

Bandolier's Marketing Plan: Maintaining Relevance in An Evolving Market

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All direct-to-consumer brands grapple with a common set of complexities: a perpetually shifting technological landscape, dynamic social media platforms, and the ever-evolving preferences of consumers and their consumption habits (CMO, 2023). Analyzing and improving a marketing plan is of utmost importance for any brand or business (Indeed, 2023). It serves as the backbone of a brand's promotional efforts and directly impacts its success in reaching and engaging its target audience. By regularly reviewing the marketing plan, a company can identify what strategies are working effectively and what areas need refinement. This process helps in allocating resources wisely, maximizing return on investment (ROI), and staying ahead of the competition (Indeed, 2023). Moreover, continuous analysis allows brands to adapt to changing market trends and consumer preferences, ensuring their marketing efforts remain relevant and impactful. Therefore, a well-analyzed and improved marketing plan not only enhances brand visibility and customer acquisition but also contributes to long-term growth and overall success.

As a cutting-edge brand, Bandolier is where fashion meets function in the most stylish and innovative way possible (Bandolier, 2021). It is a phone case and accessory company that was established in 2013. The brand has redefined the way consumers carry their essentials by seamlessly integrating a wearable design. Bandolier's cases typically feature a strap or chain that allows users to wear their phone like a purse or a bag, providing both convenience and a fashion-forward look. These have become a coveted must-have for trendsetters and tech enthusiasts as they provide hands-free convenience without compromising on style (Bandolier, 2021).

For example, Bandolier's initial product debut was a luxury crossbody phone case designed to elegantly liberate the hands of dynamic and fashion-conscious consumers

(Bandolier, 2021). The seamless blend of practicality and utility is what attracts its user base, which spans across generations, encompassing Gen Z, Millennials, and even Boomers (CMO, 2023). The brand's online promotional strategies encompass influencer collaborations and a robust presence on social media platforms through its dedicated channels and official company website. In addition, Bandolier employs diverse paid media formats to effectively convey its latest product launches and innovative offerings (Bandolier, 2021; CMO, 2023).

While Bandolier has established itself as a distinctive brand with a unique product offering, it still faces several challenges in marketing its products effectively. A few of these challenges include market saturation, targeting the right audience, educating and engaging consumers about balancing fashion and function, and effectively utilizing technology and social media. According to Bandolier's Chief Marketing Officer (CMO), the brand's primary challenge is finding new ways to discover consumers as they transition across various platforms and sources of influence (2023). In particular, the brand aims to reach a younger generation (17-24) as they quickly become 25-36. The company's overarching goal is to market Bandolier as a brand that clearly identifies a solution to a need consumers did not know they had. In the meantime, Bandolier continues to develop new and innovative products, such as handbags and tech accessories (CMO, 2023). Overcoming the challenges and achieving this goal requires a thorough analysis of Bandolier's marketing approach and innovative solutions that allow the brand to adapt to the evolving needs and preferences of its customers. The first step in achieving this is through brand analysis and the evaluation of Bandoliers' existing position in the market.

SWOT Analysis

A SWOT analysis is a strategic planning tool that brands such as Bandolier can use to assess their internal strengths and weaknesses as well as external opportunities and threats. The

acronym "SWOT" stands for Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (Kenton, 2023). By evaluating these four key aspects, a SWOT analysis provides valuable insights into Bandolier's current position and helps formulate strategies for maximizing strengths, addressing weaknesses, leveraging opportunities, and mitigating threats. This systematic examination is a critical first step for Bandolier to effectively make informed decisions, set realistic objectives, and develop a plan that will help the brand achieve its business and marketing objectives.

Strengths

Bandolier, renowned for its innovative approach to phone cases, boasts a distinctive strength in its cutting-edge design philosophy (Bandolier, 2023). By seamlessly melding fashion with functionality, Bandolier has successfully carved a niche in the market. Bandolier's wearable phone cases offer a unique and innovative design that sets them apart from traditional phone cases. As a result, users can effortlessly sport their phones as stylish crossbody accessories. This appeals to fashion-conscious, trend-savvy consumers who demand style and utility in their accessories. This innovation not only sets Bandolier apart from traditional phone case manufacturers, but also positions the brand as a trendsetter in the ever-evolving world of tech fashion (Bandolier, 2023). In addition, Bandolier's crossbody phone cases provide hands-free convenience and easy access to the phone, making them suitable for various activities and situations. Bandolier can leverage these strengths by effectively communicating them in their marketing materials. As a result, Bandolier can build a stronger brand presence and reputation, which would contribute to customer loyalty and repeat business.

