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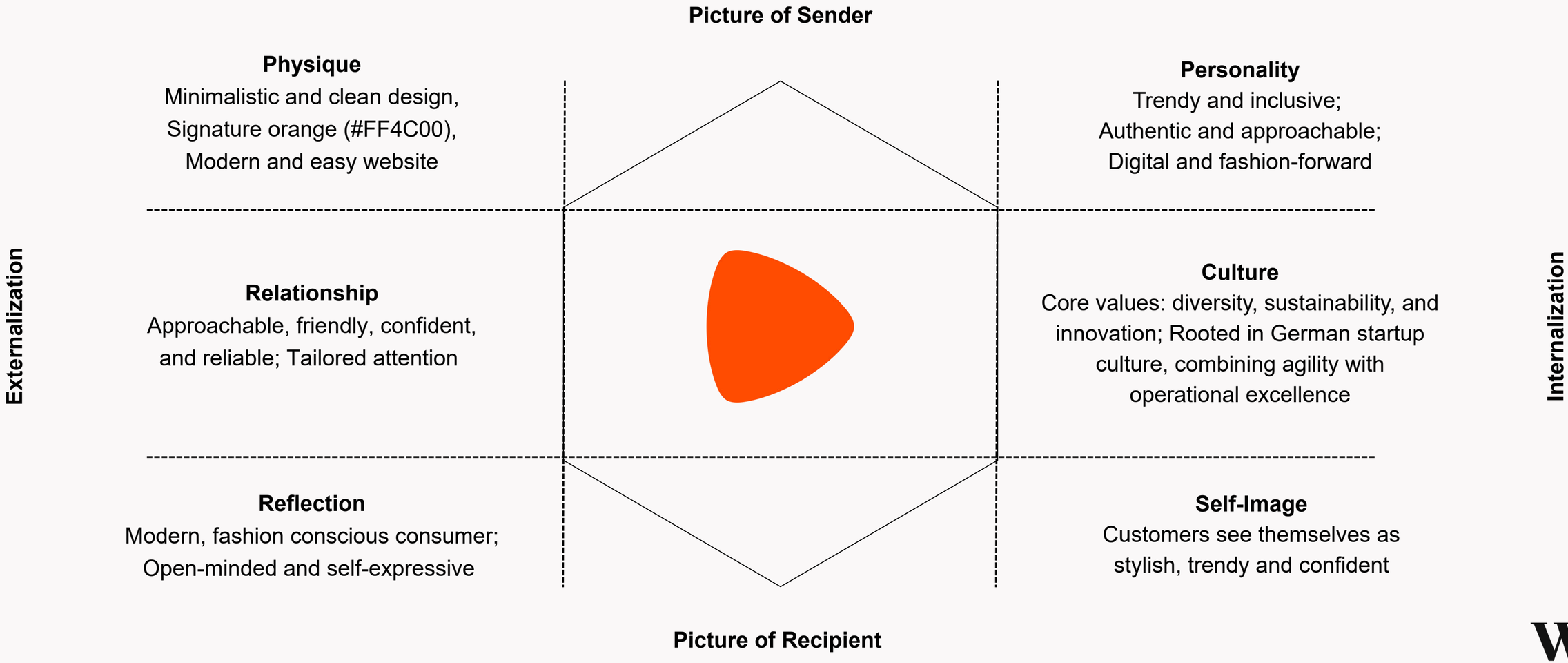
BRAND IDENTITY PRISM



BRAND CORE

Core message: Empowering people to express their unique style with confidence

Brand Essence & Values:
Confidence - support customers to express their own style
Inspiration - trends, stories, campaigns to inspire customers
Community - fashion brings people together, also through stories on the website
Diversity - people of all ages, genders, ethnicities, etc. are included in campaigns & on the website
Quality - big variety of brands, including designer
→ Zalando connects people and celebrates self-expression and confidence through fashion

Brand Core & Positioning:
Core message: empowering people to discover and express their personal styles
Goal: become Europe's most inspiring and inclusive online fashion platform for everyone
Positioning: online fashion and lifestyle e-commerce platform that blends trendy and timeless pieces with seamless shopping and a sense of community
Brand roots: customer centric platform that connects people with their personal styles and likeminded fashion enthusiasts and celebrates inclusivity and diversity



White	Black	Zalando Orange
R 255	R 0	R 255
G 255	G 0	G 76
B 255	B 0	B 0
C 0	C 0	C 0
M 0	M 0	M 80
Y 0	Y 0	Y 98
K 0	K 100	K 0
#FFFFFF	#000000	#FF4C00 Pantone 172C

BECOMING A BRAND

2008 - 2009: The Beginning
- Founded in Berlin by Robert Gentz and David Schneider during the global financial crisis.
- Started from their shared apartment, managing all operations — from customer service to deliveries.
- Introduced free delivery and a 100-day return policy, setting new standards in online retail.

