FORA Sunglasses: Revision of the brand positioning strategy in light of future strategic goals

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Abstract

Dissertation title: FORA Sunglasses: Revision of the brand positioning strategy in light of future strategic goals

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Through the analysis of a brand positioning practical dilemma of FORA Sunglasses, this thesis provides an examination of marketing contents such as brand identity, market positioning, and the importance of having a strong brand at consumers´ eyes.

FORA is a Portuguese brand that produces vintage sunglasses since 2013. Its identity and market positioning rely on its sunglasses´ production process: a handmade manufacturing process in Portugal, which ensures the brand high quality and uniqueness, something the managers are not willing to give up. Having only one sunglass factory located in Portugal operating to serve its whole customer basis, FORA needs to explicitly address the issue of how to fulfill the requirements of increasing demand and shortening response times associated with future expansion.

Therefore, the aim of this thesis is to study, through primary and secondary research, whether this strategy presents an adequate added value for the consumer, so that giving it up would mean a brand loss which isn´t worth the corresponding production process competitiveness gain

Main results showed that moving production to a different country wouldn´t mean a major loss to FORA, as it only influenced its perceptions of durability. However, if the brand considers to enhance its competitiveness through industrializing the manufacturing process, it should be more careful, as such an option could negatively affect consumers' product quality perceptions, key drivers of their ultimate product buying decisions.

Resumo

Título: FORA Sunglasses: Revision of the brand positioning strategy in light of future strategic goals

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Através da análise de um dilema prático de posicionamento da marca FORA Sunglasses, a presente dissertação proporciona uma visão global de conteúdos de marketing: identidade da marca, posicionamento de mercado, e a importância de ter uma marca forte aos olhos do consumidor.

A FORA é uma marca portuguesa que produz óculos escuros *vintage* desde 2013. A sua identidade e posicionamento de mercado assentam no processo de produção dos óculos: um processo artesanal que decorre em Portugal, assegurando à marca alta qualidade e singularidade, algo que os seus administradores não estão dispostos a sacrificar. Existindo apenas uma fábrica de óculos em Portugal, que também serve outros clientes, poderá tornar-se difícil para a FORA preencher os requisitos de um aumento de procura e gerir tempos de resposta mais exigentes derivados da futura expansão.

Assim, pretende-se estudar, através de pesquisa primária e secundária, se esta estratégia representa um valor acrescentado para o consumidor, sendo que sacrificá-la significaria uma perda para a marca que não compensa o aumento de competitividade do processo de produção.

Os principais resultados mostraram que produzir noutro país não significaria uma grande perda para a marca, uma vez que só influenciaria as suas perceções de durabilidade. Contudo, se a FORA considerar o aumento da competitividade através da industrialização do processo, deve ter um cuidado adicional, dado que as perceções de qualidade, por exemplo, dependem deste, o que influencia indiretamente a intenção de compra dos consumidores.

Table of Contents

1. INTRODUCTION 1

1.1. PROBLEM STATEMENT 2
1.2. KEY RESEARCH QUESTIONS 2
1.3. METHODOLOGY 3

2. LITERATURE REVIEW 5

2.1. THE CORE IDENTITY OF A BRAND 5
2.1.1. Building a desirable identity 6
2.1.2. Fashion brands and consumer identity: a need for congruity 7
2.2. BRAND POSITIONING 8
2.2.1. Developing an effective positioning 8
2.2.2. Positioning based on country-of-origin 9
2.3. BUILDING STRONG BRANDS 10
2.3.1. How do strong brands create value? A customer-based approach 10
2.3.2. Brand power in the Fashion Industry 12

3. CASE-STUDY 13

3.1. MARKET OVERVIEW 13
3.1.1. A deeper look at the $13 billion premium eyewear market 13
3.1.2. A journey throughout the Portuguese reality 15
3.2. FORA SUNGLASSES 16
3.2.1. Emergence, identity and positioning 16
3.2.2. Targeting 18
3.2.3. Global competition 19
3.2.4. Product portfolio & production 20
3.2.5. Managing price and distribution 21
3.2.6. Communication efforts 22
3.3. WHAT THE FUTURE HOLDS 24
3.4. THE CHALLENGE 26

4. MARKET RESEARCH 27

4.1. METHODOLOGY 27
4.1.1. Focus Group 27
4.1.2. Questionnaire 27
4.2. RESEARCH FINDINGS 29

5. CONCLUSIONS 36

6. LIMITATIONS & FUTURE RESEARCH 42

7. TEACHING NOTE 43

7.1. SYNOPSIS 43
7.2. TARGET AUDIENCE & TEACHING OBJECTIVES 44
7.3. TEACHING PLAN 45
7.3.1. In class discussion 45

8. REFERENCES 47

8.1. ACADEMIC REFERENCES 47

8.2. OTHER SOURCES: 49

9. ATTACHMENTS 52

9.1. LITERATURE REVIEW 52
9.2. CASE-STUDY 52
9.3. MARKET RESEARCH 55

1. Introduction

FORA Sunglasses is a Portuguese brand that produces vintage sunglasses since 2013. The brand surged from the inspiration of two Portuguese entrepreneurs who wanted to reach a global public, across all ages and styles. FORA is focused in using the best existent materials and delivering a high quality product financially accessible for a wide range of people.

Currently, FORA´s sunglasses are **made by hand** and entirely **produced in Portugal**. This has provided the key brand positioning basis, which generated a tangible differentiation within the sunglasses category, since no other company jointly offers these two characteristics at accessible prices.

As two years of continuously increasing sales went by, the owner started considering the expansion in the national market in the current year, as well as the brand´s internationalization one year from now. Regarding its product portfolio, future plans include a product line innovation investment.

At this point, there is only one Portugal-based sunglass factory: the one that works for FORA. Besides, this factory doesn't work with some common materials used in sunglass manufacturing, such as metals. This, in turn, imposes constraints upon production capacity, response time, innovation based on different materials, and production cost competitiveness. Therefore, the currently adopted positioning, lying on the "Portuguese handmade concept" as part of the core brand´s identity, might become highly challenging, or even infeasible in face of the company´s expansion plans.

According to the manager, FORA Sunglasses is not willing to give up these two core values, as they have been a key source of FORA´s authenticity and uniqueness. Therefore, this thesis strives to study whether this strategy will still be the most beneficial for the brand in the future: if the adopted identity and positioning are valuable enough, so that losing them would mean a brand value loss, one that is not worth the benefits resulting from increasing the manufacturing process competitiveness.

This research is relevant for the company by providing a comprehensive understanding of a challenge the firm will face, as well as the corresponding solution, taking the consumer perspective into account. It is also relevant for other managers and students as it addresses a practical dilemma in the field of strategic marketing and brand management, considering the respective literature and primary research methods to solve it.

1.1. PROBLEM STATEMENT

The problem this thesis aims to address is: **Is maintaining the current positioning adopted by FORA Sunglasses the best strategy, considering the brand´s strategic plans for the future?**

1.2. KEY RESEARCH QUESTIONS

To better address the problem, the following key research questions were formulated:

KRQ1: **What value do consumers put in Portuguese and handmade products?**

The answer to this research question will allow to assess whether the features FORA has been communicating are personally relevant to consumers and capable of driving shopping behaviors.

KRQ2: **What is the general level of awareness, and consumers´ thoughts and feelings towards FORA?**

By answering this question, following the Keller´s CBBE pyramid as a basis to assess brand equity, it will be possible to determine whether there is a general awareness regarding the brand, and if so, which kind of associations it has attached to.

KRQ3: **Does the current positioning represent a source of brand equity to the brand?**

The answer to this question will determine whether consumers place a higher value on the brand for knowing its products are handmade in Portugal.

KRQ4: Is the adopted positioning driving consumers to actually buy a pair of FORA´s sunglasses?

With this question, it will be possible to identify if "made in Portugal & by hand" are indeed, critical factors driving purchase intentions, and if this positioning can be converted into financial value for the company.

KRQ5: **In case there is no need for FORA to reposition in light of the future goals, how could the brand strengthen its positioning message to better reach the target audience?**

Brand associations are important, but they are only ideal if aligned to what the brand stands for. The answer to this question is a consequence of possible gaps between the brand´s message and the audience perceptions, and will allow to uncover some insights regarding FORA´s communication strategy.

1.3. METHODOLOGY

To answer the research questions illustrating the problem statement, both primary and secondary data was collected.

Regarding the primary data gathered, **in-depth interviews** to the firm manager were conducted to know the company, gain insights into the general nature of the problem, its possible decision alternatives, and to clarify strategic details. An exploratory approach was taken and the information was treated qualitatively.

A **focus group** was conducted to gain insights regarding participants´ knowledge, associations and opinions regarding the brand, and to help structuring the questionnaire. This method enabled participants to express their views and ideas, capturing their perspectives and experiences. All information was analyzed qualitatively and provided exploratory insights through the following research stage.

Another primary research method was used to complement and quantify the information from the focus group: a **survey** released through the Internet and conducted personally, in which a descriptive approach was taken. The questionnaire was designed using the *Qualtrics Survey Software.* Data was analyzed through SPSS Software to better characterize the brand, the respondents and explore relationships among marketing variables.

Secondary data was also collected to study relevant brand matters in the literature review section, to gain insights into the value of brands that are attached to their country-of-origin as a differentiating factor, and to characterize the market where FORA is present. Several sources were used, such as academic books, articles and Websites. The approach taken to study the secondary data was both exploratory, to gain a qualitative understanding of the problem and its nature, and descriptive, to study the market environment.

Keywords – FORA Sunglasses, brand identity, fashion, consumer identity, positioning, made in Portugal, handmade, country-of-origin, customer-based brand equity.

2. Literature Review

This chapter presents a theoretical framework on the topics related to the KRQ, explored using academic articles and previous studies.

The first part is devoted to brand identity, how to build a desirable identity and how fashion brands relate to consumer identities. Afterwards, as this thesis addresses a positioning challenge, a relevant part of the literature review is focused on how to develop an effective positioning and explore the role of a positioning strategy based on a brand´s country-of-origin. The last part of the chapter focuses on brand equity matters, and how to build a strong brand in the fashion world.

Figure 1 - Literature Review Framework

2.1. THE CORE IDENTITY OF A BRAND

> *"Brands are no longer something that can passively sit between the customer and a company. The company is the brand—and authenticity and consistency are key to maintaining relevance while sustaining a meaningful position in the marketplace."* (Interbrand, 2016)

According to Kapferer (2008), when brands launch new products, enter new markets and conquer new targets, messages may become fragmented, and the importance of having a clear identity is reinforced. Moser (2003) defines identity as the values that are integral to the existence of the brand and the origin of all other brand aspects.

2.1.1. Building a desirable identity

Mottram (1998) argues that successful identities will be based on a fundamental understanding of the brand´s vision, personality, culture and expression throughout the whole company. Choosing symbols can only be made when a clear definition of the brand meaning is established. As identity considers the several aspects of a brand´s long-run uniqueness and appeal, it must be "**concise, sharp and interesting"** (Kapferer, 2008, p.187).

The importance of the core values to brand identity has been stated by several authors, as they are a powerful source of influencing consumers and their behaviors (de Chernatony and McDonald, 2003). But what really are those core values for a firm? As Moser (2003) stated, the core values of a brand are those who uniquely define its essence, and those to which the company constantly complies with in face of all obstacles. Core values are authentic mirrors of the firm, and intrinsic to its culture, such that without them the company disappears and the brand´s ability to communicate believable messages is compromised. By building a **simple and believable set of core values**, companies create opportunities to penetrate the system by which consumers are bombarded with thousands of messages every day.

A framework for guidance

Among other theoretical approaches to study the dimensions of brand identity, Kapferer's Brand Identity Prism (2008, p.183) allows brand managers to assess the positive and negative points of their brands and to specify its brand's meaning. It is a form of guidance for brand managers in building their own brand identity. The Prism derives from the basic concept that brands have the gift of speech: they communicate. According to the author, the concept of brand identity encompasses six facets that are interrelated and form a well-structured entity[1].

The *physique* dimension is the basis of the brand and includes the brand´s physical features and how they are recognized among consumers. *Personality* represents the brand´s character as if it

[1] Attachment 1

was a person, and can be achieved by the use of a specific style of writing, for instance. *Culture* is the set of values and key principles on which a brand bases its behavior. *Relationship*, as a symbolism of relationship between different people, for example, between a mother and a child. *Reflection* refers to the user of the brand by reflecting how the customer wishes to be seen as a result of using the brand. Finally, *self-image* constitutes an internal mirror the target customers hold up to themselves.

2.1.2. Fashion brands and consumer identity: a need for congruity

Brands and their roles

From the consumer´s perspective, brands identify who stands behind the product (informational role), thus eliminating some risks associated with a purchase (Keinan and Avery, 2008), improving consumers´ trust in the company´s claims regarding a product, and rising the perceived quality in most categories (Erdem and Swait, 2004).

Apart from the assistance in the consumer decision-making process, Fischer *et al.* (2010) concluded that some brands play an important **role in *social demonstrance*** for allowing consumers to project their self-image. It has been studied that consumers like products, brands and adopt consumption behaviors to which they self-associate (Belk, 1981; Shavitt *et al*., 1992), which causes an increase of attention to stimuli that are related to their identity and a preference for those brands (Reed *et al*., 2012).

Fashion & consumer identity

Hirschman and Holbrook (1982, p.6) stressed that decisions concerning product categories that are consumed for the hedonic aspects, the case of fashion, should be based on the **"symbolic elements of the products rather than their tangible features".**

According to Kim (2012), fashion brands have particular relevant meanings for consumers, by reflecting their identity, lifestyle and symbolic values, and generating emotional responses. Hence, there is a clear and particular **need for congruence between the "projected brand identity in the fashion market", and how this is received to attract the target market"** (Ross and Harradine, 2011, p.3).

2.2. BRAND POSITIONING

From identity to positioning

While identity, as the source of brand positioning, specifies its uniqueness and value, the latter creates preference in a specific time and market for the products (Kapferer 2008, p.171).

"Positioning is the act of designing the company's offering and image to occupy a distinctive place in the mind of the target market" (Kotler and Keller, 2006, p.310).

2.2.1. Developing an effective positioning

The way a company chooses its positioning in the marketplace has an extreme influence on its subsequent marketing strategy. Kapferer (2008, p.175) developed a framework called the "**positioning diamond**" with four key questions a firm must carefully consider when addressing the matter of positioning: (1) a brand for whom? – Target market, (2) a brand against whom? – The main competitors, (3) a brand for what benefit? – Brand promise and consumer benefit, and (4) reason? – Elements that support the claimed benefits.

A brand for whom? Brand positioning is focused and driven by the customer. With the goal of achieving an effective positioning, it is critical to identify what the target customer claims as **needs**, and from there, develop a strategy of positioning to meet those needs (Yemen and Wilcox, 2012).

A brand against whom? After a successful choice of the target market to whom to communicate, it is time to define the **competitive frame of reference** by determining to which category a brand or a product belongs to and in which competes (Kotler and Keller, 2006).

A brand for what benefit? Once the nature of competition is set, the firm must choose in which points to be **equal** or **different** from the competitors. To achieve a strong position in consumers´ minds, it is important that they perceive **meaningful differences among brands** in the product category, which tend to be related to attributes or benefits of the product (Kotler and Keller, 2006). After the choice of attributes on which to claim superiority, the way to communicate the brand's superiority on these attributes it´s of most importance (Pechmann and Ratneshwar, 1991). "All the company's marketing-mix efforts must support the positioning strategy" (Kotler and Armstrong, 2006, p.244). Communicating the features in a dispersed manner, by sequentially presenting them, generates perceptions of a differentiated brand, especially when the features might seem incompatible (Sujan and Bettman, 1989). In fact, firms must communicate differentiation at every point customer touches, through the entire decision-making process (MacMillan and McGrath, 1997).

Reason? Providing the target group a reason to buy is vital, and it turns to be even more ideally when competitors cannot replicate it (Yemen and Wilcox, 2012). However, the purpose of being different from competitors demands a coherent strategy that creates added value (Kotler and Armstrong, 2006), by delivering an "authentic and relevant customer experience that all employees can help build" (Interbrand, 2016). As stated by Kapferer (2008, p.177), "creative hunches are only useful if they are consistent with the brand´s legitimate territory".