Weaknesses

However, Bandolier also grapples with certain weaknesses. One notable concern is the limitation in compatibility across various phone models. Bandolier is only compatible with

iPhones, which renders the brand's products inaccessible to a portion of the market (Bandolier, 2021). Furthermore, the fusion of technology and fashion in the production process may lead to higher production costs, potentially translating into premium pricing that could deter price-conscious consumers. This may decrease the brand's accessibility to consumers. While Bandolier's specialization caters to a specific demographic seeking fashion-forward phone accessories, it might inadvertently limit the brand's scalability and growth potential in a broader market context. Thus, while catering to a specific niche can be a strength, it can also limit the brand's overall reach and demand.

Additionally, the absence of a dedicated mobile application for shopping represents a notable weakness for the brand, as it limits the convenience and accessibility that customers expect in today's digital shopping landscape. It is also important to note that fashion trends could heavily influence Bandolier's success; therefore, its products might have a shorter life cycle if consumer preferences change rapidly. Bandolier must constantly make an effort to differentiate itself to ensure the brand stands out among its competitors. With an effective marketing plan, Bandolier can remain at the forefront of consumers' minds.

Opportunities

Bandolier operates in a distinctive market, selling luxury phone cases and accessories. This provides the company with an opportunity to showcase itself in innovative ways, setting it apart from its limited direct competitors. The company can take advantage of this opportunity by focusing on creative marketing strategies and building a strong brand identity that creates differentiation. This could include partnering with influencers or high-end brands to create exclusive designs, as well as creating visually stunning social media and advertising campaigns that showcase the unique style of their products.

Other areas for potential growth include exploring new distribution channels or expanding into other product lines beyond phone cases and accessories, such as laptop cases or tablet cases. One area that consistently offers opportunities is the realm of online shopping. It is crucial for businesses to adapt to emerging online trends in order to remain relevant among consumers, particularly younger generations. In regards to Bandolier, the brand currently does not have a mobile app. Mobile commerce is projected to account for 43.4% of all e-commerce sales, indicating an area for revenue growth (Adobe Experience Cloud Team, 2023). This presents a significant opportunity, as mobile online shopping is the preferred method of shopping with Gen Z and millennials. Using a mobile device can provide a company with a variety of benefits, such as improving customer connections, personalizing marketing channels, capitalizing on a niche, and enhancing customer engagement, among others (Adobe Experience Cloud Team, 2023). Bandolier has many opportunities to tap into, but the key strategy is personalized shopping experiences to keep consumers engaged and coming back.

Threats

On the other hand, the overall mobile phone case and accessories market is highly competitive, with a variety of companies offering similar products at different prices. It can be challenging for smaller companies, such as Bandolier, to differentiate themselves and gain market share. Established brands such as Casetify and Casemate are already well-known to consumers, making it challenging for new brands to capture consumers' attention while shopping. Casetify is one of the leading brands in phone cases, known for its numerous collaborations and partnerships with designers to launch unique designs for cases, covers, and more (DHL, 2019). Although not a direct competitor of Bandolier, Casetify does an excellent job of targeting Gen Z with its wide range of designs.

The market is constantly changing with new trends and designs emerging regularly, allowing Casetify to adapt to this changing market. It's clear that Casetify is a major competitor and threat for Bandolier to look out for when it comes to appealing to the Gen Z audience. While Bandolier may have a distinctive concept with its luxury tech accessories, Casetify has the advantage of capturing consumers' interest along with its reasonable prices. Bandolier may face additional threats, such as economic shifts in the market that can impact consumer spending and their willingness to purchase luxury items like phone cases and accessories. Consumers are likely to seek out phone accessories that are both functional and affordable during this time. Bandolier will need to carefully navigate these threats in order to maintain a strong position in the phone case and tech accessories market.

Strategic Marketing Objectives

Bandolier has several marketing objectives, including general objectives such as creating a competitive advantage, increasing brand awareness, and driving revenue growth. The company's main focus is on increasing brand awareness and recognition to reach new consumers in the market through its unique selling point of luxury products. As quoted from an interview with Bandolier's Chief Marketing Officer:

We help consumers find Bandolier in a way that clearly identifies a solution to a need they didn't know they had and continue to develop new and innovative products such as handbags, tech accessories and more. - CMO, Bandolier

However, the brand encounters obstacles when it comes to reaching out to new consumers, particularly the Gen Z demographic. The company is searching for various marketing tactics that have the potential to appeal to the younger generation. Further stated by Bandolier's CMO:

Our biggest challenge is finding new ways to discover consumers as they shift between platforms and influence. What's next? Where can we help consumers find Bandolier in a way that clearly identifies a solution to a need they didn't know they had? How do we reach a younger generation (17-24) as they quickly become 25-36? This is the tip of the spear in our fight to break through the zeitgeist and become a brand with complete global awareness. - CMO, Bandolier

By building a strong relationship and connection with this audience, Bandolier can boost brand recognition across the constantly evolving online platforms. To establish this connection, the company must understand the importance of targeting Gen Z and their specific needs and preferences. As the market continues to shift and change, Bandolier must continue to innovate and adapt, to not only grow its audience but to maintain its current customer base.