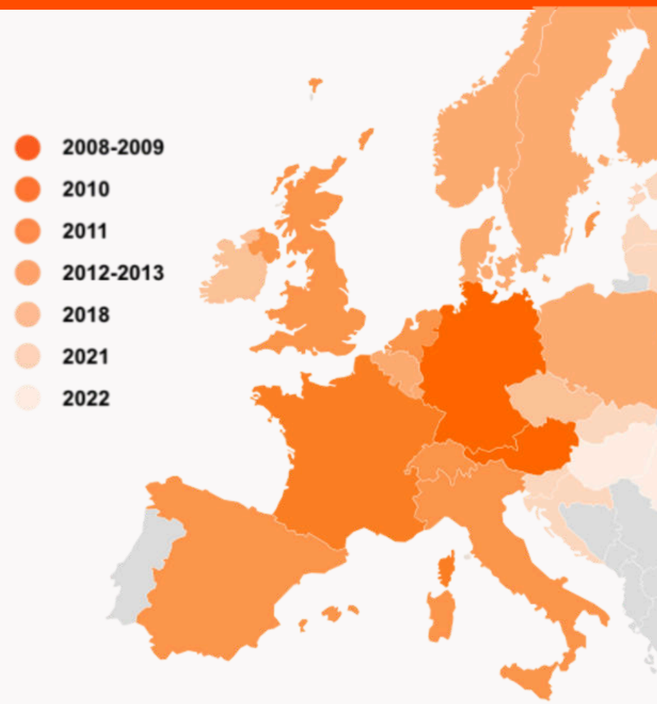
2010 - 2013: European Expansion
- Entered multiple European markets, tailoring services, marketing, communication, and payment options to local preferences.
- Established a strong brand reputation as a customer-centric online fashion retailer.

2014–2018: Scaling Operations
- Built a robust logistics and technology infrastructure to support rapid growth.
- Opened multiple fulfillment centers across Europe.
- Continued expansion and strengthened operational efficiency and reliability.

2019–2021: Platform Transformation
- Transitioned from an online retailer to a digital fashion and lifestyle platform.
- Expanded partnerships with brands and retailers, enhancing customer choice and platform reach.
- Further consolidation of the company's European market presence.

2022: Sustained Growth
- Entered new markets and welcomed a new management board.
- Continued to nurture a start-up culture focused on innovation, experimentation, and customer value.
- Workforce surpassed 15,000 employees.

Today: Zalando SE
- Headquartered in Berlin, operating in 25 European markets.
- Offers services in 19 languages and supports 20+ payment options.
- Maintains its roots — the original office now serves as an innovation and tech testing hub.



Brand Communication
- Vision: Sustainable, leading fashion & lifestyle platform
- Focus on transparency, inclusivity & inspiration
- Features diverse people across age, style & background
- Uses authentic storytelling and real testimonials
- Visuals built on infographics, illustrations & modular design
- Demonstrates accountability through sustainability reporting
- Campaigns highlight style, individuality & conscious living

Brand Culture
- Human-centric & inclusive: diversity in style, age & identity
- Keeps a start-up spirit with innovation & agility
- Collaborative & creative mindset across teams and partners
- Guided by Ethical Code: honesty, respect, trust & fairness
- Promotes a safe, diverse & empowering workplace
- Acts with integrity, responsibility & sustainability

MANIFESTATIONS

PHYSICAL EXPERIENCE:

Stores & Service Environments:
- Zalando Outlet Stores → 16 locations in Germany
- Zalando Beauty Station → 1 location in Berlin
- Contact options = chat, phone call, or contact form

Tangible Persons:
- Founders = Robert Gentz & David Schneider
- Employees = ~ 700 at Zalando Outlet Stores

SENSORY & VISUAL IDENTITY:

Sounds:
- “Zalandooo!” scream → excitement & recognition
- Now: upbeat, modern tones → optimism & emotion

Colors, Aesthetics & Style:
- Zalando Orange [#FF4C00] = energy & warmth
- Minimal design = clarity & digital ease
- Inclusive visuals → “Fashion for all”

PRODUCT & MATERIAL TOUCHPOINTS:

Products:
- 6 Private Label brands
  → focused on inclusivity & sustainability

Packaging & Receipts:
- Large wordmark & brand mark
- Purchase suggestions in order confirmation emails

DIGITAL & MEDIA PRESENCE:

Social Media:
- Authentic, inclusive tone
- Localized campaigns & creators

Website / App (UX/UI):
- Clean, intuitive, personalized
- Lounge by Zalando app as online outlet

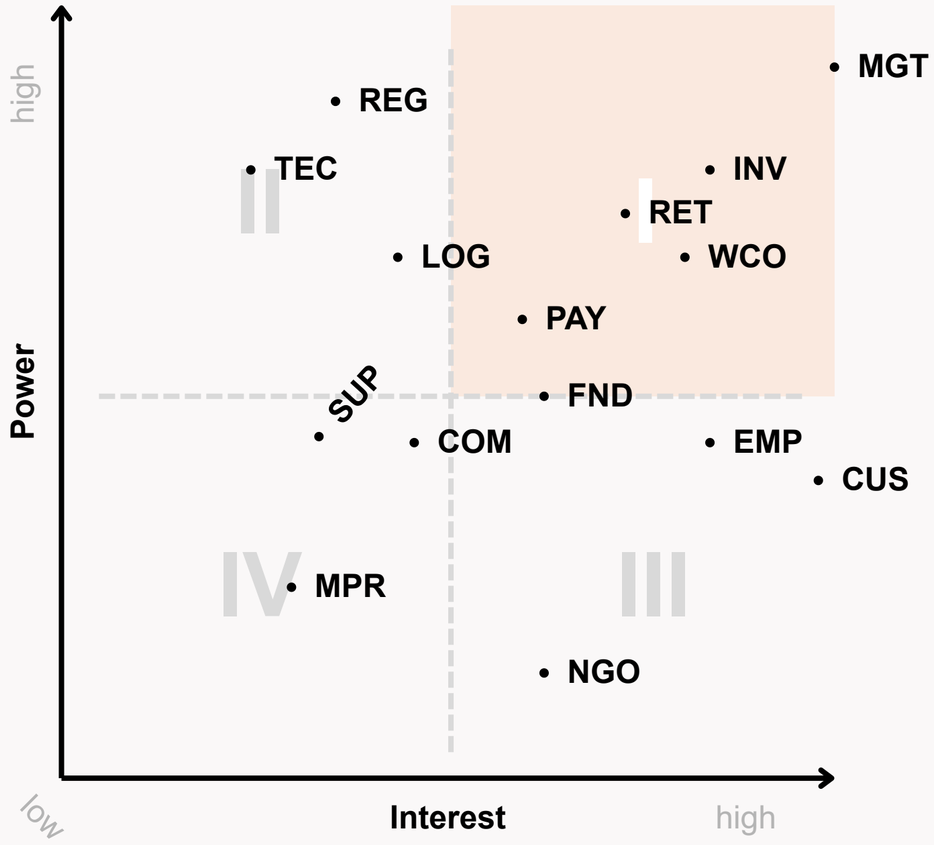
STAKEHOLDERS

Internal Stakeholders:

- Employees (EMP): f.e. fulfillment and logistics, customer care, product & engineering
- Management & Executives (MGT): f.e. management board, supervisory board
- Shareholders & Investors (INV): f.e. major shareholders like Anders Holch Povlsen; through Listed-Investor-Relation program, capital market disclosures, etc.
- Founders (FND): Robert Gentz and David Schneider
- Work Council (WCO): co-determination at German sites, ver.di union at logistics centers

External Stakeholders:

- Customers (CUS): f.e. high-value “Plus”-members, habitual repeat buyers, discovery-driven browsers, high-return cohorts
- Retail Partners (RET): wholesale brands Zalando buys from, marketplace/partner program sellers, strategic brand partnerships (f.e. Nike, connected via “Partner” program)
- Logistics & Delivery Partners (LOG): f.e. country specific carriers like DHL, partner logistics
- Manufacturers & Suppliers (SUP): f.e. for private labels (Anna Field, Even&Odd, ZIGN, etc.)
- Payment & Financial Partners (PAY): f.e. Asyen, ApplePay, Klarna, PayPal (BNPL)
- Tech & Platform Gatekeepers (TEC): f.e. Apple App Store, Google Play Store
- Regulatory Authorities (REG): f.e. overseeing data protection, labor rights, competition
- Competitors (COM): online fashion peers like ASOS
- NGOs, f.e. Sustainability Organizations (NGO): f.e. Canopy Planet, MacArthur Foundation
- Media & Public Relations (MPR): f.e. Vogue Business, Reuters, Zalando Newsroom