2.2.2. Positioning based on country-of-origin

Positioning, derived from identity, is critical for a brand as all choices are comparative. Therefore, it makes sense to start by capitalizing in the area in which the brand is strongest (Kapferer 2008). For some brands, the country which they come from is their biggest strength, and therefore, managers might associate their brand with a country-of-origin that has a strong image (Leclerc, Schmitt and Dube, 1994) and benefit from the values of its native soil (Kapferer, 2008).

Bhat and Reddy (1998) stress that brands can be positioned either at a functional and/or symbolic level. From the **functional** perspective, the country-of-origin can signal the brand´s attributes in the presence of limited information, or, serve as a comparison standard. Finally, country-of-origin can even be one of the brand attributes used in the consumer decision-making-process (Li and Wyer, 1994). From the **symbolic** perspective, country-of-origin membership can trigger emotional responses that might annul cognitive evaluations of the brand (Obermiller and Spangenberg 1989).

Consumer goods' country-of-origin has been shown to shape consumers' brand attitudes and behaviors significantly. The "domestic country bias" (DCB) phenomenon is responsible for domestic products being evaluated more positively than products from foreign origins without a rational basis. This might result in some inconsistencies in purchasing behavior such as “buy local” or “don´t buy from the enemy” (Balabanis and Diamantopoulos, 2004).

However, domestic manufacturers cannot simply trust their local consumers to grant them any favored position against imported goods, since the DCB is proven to strongly depend on consumer ethnocentrism[2]. The more ethnocentric the consumer, the higher the probability of adopting domestic products against foreign products (Balabanis and Diamantopoulos, 2004).

2.3. BUILDING STRONG BRANDS

2.3.1. How do strong brands create value? A customer-based approach

Researchers and marketers have been studying the subject of brand equity following three main perspectives: company, customer and financial based (Keller & Lehmann, 2006). Customer-based brand equity (CBBE) can be defined as the “differential effect that brand knowledge has on consumer response to the marketing of that brand” (Kotler and Keller, 2006, p.277).

According to the authors, a necessary condition for a brand to yield positive CBBE is that consumers react more positively to a product when they identify the brand, in comparison to when the brand is not identified. In addition, Keller (1993, p.2) concluded that another condition for a brand to become strong is to build familiarity and “favorable, strong, and unique brand associations” in consumers´ minds.

Growing CBBE

The process for building a strong brand, i.e., a brand with greater equity, involves four steps that follow an order, and each step is a pre-requirement to the following (Keller, 1993, 2001). The steps can be illustrated in his CBBE pyramid below.

[2] Individual differences in terms of a trait like property of an individual´s personality (Shimp and Sharma, 1987).

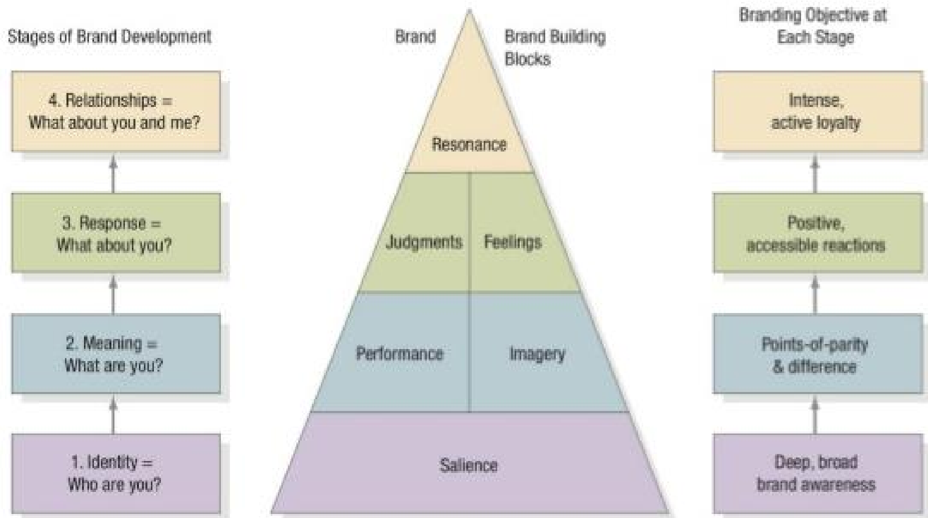

Figure 2 - Kotler and Keller (2006, p.281). Marketing Management. 12th ed. Prentice Hall

(1) *Who are you?* Starting from the bottom of the pyramid, it is important to make sure consumers **identify** the brand and make the right association with the product category. Salience is related to awareness, which two dimensions are depth - how easily consumers can recall or recognize the brand; and breath, which refers to the range of consumptions situations in which the brand comes to mind. It´s not sufficient to be "top of mind", the brand must also be placed in the right category.

(2) *What are yo*u? The second step involves establishing the **brand meaning** in consumers´ minds, through the right associations. Delivering a product that satisfies consumer needs and meet their expectations is crucial, especially because the product is the heart of the brand. Brand meaning also involves imagery, where the brand tries to meet the more abstract or social needs.

(3) *What about you?* The third step is the elicitation of the proper **consumer response**, in the form of judgments, for instance, regarding quality or credibility, or in the form of feelings such as security or social-approval. What matters is how positive these responses are.

(4) *What about you and me*? The last stage is to convert responses into a **relationship** based on loyalty and attachment between the customer and the brand, called brand resonance.

2.3.2. Brand power in the Fashion Industry

Brand relevance varies from industry to industry, and is responsible for various economic outcomes at customer, firm, and product-market level. In the fashion industry, branding becomes crucial as the product class may be defined by it. Accordingly, “customers have a greater demand for brand benefits” and the brand name plays a crucial role in the buying decision (Fischer *et al.*, 2010, p.4), resulting in the highest magnitude of equity (Simon and Sullivan, 1993).

Building CBBE in fashion industry

As stated by Keller (2009), the power of a brand lies in what customers experience over time and over the buying process with it. In today´s world, brand experience occurs through interaction between the consumer and all the brand´s physic and online channels, bringing incremental importance in **relational brand experience** towards the creation of brand resonance among consumers (Sirdeshmukh *et al.*, 2002; Huang *et al*., 2015).

Kim (2012, p.19) conducted three studies in South-Korea with the intent of understanding the multifaceted fashion-brand experience. Their findings have important implications for fashion brands: brand performance is a necessary condition in building a fashion brand experience, while **brand imagery is sufficient** – investing in imagery and feelings, stimulating senses and causing customers to feel good will induce some “behavioral outcomes, such as loyalty and price premium”.

3. Case-Study

The eyewear industry includes frames, contact lenses and sunglasses. Market sources estimated its value as $90 billion in 2014, expected to be $142.18 billion by 2020[3]. Sunglasses and frames represented 40% of the eyewear market, and within that segment, premium frames and sunglasses produced by fashion brands accounted for 35%. Therefore, the value of the premium fashion segment was around $13 billion[4].

3.1. MARKET OVERVIEW

3.1.1. A deeper look at the $13 billion premium eyewear market

The sunglass market is **globally growing** due to the shift into new and emerging markets and consumer demographics: an increasing middle class who is getting access to big brands, rising demand for high-end sunglasses. Another growth driver is the digital opportunity: due to the product´s small size and "one-size-fits-all models", the sunglasses are well-suited to digital retailing. A major challenge is to reach a fragmented customer base, by serving them with sales and logistics, which is expensive and demand local scale[4]. The other central point in the sunglass business is branding: with several firms providing similar products and value propositions, branding is what distinguishes one from another and dictates the ability to sell[5].

Variety is a mere optical illusion

Speaking of ability to sell, the fashion segment of the eyewear market is dominated by **five big players[6].** These specialists not only develop, manufacture and distribute their own brands, but also yield licensing deals with the main fashion houses to produce frames under their names. The strategy of maintaining high quality products, effective distribution channels, and consistently standing behind the brand, was driving consumers to pay hundreds of dollars for a pair of

[3] ltd, 2016
[4] The Business of Fashion, 2015
[5] Forbes.com, 2016
[6] Attachment 2

sunglasses. Furthermore, the access to cheap production materials was resulting in high margins and profits in the industry[7]: "glasses can sell for twenty times more than what they cost to make"[8].

The ubiquitous, giant player: Luxottica

The biggest eyewear company ever, **Luxottica**, an Italian firm, owned the major share of the eyewear market (80% in 2012). Today, the company controls the largest portfolio of eyewear brands, including Ray-Ban, the biggest brand in the market, managing their respective distribution, through the Sunglass Hut - the biggest sunglass chain in the world represented worldwide with over 7000 stores. Luxottica´s competitors don´t have an easy life: if they want to sell glasses they need Luxottica´s stores, and, if they own stores, they want to have the biggest brands present[9]. This way, the company has been able to set the prices as high as it wants, as the competition will follow[9].

Sunglasses are more of fashion: the rise of small players

The eyewear market can be **segmented** according to three dimensions[9]. From mass to highly exclusive, in regard to both product and distribution models. Considering consumer expectation and preferences, from "detached" to "addicted" consumers into brands, fashion, and who seek differentiation. Putting the three sources of segmentation into place, five different consumer segments emerge[10].

Today, sunglasses are not so much about function, but more about fashion. How the products look and the style they represent is critical for consumer´s buying decision, as fashion awareness is increasing. Since consumers are buying the design, brands need to create the image of fashion and uniqueness[11]. The focus in expansion from the big players created a space in the market for smaller brands to explore[12]: while large firms had advantages in buying power for raw materials

[7] The Business of Fashion, 2015; ltd, 2016
[8] 60 Minutes – Luxottica, 2013
[9] Attachment 3
[10] Investors-en.safilogroup.com, 2016
[11] Forbes.com, 2016
[12] The Business of Fashion, 2015

and control for distribution, small sunglass companies could offer unique and innovative products[13].

3.1.2. A journey throughout the Portuguese reality

Portuguese eyewear market

By 2012, the eyewear industry in Portugal was essentially constituted by big chains which owned around 75% of the retail stores, and for independent companies, either small or medium size, which owned the remaining 25%. In 2014, the country was starting to recover from the economic crisis and sales from the retail opticians achieved €400 million, a growth of 3,1% compared with the previous year scenario, and breaking the negative cycle observed since 2009. In the latest years, big groups were becoming bigger and the power more centralized, since the sales from the main 10 chains represented around 82% of the market[14].

Before, the sector in Portugal had as primary objective the health care, products yielded little differentiation and consumers were barely loyal. Optics were mainly buying from the big players like Luxottica and Sáfilo, which reduced the possibility of new producers to thrive if they wanted to sell through optics. However, the rise of new alternative channels like fashion and sports stores, as well as the online sales opportunity were becoming possible alternatives for new eyewear brands[15].

The "Made in Portugal"

In the latest years, the "Made in Portugal" was being noticed[16]. In a global context and tough competition, the Portuguese fashion cluster was being able to stand up at both national and international level, driven by the quality, innovation and creativity shown, as well as the promotion of a dynamic strategy. By offering small niche markets what they couldn´t find in the big corporations and provide the target market an added value, the Portuguese startups were making its path of success[17].

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[13] Hoovers.com, 2016
[14] Pressreader.com, 2016
[15] Gomes Ramos, 2012
[16] Morais, 2016
[17] Susana Barros, 2016

With the 2008 crisis, Portuguese consumers started showing some intentions of increasing **national products´** consumption**,** to ensure job opportunities to local citizens and for their quality. However, this do not apply to all product categories and prices, as local consumers evaluate national products with low exclusivity, and major consumption is done in the food sector, not in the fashion category[18].

3.2. FORA SUNGLASSES

3.2.1. Emergence, identity and positioning

It all started in 2010, when two friends seized the opportunity of owning a considerable stock of sunglasses from the 80´s from a warehouse that used to represent several international brands in Portugal. As soon as João Veiga and Miguel Barral, both 20 years old, started to sell these vintage sunglasses at accessible prices, they noticed an extensive adherence in the Lisbon market. As a consequence, they created STOCKGLASSES, a retail brand with a store in Lisbon center.

Shortly, the two entrepreneurs exhausted the stock and realized there was much more market ahead: people were extremely receptive to a new concept of quality sunglasses, one more connected to fashion than to health. With the knowledge obtained from working with the product, it was time to create their own brand, with inherent production.

In July 2013 they formed a team and introduced themselves to the market with a Portuguese brand of spectacles - FORA Sunglasses - born to signal a new approach to optics and retrieve the best vintage style. FORA was conceived to show that was possible to wear fashion sunglasses, without having to pay little fortunes for them, and mainly, without having to resort to cheap but harmful alternatives to the eyes.

Always with the handmade production in view, the designs of five different models idealized by the team gave birth to the first collection. With the intent of studying the market, the two friends started by selling 500 pairs for a fashion store in one of the trendiest places in Lisbon, Príncipe Real. Still with no publicity of any kind, the collection was sold out in three months. In May 2014,

[18] Canal Superior, 2016; PÚBLICO, 2014

with the visible enthusiasm the brand was generating and the sales increment, it made sense to set an exclusive store for FORA.

When the business started, the sunglasses were produced in Italy, however, the owners soon realized the potential of moving the entire process to Portugal. They would become not only a brand born in Portugal by the hands of two Portuguese, as many others, but mainly a brand that manufactured all its products in national soils, actually investing in the country. Hence, within a few months, FORA´s glasses became entirely produced in the North of Portugal, known from its craftsmanship. Since the sunglasses industry still worked as forty years ago, this factory was the only place in the country that still manufactured glasses and all products were made by the hands of craftsmen, giving a unique identity to each pair of sunglasses. In other words, it was a matter of using old methods applied to a modern design.

Taking the winter to develop the brand, FORA´s identity was created: FORA is FOR ALL. The brand aims to reach a transversal public regarding age, style and prejudices. These are **unique handmade glasses, manufactured in Portugal with the best existent materials** to unique personalities, which like to be out of the ordinary.

Figure 3 – FORA´s identity

"FORA is defined as a figure of speech for lifestyle, a way of being, a back to basics to conceive and make it happen. It comes to reinvent and educate a timeless fashion connoisseur public", said Miguel.

FORA´s sunglasses offer **diversity** and a **fair price-quality relationship**: the best products, lying on the Portuguese handmade production, accessible to everyone. It was not just about the design and innovation, the brand was inspired in timeless models giving them a twist.

3.2.2. Targeting

FORA is FOR ALL who have an identity

FORA appeals to a fashionable but not following the mainstreams public. Initially, Miguel and João thought of the glasses for a medium-high social class, both males and females, from 25 to 45 years old. Although there was an idea of what would be the potential market, they opted by not making specific communication efforts to reach it, and instead, observe how the market would react to the concept and product offerings.

Selling to those who showed interest for the models at the beginning shown that, in reality, customers were diversified in terms of age and nationality. Regarding gender, although it was almost balanced, women were buying slightly more.

Soon, the company realized the need for a broader offer to cope with the heterogeneous target, and adopted a new purpose: all customers who entered the store had to perfectly fit in and be pleased with at least one model. To do so, they maintained the unisex classic models while introducing slightly more gender or style specific models, with different colors and lenses to opt for. Some were simpler and therefore cheaper, while others were more elaborated and exclusive, belonging to special edition collections, with polarized lenses or original patterns.

The location of the first store was settled due to its potential of attracting tourists during their stay. What the two friends never imagined was that these public, attracted by minimalistic design and the classic and elegant models, would represent 30% of FORA´s sales. They were buying more than one pair at a time, seduced by the low prices, the sober packaging[19] and for the "souvenir" effect: they were enthusiastic about taking a product from their trip which was 100% Portuguese.

[19] Attachment 4

3.2.3. Global competition

FORA competes in the eyewear market both with the international brands with a huge presence, and with smaller brands offering fashion solutions. According to FORA´s owner, comparing it with Luxottica´s brands might seem almost ridiculous due to the business scales, however, the fact is that FORA´s communication target overlaps with a portion of the big brands´ consumers. According to him and to the results in the following market research chapter, the four following brands are especially relevant and worth to keep an eye on, for different reasons.

Ray-ban belongs to Luxottica, and is the world´s most famous sun eyewear brand. It was born 79 years ago with the introduction of a model of sunglasses that helped US pilots “reach new heights”. Today, it still is an iconic brand, the leader in the eyewear premium sector. It sells sunglasses and frames, and appeals to several generations and styles for its assortment, quality and durability. Prices for adult sunglasses range from 57€ to 367€. In Portugal its products can be found in every optic, all over the country.

