments its target market, Warby Parker touches on 3 of the 4 main market segments which are demographics, psychographics, and geographics with a primary focus on demographics and psychographics. As stated earlier, Warby Parker goes after young and trendy educated professional men and women in the generational sectors of Gen Z and Millennials demographics who also live in urban areas as far as geographics. Within this group, they also heavily appeal to their target audience's psychographics of values, lifestyle, and interests. Warby Parker's target audience is price conscious and has a desire for social impact which is why the price of their prescription glasses starts at only \$95 and when their customer do purchase a pair of glasses, another pair of glasses is donated on behalf of Warby Parker's "Buy a Pair, Give a Pair" program which has helped 15 million pair of glasses be given to people in need (Warby Parker 2022 Impact Report). This focus on demographics and psychographics has not only led Warby Parker to successfully capture their target audience but also create consumers who are brand loyal due to the brand's focus on creating positive change within the world. While my research did not reveal which of these two segments is the most profitable for them, I do know that these segments are key to their brand image.





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Target Audience (cont.)

From what I have researched I can confidently say that I think Warby Parker is successfully reaching and captivating their target audience. The people who need glasses but are done in the “Warby Parker Way” are exactly those who are already buying and becoming loyal consumers of the brand. Their approach to demographic and psychographic segments has allowed them to steadily grow their consumer base while also upholding their brand image. Warby Parker even remains consistent in the targeting within their marketing efforts of social media platforms. Looking at their social media pages, specifically Instagram, the brand has collaborated with social media stars/celebrities like Emma Chamberlain and Malik McIntyre to athletes like NBA basketball player Jordan Poole to create ads or short-form content that aligns and visually engages their youthful and trendy target audience. The ability of Warby Parker to utilize diverse, young, and socially conscious celebrities to give their target audience reference groups that consumers can relate to and opinion leaders that consumers feel proud to follow has only allowed Warby Parker to further take hold of their target audience creating opportunities of overall growth within their consumer base.

My research also revealed that it is not exactly certain whether Warby Parker has a distinct or intentional primary and secondary audience. Warby Parker's primary audience is again 17-34-year-olds who are urban, trendy, educated, and ultimately price-conscious consumers but their secondary audience to this primary group is unclear.

In my opinion, I believe it would be an impactful business decision for Warby Parkers to experiment with leveraging consumers aged 40-60 to be included within their target market or primary audience. I think this potential interest in an older audience could not only further spread awareness about their brand overall but also cause a boost in potentially brand-loyal consumers while still driving their profitability. This addition of consumers through an older audience would already align with the brand and its values. Older audiences who need eyewear typically want something more affordable, but they also enjoy seeing their money go to a good cause/purpose which Warby Parker already does with their “Buy a Pair, Give a Pair” program. On the contrary of that point, the potential risk behind this idea would be that older audiences might not be interested in Warby Parker's focus on trendy glasses design as well and they don't necessarily fall within the brand's ideal urban consumer geographic segmentation. Another risk may be that Warby Parker's youthful marketing efforts in ads and social media campaigns and uses may not be of value to the demographics and psychographics of an older target audience which could potentially weaken the brand's overall image through the lens of an older market.





Target Audience (cont.)

Overall, Warby Parker is already super successful in ensuring that they reach and align with their target audience. Warby Parker's use of demographics and psychographics allows them to positively connect with their market through different marketing efforts of ads and social media campaigns with social media celebrities and athletes. These intentional marketing efforts have not only created growth in consumer base opportunities for them but it has led them to create a positive brand image that consumers enjoy and feel connected to. There is a potential opportunity to expand their brand to an older audience for even more consumer base growth and profitability but to that point, there are risks that come like disinterest for their youthful glasses designs as well as lack of reception to marketing efforts. However, through the consumer persona that I have created, a representation of the ideal Warby Parker consumer is crafted to give insight into why Warby Parker's efforts in their marketing tactics/strategies align successfully with their target audience.



Consumer Persona

Lily Grace, 24

PROFILE



EDUCATION

Education : B.A. in Communications from the University of Southern California

Occupation : Social Media Manager

Income : \$65K-\$120K

Location : Los Angeles, California

BIO

A young, trendy, and price-conscious intellect, Lily Grace radiates with passion and drive to want to create social impact. Working as a social media manager, Lily Grace focuses on ways she can spread important and positive messages to the world. She is a consumer who not only values being chic but also practicality/function as well. Being the tech-savvy millennial that she is, she is always looking for brands that are modern, up-to-date, and convenient. With a desire to only shop at brands that align with her values, Lily Grace associates herself with Warby Parker as they fit seamlessly within her lifestyle and rest smoothly in her conscious mindset.

GOALS

- Maintain a healthy work-life balance.
- Growing in her career.
- Stay fashion-forward without compromising her comfort.
- Desire to shop only small, local, sustainable, and ethical.
- Building a stronger personal brand.

SHOPPING HABITS

- Craves quality pieces for an affordable price point.
- Shops at thrift stores, small and local boutiques, etc.
- Always searching for the most perfect statement piece.

FAVORITE BRANDS

Lily Grace doesn't have many favorite brands, but the ones that she does have, she is extremely loyal to them and ensures that she shares her favorite brands with others.