(II): KEEP SATISFIED

(REG) can mandate or prohibit practices; (TEC) govern access, visibility, and uptime; (LOG) determine capacity, cut-offs, returns handling, peak robustness
Why power/interest? → A single rule, policy, or capacity shift can disrupt demand or service (high power), yet their focus on Zalando is episodic (lower/medium interest)

Implication: *Run zero-surprise compliance, keep named points of contact with platform providers, and maintain multi-carrier peak plans with firm service thresholds.*

(I): MANAGE CLOSELY

(MGT) and (INV) define strategy, budgets, and risk tolerance; shaping assortment breadth, price architecture, and capital allocation; (WCO) co-determines working-time, staffing, and workplace changes – key for logistics and large teams; (RET) influence availability, pricing, and co-marketing, directly impacting GMV + margins
Why power/interest? → They control capital, labor rights, and assortment – the levers that directly drive revenue and cost (high power and interest)

Implication: *Align goals tightly, involve the works council early on operating changes, and agree concrete joint plans with priority brands/sellers while maintaining a clear investor narrative.*

(IV): MONITOR

(SUP) mainly matter for private labels and packaging – quality and delivery times affect margins but rarely strategy; (COM) set price and assortment signals without controlling Zalando's assets; (MPR) and (NGO) shape perceptions of climate, labor, and circular economy, with strongest influence during incidents
Why power/interest? → Their impact is largely indirect or event-driven (low power); but attention rises when issues surface (lower/medium interest)

Implication: *Use supplier scorecards and audits, maintain continuous market tracking, and practice proactive transparency with a prepared communications plan.*

(III): KEEP INFORMED

(EMP) drive speed, quality, and innovation but have limited formal power; (CUS) include segments such as high-value members, repeat buyers, discovery-driven browsers & high-return cohorts whose unit economics hinge on sizing and returns; (FND) provide narrative & trust; (PAY) influence approval rates & checkout friction
Why power/interest? → Outcomes affect them directly (high interest), while control of core corporate levers is indirect (medium power)

Implication: *Keep feedback loops short, continuously improve delivery promise, size/fit, and returns, communicate and upskill teams, and tune the payment mix for conversion and risk.*

COMPETITORS

*Zalando is currently acquiring **AboutYou**, another competitor in the fashion e-commerce sector*

	zalando	ULTRA LOW COST	GENERAL E-COMMERCE	FASHION E-COMMERCE	VERTICAL FASHION PLAYERS	BRAND OWN E-COMMERCE	SOCIAL MEDIA
Examples		SHEIN, TEMU	amazon	asos, Boozt	H&M, UNIQLO	adidas, TOMMY HILFIGER	
Business model	Platform model (B2C + B2B): marketplace, fulfillment, and logistics services (ZEOS)	D2C cross-border platforms using de-minimis parcel shipping & test-and-repeat model	Retail marketplace model; ad-driven	Inventory-light e-commerce; marketplace	Own-brand production → D2C + store omnichannel	Proprietary brand commerce, controlled pricing & margins	Advertising and social commerce; traffic monetization
Competitive advantage	EU logistics + regulatory compliance + fashion credibility	Speed, cost, and social virality	Convenience ecosystem + customer lock-in	Trend agility + youth engagement	Brand equity + control of quality & style	Emotional connection + brand heritage	Influence over attention & trends
Customer proposition	Curated selection, trust, convenience, sustainability	Ultra-low prices, infinite choice, viral novelty	One-stop convenience, delivery speed	Fashion-forward, affordable, mobile-first	Style authority, physical try-on, fast delivery	Authentic brand identity, innovation, community	Inspiration, discovery, trend creation

Unlike cost-driven or content-led competitors, Zalando builds defensible scale through its EU logistics platform ZEOS — where consumers gain convenience and partners gain infrastructure.

PESTEL ANALYSIS

Political:

- Political stability of EU enables sustained cross-border commerce
- EU regulatory policies deeply influence the e-commerce sector
- Governmental priorities around sustainability, data privacy, and digital innovation

Economic:

- Europe's robust and growing digital economy
- Growth of e-commerce and fast fashion
- Zalando is a major contributor to the European economy

Social:

- Social trends: online shopping, personalized experiences, diversity/inclusivity, and ethical consumption
- Shift in consumer habits towards mobile commerce & eco-friendly products
- Demographic shifts in Europe
- Growing consumer demand for convenience, competitive pricing, and rapid delivery

Technological:

- Zalando's Assistant AI interface, Digital Twins, and AI-generated product photos align with current market needs for technological innovation
- ZEOS - providing 3rd parties with multichannel inventory (PaaS switch thanks to Tradebyte)
- Automation and robotization
- Cybersecurity in-house governance (valuable for the EU market)

Environmental:

- Increasing European regulatory pressure concerning sustainability & responsibility
- Companies need to adapt operations to reduce carbon footprint
  - Net zero by 2040 (value chain → 2050)
  - 90% recycled packaging
- Leadership in sustainability transparency (E1-E5, ESRS). Being CSRD early compliant is a competitive differentiator for Zalando

Legal:

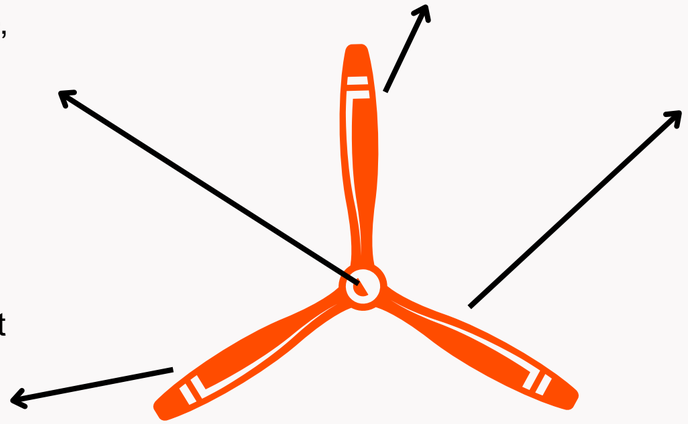
- Zalando operates under stringent EU legal frameworks: DSA, DMA, AI Act
- VAT complexities across 25+ markets
- Proposed tightening of de-minimis shipping (EU 2028 reforms) exemption may prove critical if it follows the US. It could make Chinese imports more difficult to enter the EEA market

SUMMARY

Brand Core
Enabling customers to make fashion choices that inspire their personal style and boost their confidence, the brand combines functional value (easy access to fashion) with emotional value (self-expression).

Brand Interest Groups
Stakeholders include high-power groups (management, regulatory authorities, investors, tech and platform gatekeepers, retail partners) shaping strategy, high-interest groups (employees, customers, founders) driving operations, and event-driven interest groups (suppliers, NGOs, media) affecting quality and reputation, requiring ongoing monitoring and transparent communication.

Brand Manifestations
Zalando manifests its brand through signature sounds (“Zalandooo!”), orange color, inclusive campaigns, digital platforms, stores, employees, and sustainable products, which create consistent experiences across all touch points.



Brand Culture & Communication
Zalando’s inclusive culture and start-up roots are expressed through authentic storytelling, diverse campaigns, modular visuals, and transparent sustainability reporting, highlighting its focus on creativity and customer trust.

Strategic Environment
Zalando uses its EU logistics platform (ZEOS), technology, and sustainability leadership to create convenience, scale, and trust, while navigating competitive pressures, regulatory frameworks, and fast evolving consumer trends across Europe.

Brand Drivers: Zalando’s brand is strengthened by ZEOS logistics, which ensure reliable and competitive operations, an inclusive culture reflected in its marketing campaigns, innovation and technology, sustainability leadership, a marketplace network, and authentic storytelling.

Brand Disruptors: Zalando is vulnerable to regulatory changes, competitive pressure, operational risks, reputational issues, and fast shifting consumer trends.

IMPROVEMENTS

- After receiving feedback that our visual design and slide structure lacked clarity and consistency, we assigned one team member the specific role of ensuring visual coherence across the analysis. This allowed the rest of the team to focus on improving the content and strengthened our presentation through a clearer, more cohesive layout.
- We also took the criticism regarding the “Porsche Experience” slide to heart. As a result, we decided to prioritize written analysis over visuals, aiming to make our analysis more specific and insightful.
- For the Brand Identity Prism, our first version had been based on the example from *The New Strategic Brand Management* (uploaded on Canvas). Since the feedback indicated that it appeared too general, we consulted teams who received higher marks. Their input helped us improve our new prism by making each dimension more analytical while keeping it concise.
- Lastly, for the *Interest Group Analysis*, we added more detail, visualized the level of influence, and included relevant implications.
- We hope these improvements are visible in our second Brand Analysis and that you enjoy exploring our insights.

SOURCES

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→ Zalando AW25 Campaign

AI DISCLOSURE

Aid/Tool	Type of Use	Affected Areas
ChatGPT (GPT 5.0)	Grammar check	Entire Analysis
ChatGPT (GPT 5.0)	Linguistics	Entire Analysis
ChatGPT (GPT 5.0)	Summarizing reports, slides, and website information	Slides 2, 3, 4, 8, 9, 10
Perplexity	Searching for sources	Slide 9
Adobe Photoshop GenAI	Picture expansion	Slide 1 (title)