Persol, also from Luxottica with worldwide presence and born in 1917, stands for class, elegance and high quality. It also offers sun and optical solutions. Persol shares some characteristics with FORA: the culture of craftsmanship and the timeless design with a modern interpretation. However, for its higher prices, it aims to a higher-end target, with stronger purchasing power.

Mr. Boho was born in 2012 in Spain, and is present in Europe and America. It sells sunglasses, shoes and watches that are fresh, original and colorful. Sunglasses´ prices range from 51€ to 95€, and the brand appeals to a younger and fashionable target, with a cosmopolitan attitude. In Portugal it is present in around 40 resale points, being one at 30 meters from FORA´s store, but doesn’t own any store and is not present in optics. Mr. Boho communicate to a similar target to FORA in Portugal, being therefore present in some common events.

Paulino Spectacles, a Portuguese brand that also manufactures its sunglasses by hand, resorts to the same factory than FORA. Despite being the only competitor offering these two characteristics, it follows a different strategy: only resells its models, and charges over 300€ for each pair, aiming to reach a more financially secure target.

3.2.4. Product portfolio & production

Product portfolio

The brand entered the market with just five different models. From there, new models were naturally created to complete the collection. In 2016, with 11 available models, each with four to five colors, in 100% Italian acetate and CR39 mirrored or personalized lenses, FORA offers over 300 choices. Each model has its own personality and purpose, and accordingly, its own name: "FOR A hero, FOR A dreamer, FOR A believer…"[20]. In the end, "FORA is FOR ALL", and for this reason the brand´s sunglasses are made of character and diversity.

The art of manufacturing sunglasses

From the first drawings all the way to the consumer, FORA´s glasses have the Portuguese identity engraved on them[21]. The process starts with design efforts from the team, inspired in old but immortal models "worn by our grandparents", giving them a new attitude and the possibility to wear them in twenty years from now. After the creative process, the designs are sent to the factory, where the workers do their best to achieve the perfect product from an acetate plate, in collaboration with FORA´s team input[22].

Since the business scale was still small compared to the big eyewear firms, FORA enjoyed flexibility and freedom to try new formats, test new colors and lenses directly in the market, and to continuously improve the models. However, the whole production was a handmade process, and accordingly, a lengthy one, taking from 20 days to 3 months, depending on the factory´s workload.

Once final models are introduced in the market, where they stay for at least one year, a performance assessment is made. Passing the first year evaluation, they are expected to be part of the collection for at least three years. Not all models sold the same, in fact, at the time, 80% of the sales were coming from four models, the best sellers.

[20] Attachment 5
[21] Attachment 6
[22] Attachment 7

3.2.5. Managing price and distribution

Pricing

In the matter of prices, and according to the brand´s positioning, there are “no big divas”[23]. Depending on the lenses, color, pattern, and other factors such as exclusivity, prices range from 98€ to 128€. Another variant was the fashion tendency: “If one specific color is on the rise, or the tendency is to wear plane lenses and FORA has already been producing them, we better capitalize on that”, stated the owner. Exceptions from the stated prices were the special editions[24] and fashion shows editions, in which prices could reach 160€.

Although not significantly, FORA had been increasing its prices. It was somewhat, a necessity due to the transition of the production process from Italy to Portugal, which implied a 13% increase in the unit production cost, and a strategic move, with the intent of raising credibility and signal quality.

Distribution model

From the factory, products were shipped to the warehouse. From there, several destinations were possible: besides selling directly to consumers, it also resells the sunglasses to a few stores, and online through the website.

The store in Príncipe Real owned by FORA, personifying the brand´s identity was by far the most profitable channel since the opening, granting the majority of sales, a consequence of its powerful location at the heart of contemporary Lisbon, which attracts a large influx of tourism. On the other hand, the **online distribution** was having very little expression in terms of sales volume,

The resale model accounted for 17% of the total sales by 2015, as shown in the figure below. The strategy included being present in stores with the same values, concept and that attracted the same type of public than FORA. In the major cities, Lisbon and Oporto, the brand was present mostly in Portuguese fashion stores, in popular places.

[23] Observador, 2015
[24] Attachment 8

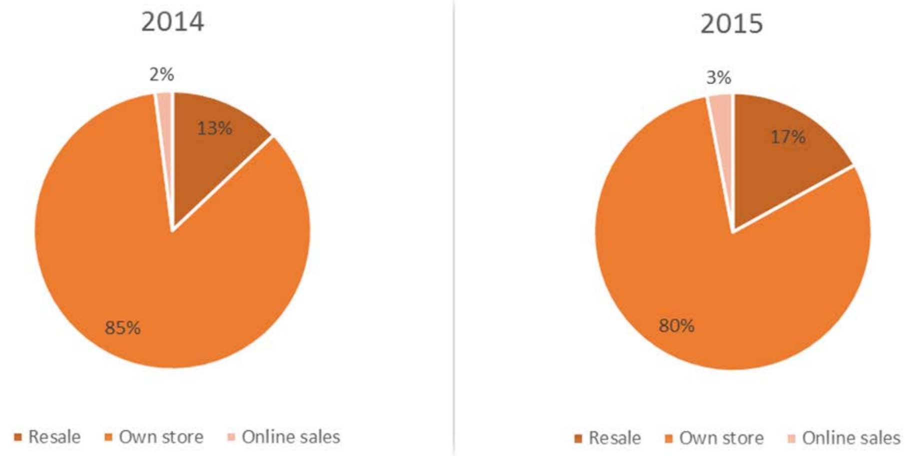

Figure 4 - Sales evolution per channel

To ensure consistency, the prices practiced in the resale points were exactly the same as the ones in the website and the own store, which implied sacrifices from the company in terms of margin. Still, the adopted resale model made sense for FORA as it ensured geographical coverage and increasing brand awareness. Furthermore, as the market still needed to feel and try the sunglasses, the brand wanted to be closer to consumers in places where until then did not make sense to open an own store.

3.2.6. Communication efforts

Betting on the digital opportunity

When the project started in 2013 it only counted with the power of word-of-mouth between friends, who would tell other friends. Since Portugal is a very small country, the initial growth relied solely on this free tool.

It was of top priority to clearly communicate the brand´s character and identity. The managers wanted to start by doing something simple but meaningful as the sunglasses, and the first step would be to build a consistent digital presence. Right after the brand´s birth, the **Facebook** page was launched, which still is the main channel of communication, with over 15.000 fans, and the primary destination of marketing investment. The object was to inform about novelties regarding products, points of sale, special campaigns and events. It was developed to convey the quality of its products and the brand´s personality. In every post, FORA´s simplicity and character are a regular presence, sharing few but relevant insights[25]. A portion of the marketing budget is allocated for each post, enabling to reach the right audience with a broader scale. From 2014 to 2015 the number of fans doubled, with a significant increase in the warmth months, when demand is naturally higher.

Social networks were becoming a "meeting point", not only relevant for individuals but also for brands, which, in an engaging and dynamic environment could interact with their fans[26]. As the first year passed, the brand continued to grow relying on digital communication, and by May 2014 it was time to strengthen this presence with the creation of an **Instagram** account, one of the primary social networks elected by the Portuguese audience[27]. Complementing the publications from the Facebook page, the purpose of this account was to share the excitement of particular relevant moments for the brand and its followers, and, eventually, reinforce awareness and create engagement[28]. Two years went by and FORA has almost 3.000 followers, a number to be raised in the following months, according to Miguel.

Building a position in the fashion world

Apart from its digital presence, FORA was starting to be known outside the virtual world. For a matter of positioning it was important to **build roots in the fashion world**, where Miguel, the only owner by 2016, wanted the brand to establish strong ties. The strategy included partnerships with Portuguese designers, participation in fashion-related events such as Moda Lisboa 2015 and 2016 editions[29], and brand mentions in Happy Woman, Edit and Vogue, with articles, ads and presence in shopping guides.

Still outside the virtual world, the brand was building its territory step by step, with street *moopies*[30] spread over Lisbon, advertising in Optic magazines to make the brand known to the

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[25] Attachment 9
[26] Marktest, 2015
[27] Marketing Portugal, 2015
[28] Attachment 10
[29] Attachment 11
[30] Attachment 12

professionals of the market, unpaid articles in newspapers congratulating the Portuguese initiative, a nomination for the best brand of 2015 in Time Out magazine, among other initiatives both from the brand and external entities that shown interest in writing about it.

Inherent to all the brand´s communication there was a permanent concern in investing in photography and video, allowing the brand to have a consistent and aligned image with its personality in both online and offline channels. Moreover, as sales and brand awareness increased, the marketing investment started raising proportionately: from mouth to mouth with zero costs, the firm now invests a fixed percentage of 20% from the turnover in marketing.

3.3. WHAT THE FUTURE HOLDS

The vision of the brand was related to its five years strategy: FORA as a reference in the choice of the Portuguese when purchasing both glasses and sunglasses. Miguel wanted FORA to mean more than a product and to be able to sell the brand. The aim was to be associated as a quality brand, **“the” Portuguese brand of sunglasses**.

Strengthening the Portuguese roots

One of the brand´s pathways for growth is to strengthen the geographical coverage with own points of sale in the country. By May 2016, it opened a second store in other “hot” place of Lisbon, where it already had a showroom. Still in Lisbon, a third store is expected to open in a more touristic place. Moreover, to cope with the demand increase, another project for the near future is the opening of a store in Oporto, capitalizing in the city´s great concept acceptance and in its biggest sunglasses usage rate among Portugal[31].

Constantly seeking improvement

Part of FORA´s evolution relies on the product level, by betting on innovation. The use of other materials, especially Portuguese materials, such as cork, is one of the paths the brand is prepared to embrace. At this point, several innovations are to be tried, from the flat lenses, to the wires to

[31] Marktest, 2015

support the glasses around the neck. According to the manager, “there are small ways to make a difference, and we want to continue to be outside the box, outside the mainstream”.

For FORA to progress, the most important aspect is to turn it into a known brand constantly seeking improvement. That is why partnerships with other known fashion designers and with brands that share the same values as FORA, make sense to enlarge the brand´s presence. The objectives for the distribution channels also include the improvement of the online channel, though the right communication and an investment in online publicity.

Going global

FORA stands for “out” in Portuguese, and means going from the inside to the outside. In times when the Portuguese youth was being forced to leave the country in search of work and better conditions to launch their projects, João and Miguel wanted to fight this cycle. They saw an opportunity in the home market, and it was from there, after building a strong position, that they wanted to embrace the internationalization.

FORA was already starting to know foreign soils. From time to time, interested tourists who visit the store propose Miguel to take the sunglasses to their countries - Singapore, Dubai, among others - and resell them there. Although the team faces this interest positively, they are convict that taking FORA out is a job for them, for knowing the brand like no one and having the right motivation to make it succeed. It is crucial to properly convey the brand values. The managers want **to show the world what Portugal does better**, and therefore, the whole process is going to be made with the Portuguese handmade kept as a differentiation factor.

According to the team´s experience, from the constant trips and some years of activity, the first market in mind includes the Nordic European countries, in 2017. These have a great product acceptance, and a considerable purchasing power. Furthermore, countries such as The Netherlands, Denmark, Norway and Sweden are open to new brands, to try new products and, above all, they value the handmade products.

3.4. THE CHALLENGE

FORA is completely dependent from the operability of the factory with which work, but doesn't own. Forgoing its identity is something the brand is not prepared to do and does not make part of future plans, even if it represents a higher production cost. However, this factory produces to other clients, companies that also value and want to transmit the Portuguese quality. Additionally, the whole process is extensive and longstanding. There were times of the year in which an order could take three months to be ready for sale. Limitations on the product innovation level also came with the Portuguese factory, which until that point only worked with acetate.

Despite the sales growth of 300%[32] from 2014 to 2015, it had been possible for the company to manage the orders and deliver them in time, due to its prediction ability and management. Nonetheless, as stated before, changing times and likely growth are ahead – the brand was going from a store and a handful retail stores, to three or four new stores in the country and new perspectives in foreign markets. With them, it is natural and expected that the sales volume increase, and eventually, that deadlines with the current production capacity become harder to meet.

With these scenarios in mind, it is legitimate to question whether the positioning adopted by the brand, lying on the Portuguese handmade as part of FORA´s core identity, might be turned into a challenge.

Is the adopted identity and positioning strong enough? Do they provide adequate added value for the target? Is this value capable of driving purchases? Is the core identity so strong that changing it would mean a loss to the brand, one that is not worth the increase in the competitiveness of the production process?

To answer the proposed KRQ, the following chapter covers the results of the conducted market research.

[32] Note: During 3 months of 2014 the company closed its operations due to disagreements between shareholders.

4. Market Research

To approach the KRQ, it is necessary to assess the Portuguese consumption behaviors regarding sunglasses, understand in which situations the brand is recalled, what consumers think of FORA, and eventually, if these characteristics matter when it comes to the decision of purchasing a new pair of sunglasses. The aim of this research is to understand if consumers see FORA as it wants to be seen and perceive a value added from its core identity. This chapter is entirely dedicated to study the brand through the eyes of the consumers.

4.1. METHODOLOGY

4.1.1. Focus Group

Apart from the interview to FORA´s manager[33], a **focus group** was conducted to uncover detailed qualitative information regarding knowledge and perceptions about FORA, both from group and individuals within the group, and to help structuring the questionnaire[34]. The six participants belonged to FORA´s target audience, with ages ranging from 21 to 24, mainly women from different academic backgrounds with a bachelor degree. Some were workers, others were still studying. The session offered rich information as it allowed participants to discuss and build on each other responses.

The focus group questions and its detailed findings can be found in attachment 14. The session covered the following topics: (1) salience, involvement and general preferences; (2) associations; (3) judgments & feelings (4) resonance; (5) suggestions and observations.

4.1.2. Questionnaire

To answer the proposed KRQ, a **survey**[35] was elaborated, and conducted both personally and online, due to the easiness of getting a considerable amount of responses and quick information. To prevent possible mistakes and ensure clarity, a pilot test was performed before the official survey launch. The questionnaire was publicly available between 21st and 29th March, having

[33] Attachment 13
[34] The session was conducted at March 10th, following a guideline based on Keller´s CBBE Pyramid
[35] Attachment 15

collected 262 valid responses, a number enabling to reach strong conclusions. The data was analyzed using IBM´s SPPS Software, and graphics built from Microsoft Excel.

The survey sample can be characterized according to the following parameters:

- 97,33% of respondents are **Portuguese**.
- **Females** account for 68,32% of the responses.
- The **18-25** age group constitutes the largest fraction of the sample (56,49%), representing 58,7% of the total females and 51,8%. of the males.
- There are two particularly relevant occupational groups: **university** students (45,04%) and **employed** respondents (44,66%).
- More than half of the sample earns **less than 10.000€** a year, 19,08% earns 10.000€-20.000€, and the remaining 29,02% earns 20.000€ or more.
- The sample was composed by 90,84% of sunglasses current or past users, having 57,25% claimed to own or previously owned Ray-Ban, 19,85% unbranded sunglasses and 3,82% FORA´s sunglasses.
- From the 10 people who claim to own or previously owned a pair of FORA Sunglasses, 8 belong to the 18-25 age group.
- To conclude, around 40% of the sample is constituted by **females belonging from the 18-25 age range and by University students who have an annual income under 10.000€.**

4.2. RESEARCH FINDINGS

The following analysis considers the research findings from the focus group and the questionnaire[36] and is structured in the following six main sections.

(1) Purchasing patterns

The first KRQ aimed to understand the value attributed to the Portuguese and handmade production in a product. Regarding the **handmade production**, opinions aren't unanimous: for some, handmade products yield higher quality (49%) and are more trusted (37,4%) than mass products, but for others they present lower quality (16%) and inspire less trust (19,1%). Besides favorable answers exceeding negative ones, a great proportion of the respondents are neutral in regard to these questions, which was also verified during the focus group session.

Concerning the **value attributed to Portuguese production**, conclusions are that the sample value the quality of local products (mean of 1,51 to a negative sentence regarding quality), think that people should support the country by buying them (4,24), and some even consider Portuguese origins as a main decision factor (3,1). However, when it comes to actually buy the products, respondents don´t always choose the Portuguese product (2,74), as 40,46% of the disagree with the statement "I always go for the Portuguese products".