Gen Z, short for Generation Z, is a significant consumer market with considerable purchasing power that is set to become the largest group of consumers in the market in the near future (Expert Panel, 2022). For this reason, companies are constantly attempting to tap into this market with unique and eye-catching marketing strategies. Gen Z is at the forefront of e-commerce shopping, with specific factors influencing their decision-making process. According to Thangavel et al. (2022), Gen Z tends to consider three primary factors when making purchasing decisions: the lowest price or best deal available, the display of merchandise, and user reviews. Gen Z values the opinions of other consumers and will seek out reviews on trusted websites or key opinion leaders and experts on social media when deciding to purchase a product. With this in mind, Bandolier must effectively communicate their value proposition to appeal to the Gen Z audience.

Cho et al. (2022) suggests Gen Z has become an important segment in the luxury fashion industry due to their desire for uniqueness and social recognition through high-quality brand names. However, Thangavel et al. (2022) argues that the Gen Z demographic tends to prioritize affordability and convenience over brand names, valuing quality above all. The younger generation does value uniqueness and individual expression, expressing themselves through fashion and personal aesthetics. This does make it challenging to increase brand awareness among Gen Z due to the sheer number of brand choices and online advertising they are exposed to. Another factor to note is that Gen Z cares about authenticity and is highly socially conscious (Gomez, 2023). This means that companies are not just selling a product; they are also selling and showcasing their values. Overall, Bandolier needs to strategically justify the price of its products by focusing on the quality and trendiness of its accessories in order to gain awareness among Gen Z. Furthermore, by successfully expressing their online value proposition and solidifying their positioning, the brand has a chance of capturing the attention of the younger generation.

Brand Position

Brand positioning creates an image, whether positive or negative, that will linger in the consumer's mind. Positioning also assists consumers in their decision of why they should pick a specific brand over other similar brands by establishing brand identity and communicating a value proposition (Amazon ads, n.d.). It establishes the brand's values and qualities that will be portrayed to its existing and potential customers.

Positioning should differentiate Bandolier from other competing brands in the market (Janiszewska & Insch, 2012). In order to solidify the differentiation, significance and credibility of the brand and its products need to be conveyed (Janiszewska & Insch, 2012). This will

showcase the ability of the brand to meet the needs and preferences of its target audience (Fayvishenko, 2018). The credibility of the brand can be amplified through providing consistent quality products, favorable customer reviews, and exceptional customer service (Drucker, 2018). This will result in positive significance also referred to as brand status.

To help in achieving these goals, a brand should create a well crafted positioning statement. This positioning statement should address who the target audience is, the value offered by the brand's products, and what makes the brand different from competitors (Hart, 2023). Bandolier develops new and innovative products such as handbags, tech accessories, and more. In doing so, the brand helps consumers identify a solution to a need they did not know they had. Bandolier is on the right track toward implementing strong brand positioning. They know who their existing audience is and the products they provide are distinct from any other company in the market at this time, creating superior value.

Taking a look at another online-based company, Amazon, provides an example of a well known brand that has effective brand positioning. Their position statement is as follows. "For consumers who want to purchase a wide range of products online with quick delivery, Amazon is a one-stop online shopping site. Amazon sets itself apart from other online retailers with its customer obsession, passion for innovation, and commitment to operational excellence." (Hart, 2023). Amazon is able to connect with its target audience by acknowledging and addressing their need for convenience while juggling busy schedules (Hart, 2023). In its positioning statement the brand stresses its commitment to customer satisfaction and operating at its best capability (Hart, 2023). From reading this, consumers now understand Amazon's brand values and how they treat and care for their customers (Hart, 2023). It is a clear and straightforward statement that sets the brand apart from competitors in the industry.

Bandolier has already established a solid mission statement and has a vision for its brand. While the company possesses the components to have strong brand positioning, they need to solidify these attributes in a positioning statement. This will allow the company to abide by the statement and ensure that customer needs are being met, while the brand's signifying values are front and center. In order to have successful positioning, a brand must implement successful market segmentation. Bandoliers' existing and potential audience need to be a priority when crafting their positioning statement, as well as their marketing objectives and strategies. Understanding the audience, which includes their characteristics and preferences is key. Once Bandolier has identified this information, it will then understand how to accommodate and fulfill their customers' wants and needs. Realizing what areas are being met and where the brand is falling short will help with any re-positioning that may need to be addressed.