- Reformation, Ralph Lauren, Levi's, Gap, Local Thrift Shops

PERSONALITY

- Independence
- Adaptable
- Leader/Ambitious
- Advocate/Compassionate

SKILLS

- Storytelling (Content Creation and Branding)
- Problem-Solving
- Attention to Detail
- Tech-Savvy

SOCIAL MEDIA

- Youtube
- Instagram
- Threads
- TikTok



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Brand Loyalty

Because Warby Parker specializes in all kinds of glasses and not one specific product, I will speak to the brand's marketing mix in a more general sense. Warby Parker's marketing mix is highly driven by the initiative to provide price-conscious consumers with trendy yet high-quality glasses. Starting with the brand product, Warby Parker offers a wide range of high-quality and unique eyewear. From designs like the "Sonia," which features an oversized square frame with the colorway of "aventurine tortoise fade," to designs like "Broom," which features a vintage style aviator frame with a "jet black and gold" colorway, Warby Parker glasses can serve as trendy, stylish, chic, or simple catering to their widely diverse audience. The brand offers not only prescription glasses but glasses with blue light lenses, readers, and sunglasses. Moving into the brand's price, as stated previously most Warby Parker glasses start at just \$95 and cover consumers lenses and additional features as well. This price point for Warby Parker is strategically competitive as the average glasses' competitor brand charges around \$300-\$400 for a pair of prescription glasses. Moving into place, Warby Parker initially positioned themselves as a Direct-to-Consumer(DTC) online e-commerce store. The fact that Warby Parker initially started only online was also something different than what most of their competitors do, but it is so successful for Warby Parker because they offer virtual/ home try-ons. This home-try-on feature was especially unique to the glasses industry as consumers were now able to select five glasses before even making a purchase, have them shipped to their home where they could try them on, and if they liked a pair, Warby Parker would put the consumer's prescription in and just like that the consumer has a new pair of glasses for just \$95. While online stores were the first thing to capture the attention of many consumers, they further evolved to include physical retail locations that offer a more personalized shopping experience with the addition of eye exams. Their stores total over 250 locations across the U.S. and Canada. Finally, touching on the brand's promotions and looking at their social media channels, Warby Parker incorporates different elements like digital marketing, reference groups, opinion leaders (social media Influencers and celebrity endorsements), virtual try-ons, customer reviews, socially conscious/environmental impact efforts through their "Buy a Pair, Give a Pair" program and sustainability practices. All these elements work together to help Warby Parker promote their products to their audience in hopes of building a brand relationship and brand loyalty.





Brand Loyalty (cont.)

When it comes to Warby Parker's promotional mix, they ensure that each element is interlaced with the aspects of the marketing mix, making their brand unified throughout all channels. Spending over 76.1 million dollars on advertising in 2023 (statista.com), Warby Parker invested a lot into their advertising efforts. The brand uses both traditional marketing tactics to advertise, like TV commercials, and digital marketing tactics to advertise, like social media content, emails, their website, and Search Engine Marketing(SEM). Because Warby Parker has so many new and emerging storefronts, personal selling is a crucial part of the promotional mix for the company. When consumers enter a Warby Parker store, they are not just buying glasses, but ultimately, they are investing in style, quality, and experience. Sales reps of the brand work one-on-one with consumers to find the perfect pair of glasses that best suits them. This type of attention to each customer not only makes them feel valued and cared for but also makes them want to value and care for the brand as well. In a LinkedIn article/post written by Aboli Moroney, she shares her experiences and stories about the brand. In one of her stories, she talked about her first time in a Warby Parker store, and she stated,

"I walked into a Warby Parker store for the first time 4 years ago in a shopping mall. I was greeted by a friendly store personnel who asked me what I was looking for. They spent quality time learning about my needs and preferences and did not jump to "sell" any pair of glasses to me. They understood my unmet needs and complaints with my current eyeglasses. Eventually, when I asked for their recommendation, they suggested a few glasses and walked away, giving me space to explore and make my decision. Many brands make excellent eye gear, but Warby Parker has differentiated customer support like no brand has. They don't just sell you eye gear; they sell an experience." (LinkedIn.com).





Brand Loyalty (cont.)

This type of experience shows how Warby Parker workers and sales associates don't just sell you anything just to make a commission like other competitors are typically known to do, but they make sure they are selling you glasses that work for you because ultimately they want the time that you spend/experience at a Warby Parker store to feel valued and memorable. In terms of public relations, I couldn't find much, but what I was able to find was that Warby Parker has a news section on their site that shares information on their yearly impact report, financial reports, and management changes. I also was able to discover some interviews that co-founders Niel Blumenthal and Dave Gilboa did with a multitude of different publications where they share the story behind the brand, reinforce the brand's values, and further proclaim their customer-centric focus. Finally, when it comes to sales promotions, Warby Parker doesn't have many. They are currently running a sale that they call "Add and Pair and Save," where consumers can buy two or more pairs of glasses and get 15% off. They also always run the program "Buy a Pair, Give a Pair" where for every pair of glasses a consumer purchases, another pair is donated to someone in need of them. Both incentives create a sense of desire to want to buy more, especially the donation program, as most people enjoy seeing their money go to a good cause. This makes buying a pair of glasses from Warby Parker rewarding as you won't be the only person who gets to receive quality style and vision, but someone else does too.





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Brand Loyalty (cont.)

