

Case study examines new product development in the fast fashion industry

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In the world of fast fashion, new product development (NPD) is the main option for companies hoping to maintain relevance and competitiveness in an ever-changing market. NPD is a multifaceted

process and covers the generation of ideas, design and implementation of those ideas, prototype and product testing, and eventual launch of a new product on to the market with the aim of capitalizing on emerging market opportunities and addressing consumer needs.

According to an [article](#) written by Duong Quang Hao, Ngoc-Hien Do, and Duc Duy Nguyen of Ho Chi Minh City University of Technology in Vietnam published in the *International Journal of Services and Operations Management*, NPD is a complex process and demands a lot of company resources. This is particularly true in industries marked by rapid shifts in consumer preferences and short product lifecycles, such as fashion.

However, an alternative approach to NPD has emerged that puts the focus on strategic integration of competitor analysis and customer feedback. This can allow a company to streamline the development processes and improve its competitiveness, especially in the world of start-up ventures.

A useful tool on this overall streamlining process is the competitor profile matrix (CPM) method. This allows companies to identify and analyze their main competitors. They can dissect their best-selling products to work out what are the important customer preferences at a given time. This initial step in the new NPD process gives them a template for understanding the changing [market](#) and allows them to stitch together their own product ideas.

Once ideas are sewn up, the wily company might then engage directly with its target customer base to gain feedback and gauge preferences. By opting for a customer-centric approach, they can ensure that their new product features and functionalities are going to be welcomed by the market. This will then mitigate the risk of pushing products that end up hemmed in by more competitive offerings and so remain on the fringes

of the fashion patchwork rather than becoming the chic pieces everyone wants to be seen to wear.

While the approach is tailored for [start-ups](#) in the fast fashion sector, a similar iterative methodology might also be used across other industries. The strategic integration of competitor analysis and customer feedback into the NPD process offers a pragmatic approach to the modern marketplace.

More information: Duong Quang Hao et al, New product development in the fast fashion industry: a case study in Vietnam, *International Journal of Services and Operations Management* (2024). [DOI: 10.1504/IJSOM.2024.138601](https://doi.org/10.1504/IJSOM.2024.138601)

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