Audience Analysis

Bandolier's primary objective is to offer potential consumers a product that provides a solution to a problem they may not have been privy to. Their new and innovative products—such as handbags and tech accessories—were created to provide their audience ease and practicality. Bandolier has been successful in reaching individuals of all ages—specifically those in their mid to late 30's, 40's, and 50's (67%). Their reach is impressive, as their target audience transcends different age brackets; however, they lack in popularity with Gen Z. Bandolier wants to market their products towards the younger demographic considering only 22% of their customers are Gen Z. Furthermore, the brand wants to reach this demographic before they approach their mid to late 20's as a means for customers to establish a foundation and a sense of brand loyalty with Bandolier. While Bandolier's marketing efforts towards Gen Z are not as effective, their current marketing tactics are evidently successful amongst those between the ages of 30-50.

Marketing Tactics

Bandolier is varied in the methods they utilize to market towards potential consumers. They employ search engine optimization (SEO), paid advertisements and social media marketing alongside user generated content (UGC) and A/B pilot testing on platforms such as Snapchat and Meta. Furthermore, Bandolier reaches their consumers with email marketing and throughout their website where they offer deals to existing and potential customers. Bandolier is also no stranger to influencer marketing or implementing celebrity endorsements into their marketing approaches. Just like other brands, Bandolier is clever in adopting multiple marketing strategies as it helps them effectively reach other audiences, which in turns catalyzes a larger profit gain (“The Benefits of Using Various Marketing Strategies”, 2023).

Of all their marketing efforts, Bandolier has the strongest presence on social media. Their existence on social media can be found on Instagram, TikTok, Snapchat, etc. Bandolier's Instagram profile specifically is well curated. It not only showcases the different products the brand has to offer, but it also illustrates how their phone cases can be best used by their target audience—individuals in their thirties and up. Furthermore, their Instagram exhibits that their product is best suited for people who consistently have their hands full—specifically mothers. Their Instagram feed consists of mothers posing with their Bandolier phone cases and their children, which coincides with the fact that Bandolier's primary audience consists of middle aged consumers. In addition to the mommy and phone case posts, Bandolier also utilizes their Instagram to merely promote their products. These posts range from official campaign or brand collaboration images to user generated content from their loyal consumers and social media influencers. User generated content is crucial for a brand because it establishes a sense of

community and brand loyalty (Beveridge, 2022). Furthermore, potential Bandolier consumers are able to see how and who the phone cases are used by perusing through their Instagram page.

Bandolier is also successful in optimizing the tools that Instagram offers such as stories and highlights. On their stories, they repost stories of influencers and their consumers posing with their phone cases. Their stories also inform their 151,000 followers about new sales and upcoming product launches. Moreover, they use their highlights to inform their followers about their collections. Bandolier also uses the highlights as a form of engagement with their followers. They have highlights titled “Beats” that promote the Bandolier playlist on Spotify curated by Dj Lindsay Luv. The playlist is meant to encourage consumers to use their phone case when they embark on a “Hot Girl Walk.” Another highlight was titled “Zodiac Picks”, where different Bandolier phone cases are assigned to each zodiac sign. This allows for followers to identify with the case that is paired with their zodiac sign and may even incentivize a purchase. The highlights are strategic and effective because they incorporate points of relatability—like music and astrology—into the marketing of their phone cases. With tactics like these, customers are able to find a common ground with the brand which further encourages their purchasing behaviors.

Bandolier's TikTok profile is much simpler and uniform compared to their complex yet effective Instagram page. The TikTok videos on their profile primarily showcase the different ways that their products can be worn. While their profile is abundant in styling tips and hauls, the short form videos mainly focus on the product and lacks in qualities that invigorates consumers or viewers to engage with their content. Furthermore, Bandolier's TikTok profile appears to be neglected. The account releases videos sporadically as the two most recent posts were from April of 2023 and the posts prior were from 2022. Evidently, TikTok is not Bandolier's most used platform. Given TikTok is the second most used social media platform by Gen Z (Busick, 2023)

Bandolier should reconsider their approach on how they utilize their TikTok platform. A transition from an irregular posting schedule to one that is consistent is necessary to capture Gen Z's attention, especially because Gen Z values instantaneous media and lacks prolonged attention spans (Lebow, 2022). Furthermore, their TikTok page needs to stray from only posting style related videos. Instead, their content should reflect their target demographic—Gen Z—interests and trends while simultaneously marketing their phone cases.

