

**Fashion and Sustainability:**  
**Analyzing Fashion Companies' Digital Communication on Sustainability:**  
**A Comparative Study of Veja and Nike**

By

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## Abstract

The emergence of sustainability as a societal concern has reshaped the basis of most industries, challenging established business models and norms. As the fashion industry is one of the most environmentally damaging, and socially and economically impactful industries, most companies had to adapt to the evolution of consumer behavior toward sustainability. Potential buyers look for alternatives, searching for fashion brands' sustainable initiatives. In this context, corporate communication about sustainability has become crucial in shaping brand image, with digital channels becoming predominant. This master's research paper sets out to analyze how fashion companies communicate about sustainability to potential consumers, by comparing communication made by a company created around sustainability, Veja, with communication made by Nike, a company that had to adapt to this issue. A qualitative method is used to investigate communication made on each company's e-commerce, website, and Instagram page. The results showed that both companies handled communication about sustainability in similar ways but with different levels of transparency.

**Keywords:** sustainability, fashion industry, digital communication, consumer

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**Table des matières**

- Introduction..... 5**
- Chapter 1: Navigating Sustainability in the Fashion Industry, From Business Models to Corporate Communication ..... 7**
  - 1.1. The Fashion Industry and its Business Models ..... 7**
    - 1.1.1. Industrialization & Consumerism.....7
    - 1.1.2. The Evolution of Business Models..... 8
  - 1.2. Business Models within the Fashion Industry: Fast Fashion and Slow Fashion..... 9**
    - 1.2.1. Fast Fashion, a Well-implemented Business Model .....9
    - 1.2.2. The Rise of Slow Fashion..... 10
  - 1.3. Sustainability as a Guideline ..... 11**
    - 1.3.1. The Fashion Industry’s Environmental Impact..... 11
    - 1.3.2. The Fashion Industry’s Social Impact ..... 12
  - 1.4. Communication and Business..... 13**
    - 1.4.1. Corporate Communication and Marketing Strategies ..... 13
    - 1.4.2. Communicating Sustainability..... 13
    - 1.4.3. Digital Communication ..... 14
- Chapter 2: Sustainability and its Impact on the Fashion Industry, a Literature Review .... 15**
  - 2.1. Sustainability within the Fashion World ..... 16**
  - 2.2. The evolution of corporate communication ..... 20**
  - 2.3. The crucial role of consumers in business..... 24**
  - 2.4. Conclusion ..... 26**
- Chapter 3: Methodology and General Presentation of the Selected Brands..... 28**
  - 3.1. Method..... 29**
  - 3.2. Data..... 31**
  - 3.3. Limitations ..... 38**
  - 3.4. General Presentation of the Selected Brands..... 39**
    - 3.4.1. Veja ..... 39
    - 3.4.2. Nike..... 39
- Chapter 4: Sustainable Communication on Veja’s Website and Instagram ..... 40**
  - 4.1. Veja’s Dedicated Tab to Sustainability ..... 40**
    - 4.1.1. Who are we? .....41
    - 4.1.2. Transparency.....43
    - 4.1.3. Better Materials .....45
    - 4.1.4. Social Inclusion ..... 47
  - 4.2. Veja’s e-commerce ..... 49**
  - 4.3. Veja’s Instragram ..... 50**
- Chapter 5: Sustainable Communication on Nike’s Website and Instagram ..... 52**
  - 5.1 Nike’s Dedicated Tab to Sustainability ..... 52**

.....	53
5.1.1. Materials .....	53
5.1.2. Sustainability Home.....	55
5.1.3. Circular Solutions .....	57
<b>5.2. Nike’s e-commerce.....</b>	<b>59</b>
<b>5.3. Nike’s Instagram.....</b>	<b>61</b>
<b><i>Chapter 6: Results and Discussion.....</i></b>	<b><i>61</i></b>
<b><i>Conclusion.....</i></b>	<b><i>64</i></b>
<b><i>Bibliography.....</i></b>	<b><i>67</i></b>

## Introduction

Since year 1, the fashion industry has gone through significant transformations, as consumerism and industrialization have reshaped the way industries work. This dynamic has led to the rise of fast-fashion business models, based on trends, disposable clothes, and consumption. This business model however leads to several issues as the fashion industry is now one of the most polluting industries. As sustainability has become a growing concern in society, awareness about the environmental, economic, and social impacts of fashion has been emphasized. The issue has become so significant that some movements were created to challenge fast fashion and consumerism, such as slow fashion. Considering the impact of sustainability on the industry and its significance in consumer behavior, corporate communication has become crucial to reporting sustainable efforts. Communication has therefore become key in shaping and sharing the brand image and crafting a brand's reputation when it comes to sustainability. Even if communication channels are numerous, digital communication channels have become predominant as the Internet is now a central communication channel.

This master's research paper (MRP) sets out to investigate fashion companies' communication about sustainability to potential consumers through a comparative study of two brands: Nike and Veja. In order to understand communication made about sustainability, this MRP aims to answer several research questions:

- How is sustainability mentioned on their website and e-commerce? Which aspect(s) of it? Are there any recurrent patterns found in their digital communication?
- How is their communication about sustainability dealt with on their corporate website and their Instagram?
- How do the two companies deal with sustainability and what are the similarities and differences in communication?

The two companies selected were chosen because they seem opposed in terms of sustainability practices. Veja was created to respond to sustainability concerns, whereas Nike is a multinational corporation that adapted to the concern as it grew over the years. The comparative study was conducted by going through the website section dedicated to sustainability, the e-commerce, and the Instagram page of both companies. A qualitative approach was primarily used to investigate the three platforms, through a textual and thematic analysis, and a thematic coding of the collected data.

Chapter 1 delves into the fashion industry's historical shift from industrialization to modern consumerism and explores the emergence of fast fashion and slow fashion movements as sustainability became a guideline in most industries. This chapter also highlights the significant role of communication and its evolution through the rise of the internet and digital communication. Building on the notions presented in Chapter 1, Chapter 2 reviews the existing literature about the main notions of this MRP: the fashion industry, sustainability, digital communication, and the role of consumers. This chapter aims to identify the research gap within the intersection of sustainability, digital communication, and consumer perspectives within the scope of the fashion industry.

Chapter 3 introduces the comparative study, as it discusses the method employed, details the data collected and highlights the limitations of the research. This chapter also provides a general presentation of the two companies investigated. Chapters 4 and 5 are dedicated to the investigation of Nike and Veja through their three platforms, as they describe the results found in terms of sustainable communication. The results of this investigation are further discussed in Chapter 6.

Finally, a conclusion summarizes the MRP findings, highlighting the main differences between Veja's and Nike's communication strategies across their respective websites, e-commerce

platforms, and Instagram accounts. Although Veja demonstrated a stronger commitment to sustainability, both brands recognized the growing demand for sustainable fashion and integrated sustainability into their digital communication. This chapter ends by suggesting openings for future research, such as exploring the influence of such communication on consumer behavior.

## Chapter 1: Navigating Sustainability in the Fashion Industry, From Business

### Models to Corporate Communication

In order to study the fashion industry and fully understand the dynamic of sustainability within this specific industry, it is crucial to first explore its evolution from traditional business models to contemporary corporate communication strategies. This chapter intends to delve into the shift from industrialization to modern consumerism, leading to the significant role of consumer behavior. By studying the evolution and history of the industry, this chapter intends to explain the emergence of fast fashion business models and slow fashion movements. Furthermore, the chapter explores the broad concept of sustainability, and its incorporation into corporate communication, especially digital communication, and marketing strategies.

#### 1.1. The Fashion Industry and its Business Models

##### 1.1.1. Industrialization & Consumerism

The various industrial revolutions influenced the fashion industry and put it through several changes. The industry's basic structure constantly reshaped itself, as it was confronted with the evolution of demand, societies, and new technologies (Bhardwaj and Fairhurst 2010; Jin and Shin, 2021). In the late 1800s, following the different waves of industrialization, the fashion world embraced mass production. Seeking to boost productivity, the industry adopted methods to manufacture goods in large quantities (Jin and Shin, 2021). This structure of the industry

created a guideline for companies: they would rely on low-cost mass production of standardized styles, making the industry product-driven (Bhardwaj and Fairhurst, 2010). The state of the industry however changed toward the late 1980s, when high market competition led retailers to switch from product-driven to buyer-driven chains (Bhardwaj and Fairhurst, 2010). This last evolution is particularly crucial because it shifted the focus from large production of the same products distributed over a long period to smaller batches with reduced time on the market, which created a need to ‘refresh’, and a sense of “fashion trends” among customers (Bhardwaj and Fairhurst, 2010). By the mid-twentieth century, optimization and automation became the focus, also enhancing the need to improve pre-existing business models.