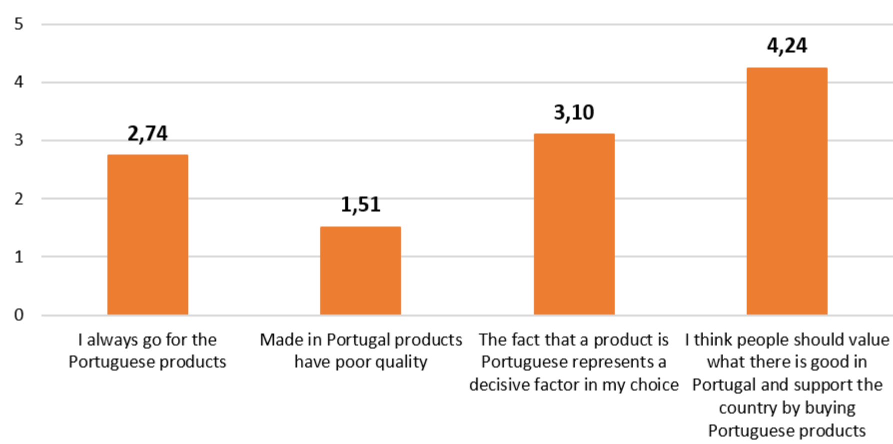

Figure 5 - Value attributed to Portuguese products

[36] To a complete understanding of the analysis, please see attachment 16 with the questionnaire exhibits

Still under the same topic, focus group participants stated to **give priority to Portuguese products only under some conditions**: a good price, quality and appealing design. Being Portuguese is then a plus, not a sufficient and not even a necessary condition.

Consumers showed involvement with the product category and consider both eye protection (41,98%), especially while driving, and fashion (38,55%) as the main functions of sunglasses. The brand is not the primary reason for a sunglasses choice, but provides cues and trust, guiding the purchasing decision, as more than half (64,5%) of the respondents opt by the branded sunglasses when it comes to protect their eyes.

The two most important characteristics for the respondents when of choosing a pair of sunglasses[37] are its design (1,77) and price (2,09), followed by the quality of the lenses and frames (2,44), and by the brand of the sunglasses (4,13), which is consistent with the focus group results. **The sunglasses´ place of origin is the least important factor** for the sample (4,58), as 62,6% of the respondents place it as the least important dimension, and only 3,1% of them place it in the first three positions.

(2) Awareness

The most mentioned **sunglasses** brand was Ray-ban, having 224 mentions with 181 being in the first white space (top-of-mind). FORA Sunglasses was mentioned by 47 people, being the second most referred brand. In third and fourth places are Persol (40) and Mr. Boho (31), respectively.

The first **Portuguese sunglasses brand** that "comes to mind" is FORA, with 66 mentions from which 63 are in the first blank space. The second brand is Mr. Boho, a Spanish brand, mentioned 16 times. The most mentioned **handmade brands of sunglasses** were FORA, named by 25 participants, followed by Skog (3). This question was mainly not answered, and consequently there are few responses to be considered.

[37] 1:best position, 5: worst position

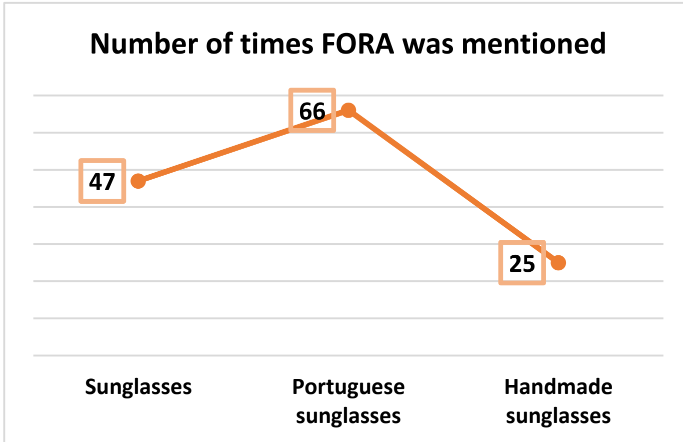

Figure 6 – Number of times FORA was mentioned

Concerning the level of awareness when aided, **the majority of respondents (62,2%) claimed never having heard of FORA**[38]. From 1 to 5, awareness of FORA is on average 1,86. In an attempt of profiling respondents in terms of awareness, several ANOVA tests were performed only showing significant differences in the level of awareness of FORA across different age groups - younger respondents are more aware of the brand (until 35 years), what might explain that all focus group participants knew the brand, and the age group 36-45 has the lowest level of awareness.

Another measure of awareness can be whether the respondents know **where the sunglasses are sold**, and due to some confusion demonstrated during the focus group session, a question to uncover this dimension was asked: 38,6% of the answers were in “street stores from FORA”, 26% in “street stores from other brands that sell FORA´s products”, and 6,3% “online”. Still, 15,7% were “I have no idea” answers and around 7% chose wrong options, which might have to do with the low extent of awareness - 37,8% of the sample have at least heard of the brand, yet they don’t necessarily know where to find it.

Still to test the level of awareness, respondents were asked to rate from 1 to 5 whether they agree with the statements "The sunglasses are produced in Portugal" and "The sunglasses are

[38] Note: Those who claimed to never heard of FORA were redirected to “Part III” of the questionnaire, and didn’t answer the next questions regarding the brand´s characteristics

handmade"[39]. Beliefs are stronger for the first question, with an average of 4,47 and 46,5% of the sample answering 5. Some respondents also believe the sunglasses are handmade (3,87), as 27,3% answered 5 and 20,2% answered 4, which goes in line with the focus group insights, in which only a few participants knew the sunglasses are handmade, but all knew they are Portuguese.

(3) Performance & Judgments

On average, the brand **performs** above the average (average rating from all dimensions of 3,87) with greater incidence on **style** (4,38), **design** (4,36) - its minimalist design is appreciated among the focus group participants - and is considered **up-to-date** (4,11). All these dimensions have a mode of 5. "Fair price" is the weaker association among focus group participants and survey respondents (3,19).

In terms of **judgments**[39], the best results are the likelihood of **considering** the brand in the next purchase (4,22) and **quality** (4,09). Also, FORA´s products are trusted (3,94) and the brand is considered to provide an above average value (3,79) – focus group participants think FORA provides an adequate value in general and fully satisfy their needs. The dimension with the poorest result is the superiority in relation to other brands (3,29), but again above the average – focus group participants find FORA superior to brands like Mr. Boho but inferior to Ray-ban and Persol, which results in a lower willingness to pay compared to the latter brands. They also consider

To understand whether the level of awareness regarding the “handmade in Portugal” influences performance perceptions and judgments regarding FORA, some linear regressions were computed. First, it was proven that the fact respondents know the sunglasses are **produced in Portugal positively** influences their opinions about the brand´s **durability**, which is important as the focus group participants showed some concerns regarding product durability - the general perception was that the sunglasses would last around ten years, not thirty.

[39] Note: In this question there was an item with the intent of checking attention, and all the respondents who did not chose option two (as asked) were excluded from this analysis

Second, it was found that the fact respondents know the sunglasses are **handmade,** positively influences perceptions of **reliability** and "**up-to-date**", as well as judgments of **superiority**, **quality, and value** for this order. This also goes in line with focus group insights that went along with a participant´s comment participant suggesting the communication of a personal care in the manufacturing increased her perceptions of quality.

However, consumers´ trust and willingness to buy FORA´s products (consideration) don´t increase for knowing they are handmade. In the latter case, consideration is high both for those who know its characteristics and those who don't. This knowledge also doesn't impact other performance dimensions, such as style, design, fair price and variety.

(4) Imagery & Feelings

For survey respondents, FORA is mostly **elegant, sophisticated and sexy**. However, the results were similar between each dimension and above average for all, with the means ranging from 3,65 (daring) to 4,05 (elegant). These conclusions are somewhat consistent with the brand´s personality: elegant and unique. Regression analysis showed that, the greater the awareness regarding the **handmade production**, the better FORA was evaluated in its **daringness, uniqueness, sophistication** and **honesty**, for this order.

According to survey respondents, FORA is for stylish (27,5%), young (24,8%) and alternative people (16,3%). The sunglasses are less suited for executives (4,6%). Focus group participants also mentioned they feel part of the target.

Respondents imagine themselves wearing FORA´s sunglasses at various moments, with greater incidence on their daily life (16,9%), to travel (16,5%), at the beach (16%), relaxing with friends (15,8%) and to drive (15,1%). On the other hand, and consistently with the focus group results, the sunglasses don´t seem to be made for work (6,7%). What if brands were occupations? In that case, FORA would be either a designer or architect for some focus group participants, due to its style concern, and surfer and bar owner for other, due to its good energy.

There wasn´t much variation between **feelings** respondents claim to have toward FORA. Still, it is possible to see the brand evokes a sense of **good mood, self-confidence** and **social approval** among respondents, which is consistent with the focus group insights. The remaining feelings are also above the average, yet a considerable part of the sample showed neutrality, choosing option 3.

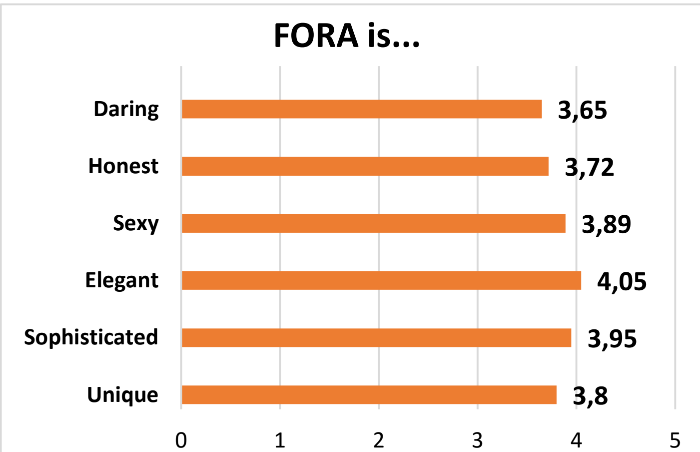

Figure 7 – Imagery

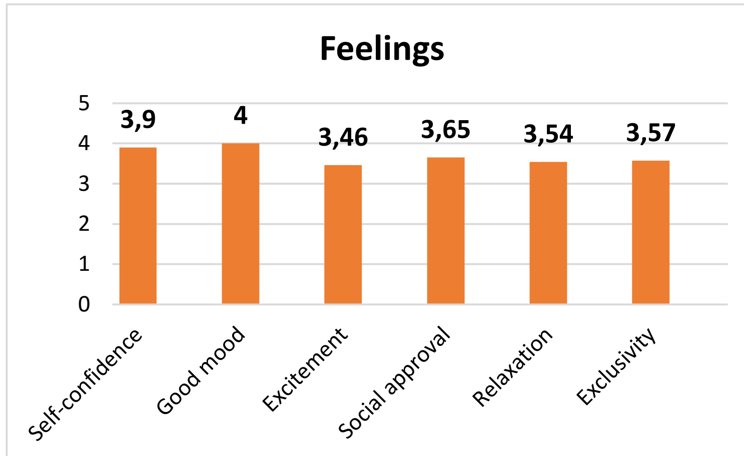

Figure 8 - Feelings

(5) Resonance

Although consumers don't feel particularly attached to the brand, as the majority (30%) chose the neutral option, almost 40% wouldn't be indifferent if the brand disappears and 51,5% would move to another place to try a pair of FORA´s sunglasses if they weren't available nearby. **60% identify with people who wear the brand** and more than half follow the brand on social networks, **showing a sense of community** uncovered in the focus group. However, FORA is still not more than a product to all respondents (mean of 2,9 out of 5).

(6) Perceptions of those who don't know the brand and were presented with different concepts

Those who previously claimed to "never heard of" FORA were redirected to a different part of the questionnaire, divided in two: around half was presented with the full concept of FORA, including the "handmade in Portugal", and the other half with the same concept and pictures but without these two characteristics. After, all the 163 respondents answered the same question regarding their opinions about the brand and its products.

The aim was to compare the results of those who were presented with the full and with the incomplete concept, assessing the role of the brand´s claimed benefits in the perceptions of people who are hearing of it for the first time.

In general, from the figure below it is possible to see that FORA was well rated in both situations. Apparently, the first four dimensions are better evaluated under the full concept, and the remaining under the incomplete concept. These results were tested through several Independent Samples T-Test, to assess if the differences in the means are statistically significant and conclusions can be derived for the population.

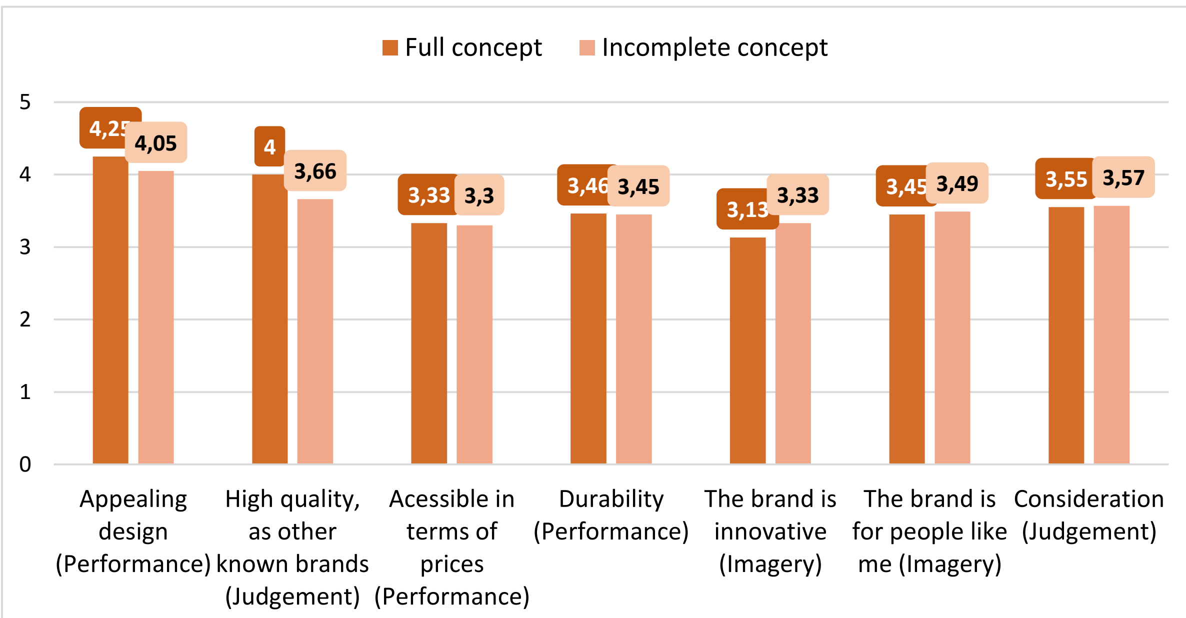

Figure 9 - Perceptions of unaware respondents

Results showed that although **"Made in Portugal" and "handmade" positively influence perceptions of durability and quality**, it doesn´t necessarily mean consumers will **consider** the brand for a purchase because of that, rate it better in terms of innovation and price accessibility, and produce a higher identification with the brand.

It is also interesting for the brand to know if there is a “statistic profile” of people who identify with the brand and think FORA is suited for them. Through several ANova tests, it was possible to conclude that the only relevant demographic variable whose means statistically differ is gender: females are more likely to identify with the brand than males.

5. Conclusions

The purpose of this thesis was to assess whether FORA should maintain its positioning in face of new strategic goals that include a higher and more demanding business scale. To answer the dilemma, five research questions were presented. Finally, it is possible to answer them based on concepts from the Literature Review, insights from the Case-study, and primary data gathered in the Market Research.

KRQ1: **What value do consumers put in Portuguese and handmade products?**

Survey analysis provided some important conclusions concerning the general value people place in these two characteristics. Regarding the **handmade production**, positions are not unanimous as a great fraction expresses a neutral opinion, what might mean they don´t find it applicable to all the product categories. Still, favorable opinions regarding quality and trust in handmade products exceed negative ones.