Considering Facebook is a dying social media platform for Gen Z (“Does Gen Z Use Facebook?”, 2023), Bandolier's dated presence on the site makes sense. Instead of creating points of engagement on their Facebook profile, Bandolier treats the site the same as their promotional emails. Every post promotes a new product or a relaunch of a fan favorite phone case. While product promotion is continuously necessary, it should not be the only activity seen from a brand—especially when millennials continue to use Facebook (“Does Gen Z Use Facebook?”, 2023). Customers comment on the Facebook posts with suggestions, feedback, and excitement about new products; however, Bandolier does not engage or respond. Engagement is crucial for brands because it is a key way to establish relationships with customers, which in turn results in stronger brand loyalty (“What is brand engagement, and why is it important?”, n.d.).

Contrarily, the promotional emails Bandolier sends to subscribers are warranted. Email marketing is a direct form of marketing that is meant to promote a brand's product while also generating awareness (“Email Marketing”). Email marketing does not require engagement with consumers, as its sole purpose is to directly advertise a product (“Email Marketing”). Bandolier is consistent with their emails, as they send the different promotional deals and new campaign launches to their subscribers every three days. They also notify customers about product restocks

and relaunches to ensure they do not miss the chance to repurchase their favorite product in a new color or phone size.

Bandolier's website immediately communicates their brand message to potential consumers. The home page presents an image of a model wearing a Bandolier phone case with the slogan "Made to fit your phone, designed to fit your life." Bandolier directly emphasizes the brand's purpose, which is to provide practical solutions to their consumers. In other words, the Bandolier phone cases are meant to provide the consumer ease in situations or daily occurrences that are individual to them. Alongside their straightforward home page, Bandolier immediately initiates a call to action by offering 10% off consumers' first order if they sign up to receive emails from the brand. The email sign up benefits both parties. Customers receive 10% off their order, while Bandolier has access to customers' emails which will help generate sales for future purchases as customers are now consistently exposed to the brand and the products they offer. Furthermore, the website draws attention to the rewards club that is available for loyal customers. Once they join the club, they garner points and rewards when they make a purchase. The rewards club program is similar to the email sign up in that both parties are at an advantage. Customers receive perks with their purchase while Bandolier establishes brand loyalty with their consumers.

Proposed Digital / Online Marketing Strategies

Traditional marketing methods are still relevant in today's world, but many consumers spend a lot of time relying on the Internet for information. By 2026, the "global digital advertising and marketing market is estimated to reach \$786.2 billion which indicates why digital marketing is so important for businesses of all sizes" (FutureLearn, 2023). Digital marketing includes using online sources to promote Bandolier, while allowing room for

creativity and stand out from competitors in the same market. The concept of digital marketing is essential for all businesses. A successful digital marketing strategy will propel Bandolier's company and support wider ambitions and objectives through various channels.

A Mobile App Experience

Customers are often on their phones, and in today's age of technology, people could be shopping, gaming, working, or even checking the news (Bahr, 2023). Regarding marketing tactics, creating a mobile app allows customers to stay up-to-date with technology and also stay relevant. A mobile app would build the strength of Bandolier's relationships with customers. For example, if a consumer values saving time, they could purchase phone cases on the app by tapping on the product they want, adding them to the cart, and then proceeding to checkout.

A mobile app will allow the company, Bandolier, to gain more exposure and for future customers to be informed about the services and items offered. Mobile apps call for a more emotional connection with customers, and easier accessibility. Additionally, services on the mobile app can be catered specifically to the customer. A strong example of successfully personalizing a relationship with customers would be to create a quiz for customers to express themselves and figure out what they like or do not like about Bandolier. Therefore, the customer's feed can be personalized to the content they would like to see along with them having notifications they value. More people will continue to use the app if certain changes are made to the algorithm of customers and this provides important information about the way customers act, which leads to a strong marketing strategy and being more familiar with customers, and their characteristics.

A weakness of Bandolier's marketing strategy is not making cases for other phones besides iPhones, once cases are created for other brands, the mobile app should be available to

customers with Android devices. Overall, a mobile app allows Bandolier to have a stronger business known for caring about the feedback of customers, along with keeping them happy. Overall, a mobile app will help with reaching a younger audience, as they are known for playing on their phones, and discovering new information as well. Younger audiences create content on social media that often goes viral, and their interests are pushed to the forefront. For example, “Gen Z is inextricably tied to the digital world, and the way they identify with it is rooted in their deep connection and familiarity with the Internet, and this generation spends more time connected to the web than any other generation and they are the most dependent on it” (Selig, 2022, p.1). Also, Gen Z is known for creating their own brands through digital creativity, therefore, influencers are constantly looking to promote new brands and share their experiences.