### 1.1.2. The Evolution of Business Models

Understanding the evolution of business models is especially crucial since those conceptual frameworks serve as the foundation for an organization’s strategies and operations. Business models structure how an organization generates and creates customer values. Customer values refer to the methods and processes employed to create products or services that fulfill customer needs or desires. These values ultimately determine the perceived worth or utility of these offerings to the customer (Fielt, 2013, p.85).

Beyond the shift to buyer-driven chains and buyers’ role in business models, consumers are central to industrialization since the industry has an intertwined relationship with consumerism. Consumerism refers to the socio-economic and ideological phenomenon that empowers consumers within the marketplace and that seeks to emphasize their rights, and interests (Kucuk, 2016). In fact, because of the importance given to consumers, industrialization and consumerism both depend on each other (Gerth, 2022). As stated by Gerth (2022), within the new dynamic of modern consumerism, “industrial capitalism needed people (reconceptualized as “consumers”) to want newer and more products” (p.70). Consumers responded positively to

this shift and innovations, following new fashion trends within the industry, and started to seek new goods (Campbell, 2021). It is within this context of innovation and rapid market, and because of the principle of productivity on which the industry is strongly based, that a new business model emerged and predominated: fast fashion.

## 1.2. Business Models within the Fashion Industry: Fast Fashion and Slow Fashion

### 1.2.1. Fast Fashion, a Well-implemented Business Model

As previously stated, the emergence of the “fast fashion” business model was a direct response to a call for innovation and a quick market. Understanding business models is therefore crucial to better understand the fashion industry’s evolution. Following the principles of “disposable clothes” (Jin and Shin, 2021, p.4) and “replacement consumption” (Campbell, 2021, p.19), fast fashion is a business model generally based on three concepts: quick response, frequent renewal, and affordable prices (Caro and Martínez-de-Albéniz, 2015).

Since the definition of “fast fashion” is quite broad, it is important to highlight that companies don’t necessarily operate this business model the same way. Zara and H&M, for instance, are two companies usually categorized as typical examples of fast fashion. They however share similar practices but don’t exactly work the same way (Caro and Martínez-de-Albéniz, 2015). In terms of similarities, the two companies both follow the same quick-response production techniques, which corresponds to one basis of fast fashion. They both sell a reduced quantity of products as they frequently renew their goods, which encourages consumers to frequently visit their stores (Caro and Martínez-de-Albéniz, 2015; Bhardwaj and Fairhurst, 2010). They do not however follow the same pricing strategies, differentiating their practice of a shared business model. In order to offer affordable prices, H&M uses in-season promotions and markdowns to sell their products, whereas Zara does not. That said, they both rely on clearance sales at the end of seasons (Caro and Martínez-de-Albéniz, 2015, p.254). Consequently, even

if the fast fashion model is a broad business model that can vary in terms of practices, companies that adopted it still follow its general features, mentioned above.

### 1.2.2. The Rise of Slow Fashion

Although fast fashion business models have been well-established since industrialization, in recent years, society-wide concerns have led to the emergence of new business models, that challenged these leading models (Campbell, 2021). Even though fast fashion created and implemented the idea of disposable fashion, recent awareness about the industry's environmental impact has changed consumers' perceptions of the industry and its functioning (Jin and Shin, 2021).

These new business models born from these new societal concerns are named in several ways, with authors referring to them as “green” movements. For instance, Campbell (2021) refers to consumers' interest in recycling products as “green consumerism” (p.19), and the term “green market” has been used by Bhardwaj and Fairhurst (2010) to talk about companies that include environmental concerns in their business models (p.171). This MRP will gather these movements under the term “slow fashion” movements, drawing on the work of Fletcher. This term was invented by the author to define a movement in fashion that advocates for sustainable approaches within the fashion industry to improve its environmental and ethical impact (Fletcher, 2010). These sustainable approaches can be buying less, making clothes last longer, or promoting ethical brands. They are based on timeless, high-quality clothing. Slow fashion movements are rooted in the principles of sustainability, which encompasses three main aspects: economic, social, and environmental considerations.

### 1.3. Sustainability as a Guideline

Sustainability is a broad term that refers to the responsibility to use resources efficiently in order to meet our needs, without compromising future generations (Purvis et al, 2019). Even though it is very difficult to track down the origin of sustainability, it is possible to identify some crucial events that have played major roles in defining sustainability as it is perceived today. The 1987 Brundtland Report published by the World Commission on Environment and Development was one of these milestones. The report was one of the major advances in terms of sustainability research, creating the roots of sustainability as it is known today. It defined the term “sustainability development”, emphasizing the interconnectedness of the economy, social well-being, and environmental protection (Purvis et al, 2019, p.684). Given that sustainability is a growing concern present in several sectors of society, its definition is broad. It is therefore essential to clarify that this paper will only study some aspects of environmental and social sustainability, but also omit the economic dimension of sustainability.

#### 1.3.1. The Fashion Industry’s Environmental Impact

The environmental aspect of sustainability refers to ensuring human welfare, by protecting raw material resources necessary to human survival, and by preventing the overproduction of human waste, to protect future generations (Goodland, 1995). In practice, when it comes to the environment, the fashion industry is one of the most polluting industries. The production process of clothes strongly impacts the environment in terms of energy waste, water consumption, water pollution, gas emissions, etc. (Nayak et al, 2020). Since the environmental impact of fashion production is so significant, it is considered the aspect of sustainability on which fashion brands mostly focus. They adopt sustainable practices to try to reduce the impacts of fashion (Nayak et al, 2020, p.7).

Environmental practices can be the use of “eco-friendly” materials or products (not harmful to the environment) or green supply chain management, which involves including sustainable environmental practices in supply management, distribution, and retailing. Crucially, minimizing waste and pollution are sustainable practices usually considered part of slow fashion, but slow fashion goes further than production impacts. It seeks to educate consumers about sustainable production and distribution, but also to make them consider sustainable uses of their goods (Nayak et al, 2020).

### 1.3.2. The Fashion Industry’s Social Impact

To address the various impacts of the fashion industry, the 1987 Brundtland Report (World Commission on Environment and Development, 1987) defined “social responsibility” as one of the three pillars of sustainability. This social pillar is usually based on four principal concepts: equity, sustainability awareness, participation in decision-making, and social cohesion (Murphy, 2012). As social responsibility encompasses quite broad concepts, this MRP will exclusively focus on equity and sustainability awareness.

Equity in this context refers to the equality of everyone when it comes to welfare goods and opportunities, at an international, national, or intergeneration level. It includes equal access to necessities like clean water, education, and employment, as well as protection from discrimination based on gender, religion, or race (Murphy, 2012). Within the fashion world, it is often linked to the working conditions of the production and manufacturing workforce. Equity tries for instance to stop child labor or ensure good work conditions, which can go from providing proper protection gear to protecting employees from discrimination (Williams, 2022).

In addition, the principle of social responsibility can also be linked to “sustainability awareness”, which refers to raising public awareness about sustainability issues to encourage sustainable

consumption (Murphy, 2012). As explained by Murphy (2012), raising awareness is typically made through “‘green’ advertising campaigns, ecolabelling, awareness-raising events, environmental education programs, and education for sustainable development (ESD) programs” (p.15).

## 1.4. Communication and Business

### 1.4.1. Corporate Communication and Marketing Strategies

Corporate communication refers to any communication made by a company to external or internal stakeholders. It encompasses disciplines such as public relations, media relations, investor relations, employee communication, crisis communication, branding, marketing communication, etc. (Goodman, 2000). Corporate communication is crucial since its primary goal is to build and maintain a positive reputation for the organization, to sustain strong relationships with stakeholders, and to ensure alignment between organizational objectives and messaging. (Goodman, 2000). One crucial component of corporate communication in the context of this MRP is brand image management since sustainability holds a strong influence on a company’s reputation (Siano et al., 2016). Brand image refers to stakeholders’ perception of a brand and their associations with the brand. A brand image is strongly shaped by how consumers relate to the brand or the emotions evoked by the brand (Kim and Chun, 2017).