For some brands, its country-of-origin is their biggest strength, and therefore, brands can be associated with a country-of-origin that has a strong image[40]. Is the Portuguese image strong enough? With the 2008 crisis, Portuguese consumers gradually show intentions of increasing consumption of **national products** for its quality and to ensure job opportunities to local citizens. Still, they disagree that Portuguese products stand for exclusivity and the major consumption of national products isn't in the fashion industry[41].

Research findings go in line with the general opinion about Portuguese products, as the survey sample value its quality and share the opinion that people should support the country by buying them. Some even show greater purchase intentions for these products, by pointing the Portuguese origins as a main decision factor. However, **the fact that a product is Portuguese does not imply its purchase over foreign products**. This conclusion applies to the general products, but is reinforced in the sunglasses category, as the "Portuguese origin" is constantly placed as the

[40] Leclerc, Schmitt and Dube, 1994
[41] Canal Superior, 2016; PÚBLICO, 2014

least important factor (compared with design, quality, price and brand) when buying a pair of sunglasses.

Summing up, despite the claimed value attributed to these characteristics in general, and with greater incidence on the Portuguese origin, they are not capable of driving shopping behaviors alone.

KRQ2: **What is the general level of awareness and consumers´ thoughts and feelings towards FORA?**

The level of awareness and the capacity of recalling FORA as a sunglasses brand is positive compared to other brands, for which associations are more dispersed (with the exception of Ray-Ban), but not necessarily strong, as 62% of the survey respondents never heard of the brand, and only 3,4% are customers.

Brand recall increases when consumers are presented with the right cues, being **FORA mainly associated to a Portuguese brand of sunglasses**. Most of respondents who claimed to have at least heard of FORA associate it with a Portuguese brand (4,47) that manufactures its products by hand (3,87). Strong associations with the product categories positively influence the level of awareness, and the fact that few competitors appear under the "made in Portugal" and "handmade" cues enhances consumers´ ability to recall FORA´s communication efforts without creating confusion in their memory[42].

The pyramid below is an application of Keller´s CBBE Pyramid to FORA Sunglasses, from which was possible to assess the main associations consumers have toward the brand and their relationship with it, through the primary data gathered. Almost all conclusions from the focus group were confirmed and reinforced in the questionnaire.

[42] Burke and Srull, 1988

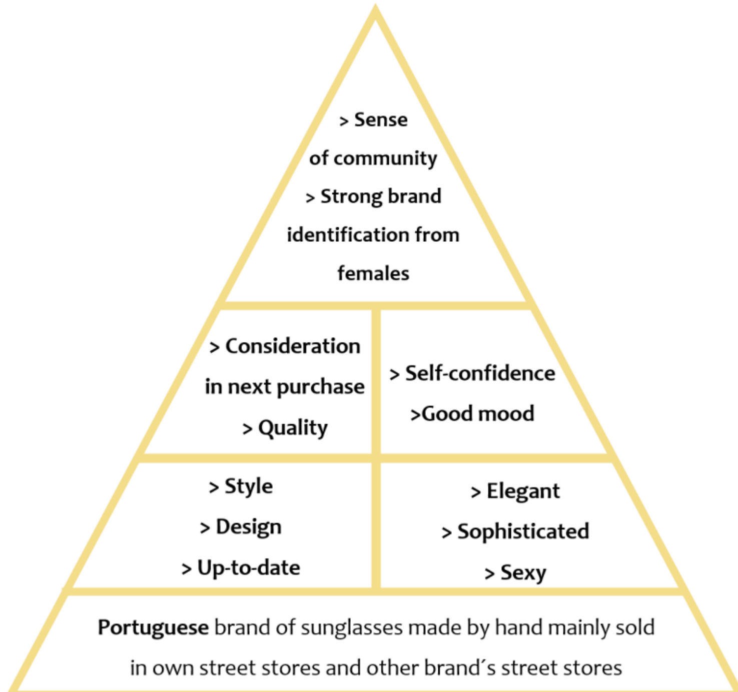

Figure 10 - Keller´s pyramid applied to FORA Sunglasses

KRQ3: **Does the current positioning represent a source of brand equity to the brand?**

Conclusions from KRQ1 show that, consumers don't always choose Portuguese products or trust the handmade goods more. This might be related with the generalization of the question, and therefore, it´s necessary to complete the analysis by studying its influence on FORA´s perceived value.

More than the Portuguese origins, which only positively influence durability perceptions[43] and have proven to fail when it comes to the final decision, **the handmade production represents a source of brand equity to FORA**, positively influencing several perceptions at performance and imagery level, as well as judgments[44].

This conclusions go in line with the focus group insights showing that quality perceptions were positively influenced by the personal care shown in the production process "*in which they work with own hands, doing everything very careful and showing a personal commitment".*

[43] and quality perceptions for those who were hearing of the brand for the first time
[44] See figure 12 in the next pages

KRQ4: Is the adopted positioning driving consumers to actually buy a pair of FORA´s sunglasses?

Consumers´ positive perceptions are not always converted into purchase intentions. This question evaluates whether the Portuguese handmade authenticity does not only improve consumers´ perceptions but actually influences their buying intentions.

Conclusions are that for both for aware and unaware consumers, knowing the sunglasses gather the two mentioned features **don't influence the likelihood of considering the brand for their next purchase**, as the level of consideration is already high.

As perceptions are not always converted into intentions, these aren't always converted into actions. When speaking about actually buying the products, focus group participants showed hesitation, some claiming they would prefer to stay loyal to their current brand.

Quality is the third characteristic consumers take into account when choosing a pair of sunglasses, and, handmade production does influence their quality perceptions regarding FORA. It was also proven through statistical analysis that quality strongly influences "consideration" in a positive way[45]. Therefore, and given that the handmade production alone is not sufficient to influence sales (it must be combined with a pleasant design, a superior **quality** and accessible prices), it indirectly does. Moreover, sacrificing it could compromise what has been working positively for the brand.

Figure 11 - Handmade production effects

To address the research purpose of the thesis, in case the business scale actually increases in a way the company cannot cope with the demand by resorting to the current production source:

- Moving the production to a different country would not mean a major loss to the brand, as it only influences the perceptions of durability, and not the aspects the brand stands

[45] Attachment 16.32

for. The Portuguese origin is a plus, not a necessary and even less a sufficient condition for a product choice.

- Nonetheless, if FORA considers to industrialize the process to enhance its competitiveness, it should be more careful, as the quality perceptions, for instance, lie on it, which indirectly influences consumers´ willingness to buy the products.

KRQ5: **In case there is no need for FORA to reposition in light of the future goals, how could the brand strengthen its positioning message to better reach the target audience?**

To answer this question it is important to determine to what extent the market perceptions of FORA are aligned with its brand identity, and start working from there. FORA´s message emphasizes quality and diversity, lying on the Portuguese handmade production, accessible to everyone. Results from primary research show that FORA is strongly seen as Portuguese brand for all kind of people, whose products yield high quality. **The "handmade" association is still not as strong as desired**. Moreover, other identity dimensions such as price accessibility, brand uniqueness and product variety are weakly tied to the brand.

For a brand to yield positive CBBE, it is necessary that consumers react more positively to a product when they identify the brand than when they don't[46]. In FORA´s case, survey results showed that the condition verifies for some features, but not for all. Unfamiliar consumers seem to find it more accessible in terms of prices, which is a proof of the poor association familiar consumers have toward FORA´s price accessibility.

In light of all answers given to the previous research questions, **my recommendation is for the brand to strengthen the handmade manufacturing associations**. This way it consequently improves general consumers´ perceptions towards it, especially the ones who are part of the brand´s identity and still represent weak links to the brand, but can be influenced through this characteristic, as its uniqueness.

[46] Kotler and Keller, 2006

Additionally, **it is also important for FORA to manage price accessibility perceptions**, which are not directly influenced for the handmade associations, but are positively influenced by quality[47]. When consumers perceive the products as having high quality, they place a higher value on them, and are naturally willing to pay more.

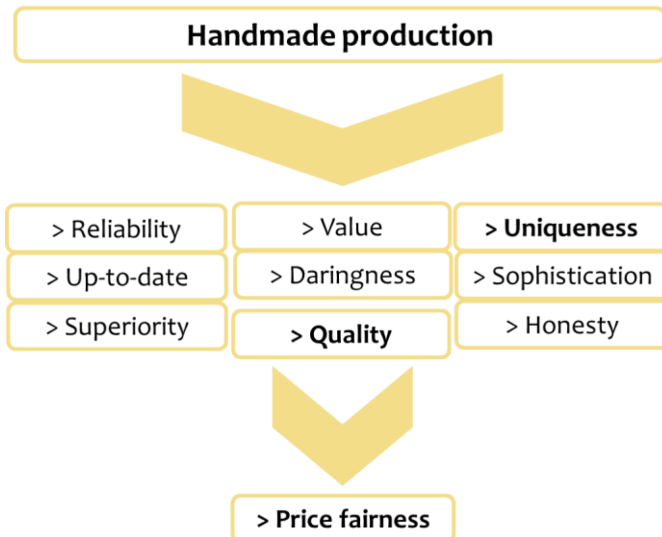

Figure 12 - Handmade production effects

Finally, **variety should be emphasized in the brand´s communications to its target audience**. One of FORA´s purposes stated in the case-study is that all consumers who enter the stores should perfectly fit and be pleased with at least one model. Therefore, FORA can start from there and make consumers see that there is a FORA for all face shapes, tastes and personalities. The names attributed to each model can be a starting point for the brand to communicate its diversity.

[47] Attachment 16.33

6. Limitations & Future Research

Despite having obtained a considerable number of objective responses to what this thesis proposed to study, there are some limitations to be considered. At the case-study level, the insufficient information about the Portuguese sunglass and eyewear. Another limitation was the lack of internal quantitative data from the company to illustrate the case due to confidentiality issues, as the cost structure and sales values.

At the market research level, the fact that the questionnaire was spread over the social networks might have resulted in respondents´ age bias. Additionally, there was a possible problem of inaccuracy in responses due to possible uninformed or courtesy answers given.

Regarding future research, it would be interesting to study FORA by comparing it across some of the mentioned competitors to measure the favorability, strength and mainly the uniqueness of associations regarding FORA – all critical conditions to yield CBBE.

It would also be interesting to conduct a conjoint analysis at the survey level to understand the trade-offs consumers are willing to make regarding different product concepts. By avoiding direct questions and putting a price on the items, it would be possible to assess the unique value of each product concept and the importance of the handmade and the made in Portugal for consumers under the brand FORA.

7. Teaching Note

7.1. SYNOPSIS

FORA was born in 2013 as a Portuguese sunglasses brand, inspired in vintage models from the past. The sunglasses are handmade in a factory in the North of Portugal, the only which still manufactures glasses. The brand aims to reach all types of people, by offering a diversified product portfolio full of character and suited for different kinds of personalities and tastes.

FORA wants to be a reference choice in the purchase of both glasses and sunglasses, by providing high quality products at accessible prices. The business started with few models and no investment in communication. The enthusiasm and success from the first months, relying only on word-of-mouth, made the young managers to set a first store in the heart of Lisbon, which is until today the most profitable channel.

These days, FORA continues to grow and strengthening its roots in the fashion world, with the participation in fashion events and partnerships with local designers. It continuously innovates its portfolio with limited editions and exciting news every season. Today, the brand dreams higher, and both the consolidation in the Portuguese market with the opening of two new stores, as well as the expansion to new geographies are the next big steps.

FORA´s identity and market positioning rely on the sunglasses´ production process: the handmade manufacturing in Portugal ensures the brand high quality and uniqueness, something the managers are not willing to let go. With the current conditions from the only factory operating in the country and working with different customers, it might become harder, if not impossible for the brand to fulfill the requirements of the increasing demand derived from expansion, faster response times, as well as product innovation.

Having this in mind, it is legitimate to question whether the adopted positioning might be turned into a challenge when considering the next steps the company is about to take.

7.2. TARGET AUDIENCE & TEACHING OBJECTIVES

The case-study aims to be a useful tool in the learning of both undergraduate and master students in the marketing field. It may be included in a Marketing course, under the topics of targeting, positioning, marketing mix, and competition analysis. It can also be relevant for Brand Management courses, for its strong emphasis on brand matters, such as identity, positioning and brand equity; and in Strategic Marketing, to approach the importance of consumer preferences and perceptions over a brand´s positioning strategy.

The case presents a real life challenge for which there is no right or wrong answer. Its main objectives are:

- Introduce students to the importance of a brand in a company and how a decision regarding it requires a thoughtful analysis and imply several consequences for the brand.
- Present students with the notion of brand identity, its core values and all dimensions.
- Highlight the importance of a strong brand positioning: a clear communication to the target market, a differentiated strategy from competitors, desired product benefits and a strong reason to believe in them.
- Elucidate students regarding the concept of brand equity: what it represents at company and customer level, its consequences and sources.
- Improve the target audience´s strategic thinking skills by considering several approaches to the proposed practical dilemma, considering its consequences for the firm and by applying the learned knowledge through the use of appropriate notions and frameworks.

7.3. TEACHING PLAN

For the session to achieve its potential it is necessary that students have properly prepared the case beforehand. My proposal is that students prepare a presentation with the answers to the case-study in groups of four before the class. During the class, the instructor randomly chooses around two groups to present each question, creating room for discussion, i.e., each group only presents one question but must be prepared to all.

To ensure a positive experience, it is crucial that students are prompt to learn and contribute with relevant participation to make the discussing interesting. At the end of the session, the professor could provide students with a summary of the case and the sample answers to the questions.

The following articles are recommended for students to complement its knowledge regarding the topics discussed in the case:

- *Kapferer, J. (2008). The new strategic brand management. London: Kogan Page, pp.175 - 182.*
- *Balabanis, G. and Diamantopoulos, A. (2004). Domestic Country Bias, Country-of-Origin Effects, and Consumer Ethnocentrism: A Multidimensional Unfolding Approach. J Acad Market Sci, 32(1).*
- *Keller, K. (1993). Conceptualizing, Measuring, and Managing Customer-Based Brand Equity. Journal of Marketing, 57(1).*

7.3.1. In class discussion

(1) Briefly describe FORA Sunglasses and its strategy in the Portuguese market. What are the main challenges the brand faces in the next years?

The answer to the question is spread through the case. Students must create a small summary covering the main sub-sections and pointing the most important factors in each.

(2) What is the relationship between a brand´s identity and the way it is positioned in the market? How would you describe FORA´s positioning according to Kapferer´s positioning diamond?

To answer this question, students must resort both to the case-study (pages 5 – 8) and to the first source of literature mentioned above (pages 175 – 182). A possible answer to the second part of the question is the following:

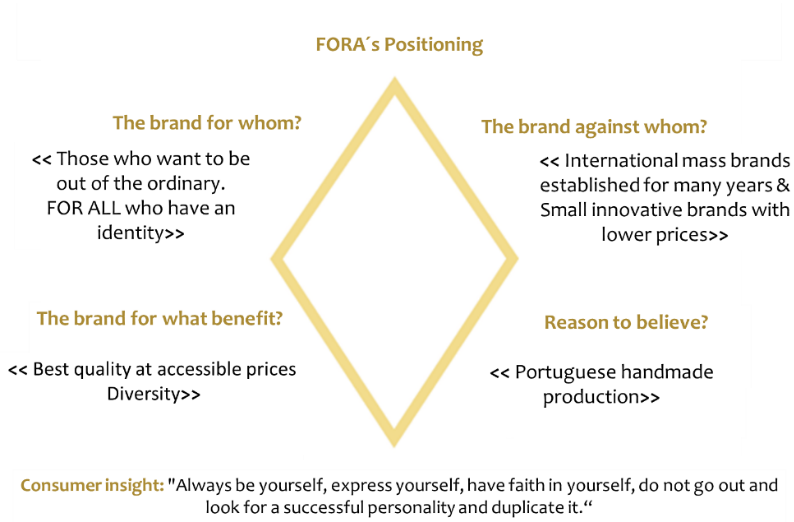

Figure 13 – FORA´s positioning diamond

(3) According to what you´ve learned regarding the subject and the brand, what are the major sources of FORA´s CBBE?

To understand what can be the sources of CBBE, students should read the third source of literature mentioned above. To apply the acquired concepts to FORA, they must resort to the case-study, to get insights regarding the brand´s values and characteristics, and to chapter 4 of the document, which attempts to answer the question.

(4) Should FORA Sunglasses keep its positioning strategy in light of the future reality? Please support your answer with the construction of different scenarios and respective implications for the firm.