When it comes to brand loyalty and brand love, I can completely understand why a consumer would only want to purchase their glasses from Warby Parker. They not only provide consumers with unique quality glasses at a competitive price of just \$95, but they also make trying on glasses super convenient with their physical retail store or even with their virtual try-ons, which you can do anywhere, and their at-home try-ons. They even make buying a pair of glasses feel impactful with their “Buy a Pair, Give a Pair” program. This aspect of Warby Parker alone was enough to make me feel super connected to the brand when I purchased my first pair. This factor made me feel and see how they care to impact the world for the better, the same way I and probably many of their other loyal consumers aspire to do. It also makes me, and other Warby Parker consumers, super eager to share the brand with others who may be unfamiliar with them. Even after analyzing the brand’s efforts of personal selling with a consumer-centric approach and their sales promotion, each of these factors was planned to best serve the consumer, which makes it super easy to feel cared for/valued by the brand. When we compare all these factors to some of Warby Parker’s greatest competitors, in my opinion, from a business standpoint, I still would pick Warby Parker as these competitors seem to focus only on how they can make the most money selling prescription glasses to consumers. Ultimately, this makes me unvalued and tremendously disconnected. Warby Parker’s efforts to create unique, trendy, and quality glasses for consumers at a reasonable price is the idea that they started with, but they have ultimately done more for consumers, giving us a brand that we can all know, love, and be unconditionally loyal to.





Promotions Mix and Communication Vehicles

Warby Parker uses all three marketing tactics of paid, owned, and earned ad placements. In terms of their paid placements, Warby Parker pays for targeted ads on traditional marketing channels like TV ads and billboards as well as digital marketing channels like social media and website browsers like Google. During my research, I was able to locate Warby Parker's first TV ad, called "Eyeballs Looking For Glasses," which was released 12 years ago and took viewers on a 30-second tour through Warby Parker's brain where two eyeballs searched for the perfect pair of glasses. The ad gave viewers insight into Warby Parker's trendy, youthful, and vintage brand aesthetic and gained almost 1 million views on YouTube. In terms of their owned placements, the brand has ownership of their website, original social media pages on Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, X(formerly known as Twitter), TikTok, email marketing campaigns, and their brick-and-mortar stores. Finally, in terms of earned placements, Warby Parker leverages consumer testimonials on their website, press done by news and magazine publications, social media shares, reposts, comments, hashtags, mentions, and consumers' word of mouth.



Image Captured From Warby Parker's First TV Ad 12 Years Ago



Warby Parker Print Ad in a Bus Station Shelter

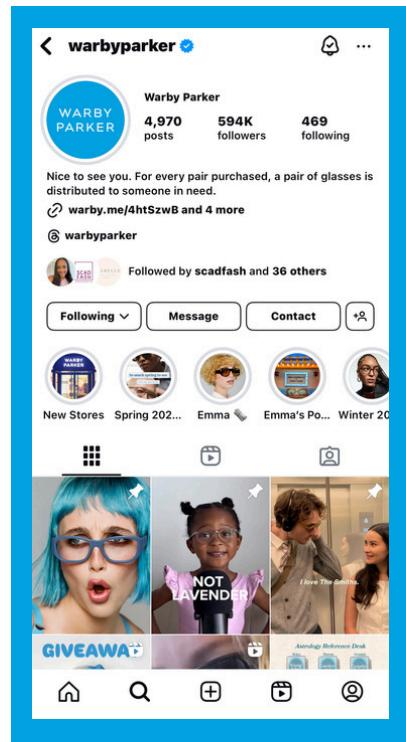


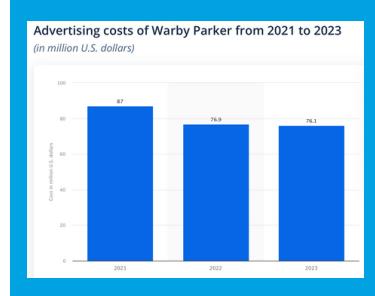
Image of Warby Parker's Current Instagram Page





Promotions Mix and Communication Vehicles (cont.)

Warby Parker has always understood the importance of advertising. In 2021, the brand spent 87 million dollars on advertising efforts. But over the next two years, we would see a slight decrease in the amount they spent on advertising efforts, dropping to 76.9 million dollars in 2022 and dropping slightly lower in 2021, only spending 76.1 million dollars(statista.com). While it is not specified, we can assume they spend this amount on both their traditional advertising channels like TV commercials and print ads (Billboards), and their digital marketing channels like social media platforms, emails, their website, and Search Engine Marketing(SEM). It was stated in a research article done by the Institute of Marketing Science at the University of South Australia that when brands start to spend less on advertising their sales drop 16% after year one and 25% after year two (marketing science.info) but for Warby Parker their sales increased going from making a revenue of 540.8 million dollars in 2021 to making a revenue of 669.76 million dollars in 2023. So why did Warby Parker lessen their spending on advertising? The reason for this decrease in money spent on advertising for the Warby Parker brand is unclear, but it is possible that the brand chose not to spend as much on advertising and instead started leveraging consumer-based social media marketing. When brands have a positive representation and brand value, they can oftentimes leverage and repost their free social media content that consumers naturally make about the brand. This, in turn, helps brands promote themselves without having to do a ton of work or spend a ton of money on it. Essentially, Warby Parker is largely leveraging their word-of-mouth marketing. Although this might seem risky, we have seen brands do it before, specifically the fast fashion conglomerate ZARA, who is known to only spend a small amount of their revenue, specifically 0-0.3% of its revenue, on advertising(martinroll.com). Yet even with this small spend on advertising, the ZARA brand is considered to be one of the most popular and successful fashion retail brands in the country. The same principle applies to Warby Parker as their word-of-mouth marketing tactic mixed with their traditional and digital marketing tactics fit seamlessly within their marketing plan.