### 1.4.2. Communicating Sustainability

Another significant concept, strongly linked to the management of brand image and conveyed by corporate communication, is Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). CSR is often defined as the deliberate and voluntary effort undertaken by organizations to integrate social and environmental considerations into their business operations (Witkowska, 2016). Even though

CSR does not have a universal model that companies follow, common features have been identified. CSR should be voluntary, targeted towards stakeholders, and focused on the external effects of the company's production and services. It should also influence every business operation and decision. Finally, CSR must be fully integrated into the company's values (Witkowska, 2016).

Since communication is usually a way to inform consumers about a company's practices and identity, it is also strongly linked to marketing. Moreover, since it is used to communicate about sustainable practices, CSR can also be used as marketing communication. In fact, CSR marketing has been proven to positively impact a brand because green efforts benefit the brand's image and produce a positive response from consumers (Glozer and Morsing, 2020). As far as the fashion world is concerned, the tendency to market CSR practices arose from the urge to respond to consumers' buying attitudes and their concern for sustainable practices (Jiménez-Marín, 2022). A brand, however, needs to align its CSR communication with its actions and avoid any gaps between claims and actions (Glozer and Morsing, 2020).

### 1.4.3. Digital Communication

The constant search for innovations and the rise of the internet have completely reshaped marketing and communication strategies (Jin and Shin, 2021), creating new business models that include digital communication channels such as e-commerce and social media. The internet is such a significant communication channel that companies are now expected by their public to engage with them through their corporate website or social media (Mangold and Faulds, 2009; Da Giau et al., 2015). In fact, digital platforms are now not only used to sell goods online, but they also strongly impact and support a company's brand image. Considering the growing importance of sustainability, and especially of CSR communication, digital platforms as part of

corporate communication are also becoming crucial tools for reporting sustainable practices (Siano et al., 2016).

Focusing on web-based communication is also a strategic choice made by companies because this type of communication is quick, economical, customizable according to targeted stakeholders, and directly available to any consumer (Da Giau et al., 2015). Consequently, corporate websites have even started to replace traditional communication channels to convey the company's sustainability engagement (Siano et al., 2016). On these websites, the CSR information is usually found in sections dedicated to sustainability or corporate identity often called "about us".

## Chapter 2: Sustainability and its Impact on the Fashion Industry, a Literature Review

As the fashion world is historically strongly linked to consumerism and industrialization, and largely bases itself on profits, sustainability has often been considered incompatible with this industry, and with its practices and business models. Sustainability is however everywhere nowadays. It is a concern that has gained more importance over the years and its presence has become increasingly pronounced in different aspects of society. Consumers have started to demand changes, leading to fashion companies adapting to this concern, modifying their brand image, and reshaping their corporate communication to share their sustainable efforts with their consumers to stay relevant in the fashion industry.

This MRP intends to take a new look at what is being done, by focusing on digital communication about fashion, through the lens of consumers. This chapter therefore aims to review the existing literature about sustainability, digital communication, the role of the consumer, and the fashion industry. As consumer awareness about the social responsibility and the environmental impact of this industry keeps growing, it seems crucial to understand how

organizations communicate about sustainability, what information is made available to consumers, and identify the potential different corporate strategies behind it. This chapter seeks to explore the existing research gap when it comes to the intersection of sustainability, digital communication, and consumer perspectives within the scope of the fashion industry.

## 2.1. Sustainability within the Fashion World

Even though the concern about sustainability is quite significant within the fashion industry, its presence is still relatively new (Da Giau et al., 2015). It has only been a few years since companies started to acknowledge their environmental and social impact and this shift toward sustainability was largely influenced by stakeholders' pressure on companies (Da Giau et al., 2015). However, since sustainability started to become such a crucial matter within societies, a lot of changes had to be made and many scholars focused on this specific transition toward sustainable fashion. Fletcher is for instance one of those scholars who seem to have largely shaped how sustainability is approached within the fashion landscape (Solino and Dantas, 2020, p.190). She is an author frequently quoted in research made about sustainability, such as the studies conducted by Solino and Dantas (2020), and Da Giau et al. (2015). Fletcher significantly impacted how sustainability is considered within the fashion industry, through her different publications promoting “slow fashion” and ethical behavior. Slow fashion refers to a movement in fashion that advocates for sustainable approaches within the industry to protect the environment and reach social equity in the industry (Fletcher, 2010). Fletcher argues that “companies [are] driven by the underlying necessity to profit and expand their operations” (Brooks et al., 2017, p. 495) and she therefore works toward proposing solutions for sustainable fashion.

Since the fashion industry requires changes and evolution, concepts like slow fashion are crucial because they strongly influence corporate decision-making within the fashion industry

(Fletcher, 2010). Companies have to remodel their traditional practices and align their strategies with sustainable engagement to stay relevant. As highlighted by Da Giau et al. (2015), some companies started to implement sustainable strategies because the market required it and to avoid being “attacked” (p.85). This is particularly crucial because within the reshaping of the industry, concepts such as “slow fashion” are considered to be challenging “fast fashion”, the conventional way this business works, forcing companies to reconsider the fast-paced, low-priced, and disposable nature of fashion that the industry is based on (Fletcher, 2010). Fletcher as well as other researchers often oppose the two notions of “fast” and “slow” fashion in their work, distinguishing their economic logic, values, and processes, as slow fashion is a movement created to present the industry with an alternative to the business models established by fast fashion (Fletcher, 2010; Thorisdottir and Johannsdottir, 2019).

In addition to the significant work of Fletcher, other scholars have studied the state of the industry. Allwood et al. (2006) contributed to studying the fashion industry by publishing a comprehensive study on the sustainability of clothing and textiles in the United Kingdom. They proposed scenarios for change, highlighting that the UK was already facing a crisis when it came to disposing of waste generated by the fashion industry. For instance, this research pointed out several waste-producing practices such as washing certain types of textiles or getting rid of clothes before they are worn out (pp.38-39). The impact of fashion on water pollution and the impact of laundry on sea life are two problems underlined by Allwood et al.’s research that were also discussed by other scholars like Brooks et al. (2017) as they were stressing the effects of fashion on the environment and the need for change. Brooks et al. (2017) also highlighted a new approach, called closed-loop recycling, to reduce the environmental impact of fashion. Based on circular principles, closed-loop recycling is a production method that uses unwanted garments as the raw materials for new products.

Another impact is the energy needed to create any piece of clothing, which is also concerning since the UK manufactures one-fifth of the UK's annual consumption of clothing and textile products. The country therefore generates a large amount of waste in terms of oil, CO2 emissions, or water used (Allwood et al.,2006).

In addition, the study conducted by Allwood et al. (2006) stressed another consequence of the industry: its social impact. The authors devoted a section of their research to how this industry could be reshaped, tackling, among other issues, the dependence of the fashion industry on cheap labor and trading with low-labor-cost countries (pp.8-14). Although the authors did not seem to find a good sustainable alternative to deal with this problem, they nevertheless proposed innovations as a solution to replace certain labor (Allwood et al.,2006, p.33).

After analyzing the state of the industry as it was at the time of the study, Allwood et al. (2006) proposed potential solutions such as modifying government policy, technology development, or new business models. This last solution also hints at Fletcher's work and the business models discussed within the "slow movement" (Fletcher, 2010) without ever mentioning this movement. For instance, in their research, Allwood et al. (2006) suggested addressing sustainable issues by promoting changes in consumer behavior, such as opting for second-hand clothing or transitioning companies towards a lease-based clothing model. This approach aligns with the sustainable business model advocated by Brooks et al. (2017) in their examination of eco-friendly practices within the fashion industry. The importance of consumers is crucial within the context of this MRP and will therefore be developed more thoroughly in section 2.3 of this literature review.

Works from scholars like Fletcher or studies such as the one published by Allwood et al (2006) give insight into the fundamental shift toward sustainability that corporations had to make in many aspects of their decision-making and communication. Sustainability is not a trend and has

a key role in choosing business strategies and reshaping the industry's norms and responsibilities. It is however important to mention that even if sustainability is now crucial, most research has been centered around finding solutions to achieve a sustainable industry, and not on the actual practices of sustainability. Empirical studies of business models incorporating sustainable strategies are still quite rare (Thorisdottir and Johannsdottir, 2019, p.22). Studies such as the one carried out by Thorisdottir and Johannsdottir (2019) are therefore crucial for this paper since the authors navigate the existing literature concerning the integration of sustainability into business models.