Trying on Products with Augmented Reality

Technological advancements have altered the shopping habits of consumers, with one being the adoption of augmented reality (AR). AR is an enhanced and interactive version of the real world “achieved through the use of digital visual elements, sound, or other sensory stimuli and delivered via technology” (Hayes, 2023). We propose Bandolier take advantage of this trend by incorporating AR technology into its marketing efforts. By adding this feature to the mobile app mentioned earlier, customers will be able to try on different phone cases or accessories virtually before making a purchase. We created a mockup that shows how consumers would use the AR function to try on Bandolier's products (See Appendix D).

AR encourages shoppers to explore and try different products, providing a more engaging and user-friendly experience that can potentially lead to increased sales and customer satisfaction (Chandukala et al., 2022). Utilizing AR technology as a marketing strategy will set Bandolier apart from its competitors and appeal to the tech-savvy Gen Z demographic.

Phone Case Design Contest

This next proposed marketing tactic will give consumers a voice and an opportunity to engage with the brand on a more personal level. It will consist of a social media driven contest that will allow Bandoliers' followers to design their own ideal trendy phone case. Followers will come into contact with the rules of the contest through Bandoliers' owned social media channels, including Instagram and TikTok, where many Gen Z consumers reside (See Appendix B). In order to be entered into the contest, consumers will have to engage with the post itself by liking and commenting under it, following Bandoliers' socials, and posting their design on their personal platforms with an associated hashtag. The full disclosure of contest details will exist on its own landing page connected to the brands' personal website. The winner of the contest and their design will be featured on Bandoliers' website coinciding with the release of the brands next collection. The new design will be available for purchase for a limited time creating a sense of exclusivity and emphasizing the idea of product scarcity. Consumers are more likely to purchase an item if they are informed that it is a limited time offer that they might miss out on (Schenker, 2022). This acts as a purchase motivator that brands implement through various marketing tactics in order to increase sales (Schenker, 2022).

A social media contest is an ideal tactic to utilize in order to promote consumer engagement, incentivize people to follow a brand's socials, and increase brand awareness. This contest will create buzz and interest surrounding Bandolier and its upcoming collection drop. When participants engage in contests and content is shared through their own personal channels, it can create a ripple effect of brand exposure for the company (Global Owls, n.d.). This may attract new followers that were not previously aware of the brand. The goal will be to engage Bandoliers' audience and increase interest among the younger generation. Gen Z tends

to be driven by competition (Sladek, 2022). Therefore, brands that employ contests that include prizes or a sole winner have a higher chance of engaging Gen Z consumers. This younger audience also wants to feel understood by brands they support and follow. This includes brands that stand out from competitors and embrace uniqueness. By creating a unique experience that allows consumers to creatively express themselves increases chances of brand loyalty and interest.

Connecting with News Articles

A news article would be essential for Bandolier to include in its marketing strategy. Blogging and online news articles increase website traffic, along with building a strong relationship with customers by establishing trust. Digital media exposure for Bandolier calls for introduction to new potential customers, building relationships with existing customers, along with sharing any information or tips related to Bandolier. The blog aims to attract more customers through informative content. It also sells products to customers who find them worthwhile to purchase. Also, customers who visit the website have the potential to purchase one of the phone bags, therefore a product will be sold. Browsing the blog helps customers seek information and finalize their purchases (See Appendix E). News websites contribute to increasing website traffic by keeping customers engaged for a longer period of time and search engine ranking (Hetler, 2022).

The Magic of Short-Form Videos

Bandolier aims to create shareable content that resonates with that younger audience. Instagram reels and TikTok reels create an intimate experience for customers. To this end, We created a captivating 20-second video that can serve as either a reel on Bandolier's Instagram or an engaging TikTok video (See Appendix C). By seamlessly blending aesthetic visuals with

creative copy, the advertisement effectively conveys Bandolier as the solution to the problem of holding one's phone in a way that lacks style or convenience. The video concludes with a compelling call to action, encouraging viewers to download the innovative new Bandolier app we have developed.

Instagram Reels "is a feature similar to other social media options that allow users to create short videos to appeal to their target audience. They also allow you to edit and put together video clips to create entertaining content using uploaded filters, text, audio, and editing tools" (DiSilvestro, 2022, p.1). Millennials and Gen Z use Instagram Reels, particularly as a way to engage with people from around the world through content trends that promote collaboration. By recommending trending reels, Instagram boosts engagement and helps Bandolier's platform to grow followers organically.