Graph From Statista Depicting Warby Parker's Advertising Cost From 2021 to 2023



Graph From Statista Depicting Warby Parker's Revenue From 2019 to 2023





Promotions Mix and Communication Vehicles (cont.)

Warby Parker's efforts in social media play a semi-important role in their marketing plan. While social media is not the brand's only marketing form, it does play a somewhat important part. At the center of the brand's marketing plan is a desire to connect with consumers and truly make them feel and know that Warby Parker is not meant to benefit the founders and workers but to ultimately benefit consumers. While Warby Parker's social media is filled with consumer-based content that includes reposts of content that Warby Parker consumers have naturally made, the brand also includes moments of branded content that the social media team has come up with as well. Oftentimes, in the moments of branded content, we get to see a familiar face, whether that be a social media influencer or even a celebrity actor or athlete. The brand has collaborated with social media stars/celebrities like Emma Chamberlain and Malik McIntyre to athletes like NBA basketball player Jordan Poole to create ads, short-form content, and even specialty collections that align with the brand overall.

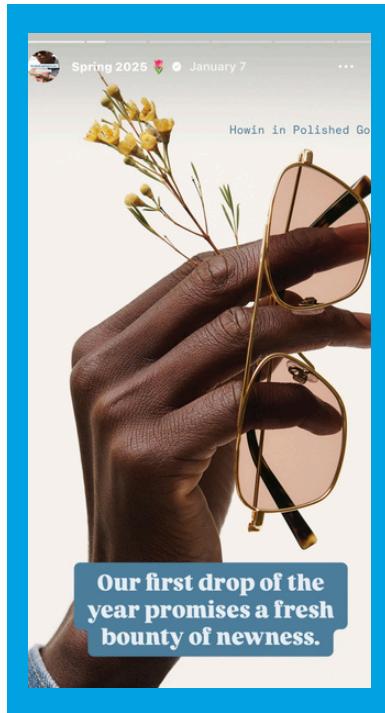


Image of Warby Parker's Content On Their Instagram Story

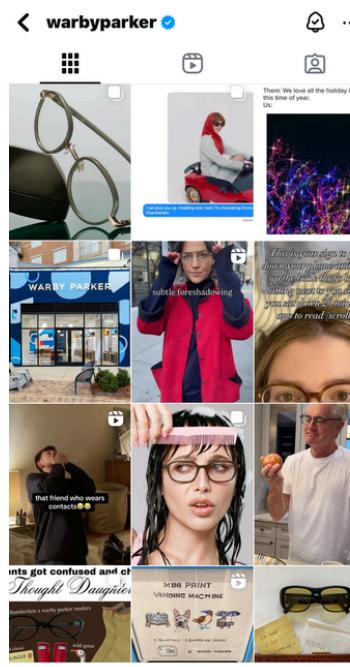


Image of Warby Parker's Instagram Page Layout, Which Features Both Consumer-Based and Branded Content

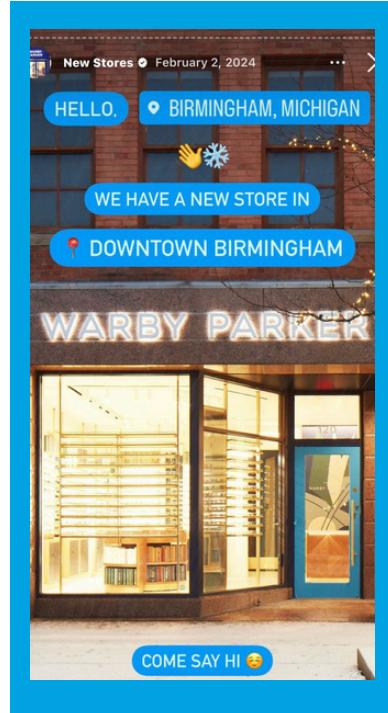


Image of Warby Parker's Content on their Instagram Story



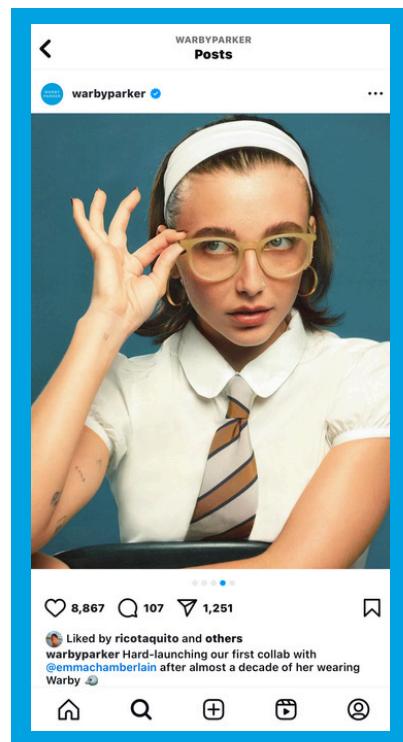


Promotions Mix and Communication Vehicles (cont.)