Thorisdottir and Johannsdottir's (2019) work is especially relevant to this MRP because it examines research about the benefits of including sustainable strategies for companies, the impact of consumers, and the importance of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) in communicating about sustainable practices.

Thorisdottir and Johannsdottir also investigated sustainability-related practices in terms of transparency and improvement and sought to "recognize what drives sustainability in fashion business models" (Thorisdottir and Johannsdottir, 2019, p.18). Aligning with Da Giau et al.'s (2015) findings, Thorisdottir and Johannsdottir's findings revealed that the integration of sustainability-related practices into the fashion industry, through new business models, was based mostly on the pressure of being part of one of the most polluting industries in the world. Companies seem to engage in sustainable efforts and transparency not only to reassure stakeholders but also to position themselves in the market, among other motivating factors (Thorisdottir and Johannsdottir, 2019, p.19; Da Giau et al., 2015, p.77). Thorisdottir and Johannsdottir also highlighted that there was an increasing interest from consumers in renting clothes and for practices born from the slow fashion movement such as up-cycling clothes, repairing, and second-hand shopping (Thorisdottir and Johannsdottir, 2019, pp.16-17). This

observation echoes the papers previously published by Brooks et al. (2017) and by Allwood et al (2006).

Even if the studies previously mentioned provide valuable insights into the incorporation of sustainability within the fashion industry, research like the one conducted by Niskanen (2019) is especially significant as it specifically investigated Nike, one of the two brands studied in this MRP. Niskanen (2019) analyzed the level of sustainability of three leading sports brands (Nike, Adidas and Puma), which provides a good basis for this MRP. For instance, it discussed Nike's child labor controversy, which severely impacted the brand's image back in the 90's. Niskanen highlights Nike's reaction to the backlash that followed, such as the establishment of a code of conduct (Niskanen, 2019, p.31). As the author analyzed the brand's sustainability efforts, she identified that sustainable efforts are often made to improve the brand image, follow legislative requirements, and attract stakeholders (p.44), which aligns with Da Giau et al.'s (2015) and Thorisdottir and Johannsdottir's (2019) research. This paper also hints at some results this MRP might encounter. For instance, Niskanen (2019) mentions that Nike's sustainable practices are present, but appear at different levels, like the use of recyclable materials displayed in "non-sustainable" collections on their e-commerce (p.43).

## 2.2. The evolution of corporate communication

Examining how companies handle and react to this shift toward sustainable practices is central to understanding this new requirement in the fashion industry. Studies such as Allwood et al. (2006) and Thorisdottir and Johannsdottir (2019) hint at the importance of corporate communication. Through their systematic literature review, Thorisdottir and Johannsdottir (2019) mentioned research made on CSR (pp.13-16) and concluded that CSR is usually used as a strategic tool to simultaneously be transparent to the public and reshape brand image (Thorisdottir and Johannsdottir, 2019, p.19). This is also one of the findings of Skrzypczynska's

(2014) work about corporate social responsibility among the companies operating in Poland. Skrzypczynska (2014) even went as far as saying that “transparency is a trait that is inseparable from the CSR concept” (p.77).

Another finding made by both Thorisdottir and Johannsdottir (2019) and Skrzypczynska (2014) is that innovation appears to be the key to reaching a business model that includes sustainable practices and therefore having efficient CSR (Thorisdottir and Johannsdottir, 2019, p.13). As explained by Skrzypczynska (2014), companies considered as CSR leaders are usually characterized by innovativeness (p.82). Both publications considered that it is crucial to build new business models to better deal with corporate communication about sustainability. The two publications considered that there is a need for companies to evolve. Skrzypczynska (2014) concluded their paper by stating that “the growing interest in issues related to sustainable development and the increasingly strict legal requirements, serve as a sort of fertilizer for the growth of corporate social responsibility” (p.73). The authors also stated that a company implementing CSR has to focus on social, economic, and environmental responsibility (p.74). Companies should therefore align their practices with the three pillars of sustainability, as they were defined by the 1987 Brundtland Report by the World Commission on Environment and Development (Purvis et al, 2019, p.681). Moreover, another interesting point highlighted by Skrzypczynska (2014) was that “making the social responsibility an element of the corporate strategy is considered as the weakest aspect of the studied companies responsibility towards the market” (p.78). Corporate communication strategies are therefore more focused on transmitting business activity and providing key information to stakeholders.

Since one of the three main focuses of this MRP is web communication, the research conducted by Da Giau et al. (2015) is once more relevant to the study. This research focuses on the web communication of sustainability practices of the Italian fashion industry, making it a strong basis for this MRP, since, as the authors themselves underlined, it is a topic that has not often

been addressed in the literature (p.73). Da Giau et al.'s case study reaffirmed that the concern for sustainability was still quite new at the time as it was usually a matter dealt with within the company, but not broadcasted to stakeholders (Da Giau et al., 2015, p.74).

The researchers' findings were that even if web-based communication is still quite new, it is becoming more relevant than traditional corporate communication (Da Giau et al., 2015). The web is even replacing traditional channels when it comes to sustainable initiatives. For instance, it was observed that a growing number of companies are using their website to share their annual sustainability reports online, such as the LVMH groups (Da Giau et al., 2015). One advantage pointed out by Da Giau et al.'s (2015) is that the web is a quick and economical way to share information with stakeholders. It is easy to update and customize, distinguishing itself from traditional media. The growing importance of the internet has therefore remodeled how businesses communicate about their sustainability initiatives and consequently reshaped how corporate communication is dealt with. This is an observation that was already made by Skrzypczynska in her paper published in 2014.

Understanding this evolution toward digital communication is especially crucial to better understanding its impact on corporate communication, as highlighted by Lyon and Montgomery's research on the impact of social media on corporate communication (2013). This study is a good addition to the previous studies mentioned given that this MRP also examines social media. Lyon and Montgomery (2013) explore the importance of well-handled digital corporate communication, mentioning a counterexample where communication failed and even led to backlash: McDonald's campaign on Twitter (p.747). It led them to the conclusion that corporations must adapt and find a way to communicate efficiently on both social media and websites.

Lyon and Montgomery's paper (2013) also distinguished between website communication and social media communication, stating that the two don't necessarily work the same way (p.753). Drawing on Schultz and Morsing's work (2006), Lyon and Montgomery (2013) explain that different models of public relations exist: stakeholder information, stakeholder response, and stakeholder involvement. According to them, traditional media typically use stakeholder information. It is a one-way form of communication in which the stakeholder has a passive role, which is good for companies because it protects them more from a negative response from the public. In contrast, companies' websites and social media are said to be based on two-way communication (Lyon and Montgomery, 2013). There seems to be, however, a difference between the two web-based communications, since the researchers consider that social media is based on a symmetrical relationship: the sender and the receiver are supposedly more equal in their relationship and are both active, which creates a higher risk for companies. By contrast, a website is much more based on an asymmetrical relationship than platforms like Instagram, since a website allows "site visitors to leave comments, but without overturning the dominance of the host's voice" (Lyon and Montgomery, 2013, p.751).

In addition, Lyon and Montgomery (2013) discuss why differences in communication exist between companies, which is something that this MRP might encounter. For instance, they believe that when it comes to sustainability, choices made about communication might be due to the status of the company. Green firms could communicate on their social media more than brown firms (i.e. less sustainable companies) because, as green firms, they know that they are supposed to be doing good in terms of sustainability and that they are not facing a risk of backlash, which is not the case for brown firms. This theory brought up by Lyon and Montgomery (2013) aligns with one of the conclusions made by Da Giau et al. (2015) in their work. Indeed, Da Giau et al. (2015) highlighted, that despite the opportunity given to companies to share information on their digital platforms, information about their social and environmental

practices is still lacking. It seems that corporate websites are mainly used to support the brand image and their e-commerce activity because emphasizing their sustainable practices could lead to backlash (p.77, p.85).

### 2.3. The crucial role of consumers in business

The role of consumers has transitioned from a more passive observer role to active influencers, particularly in the fashion industry. Some of the studies previously mentioned pointed out the importance of the consumers in shaping the market and its expectations. Solino and Dantas (2020) emphasized the crucial role of consumers in shaping the industry since fast fashion and slow fashion were two business models that emerged from the consumer's demands (p.166). Fast fashion is supposed to be born from the consumer's demand to consume products quickly at low prices, following the model of fast food, and slow fashion is said to be born from the consumer's need to access "a more transparent and responsible production process" (p. 166).