Students' opinion and strategic thinking is required above all sources. They must analyze the case carefully and build scenarios accounting for the respective implications, or even come up with a different solution to the dilemma. They can also address the second article, to gain insights about positioning based on the country-of-origin, and chapter 4 of the document to understand consumers´ attitudes and knowledge toward FORA.

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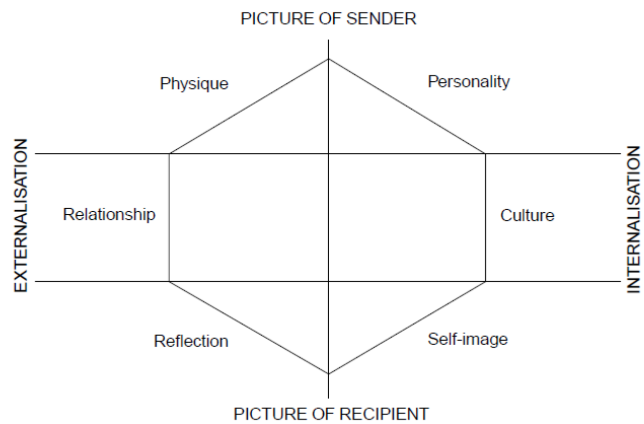
9. Attachments

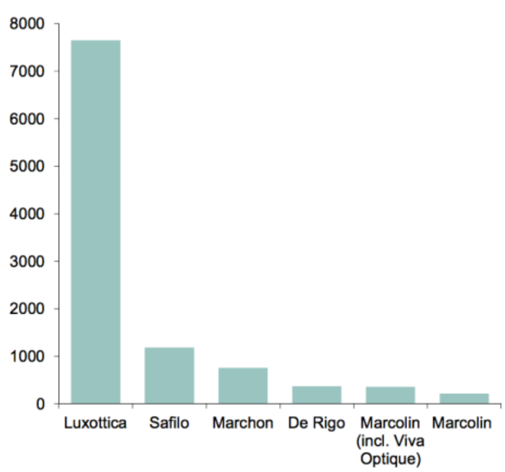
9.1. LITERATURE REVIEW

1. Kapferer´s Identity Prism (2008, p.183)

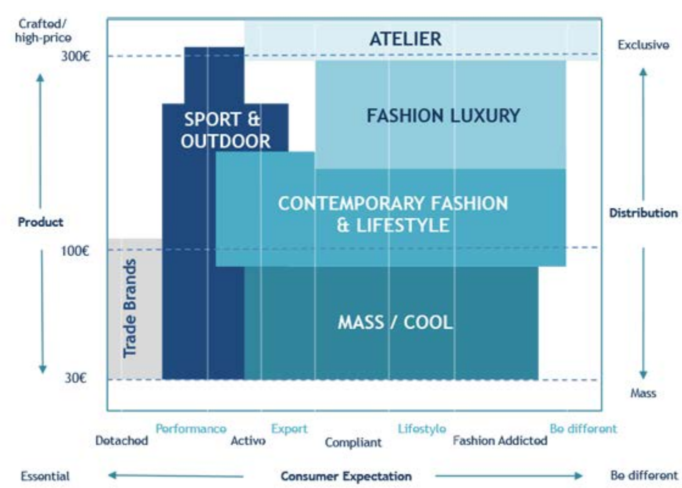


9.2. CASE-STUDY

2. Revenues of main players (Million €) (Source: Exane BNP Paribas estimates)



3. Segmentation of the eyewear market (Source: Investors-en.safilogroup.com, 2016)



4. Packaging

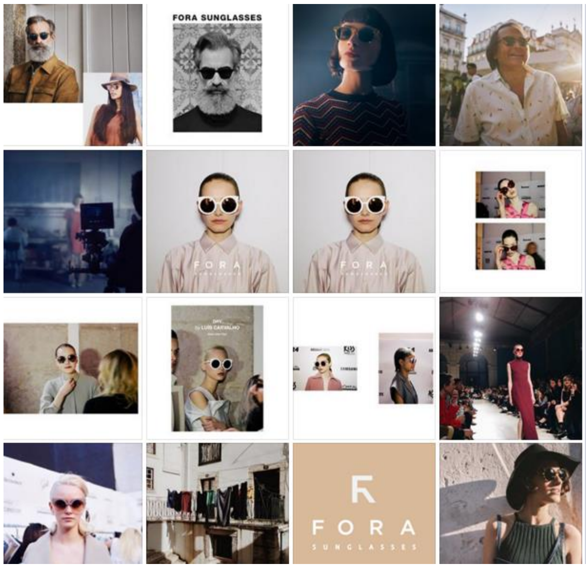
5. Some of the sunglasses models

6. Identity engraved on product

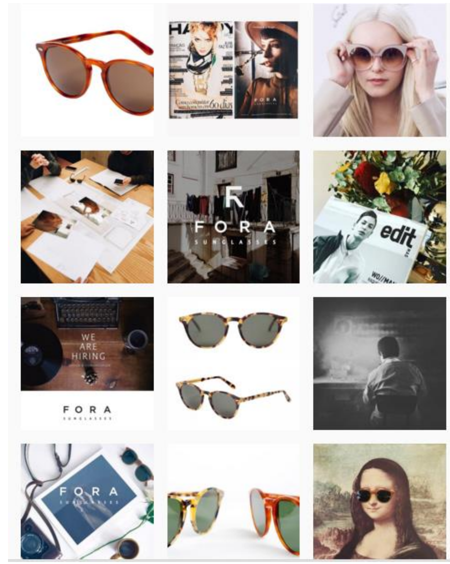
7. Production process

8. Special edition

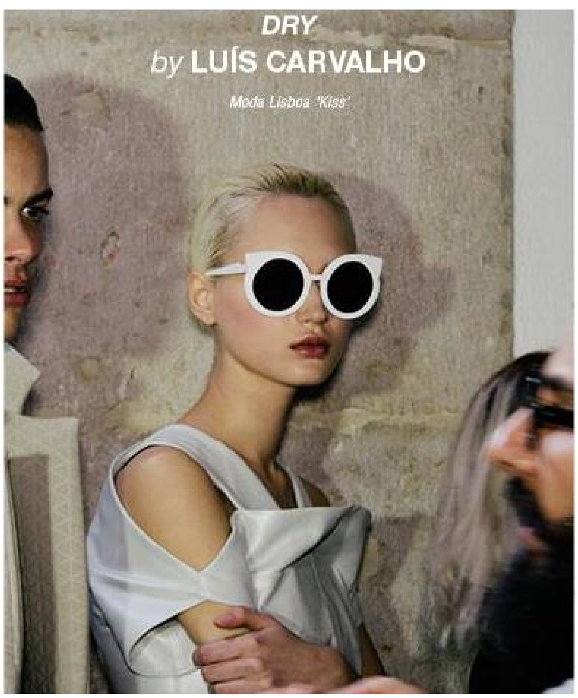
9. Facebook publications



10. Instagram publications



11. Moda Lisboa, 2016 Edition



12. Street moopies

9.3. MARKET RESEARCH

13. Interview guidelines

A – Introduction & Positioning

1. Can you please tell a little bit about the brand´s history? How was FORA born? How did it go from an idea to a real business?

2. What is the company legal name? How was it created (capital, shareholders)?

3. How is the company organized in terms of functions and work stations?

4. What is the company and the brand´s mission?

5. What is the identity and positioning of the brand? How do you want the public to see the brand?

B – Targeting

1. How would you describe FORA´s customers? Who are they?

2. Do you follow any segmentation strategy to better classify and reach your target?

C – Industry

1. How would you say the sunglasses industry works (globally)?

2. And what about the Portuguese market? Is it different?

3. In which market is FORA placed? More connected to fashion or to health?

3. Who do you consider your major competitors? In what do they compete with FORA?

4. What are FORA´s vantage points in relation to the competition? And weaker points?

D – Product portfolio & Production

1. How does the production process works? Are the products entirely produced in Portugal and with Portuguese materials?

2. Can you please tell the story behind the current models? How did you get here in terms of product portfolio?

3. How did the unit production cost evolved from 2013 until now?

E – Pricing

1. Can you please describe your pricing strategy? How were the prices fixed?

2. How did the prices evolve from 2013 until now?

3. On average, what is the unit margin released per product?

F – Sales & Distribution

1. What are the distribution channels FORA currently uses?

2. How did the distribution evolved from the beginning until now?

3. What is the most profitable channel?

4. What are the sales proportion in terms of channel? How did it vary?

5. What are your main objectives with each channel (specifically the resale model)?

6. Do you sell just for Portugal or to other countries as well? If yes, how does it work?

7. Do you feel the sales are more intense in a particular time of the year? Which one?

8. What is the sale proportions for product type?

9. How was the sales evolution? Was there any particular time that you noticed a peak in sales?

G – Communication

1. Can you please describe FORA´s communication strategy and its evolution?

2. What do you mainly want to communicate?

3. For whom do you communicate? And how do you reach them?

4. How do you allocate the marketing budget? What is that budget?

5. What constitutes a priority in terms of FORA´s communication strategy?

H – Conclusion

1. In your opinion, what is the biggest challenge the brand faces?

2. Do you feel any specific difficulty in terms of growth?

3. What are the next steps? And when?

4. What were the main drivers of the observed growth?

5. What would you change in the business model or in the brand?

6. Where and how do you see FORA in five years?

7. How do you plan on getting there?

14. Focus Group

1) SALIENCE	
Depth	
What words come into your mind when I say the word eyewear?	Glasses, Ray-ban, mirrored, sun, corrective glasses, contact lenses, coloured contact lenses
What words come into your mind when I say the word sunglasses?	Ray-ban, Mr. Boho, protection, style, sensitive eyes
What words come into your mind when I say the word accessories?	Glasses, scarf, earrings, rings, sunglasses, bracelets, purses
What eyewear brands can you think of? (Unaided depth)	Multiopticas, Ray-ban, Mr. Boho, Tommy, Gucci, Calvin Klein
And sunglasses brands? (Unaided depth)	Ray-ban, **FORA**, Mr. Boho, Persol, Hurley, Oakley, surfer brands
Do you know FORA Sunglasses? (aided depth)	Yes
Breath	
Which sunglasses brand(s) do you currently own, if any?	Mr. Boho (2), Persol, Ray-ban, Pull&Bear, Lefties, unbranded, don´t own
What were the main reasons for that brand choice?	**Mr. Boho**: price-quality relation; **Perso**l: quality and design; **Ray-ban**: protect eyes and brand; **Unbranded**: convenience based on price
Involvement & Relevance	
Who helped you choose the sunglasses?	All but one participant asked for opinion. From friends, familiy
In your opinion, what are the top main purposes of sunglasses?	Eye protection (several mentioned they used to drive), fashion
What would be a reason for you to switch your sunglasses brand?	Bad experience, poor quality, a promotion from other brand
What role does the brand plays for you when choosing a pair of sunglasses?	For the majority, not the primary reason to buy but very important. The brand provides cues that allow them to guide their decision, like trust
Do you always go for the branded ones? Why? (branding role in category)	The majority yes, that grant them quality
General Preferences	
Which are the main characteristics you consider when choosing a pair of sunglasses?	Price, design, aesthetics, quality, place of origin (Portuguese)
Do you give priority to the Portuguese products?	If for a good price, good quality and good design yes. For some, if one of these conditions fails they don´t go for the Portuguese. Between 2 completely equal glasses, they would go for the Portuguese

2) ASSOCIATIONS	
General associations	
Does any of you owns a pair of sunglasses from FORA?	No
What characteristics, if any, do you associate with the brand?	Design, Made in Portugal, not very accessible in terms of prices, good quality-price relation (both lenses and frames)
What features does FORA have in common with competitors? (Positioning) And different from competitors? (Positioning)	Design is similar to **Mr. Boho** for some, but with more quality and variety. For others is more similar in terms of design to **Ray-ban**, but with more alternatives for their tastes
What is the brand's message? (Positioning)	Handmade, Made in Portugal, Style concern
What do you like most about the brand?	Design and variety
And least?	Price, confusing points-of-sale, don´t really know where to find them, the store is not close to me
Performance associations	
Compared to the other sunglasses brands, how well does FORA provide the functions/requirements you identified in the previous question?	Value style: up-to-date, same type of style between the models. Value design: like the design but not sure if they would fit my face. Minimalist design is appreciated
In your perception/opinion, how reliable/durable is this brand?	"I cannot imagine to own a pair of FORA for the rest of my life, as I see my parents doing it with Ray-ban", perception of duration around 10 years. Durable in terms of style: too fashion for the moment, probably not in the future. Others disagreed: they are very classic
In your perception/opinion, how stylish is this brand?	Very much
How much do you like the design of the products? (compare to other mentioned brands)	Very much
And of the brand? (compare to other mentioned brands)	Very much
Compared to other sunglasses´ brands, are FORA´s prices generally higher, lower or about the same?	More expensive than Mr. Boho and unbranded, but cheaper than the big brands like Ray-ban and Persol. For those who owned models unbranded and Mr. Boho (price sensitive), FORA´s glasses are expensive. For those who wear Rayb-ban and Persol, they have a good price for what they offer.
Compared to other sunglasses´ brands, how do you evaluate the price-quality relation from FORA?	In general, good price-quality relation: higher than Mr. Boho and unbranded glasses, lower than Ray-ban and Persol.
Did you all knew the products are made by hand and in Portugal?	Some knew, but others only knew they were Portuguese
Imagery associations	
What kind of people use the brand? How would you characterize them and why?	Alternative, stylish, opinion leader (but not one for masses). Someone with different characteristics, out of common
Do you think that you have something in common with FORA´s consumers?	Mostly said yes. They feel they belong to the target
How well do the following words describe the brand: down-to-earth, up-to-date, honest, daring, reliable, successful, upper-class, charming, outdoorsy?	Down-to-earth, Up-to-date, Honest, Daring, Reliable, Outdoorsy. Could be more successful, with the product and brand it has
What places are appropriate to buy the brand?	Street store, Chiado, Príncipe Real, Quiosco, Mercado da Ribeira
Can you buy it in a lot of places?	Showed some confusion with some old places where the brand used to be present and thought the official store was the one from Av. Álvares Cabral. "If I were to go to the store I would have to consult the website"
In which situations wearing the brand is most appropriate? Why? (compare to other 3 mentioned brands)	**FORA**: Beach, Travelling, Sunset in the beach, terrace, chilling with friends (very associated to summer and friends). **Ray-ban**: to drive, to go to work, in the day-to-day because they are more classic. **Mr. Boho**: music festival
If this brand was an occupation, what would it be? And why? (compare to other 3 mentioned brands)	**FORA**: Designer, surfer, architect, beach bar owner, blogger (but more exclusive, not for masses). **Ray-ban**: executive, suit wearing. **Mr. Boho**: blogger (masses)

3) JUDGEMENTS	
Quality	
What is your overall opinion of the brand?	Positive, nice in general
How do you evaluate its quality?	**Medium-high**: superior to brands like Mr. Boho, inferior to brands like Ray-ban and Persol. Willing to pay more for Ray-ban because of that. Observation: "I didn´t value the quality so much until I saw the Facebook movie about the production process, in which they work with own hands, doing everyhting very careful and commitment" --> personal care in the manufacturing increased perceptions of quality
To what extent does it satisfy your needs?	Totally
Does it provide good value?	Yes
Credibility	
How innovative are the products of the brand?	Very much innovative
How much do you trust them?	70%, not 100% because don´t own any so cannot speak for experience. But after seeing the movie of the production process, increased trust
To what extent do the producers have your interests in mind?	Totally. Handmade (personal commitment) and up-to-date
How much do you like/admire/respect the brand?	Admire a lot this Portuguese innovative projects and especially the brand
Consideration	
How likely would you consider FORA the next time you look for a pair of sunglasses?	Very likely to be considered for everyone. But the likelihood decreases when speaking about buying the glasses - some prefer to stay loyal to the brand they currently own
Which other brands would you compare FORA to?	More similar in generaL: Ray-ban, Persol. Totally different from Chanel, Gucci, and those brands - FORA is simpler, more minimalistic and discrete
How likely would you suggest this brand to a friend that wants a new pair of sunglasses?	Very likely
Superiority	
How unique is FORA?	In Portugal the concept is different and unique. Outside the country there are probably other brands with similar concepts
How superior is it, compared to the other brands in the category?	Superior to unbranded, cheap brands and brands like Mr. Boho