In 2023, Warby Parker collaborated with social media and YouTube phenom Emma Chamberlain on what would be the start of a successful brand collaboration journey of many. Emma was first prompted to walk into a Warby Parker store when her dad recognized that he needed a new pair of reading glasses (problem recognition), which is often consumers' first step in the purchasing process. Emma stated that the minute they walked in, they were both immediately drawn to the brand, and she and her dad ended up leaving the store with a matching pair of glasses, which was when she was 14 years old. Since that moment, Emma has worn Warby Parker glasses ever since, making this a natural collaboration for the two. When designing the glasses, Emma and Warby Parker co-founder Niel Blumenthal worked together closely, creating frames that felt personal to Emma and her unique aesthetic. Combining Emma's following of around 14.8 million social media fans with Warby Parker's over half a million followers, the two were able to create a successful design collaboration and social media campaign that gained traction and immediate interest from the brand's target audience and even new consumers from the Emma fanbase.



Warby Parker X Emma Chamberlain Collab Ad Campaign (Posted on Instagram)



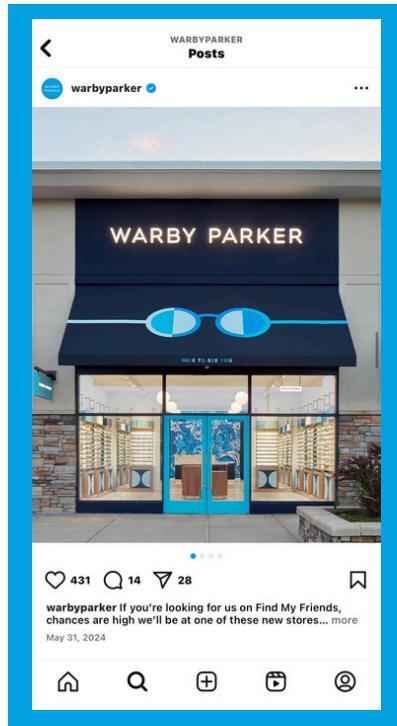
Warby Parker X Emma Chamberlain Collab Ad Campaign (Posted on Instagram)



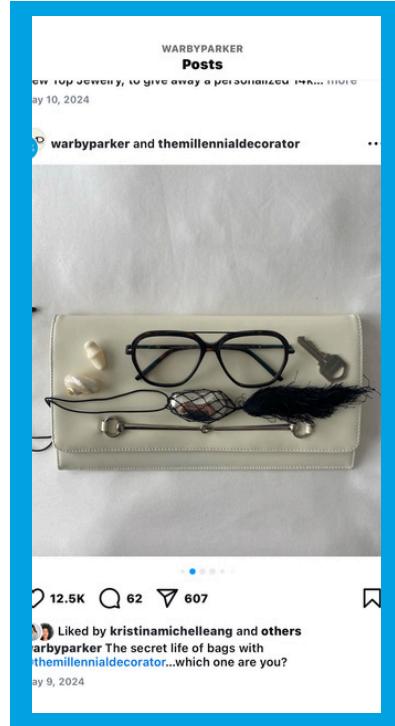


Promotions Mix and Communication Vehicles (cont.)

While this effort to connect with their target audience through social media is in line with their marketing plan, I do think the brand has an opportunity to create more engaging social media content. On Instagram, the brand has around 594K followers, but their engagement on their posts is pretty low. The content that the brand creates originally, receives a very low amount of likes, shares, and reposts, all being under 800 people for each category. But anytime the brand posts or reposts content from a familiar face, the brand averages anywhere over 10K for each of these social media interactive features per post. It is my opinion that the brand should revamp its social media to obtain more engagement not just when a celebrity or athlete is present but overall. Furthermore, while I think their social media does contribute to a decent amount of awareness of the brand, I do think there is a slightly stronger push coming from one of their other sectors of marketing, like their traditional marketing tactics of TV and print ads. I even would suggest that Warby Parker experiment with doing more paid placements through traditional channels and seeing the traction they gain from that. Once they get slightly bigger and become more mainstream, Warby Parker could even invest in doing an ad for the next upcoming Super Bowl.



Example of Warby Parker Social Media Content With Low Engagement (Non Collab Content)



Example of Warby Parker Social Media Content With High Engagement (Collab Content)



Promotions Mix and Communication Vehicles (cont.)

In terms of the Warby Parker website, I think this is successful for the brand. It is not only super user-friendly and easy to navigate, but it also gives an understanding of who the brand is and what it stands for. Once you open the brand's website, you are greeted by some on-brand product imagery, brand logo colors, and graphics along with a section to explore their home try-on program, products like sunglasses, eyeglasses, contacts, and accessories, schedule eye exam appointments, and find the closest store near you. After exploring those sections, you can scroll to the bottom where you find more about these sections in detail as well as a section that provides information on ways you can save when shopping with the brands, education on glasses and lenses, their very own blog, and even an about section that speaks to their brand story, donation programs, consumer testimonials, jobs, impact foundation, investors and more. All of these features and sections not only work in alignment with the brand's aesthetic and values, but they also work well for the consumers exploring the website as they get a representation of exactly who Warby Parker truly is.