Da Giau et al. (2015) stated that the evolution toward communicating about sustainability was due to "consumers' increased sensibility about and awareness of green and social concerns" (p.73). Aligning with this finding, Skrzypczynska (2014) concluded that one of the elements influencing the development of CSR is consumer awareness of the industry practices (p.74).

Allwood et al. (2006) frequently referred to consumers throughout their paper, considering that they were crucial actors within the industry. Consumer behavior was considered fundamental to the evolution of sustainability practices. The authors even concluded that the market could evolve toward a more durable fashion with the education of consumers and the evolution of their attitudes regarding fashion (p. 43). For instance, according to Allwood et al. (2006), the "adoption [by companies of new materials and technologies], once scientifically proven, will depend on consumer trust and acceptance" (p.55). This research once more, confirmed that

consumers have always had a key role in business, mentioning the importance of consumer knowledge on sustainable matters. It appears that it is more than ever important to consider consumer behavior to keep being relevant as a business.

As just mentioned, educating consumers is crucial, but communicating about sustainability is crucial as well. In their paper about consumer perception of sustainability practices within the fashion industry, Neumann, et al., (2020) studied two well-known fast fashion brands, namely H&M and Zara, and studied how consumers perceived the sustainable efforts made by the two companies and how these perceptions influenced their purchase behavior. One finding of this study was that sustainable practices communicated by the two brands impacted both the brand image and the general trust the consumer put in those brands (Neumann, et al., 2020, p. 584). This finding is particularly relevant since it was already highlighted by other researchers that creating trust with consumers has an impact on the market because it strongly influences loyalty and purchase intention (Neumann, et al., 2020, p. 577), which also affects how managers and marketers communicate about their business practices (Neumann, et al., 2020, p.585).

In line with Neumann, et al.'s (2020) findings, Bernyte (2021) demonstrates that communicating about sustainability is now crucial within the fashion industry. In her paper, Bernyte (2021) argues that “consumer behavior is at the very heart of marketing” (p.29). This statement is crucial since Bernyte's (2021) research highlights that consumers' values are evolving towards sustainable ones and that consumers are therefore calling for sustainable practices showcased by their brands (p.33). Bernyte (2021) insists that good marketing creates a sense of shared values between the company and consumers and, therefore, economic performance (p.33). This study also found that the communication made about sustainability was not consistent and strong enough, because brands don't want to position themselves as a “market leader in sustainability” or don't focus on sustainable practices (p.33).

Lyon and Montgomery (2013) gave some insight into the stakes of well-handled communication with consumers. Considering the shift towards sustainability, corporations must be careful about the information they share about their environmental and social engagement, and, even if CSR is a good way to build this relationship with their customer, it may also jeopardize the brand's image (pp.753-754). Once again, this echoes Da Giau et al.'s (2015) paper and their statement about companies fearing negative responses to their sustainable practices (p.85). Lyon and Montgomery (2013) elaborated on how social media is trickier than traditional media, given that social media is said to give voice to consumers. Companies consequently need to be careful about their communication and select the best medium to share their sustainable achievements. One of Lyon and Montgomery's (2013) hypotheses was that less sustainable firms avoid communicating about sustainability on social media to avoid possible backlash and negative reactions from consumers (pp.754-755), suggesting once more that consumers' reactions can have a significant impact on corporate marketing strategies. Since this MRP's goal is to compare the web-based communication by two brands that are supposedly different in terms of sustainable practices, this hypothesis will also be tested.

#### 2.4. Conclusion

In conclusion, through this literature review, it becomes evident that sustainability is not a trend but a factor that shapes business strategies and industry norms. Through the study of the existing literature, it becomes evident that there is an interconnected relationship between corporate communication, consumer behavior, and sustainability, within the context of the fashion world.

It was shown that within the context of this research, another important shift is crucial: the shift toward the internet and social media. The rise of digital communication holds a strong influence on the business industry. The internet introduced new challenges and opportunities for

corporations. This evolution is especially crucial since consumer perceptions of a company are now influenced not only by corporate websites but also by interactive platforms like Instagram.

Furthermore, as previously discussed, the role of consumers has evolved from passive observers to active influencers, which explains the crucial impact consumer opinion has on a brand and the importance of well-handled communication. This new active role of consumers adds to the pre-existing importance of consumer behavior which is crucial in establishing business strategies. The evolution of the consumer's role has emphasized even more the need for corporations to gain consumer trust and to carefully manage corporate communication, especially as far as sustainability is concerned.

Overall, this literature review has demonstrated that it is now crucial to explore the intersection of sustainability, digital communication, and consumer perspectives within the scope of the fashion industry. The insights gained from the literature review provided a better understanding of the key concepts of this research paper. They helped establish a foundation to examine how corporations communicate about sustainability and what the different corporate strategies could be.

By going through the existing literature, it becomes clear that most research is centered around proposing solutions to reach a sustainable fashion industry, but investigations about practices themselves seem to be lacking. In addition, even though it has been recognized that digital communication, such as corporate websites and social media, has a significant role in corporate communication, there is little study on how fashion companies use these platforms to communicate about sustainability. Moreover, there is a need to compare how companies deal with different levels of sustainability engagement and communicate their sustainable practices through digital platforms.

### Chapter 3: Methodology and General Presentation of the Selected Brands

Considering previous studies and the gaps identified in the literature, this MRP tries to understand to what extent and how fashion companies communicate to their consumers about sustainability on their digital platforms. The research questions this MRP focuses on are:

- How is sustainability mentioned on their website and e-commerce? Which aspect(s) of it? Are there any recurrent patterns found in their digital communication?
- How is their communication about sustainability dealt with on their corporate website and their Instagram?
- How do the two companies deal with sustainability and what are the similarities and differences in communication?

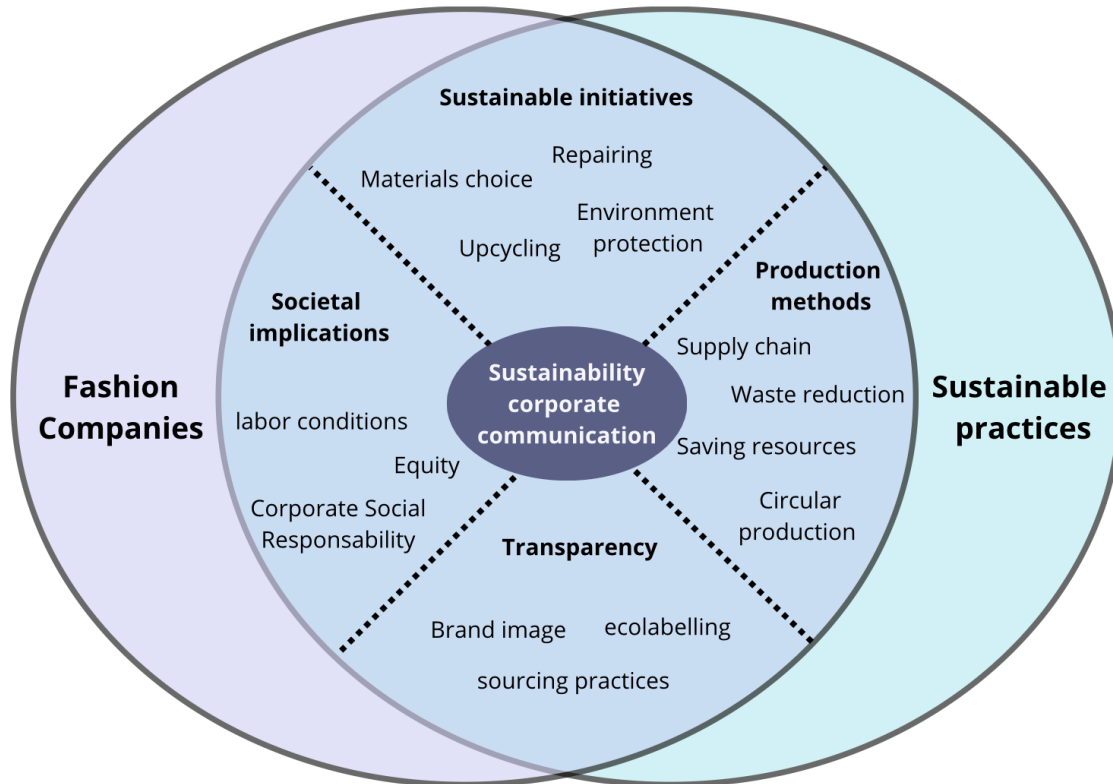
The practical part of this MRP aims to analyze the communication strategies about sustainability employed by two companies under study, Nike and Veja, by exploring their corporate websites and social media platforms. Nike and Veja were chosen due to their similar catalogs of goods, as they both offer footwear such as sneakers for casual wear, athletic shoes for sports, and lifestyle-oriented options. Significant distinctions however appear to exist between Nike and Veja in terms of design aesthetics, material used, production processes, branding, and target markets. Given that sustainability strongly influences some of these concepts such as materials or production processes, this MRP sets out to investigate if and to what extent corporate communication strategies relating to sustainability communication differ between these two brands.