Ways to Measure ROI

Bandolier currently tracks return on investment (ROI) through their integrated platforms (Klayvio, Shopify, etc), which provide data analytics that aid in measuring ROI. ROI is a critical metric to analyze partially due to the importance given to it by top executives (Hemann & Burbary, 2018). Execs and stakeholders want to see results. They want to know that the money they are investing in digital marketing efforts are paying off and helping the company and its business objectives.

ROI is the "gain from spending minus the cost of the investment divided by the cost" (Hemann & Burbary, 2018). When calculating ROI, marketers discover the percentage gained or lost. Sometimes ROI is hard to calculate. Therefore, marketers have come up with other variations of the metric to compensate. These variations include return on engagement, return on influence, and return on experience (Hemann & Burbary, 2018). Bandolier can use a

combination of top-down and bottom-up measurements as ways to calculate ROI for their marketing tactics.

By utilizing top-down measurements, the brand would be able to track the consumer journey between a social media activity and a sale (Hemann & Burbary, 2018). Bandolier can use correlation analysis to do so. They would be able to use correlation metrics to see if an Instagram like generated a product sale. This could be used on the social media engagement with the design contest post or the TikTok reel that promotes the Bandolier app. A/B multivariate testing also falls under top-down measurements. Bandolier already utilizes this strategy to understand the effectiveness between two different versions of content posted. A/B testing can be used even further through posting slightly different reels across various platforms to see which post performs the best and has the most engagement.

Additionally, bottom-up measurements offer a little more detail and can be employed as supplementary methods to ensure that the marketing tactics are benefiting the brand and positively connecting with consumers. Bandolier can employ tagging, which is the use of a series of codes or cookies to track a consumers' journey. This method will allow the brand to see if the social media content they are posting is leading the consumers to their website and/or app, which increases the chance of a sale.

Bandolier currently uses direct commerce, which falls under bottom-up measurements. Direct commerce or direct selling is the use of an online store-front that exists on a social media platform. Users are able to buy products directly through this social channel and each sale is tracked and relayed to the business accordingly.

Although ROI metrics are important to consider, Hemann & Burbary (2018) believe that ROI should not dominate the analytical process. There should be a blended approach to satisfy

all areas and ensure the optimization of campaigns. This blended approach includes measuring effectiveness, efficiency, and impact. Marketers should understand the impact a certain channel has against a KPI, the cost to reach and engage with a target audience, and the campaigns' contribution to the business (Hemann & Burbary, 2018). Taking a blended approach will allow Bandolier to cater to its audience, while also satisfying its top execs and shareholders.

The Bottom Line

It is clear that the marketing industry experiences evolving changes, whether due to technological advancements or shifts in consumer preferences. As Gen Z takes the lead in online shopping, it is crucial for Bandolier to develop strategic marketing approaches in order to maintain relevancy. The shifting trends happening in the online world present Bandolier with various opportunities to engage with younger generations in innovative ways. This paper proposes five unique marketing strategies to help Bandolier appeal to the Gen Z demographic and establish itself as a leading brand in the luxury phone case and accessories market by offering a personalized experience.