Bestsellers Trending New arrivals Home Try-On

Carlton \$95 Brady \$95 Percey

Get the inside scoop on new frames, events, and more

Products: Glasses, Sunglasses, Contacts, New collections, Shop by Warby Parker, Accessories, Gift cards

Shop Online: Try it free, Download our app, Get a prescription, Book an eye exam, Renew a prescription, Measure your PD, Visit a store, Find a location

Ways to save: Insurance, Flexible spending, 20% off contacts, Add a pair and save

About us: Our story, Buy a Pair, Give a Pair, Customer reviews, Jobs, Impact, Impact Foundation, Investors, Sitemap

Need a hand?: We're available by phone (888.492.7297) and chat today from 8 a.m.-11 p.m. ET

FAQ, Text, Chat, Email, 888.492.7297

App Store, Google Play

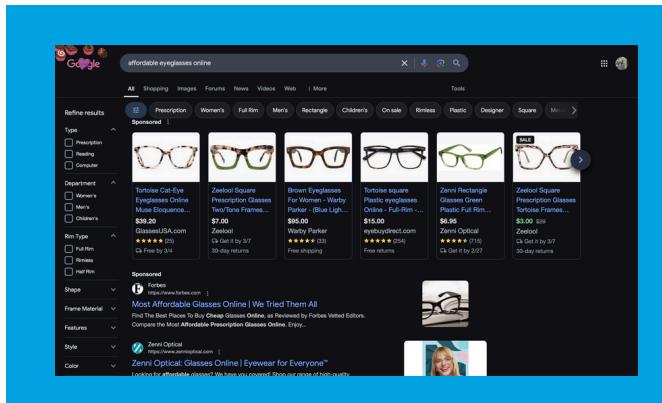
It's easy to use your insurance

Images Captured From Warby Parker's Brand Website (Home Page, Bestseller Product Page, Home Try-On Feature, And Bottom Of Website)

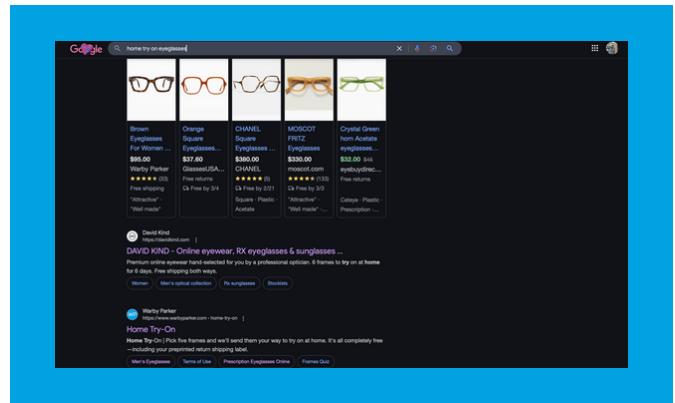


Promotions Mix and Communication Vehicles (cont.)

When analyzing the brand's SEO, I noticed areas for improvement. I experimented with using both short and long keywords to see where the website was being ranked on the Google browser. When using words and phrases like "eyeglasses", "affordable eyeglasses online," and "trendy eyewear", Warby Parker was ranked in the middle to bottom of the Google search page but it was only when I searched "try-on glasses at home" did Warby Parker pop up closer towards the top up the list being ranked second on the page. But even with Warby Parker being ranked higher when searching keywords regarding glasses that can be tried on at home, they still had one glasses brand above them offering this same feature which was slightly alarming as Warby Parker to knowledge was one of the first brands if not the first to introduce the feature where glasses can be tried on at home before you buy them. If Warby Parker altered their webpages to increase their SEO, they could not only further enhance their website traffic but they could also boost overall brand awareness and sales conversions. In terms of the brand's SEM, it is not clear how much of their advertising budget they are spending on this, but it seems that they do. In the images below, you can even see that they have at least one pair of their glasses in the sponsored section of the Google page in both images. With that being said, I would still recommend that they spend more of their budget on this to boost their brand visibility and awareness for consumers, creating more traffic for the brand overall.



Example of Long Keyword Experimentation with Warby Parker's SEO ("affordable eyeglasses online")



Example of Short Keyword Experimentation with Warby Parker's SEO ("home try-on eyeglasses")





WARBY
PARKER

Public Relations (PR)

While Warby Parker is a fairly new brand, only being in the business industry for around 15 years, from the start, they have always had good PR. When the brand was coming about, one of the few things they invested in right away was hiring a PR firm and fashion publicist to help them grow the brand immediately. It became a part of their initial launching strategy to have magazines do positive press for the brand, allowing them to gain some pre-awareness from consumers. It was quickly after that, in February of 2010, that the brand would be featured in powerhouse magazines like Vogue and GQ. They became quickly memorable for many as GQ had just given them the title of “the Netflix of eyewear” based on the brand's innovation of the Home Try-On feature which allows consumers to select five pairs of glasses and have them shipped to their doorstep for free for consumers to be able able to try them on in the convenience of their home before making a final decision purchase(forbes.com). In Vogue's press article for the brand, they referred to Warby Parker's unique collection of glasses as “a line of boutique vintage-inspired frames and lenses for savvy urbanites at a revolutionary price point”(vogue.co). These positive press articles in the media allowed for the brand's top eyewear styles, which were around 15 different pairs, to sell out within almost a month of the brand's site launch. This also led to them achieving/hitting their first-year sales targets in just shy of three weeks of the brand's launch overall.