Following a detailed description of the data studied and the methodology used for the corporate website and social media analysis, this chapter provides a brief overview of the two selected companies, Nike and Veja.

### 3.1. Method

A qualitative method is arguably the best approach for this MRP as it only considers non-numerical data and observes the textual content shared by the two brands on their digital platforms. To support this qualitative method, a textual analysis and a thematic analysis will be conducted. The first one will help to understand elements such as word choice or location of the text (website or Instagram? If on the website, which section?) and deduce possible corporate strategies for their communication. The second one will help identify and interpret patterns in the communication displayed by the selected brands. This method is appropriate to focus on what is communicated and by which means and should provide an in-depth understanding and interpretation of observed strategies deployed by corporations.

Within this qualitative approach, thematic coding is used to build the basis of this research, as it identifies recurring themes, patterns, or concepts within the selected data. The textual content of both companies' web pages and e-commerce will be investigated by collecting segments where sustainability mentions appear. Drawing on research by Aakko and Koskennurmi-Sivonen (2013), Figure 1, includes the recurring themes linked to sustainability within the fashion industry discussed in the previous chapter. The figure will be used to collect, analyze, and classify the data. The core category called "sustainable corporate communication" is divided and subdivided into several categories to identify and categorize the recurring concepts/patterns linked to sustainability within the fashion industry.



*Figure 1: Model of Sustainability corporate communication  
(based on Aakko and Koskennurmi-Sivonen (2013) research)*

The choice of “sustainable initiatives”, “production methods”, “societal implications” and “transparency” as categories linking “fashion companies” and “sustainable practices” was made by looking through the two companies’ websites. Considering the divisions they both make to organize the section dedicated to sustainability (Figures 2 and 6), it becomes clear that they divide this topic into categories quite similar to the ones selected for this diagram. The subcategories/keywords selected within each category were based on the definitions of those categories given in chapters 1 and 2.

Transparency is related to communicating about sustainable practices (also called “sourcing practices”) and it influences brand image and is strongly related to marketing strategies, as mentioned in sections 2.3 and 1.4.1.

Sustainable initiatives have been mentioned throughout this paper. They cover environmental approaches adopted by the company such as repairing, upcycling, and the use of recyclable materials. This category is strongly linked to the definition of slow fashion as developed in sections 2.1, 2.3, and 1.2.2.

The category “production methods” relates to the definitions given about supply chain (section 1.3.1), waste reduction/production (section 1.3.1), the importance of resource-saving (section 1.3.1), and the principle of circular production (as mentioned in section 2.1)

“Labor conditions” (section 1.3.2), “equity” (section 1.3.2), and “Corporate Social Responsibility” (section 1.4.2) fall under the name “Societal implications”.

This research is more oriented toward a descriptive method. It seeks to investigate a specific topic to identify trends and patterns. Since the attention given to sustainability, especially in the fashion industry, is relatively new, it seems important to investigate how the industry deals with this communication on its digital platforms. This MRP strongly relies on observations made about the content displayed since I’m the one collecting my primary data.

### 3.2. Data

As mentioned in the previous chapters, two companies are being studied in the context of this MRP: Nike and Veja. To answer the research questions and to examine the corporate communication shared on their digital platforms to their consumers, this MRP focused on their corporate website and their Instagram page.

A preliminary search on both companies' websites revealed that information about sustainability was found in a specific section dedicated to sustainability. Veja's section dedicated to sustainability is called "Veja Project" (Figure 2) and is directly visible to users as they arrive on the landing page (Figure 3). The sections present in Figure 2 are visible on the bottom page. The "Project" tab on the landing page (Figure 3) leads to a brief presentation of Veja's sustainable goals, followed by several articles about sustainability

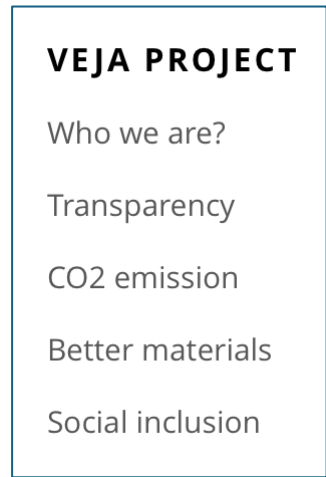


Figure 2: Veja's investigated sections and subsections

(Figure 4). The articles' suggestions shown in Figure 4 are found at the end of each article. To reduce the amount of data analyzed, the only articles considered for this MRP are the ones generated by the sections presented in Figure 2. Consequently, the subsections analyzed from this section are "Who are we?", "Transparency", "Better materials" and "Social inclusion". "CO2 emission" will not be considered to reduce the amount of data analyzed.

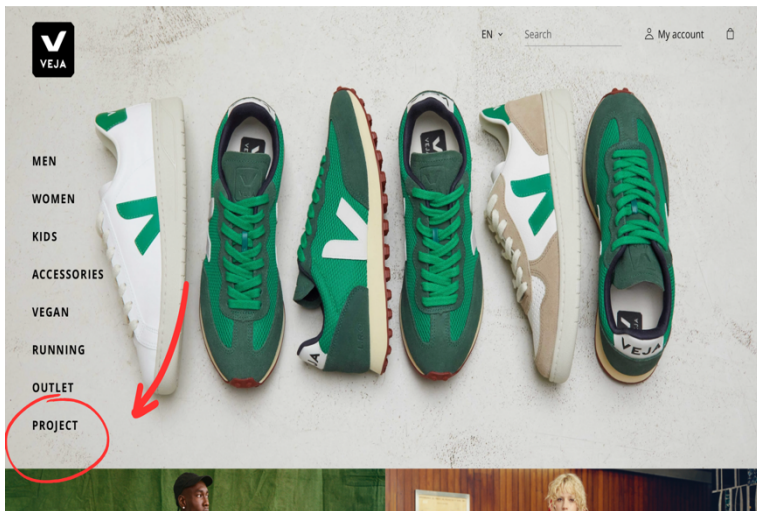


Figure 3: Veja's landing page

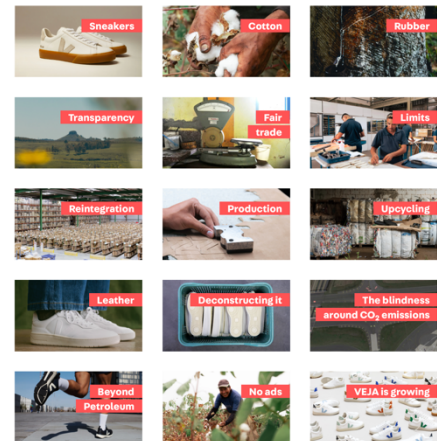


Figure 4: Veja's articles

Nike’s dedicated section to sustainability is called “Sustainability” and is not directly visible to users as it is located at the bottom of the landing page (Figure 5). This section is called “Sustainability”. The subsections investigated (Figure 6) are called “Materials”, “Sustainability Home” and “Circular Solutions”.