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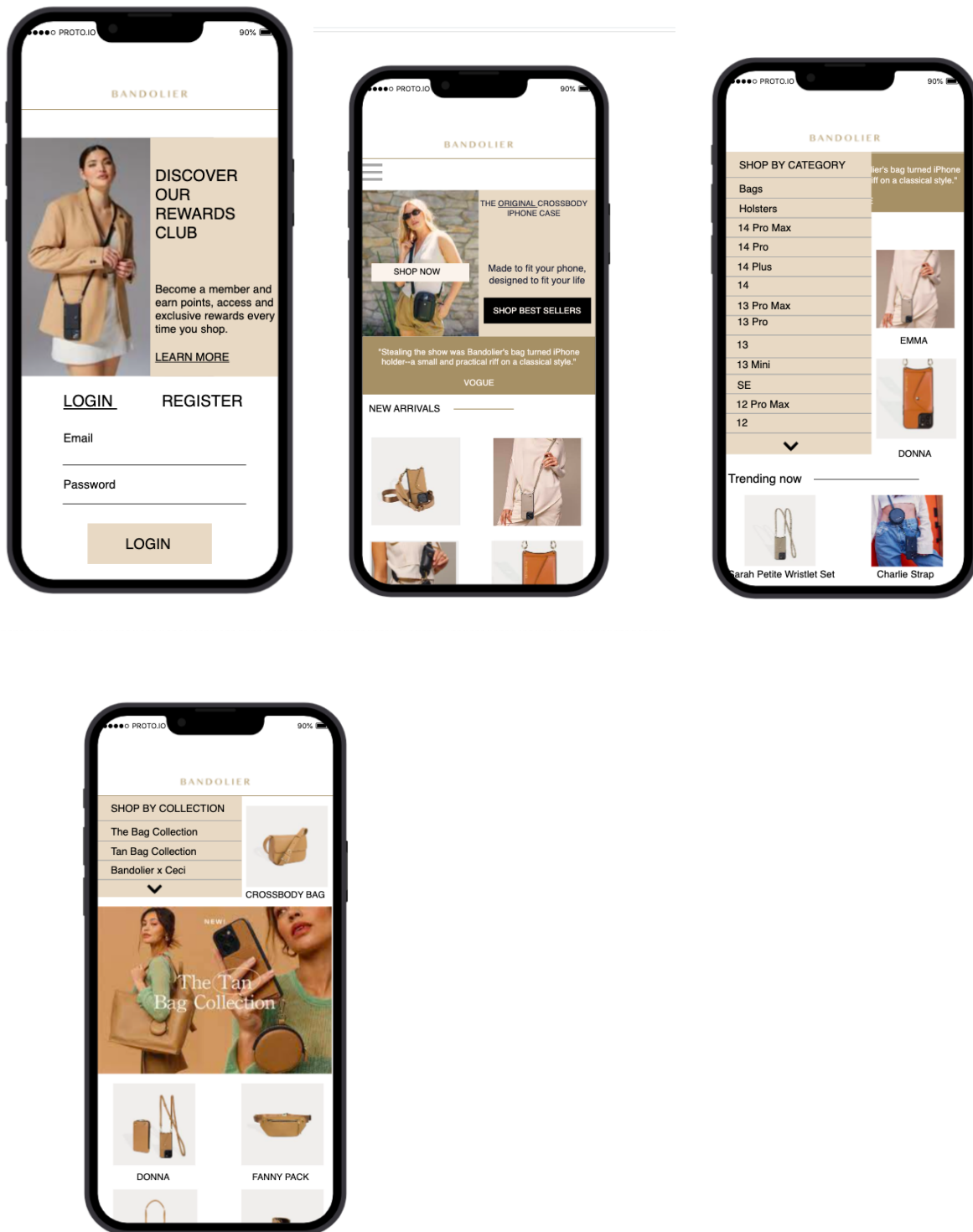
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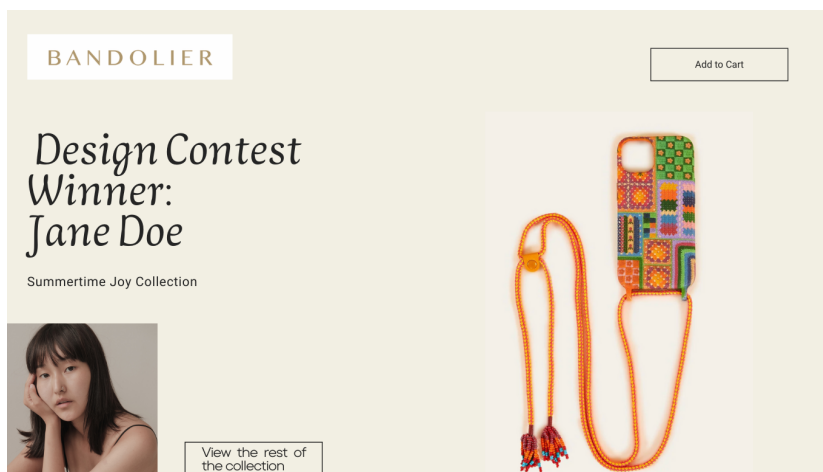
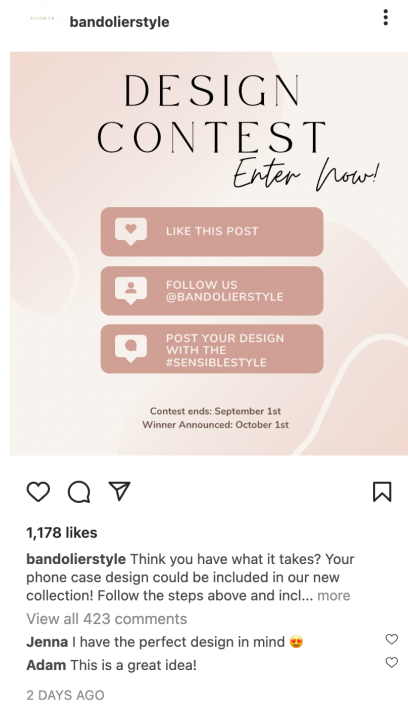
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Appendix A



Appendix B



Appendix C

Instagram Reel or TikTok Post

<https://share.icloud.com/photos/00cFsMyUKxVkOHX7jSGLO3I9w>

Appendix D



Appendix E