Magazine Clippings of GQ and Vogues Press For
Warby Parker in 2010





WARBY
PARKER

Public Relations (PR)

Due to their surpassed expectations during their brand launch, the co-founders of the brand had to have their website developers add waitlist functionality to their website as they had accepted more orders than they had inventory for accumulating over 20,000 consumers on their waitlist. The brand even had to use crisis management early on when some consumers were upset about the long waitlist and temporary suspension of their Home Try-On feature. Instead of the brand sending out a mass generic email in an attempt to pacify consumers, they instead sent personalized emails to every upset consumer along with explanations and apologies as to why they had to temporarily suspend their Home Try-On. The co-founders shared in an interview with CNBC that days after this unexpectedly successful launch, the co-founders, along with their family and friends, worked tirelessly to fulfill orders and respond to consumer emails and phone calls as effectively and efficiently as possible. Co-founder Niel Blumenthal later stated that how they positively handled the brand's minor crisis ignited from their good PR would "set the tone" for how the brand would always handle/manage the brand's customer service.





WARBY
PARKER

Public Relations (PR)

The Warby Parker brand continues to have positive PR to this day. The brand's PR reveals itself in the form of company press releases, including information regarding new products and even their annual reports and impact reports. Each year, the brand has released its annual reports and yearly impact reports as not only a form of PR but as a way to give insight to investors, stockholders, and even consumers, which speaks to the company's current activities, financial performance, plans/goals, and so much more. The brand even does Co-founder interviews with major new publications and magazines like CNBC, CBS, Vogue, Goldman Sachs, Forbes, and so many more. These interviews/news conferences allow for the brand to introduce themselves to consumers in a controlled manner while also updating their pre-existing consumers on their current activities and future things to look out for. The brand also does PR through its social media postings. By posting content that is a pure and authentic reflection of the Warby Parker brand, they give themselves the ability to leverage post/content in a way that builds a valuable and positive brand image in the eyes and hearts of many of their consumers. Most importantly, the company's donation program called "Buy A Pair, Give A Pair" is also a form of PR.



Image of Warby Parker's 2023 Annual Report



Image Captured From Warby Parker's Interview With CNBC On Going Public

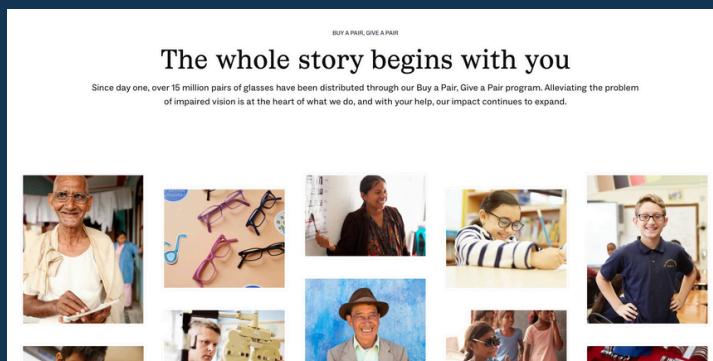


Image Captured From Warby Parker's "Buy A Pair, Give A Pair" Donation Program Section On Their Website



WARBY PARKER

Public Relations (PR)

Since the day the brand was launched, Warby Parker has always cared about social impact, and the best way they could use their brand to make the world a better place is by donating glasses to people in need. For every pair of Warby Parker glasses bought, a pair is given to someone in need for free. To date, the brand has donated over 15 million pairs of glasses to people in over 75 countries(warbyparker.com). Through this program, they have also been fortunate enough to create another donation program called the Pupils Project, which started in 2015. Warby Parker has been able to partner with local organizations and government agencies to create this school-based vision program that essentially gives free vision screenings, eye exams, and glasses to schoolchildren in the US. These free eye exams and vision screenings are given right in students' classrooms to help eliminate any potential barriers, making it super simple and easy for children to gain the vision help they need. It is noted by Warby Parker that to date, they have given out 227K pairs of glasses to school children in need through this program(warbyparker.com). Many of these children who receive glasses through this program are getting their very first pair of glasses for the first time. In a CBS interview Co-founders Dave Gilboa and Niel Blumenthal were asked why they started these donation programs, and Blumenthal stated that he and the other Co-founders knew that starting a business would be hard work and the one thing that would motivate them all to never give up is being able to see the look on someone's face when you have given them not just a pair of glasses but ultimately the gift of vision and clarity.



Image Captured From Warby Parker's Website Depicting How Many Glasses They Have Donated Through The "Buy A Pair, Give A Pair" Donation Program

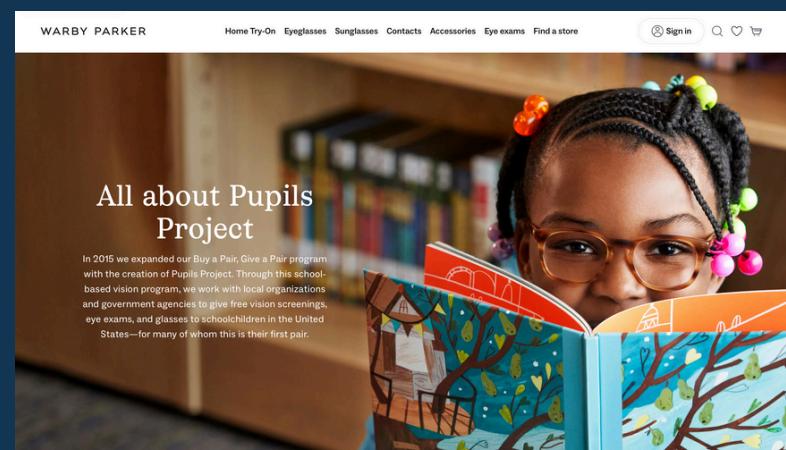


Image Captured From Warby Parker's Project Pupils Donation Program Section On Their Website

SWOT Analysis

Warby Parker SWOT Analysis

S	W	O	T
Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Innovative Business Model/Affordable Pricing• Home Try-On Program• Social Responsibility Initiatives/Donation Programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Product Range Limitation• Limited International Presence	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sustainability Initiatives• Partnerships and Collaborations• Online Eye Exam Technologies	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Brand Competition• Evolving Consumer Preferences



SWOT Analysis (cont.)