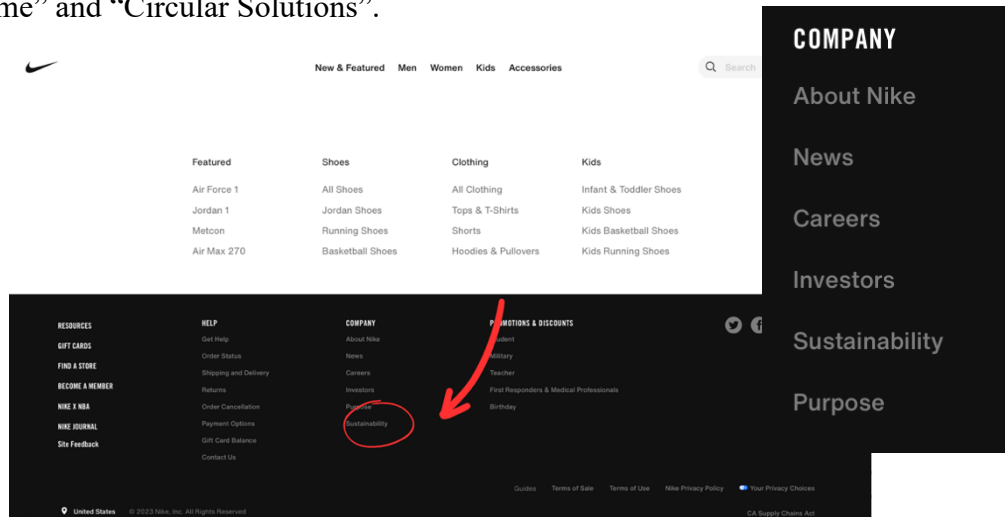


Figure 6: Nike's investigated subsections



Figure 5: Nike's dedicated section to sustainability

The subsections “Impact” and “Products” are not being considered as the section “Impact” leads to another website (Figure 7), and the “Products” section leads to a specific page of the e-commerce that regroups only sustainable products (Figure 8). Nike’s e-commerce is investigated in another section (section 5.2).

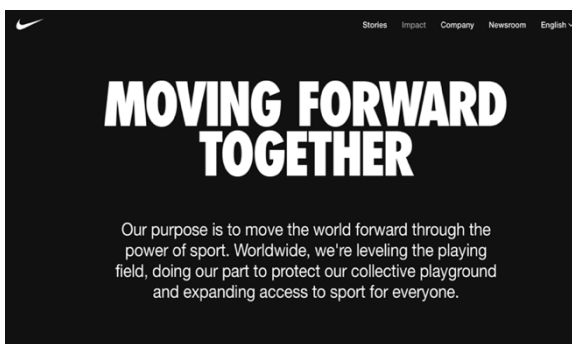


Figure 7: FY23 NIKE, Inc. Impact Report

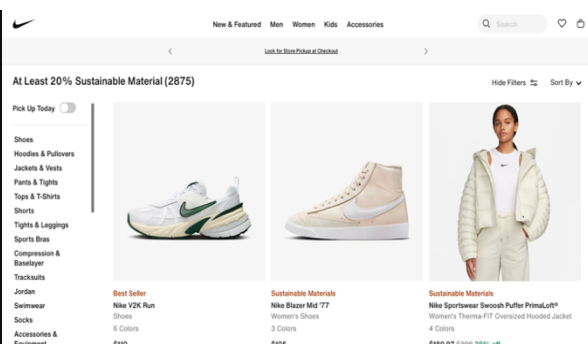


Figure 8: Nike's sustainable e-commerce

The three subsections investigated are organized into smaller articles, and the user can click on “Learn More” (Figure 9) to be given more details. The pages generated by clicking on “Learn More” are not being considered in this paper.

The collection of the data was made by looking through the selected sections and analyzing mentions of sustainability. The data was collected into two separate Excel documents (cf. Appendix 1 and 2). The classification used to analyze the content was made based on Figure 1.

To organize the collected data from the website, several sheets per document were created, with a table of three columns in each. These sheets are called according to the investigated tabs on the website mentioned above: “Materials”, “Sustainability Home” and “Circular Solutions” for Nike’s website; “Who are we?”, “Transparency”, “Better materials” and “Social inclusion” for Veja’s website. Both documents include a sheet called “Results” which contains statistics of the analyzed data. The data from both websites was collected between March 10 and March 13, 2024<sup>1</sup>.

The three columns are called “Text analyzed”, “Category”, and “Subcategory”. Under the term “category” is written one of the four categories from the Figure 1 (“sustainable initiatives”, “production methods”, “societal implications” and “transparency”) with which the text analyzed most identifies. The “Subcategory” column classifies more precisely sustainability



**Nike Flyleather**

Flyleather looks, feels and smells like natural leather, made by binding at least 50% recycled leather fibers with synthetic fibers using a water-powered process. This creates less waste and a lower impact on climate change compared to full grain leather.

[Shop Nike Flyleather](#) [Learn More](#)

*Figure 9: Example of smaller articles on Nike's website*

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<sup>1</sup> Upon submission of this MRP, Veja updated its website. As a result, the content of some subsections differs slightly from the data originally collected.

mentions within the four categories and could lead to identifying certain patterns in the vocabulary chosen.

An examination of the two companies' websites revealed that information about sustainability was also found in the e-commerce section of the websites. This section is also investigated, through a simulation of a potential female buyer looking for a pair of shoes and going through the e-commerce of both companies.

The simulation looks at the information displayed about the products on the e-commerce platform, by looking at the first fifteen products that appear on the two platforms. Veja's selected section for this simulation is called "Women" (Figure 10). The data analyzed on Veja's e-commerce was collected on March 5, 2024. Nike's selected section is the one called "Womens Lifestyle Shoes" (Figure 11). The data analyzed on Nike's e-commerce was collected on March 4, 2024.

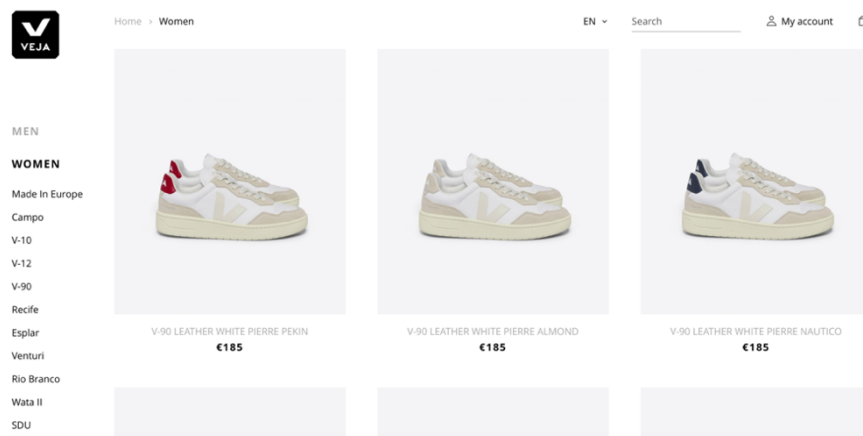


Figure 10: Veja's women section

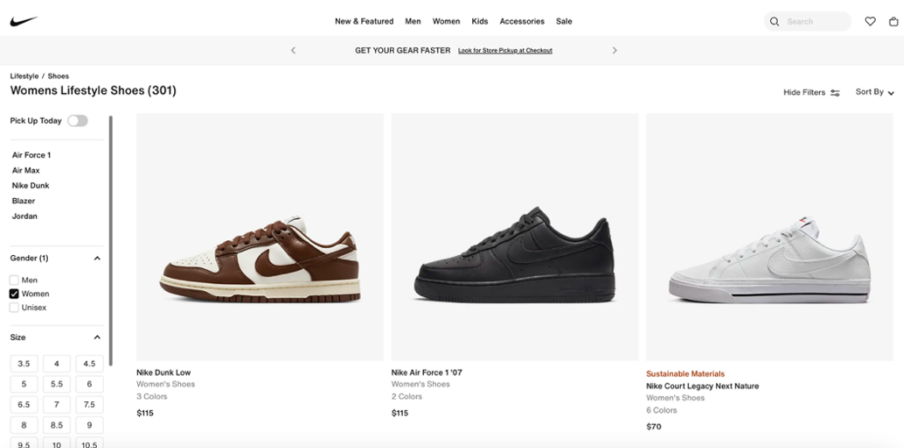


Figure 11: Nike's Womens Lifestyle Shoes

The data considered in this simulation is the information that appears on the tabs called “product details”, which feature on both websites when a potential buyer clicks on the product (Figures 12 and 13).