4) FEELINGS	
Please think of every experience you have ever had with the brand, what you have seen and heard about it, and tell me what feelings does it provide to you?	Self-confidence, good mood, feel stylish, social
Which of the feelings does the brand provide to you? Warmth, fun, excitement, security, social approval, self-respect	Warmth, Fun (not all), Excitement, Security, Social Approval (all) and Self-Respect (all)
What do you feel when watching this video? (2015 campaign video)	Calm, tranquility, exclusivity, alternative mood, joy, life-quality, well-being, romantic, chill

5) RESONANCE	
Loyalty	
To what extent do you consider yourself loyal to FORA?	Don´t consider themselves loyalt to the brand
Is this the one brand you prefer/would prefer to use?	Yes, one of them at least
If this brand was not available, would it make any difference to you?	No for most, except for one, since is the one brand that offer what they look for
Imagine you wanted to buy a pair of sunglasses, as you know FORA is not available in the optics, would you go to Principe Real to try some pairs?	Yes, for sure
Attachment	
Would you miss the brand if it disappears?	Some disagreement. More pitty
Is the brand special to you?	Yes for a few because is Portuguese. No for most
Can you say you love it?	Some disagreement
Is FORA more than a product to you?	Yes
Community	
Do you identify with people who wear it? (community and social demonstrance function)	Yes (see above)
Is the brand used by people like you?	Yes (see above)
Engagement	
Are you interesting in learning more about FORA?	Now tat we talked about it here yes
Do you visit the website?	Didn´t even know it had a website
Do you follow FORA on social networks? Which ones?	Most of them yes, some in Facebook, other in Instagram, and only few in both
If yes, do you usually pay attention/like/share its publications?	Some yes, saw the video and follow the products. But some didn´t remeber they followed the brand (had to check)
Do you often see posts from FORA? Do they appear in your feed?	The two members who were liking the posts and visit the page yes, the rest not very often

6) SUGESTIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND OBSERVATIONS	
Do you have any suggestion for the sunglasses of the brand? Is there something you would like to find on them? What?	Communicate more often, find ways to interact with followers such as contests, games and special offers to keep interest. Partnerships like the one with Time Out.
Would you like the brand to expand its current product portfolio into other categories? Which ones?	Yes for other products but within the category: like packages and wires to support the glasses
If for some reason the brand ended its production by hand, would it make any difference to you?	Ending the handmade production **would make a lot of difference**, as their perceptions of FORA´s quality lie on it.
If for some reason the brand ended its production in Portugal, would it make any difference to you?	Ending the Portuguese production **would make difference for some, but not for others**, who like the design and would buy it anyway if they were to do so - "If the glasses are Portuguese, great, but I don´t specifically look for Portuguese sunglasses in my decision-making process".

15. Survey

Dear participant,

The following survey is part of a Master Dissertation of Católica-Lisbon School of Business and Economics.

The main goal is to understand your thoughts, opinions and attitudes regarding a particular category of consumption. The collected information will be treated confidentially, only for study purposes and all answers are anonymous. Therefore, I kindly ask you to answer honestly and spontaneously. The questionnaire has the total duration of 5-8 minutes.

Thank you in advance for your time and collaboration!

Part I

1 – What sunglasses brands can you think of?

Brand 1
Brand 2
Brand 3

2 – What **Portuguese** sunglasses brands do you know, if any? In case you don't remember any brand you can pass to the next question.

Brand 1
Brand 2
Brand 3

3 – What brands of sunglasses **made by hand** do you know, if any? In case you don't remember any brand you can pass to the next question.

Brand 1
Brand 2
Brand 3

4 – Do you currently own or ever owned a pair of sunglasses?

- Yes
- No → jump to question 6

5 – Which brand(s) do your sunglasses belong to?

- Ray-ban
- Mr. Boho
- Persol
- FORA Sunglasses
- Oakley
- Hurley
- Prada
- Gucci
- Channel
- Armani
- Façonnable
- Unbranded
- Other: __________

6 – Imagine you want to buy a new pair of sunglasses. What characteristics would you mainly be looking in the sunglasses? Please rank each the options according to your priorities.

Price
Design
Quality (lenses and frames)
Place of origin
Brand of the sunglasses

7 – Please choose the option that best describes your beliefs for each of the following sentences: (lifestyle questions and the value of the handmade and made in Portugal)

	Completely disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Completely agree
Handmade products yield higher quality than industrialized ones					
I always go for the Portuguese products					
I trust handmade products better					
Made in Portugal products have poor quality					
The fact that a product is Portuguese represents a decisive factor in my choice					
I think people should value what there is good in Portugal and support the country by buying Portuguese products					
Sunglasses are made to protect the eyes, not for fashion purposes					
When it comes to protect my eyes, I always choose branded sunglasses					

8 – To what extent do you know a brand called FORA Sunglasses? (Choose 1 option)

- Never heard of it → go to part III
- I have only heard of it
- I know some of its products
- I already visited the store
- I own a pair of FORA´s sunglasses

Part II: For those who have at least heard of the brand

9 – From what you know, where can you find FORA´s sunglasses? Please check all that apply.

- Optics
- Shopping centers
- Street stores from FOR A
- Street stores from other brands that sell FORA´s products
- Other: ______

10 - From your experience with the brand, how would you rate the **sunglasses** from FORA in the following parameters, being 1 – poor, and 5 - excellent? (Performance associations)

Reliability	* * * * *
Durability	* * * * *
Style	* * * * *
Design	* * * * *
Fair price	* * * * *
Variety	* * * * *
Up-to-date	* * * * *

11 – According to everything you have ever seen, heard or experience with FORA Sunglasses, in your opinion to what extent do the following sentences **describe the brand and your judgments about it**? (1 – Not at all; 5 – Absolutely) (Judgment & awareness)

	1	2	3	4	5
The sunglasses are produced in Portugal (awareness)					
The sunglasses are handmade (awareness)					
The products present a good quality (quality – judgement)					
The brand provides a good value for its products (quality – judgement)					
I trust its products (expertise – judgment)					
The brand is superior to other sunglasses brands (superiority – judgement)					
I am likely to consider this brand the next time I want to buy a new pair of sunglasses (consideration – judgement) - only if 1 or 2 answer question 12					

12 – Can you provide us the main reason for **not** considering FORA the next time you look for a pair of sunglasses?

____

13 – Please rate the following sentences regarding FORA Sunglasses according to your level of agreement: (imagery)

	Completely disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Completely agree
FORA is unique					
FORA is sophisticated					
FORA is elegant					
FORA is sexy					
FORA is honest					
FORA is daring					

14 – In your opinion, for which type of people is the brand and its products for? Please check all that apply. (imagery).

- Alternative people
- Stylish people
- Executives
- Young people
- People like me
- Classic people
- Other: __________

15 – In which situations do you imagine yourself wearing the brand´s sunglasses? Please check all that apply.

- In the beach
- In a music festival
- Relaxing with friends
- In my daily life
- To work
- To travel
- To drive
- Other__________

16 – Sometimes wearing different brands or fashion accessories makes us feel differently. How would you feel by wearing FORA? From 1 to 5 (1= not at all, 5= totally) what **feelings** does the brand provide to you, if any?

	1	2	3	4	5
Self-confidence					
Good mood					
Excitement					
Social approval					
Relaxation					
Exclusivity					

17 – At this point we are interested in knowing more about your **relationship** with the brand. Please rate each sentence according to you level of agreement. (Resonance)

	Completely disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Completely agree
I feel attached to the brand					
If the brand were to disappear it would be completely indifferent to me					
If I wanted to try a pair of FORA´s sunglasses but it wasn't available nearby, I would go to another place to find it					
I identify myself with people who wear the brand					
I follow the brand on social networks					

Part III

Note: Those who didn't know the brand are invited to answer to this part. For half of these respondents the description below would appear. For the other half, the part that says the glasses are Portuguese and handmade was removed for later comparison.

18/19 - FORA Sunglasses is a brand that comes from the inspiration of two Portuguese friends. The sunglasses are entirely **produced in Portugal** and **made by hand**. Prices go from 98€ to 128€. Below you can see some of its current offerings:

20 – Now that we presented you the main characteristics of the brand, and some of its products, please rate the following sentences according to the level of agreement.

	Completely disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Completely agree
The design is appealing (performance)					
The sunglasses seem to have high quality, as other known brands (quality – judgment)					
The sunglasses are accessible in terms of prices (performance)					
The sunglasses seem to be durable (performance)					
The brand is innovative (imagery)					
The brand is for people like me (imagery)					
If I had to buy a new pair of sunglasses, I would consider these in my decision-making (consideration – judgement)					

Part IV: for all

21 – Gender

- Female
- Male

22 - Age:

- <18
- 18-25
- 26-35
- 36-45
- 46-55
- +55

23 - Current occupation

- High school student
- University student
- Employed
- Unemployed
- Retired
- Other

24 - Nationality

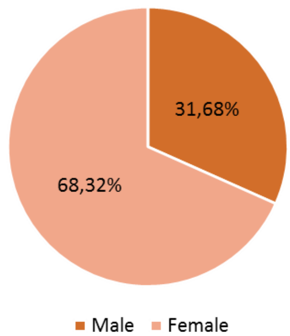
- Portuguese
- Other

25 - Annual gross income level

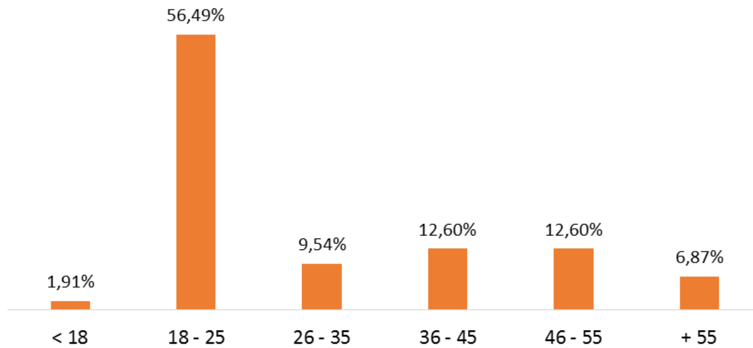
- <10.000€
- 10.000€ - 20.000€
- 20.000€ - 30.000€
- +30.000€

16. Survey analysis exhibits

16.1. Gender



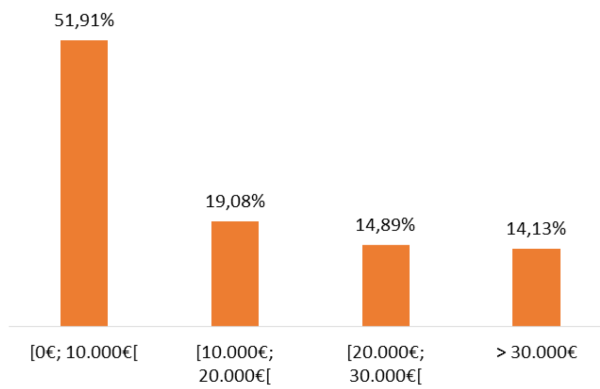
16.2. Age



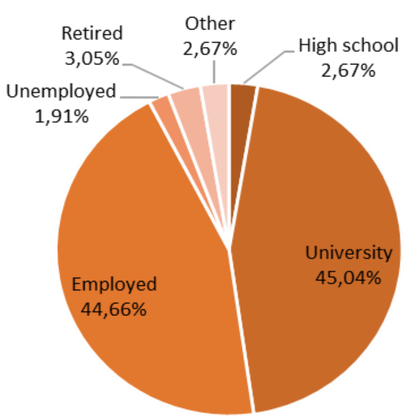
16.3. Cross tabulation: Gender * Age

			Age:					
			< 18	18 - 25	26 - 35	36 - 45	46 - 55	+ 55
Gender:	**Male**	Count	3	43	12	9	8	8
		% within Gender:	3,6%	51,8%	14,5%	10,8%	9,6%	9,6%
	Female	Count	2	105	13	24	25	10
		% within Gender:	1,1%	58,7%	7,3%	13,4%	14,0%	5,6%

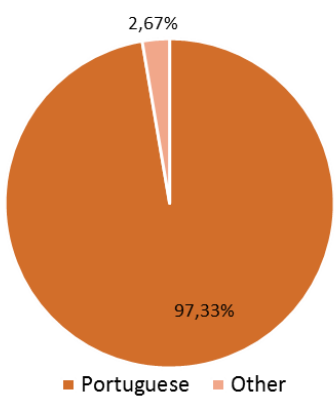
16.4. Annual income level



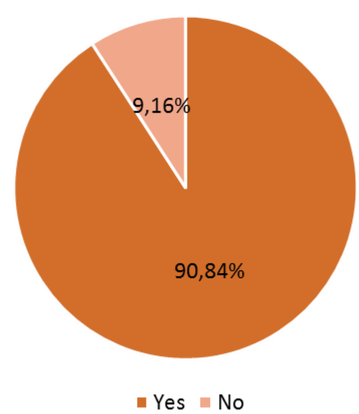
16.5. Current occupation



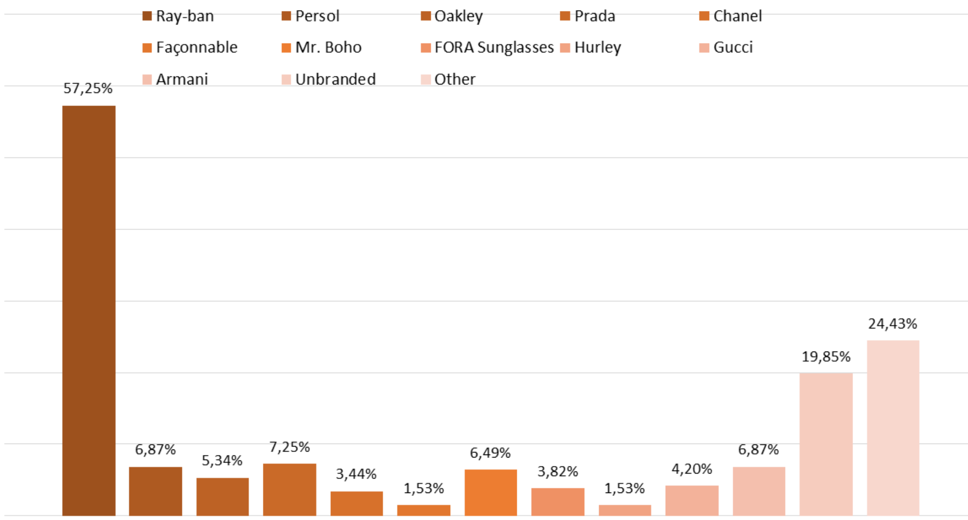
16.6. Nationality



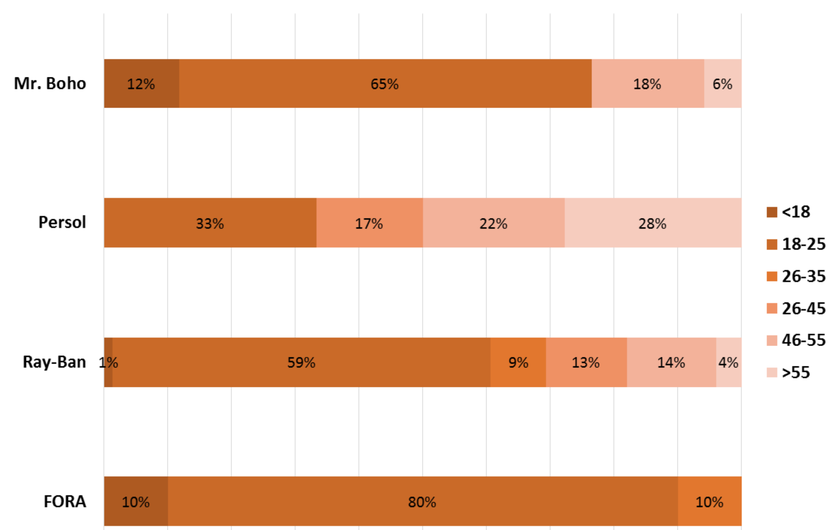
16.7. Do you currently own or ever owned a pair of sunglasses?