Strengths:

- Innovative Business Model/Affordable Pricing
 - Since Warby Parker has a DTC business model and creates all their glasses in-house, they can price their glasses at a more affordable rate for consumers. Most Warby Parker glasses start at just \$95 and that price has remained the same since the start of the brand allowing consumers to save and become more price conscious.
- Home Try-On Program
 - Warby Parker was one of the first, if not the first, eyewear brands to create a Home Try-on feature that allows consumers to try on five pairs of glasses of their choice for free in the comfort of their home before purchasing their preferred pair.
- Social Responsibility Initiatives/Donation Program
 - Warby Parker donation programs are one of their strongest differentiation factors. Since the brand started they have had in place the “Buy A Pair, Give A Pair” program which for every pair of glasses bought from Warby Parker, a pair of glasses is donated to someone in need.

Weaknesses:

- Product Range Limitation
 - While the brand has a diverse product lineup in terms of pattern and color, they don't have as many different styles as some of their competitors, which takes away from their brand reliability and sales. To combat this, the company should broaden their product range even further to introduce more diverse styles of glasses.
- Limited International Presence
 - Warby Parker lacks a sense of international presence with the majority of their stores being in the U.S. and only five of their stores being in Canada. To combat this, the brand should open one new international retail store every two quarters (six months) to start growing its international presence and brand awareness.





SWOT Analysis (cont.)

Opportunities:

- Sustainability Initiatives
 - Warby Parker offers sustainable and eco-friendly packaging, but they have an opportunity to focus their consumer's attention on it. The brand could proclaim its sustainability efforts through a set campaign that showcases the brand's new eco-friendly glasses design or even collection. This would also differentiate the brand from other glass brands that have yet to introduce this idea in this way to the eyewear market.
- Partnerships and Collaborations
 - Warby Parker has teamed up with celebrities and influencers to release product collaborations, but the brand has an opportunity to heighten their brand awareness through collaboration/partnerships with fashion brands that already align with Warby Parker's target audience.
- Online Eye Exam Technologies
 - Creating technology for their brand to offer online eye exams would create a heightened brand image and more convenience for consumers. Warby Parker already offers in-person eye exams but if the brand worked with AI to create eye exams that could be done digitally, the brand could not only bring more awareness to themselves but they could also become an innovator in the eyewear market.

Threats:

- Brand Competition
 - The Warby Parker brand has strong competition from brands like Zeekool, EyeBuyDirect, GlassesUSA, LensCrafters, and Moscot. Warby Parker can close this gap by doing more marketing that shows how they differentiate themselves from their competitors.
- Evolving Consumer Preferences
 - Warby Parker works hard to ensure that their product lineup aligns with their trendy audience but because glasses are moving more into the fashion category as they are an accessory that all people like to wear even if they don't need glasses, Warby Parker should work with fashion forecasters to ensure that their glasses are aligning with the right trends. Without this, Warby Parker faces the threat of creating glasses that won't always align or perform well with their consumers.



Conclusion

In this paper, we have analyzed the many layers of the Warby Parker brand. From their brand history to their growth/changes over time to even their promotion mix and communications vehicles, we have been able to see exactly why Warby Parker is the brand that it is today. While all of those topics cover a different sector of the brand what does not change is how Warby Parker interlaces their brand strategy, objectives, values, and mission in everything they do. The founders of the brand set out to change the trajectory of the glasses industry making their sole focus to change/innovate the way consumers shop for glasses making the experience fun and affordable and doing it with so much style. With only being in the business and glasses industry for 15 years, the brand has already proved itself as a disruptor in the business world being used as an example to describe other disrupting businesses with the phrase “The Warby Parker of...” is a key testament to their devotion to creating a brand that people can respect, trust, and feel loyal to. They have even proven to not only be a brand that approaches everything they do with a consumer-centric focus but they also approach everything they do with the idea of how they can help people in need with their resources as well. With their mission statement being “to inspire and impact the world with vision, purpose, and style” they have not only earned the success that they have today but through this statement they revealed to consumers the heart of their brand. And that exact mission, those exact words, and that exact idea act as the most poignant and impactful part of the anatomy of the Warby Parker brand.





WARBY
PARKER

Citations

"21K Views · 236 Reactions: How Warby Parker Glasses Are Made: Ever Wonder How Warby Parker Glasses Are Made? Well, We Documented the Entire Process, from the Initial Design to the Cutting of the Lenses. Spoiler...: By Warby Parker." *Facebook*, www.facebook.com/warbyparker/videos/how-warby-parker-glasses-are-made/10156057598793838/. Accessed 28 Feb. 2025.

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