16.8. Sunglasses brands respondents own(ed)



16.9. Ages of sunglasses brands owners



16.10. Value in handmade products

	Handmade products yield higher quality than industrialized ones		I trust handmade products better	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Completely disagree	11	4,20%	13,0	5,0%
Somewhat disagree	31	11,83%	37,0	14,1%
Neither agree nor disagree	91	34,73%	114,0	43,5%
Somewhat agree	95	36,26%	79,0	30,2%
Completely agree	34	12,98%	19,0	7,3%
Total	262	100%	262	100%
Mean	3,42		3,21	

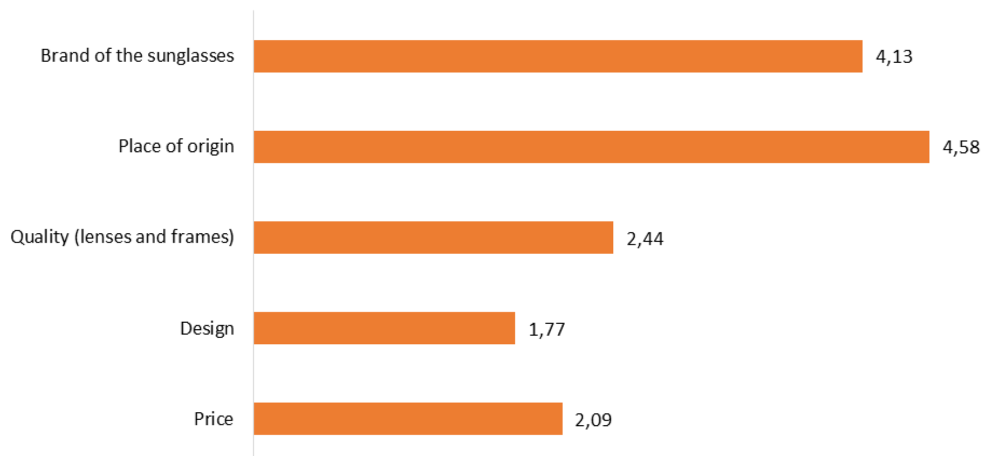
16.11. Fashion vs. Health purpose

	Sunglasses are made to protect the eyes, not for fashion purposes	
	Frequency	Percentage
Completely disagree	32	12,21%
Somewhat disagree	69	26,34%
Neither agree nor disagree	51	19,47%
Somewhat agree	66	25,19%
Completely agree	44	16,79%
Total	262	100%
Mean	3,08	

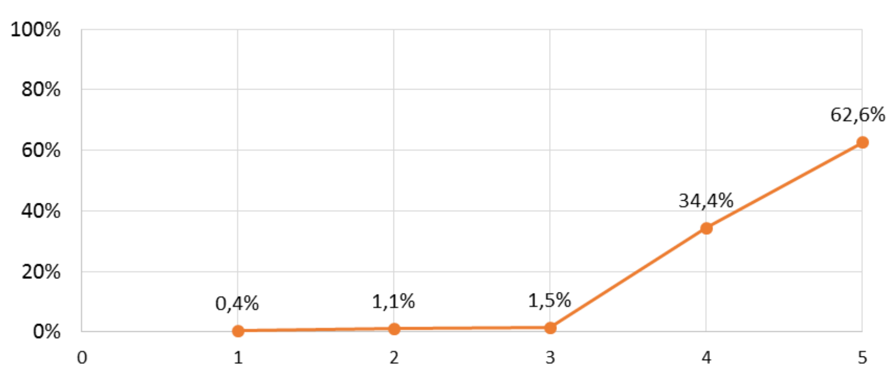
16.12. Brand relevance in the category

	When it comes to protect my eyes, I always choose branded sunglasses	
	Frequency	Percentage
Completely disagree	16	6,11%
Somewhat disagree	29	11,07%
Neither agree nor disagree	48	18,32%
Somewhat agree	94	35,88%
Completely agree	75	28,63%
Total	262	100%
Mean	3,70	

16.13. Importance of characteristics when choosing a pair of sunglasses



16.14. Importance of Place of origin when choosing a pair of sunglasses



16.15. Portuguese brands of sunglasses that come to mind

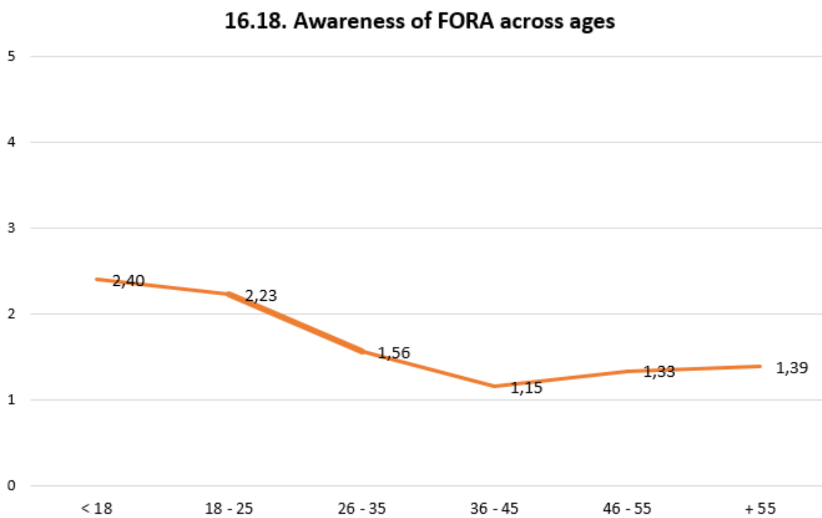
	1st Portuguese brand that comes to mind	2nd Portuguese brand that comes to mind	3rd Portuguese brand that comes to mind
AkFree	1	-	-
Ana Salazar	1	-	-
António Tenente	1	-	-
Boo	1	1	-
Bronze	-	1	-
Chilli Beans	2	-	-
Dielmar	1	-	-
Fátima Lopes	1	-	-
Fora	**63**	**3**	**-**
Komono	1	1	-
Mr. Boho	**6**	**9**	**1**
Multiopticas	3	2	-
Refleczo	3	-	-
Skog	3	3	-
Stockglasses	-	1	-
Missing	175	241	261
Total	262	262	262

16.16. Handmade sunglasses brands that come to mind

	1st handmade brand that comes to mind	2nd handmade brand that comes to mind	3rd handmade brand that comes to mind
A Morrir	1	-	-
Chilli Beans	1	-	-
Cutler and Grass	1	1	-
Dolce&Gabbana	-	1	-
Fora	**25**	**-**	**-**
Mr. Boho	1	-	-
Oliver peoples	1	-	-
Persol	2	-	-
Prada		-	1
Ray-ban	2	-	-
Skog	**3**	**-**	**-**
Missing	225	260	261
Total	262	262	262

16.17. Extent of awareness

	Frequency	Percentage
Never heard of it	163	62,2%
I have only heard of it	21	8,0%
I know some of its products	38	14,5%
I already visited the store	31	11,8%
I own a pair of FORA´s sunglasses	9	3,4%
Total	262	100,0%



16.19. ANOVA: Extent of awareness * Age

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	53,651	5	10,730	7,907	0,000
Within Groups	347,403	256	1,357		
Total	401,053	261			

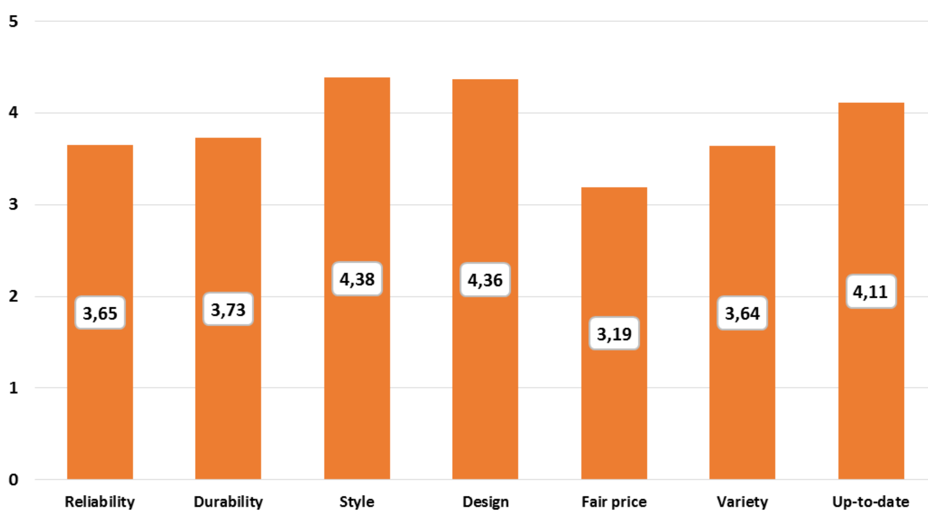
16.20. Where can you find FORA?

	Frequency	Percentage
Optics	5	3,9%
Stores in Shopping centers	4	3,1%
Street stores from FORA	49	38,6%
Street stores from other brands that sell FORA´s products	33	26,0%
Online	8	6,3%
I have no idea	20	15,7%
Other	8	6,3%
Total	127	100,0%

16.21. Beliefs about the brand´s characteristics

	The sunglasses are produced in Portugal		The sunglasses are handmade	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
1	1	1,0%	1	1,0%
2	0	0,0%	5	5,1%
3	7	7,1%	24	24,2%
4	23	23,2%	20	20,2%
5	46	46,5%	27	27,3%
Total	77	78%	77	78%
Mean	4,47		3,87	
Mode	5		5	

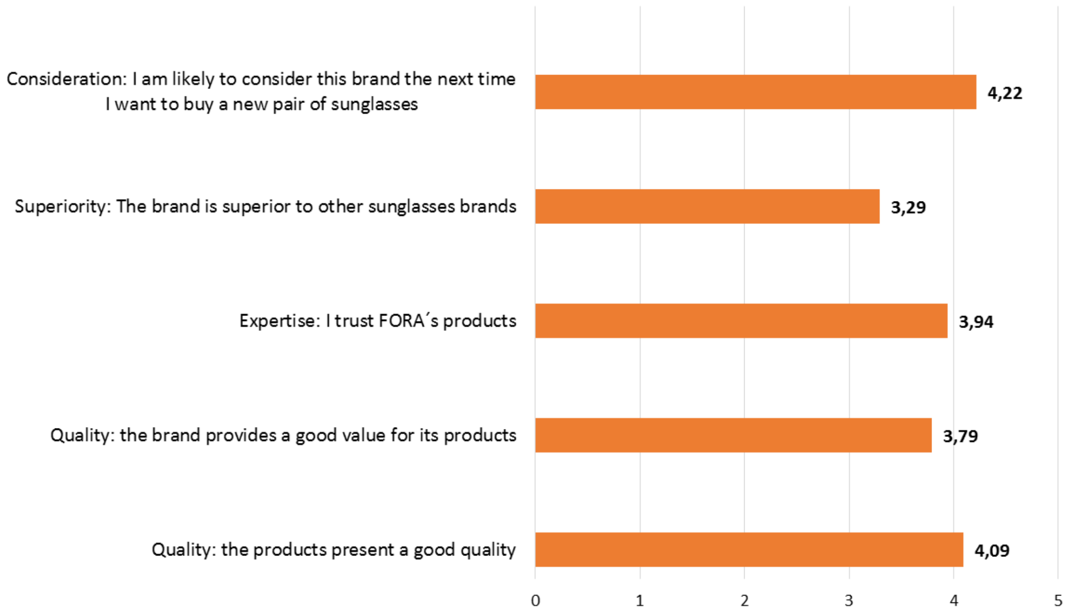
16.22. Performance associations



16.23. Do the performance perceptions vary with the fact respondents know sunglasses are handmade in Portugal?

	Reliability			Durability			Up-to-date		
	Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
(Constant)		2,671	0,009		2,567	0,012		4,565	0,000
Beliefs and Judgments: The sunglasses are produced in Portugal	0,240	1,402	0,165	0,266	2,163	0,034	0,084	0,646	0,520
Beliefs and Judgments: The sunglasses are handmade	0,168	2,335	0,022	0,242	1,973	0,052	0,273	2,107	0,038

16.24. Judgements



16.25. Do the judgments vary with the fact respondents know sunglasses are handmade in Portugal?

	Quality			Value			Superiority		
	Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
(Constant)		5,866	0,000		4,503	0,000		3,732	0,000
Beliefs and Judgments: The sunglasses are produced in Portugal	0,216	1,810	0,074	0,211	1,695	0,094	-0,003	-0,022	0,983
Beliefs and Judgments: The sunglasses are handmade	**0,345**	2,894	**0,005**	**0,266**	2,135	**0,036**	**0,414**	3,317	**0,001**

16.26. Do the imagery perceptions vary with the fact respondents know sunglasses are handmade in Portugal?

	Uniqueness			Honesty			Daringness			Sophistication		
	Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
(Constant)		4,234	0,000		6,130	0,000		5,634	0,000		5,634	0,000
Beliefs and Judgments: The sunglasses are produced in Portugal	-0,081	-0,671	0,504	-0,040	-0,301	0,764	-0,148	-1,222	0,226	-0,148	-1,222	0,226
Beliefs and Judgments: The sunglasses are handmade	**0,512**	4,240	**0,000**	**0,304**	2,309	**0,024**	**0,529**	4,357	**0,000**	**0,529**	4,357	**0,000**

16.27. FORA is for…

	Frequency	Percentage
Alternative people	50	16,3%
Stylish people	84	27,5%
Executives	14	4,6%
Young people	76	24,8%
People like me	55	18,0%
Classic people	24	7,8%
Other	3	1,0%
Total	306	100%

16.28. FORA is to be used in…

	Frequency	Percentage
The beach	72	16,0%
A music festival	55	12,2%
Relaxing with friends	71	15,8%
In my daily life	76	16,9%
To work	30	6,7%
To travel	74	16,5%
To drive	68	15,1%
Other	3	0,7%
Total	449	100%

16.29. Relationship with FORA

		Completely disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somwhat agree	Completely agree	Total	Mean	Mode
I feel attached to the brand	Frequency	12	18	29	27	13	99	3,11	3
	Percentage	12,1%	18,2%	29,3%	27,3%	13,1%	100%		
If the brand was to disappear it would be completely indifferent to me	Frequency	13	26	33	13	14	99	2,89	3
	Percentage	13,1%	26,3%	33,3%	13,1%	14,1%	100%		
If I wanted to try a pair of FORA´s sunglasses but they weren´t available nearby, I would go to another place to find them	Frequency	8	18	22	37	14	99	3,31	4
	Percentage	8,1%	18,2%	22,2%	37,4%	14,1%	100%		
FORA is more than a product to me	Frequency	17	14	35	28	5	99	2,9	3
	Percentage	17,2%	14,1%	35,4%	28,3%	5,1%	100%		
I identify myself with people who wear the brand	Frequency	5	7	27	38	22	99	3,66	4
	Percentage	5,1%	7,1%	27,3%	38,4%	22,2%	100%		
I follow the brand on social networks	Frequency	20	14	11	18	36	99	3,36	5
	Percentage	20,2%	14,1%	11,1%	18,2%	36,4%	100%		

16.30. Comparison of perceptions when presented with different concepts of FORA

	High quality (Judgment)					Durability (Performance)				
	N	Mean	SD	F	Sig.	N	Mean	SD	F	Sig.
Full concept	87	**4,00**	0,08	9,279	**0,003**	87	**3,46**	0,679	6,413	**0,012**
Incomplete concept	76	**3,66**	0,1			76	**3,45**	0,9		

16.31. The brand is for people like me * Gender

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean Lower Bound	95% Confidence Interval for Mean Upper Bound	Minimum	Maximum
Male	60	**3,12**	1,027	0,133	2,85	3,38	1	5
Female	103	**3,67**	1,042	0,103	3,47	3,87	1	5
Total	163	3,47	1,067	0,084	3,30	3,63	1	5

One-way ANOVA

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	11,604	1	11,604	10,802	**0,001**
Within Groups	172,960	161	1,074		
Total	184,564	162			

16.32. Does consideration vary with quality perceptions?

	Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
(Constant)		4,658	0,000
Quality	**0,427**	4,088	**0,000**

16.33. Does the perception of fair prices vary with the quality perceptions?

	Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
(Constant)		1,972	0,052
Beliefs and Judgments:The products present a good quality	**0,387**	3,633	**0,001**