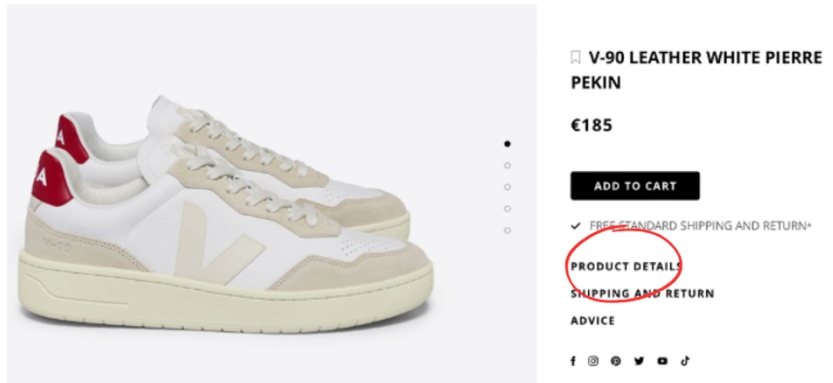


Figure 12: Veja's product details section

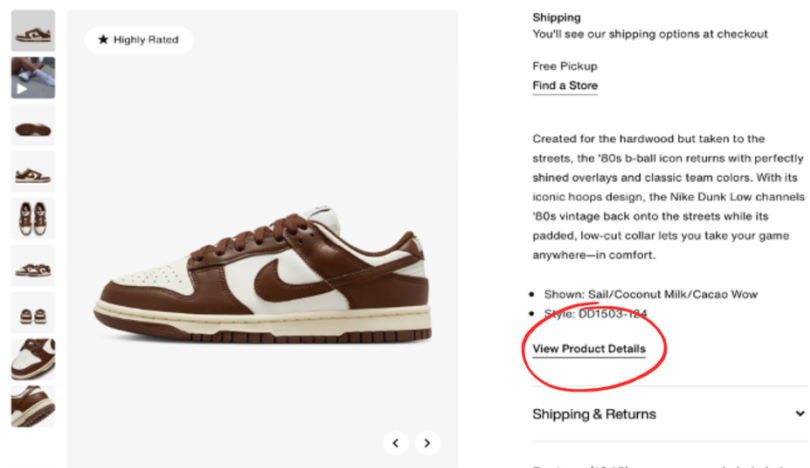


Figure 13: Nike's product details section

To analyze the e-commerce sustainability information, the selected data was compiled into two Excel tables (one for each company; cf. Appendix 3) that were each divided into five categories: “shoe reference”, “product details”, “Sustainability mentions”, “detailed description of the product composition” and “Category/subcategory”. The first two categories are used to classify the information taken from the website, and the other two are used to analyze the content. The fifth column describes which category or subcategory from Figure 1 is concerned when/if there is any mention of sustainability in the product details.

In addition to the data taken from the selected website sections mentioned above, Instagram posts are also being analyzed (see Figure 14).

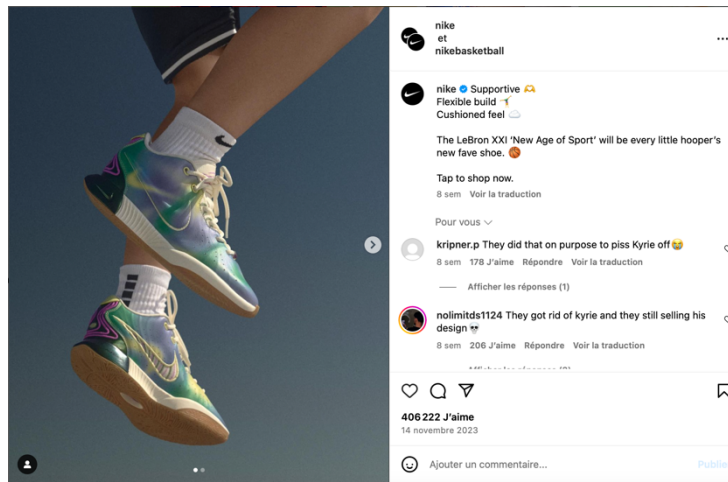


Figure 14: Example of an Instagram post

The data used from both companies' Instagram accounts are posts shared between November 1st and December 31st, 2023. The comments made by users are not considered as this MPR focuses exclusively on corporate communication. To analyze this data taken from Instagram, a fourth Excel document was created (cf. Appendix 4), with three sheets: one per company and a third one containing statistics from the data analyzed. Each sheet contains a table divided into five columns: "Date", "theme", "caption", "Hints at sustainability" and "Screenshot". The sections "date", "caption" and "screenshot" are used to organize the data. "Theme" describes what the content of the post is about. "Hints at Sustainability" has three possible answers: yes, no, and maybe. The addition of "maybe" as a possible option was made because some posts might refer to sustainability without specifically mentioning it. Figure 15 is for instance an example of these posts hinting at sustainability; on Black Friday, Veja offered to repair shoes for free, but they never specified if this event was linked to a sustainable movement, even though repairing is part of slow fashion movements and sustainable initiatives.

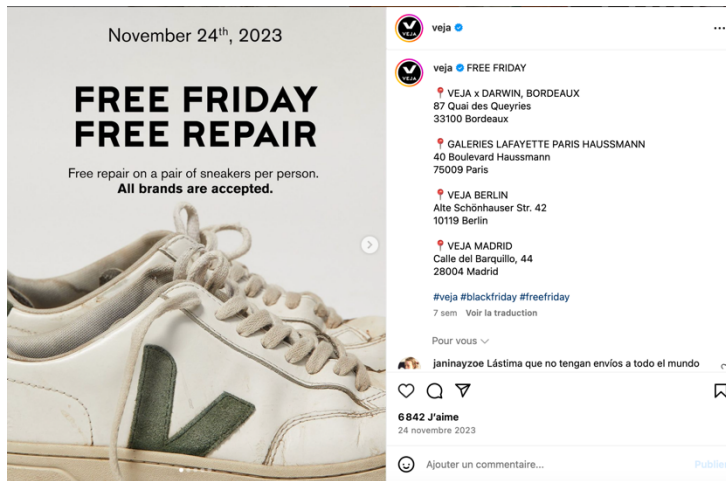


Figure 15: Veja's post hinting sustainability

The data studied in this MRP was collected from January 5<sup>th</sup>, 2023, until March 26<sup>th</sup>, 2024.

### 3.3. Limitations

The potential limitation of the selected method is that it focuses heavily on qualitative methods. It also strongly relies on the data found, which could result in overlooking information given by other sources that could help nuance the findings. Focusing exclusively on qualitative methods could also limit the understanding of certain patterns or trends, which would require focusing more on other types of methods, such as understanding the “why” and not only the “what” behind some brand communication.

In addition, a qualitative method relies on interpretation, which means that my subjectivity and preconceptions may bias conclusions drawn from my investigations about this research topic, as Nike is usually considered as fast-fashion and Veja seems more sustainable. The data found could also be interpreted by others in different ways since I am the one categorizing the data collected between the categories from Figure 1.

Another limitation concerning this study is that investigating only two brands means working on a fairly restricted corpus. To provide a better overview of fashion brands’ digital communication, other studies will be needed.

### 3.4. General Presentation of the Selected Brands

#### 3.4.1. Veja

Veja is a French footwear company, founded by Sébastien Kopp and François-Ghislain Morillion in 2004. The brand's commitment to sustainability and social responsibility is at the center of the brand image, as the brand was created as a response to the need for a sustainable fashion industry. Its digital corporate communication on its website focuses on explaining its dedication to sustainability. Veja's "project" is explained through several pages, each developing the brand's practices, from their social commitment to the use of eco-friendly materials (organic cotton, wild Amazonian rubber, vegan leather) or production methods that minimize the brand's environmental impact.

Veja seems to place a strong emphasis on ethical manufacturing practices and transparency. The brand dedicates some articles to presenting its cooperation with small-scale producers and cooperatives in Brazil and other countries. Veja's goal is presented on its website as being the guarantee of fair wages, safe working conditions, and respectful treatment of workers. Veja promotes social equity and empowerment within local communities.

Overall, Veja is a company that seems actively engaged in social and environmental initiatives aimed at promoting a sustainable fashion industry.

#### 3.4.2. Nike

Nike is a multinational corporation founded in 1971 by Bill Bowerman and Phil Knight. The brand's original vision was to create the best running shoes and to provide athletes with good equipment. This original goal evolved throughout the years, leading the brand to become one of the world's leading suppliers of athletic shoes, apparel, equipment, and accessories. The brand's great interest in athletes also transpires in its numerous partnerships with sports figures such as Serena Williams and LeBron James.

When going through Nike's website, it becomes evident that the brand offers a wide range of products providing sportswear and shoes to athletes, but also providing everyday looks. Nike's product range seems diverse and appealing to a broad audience.

With a constant need to stress innovation in sportswear, Nike promotes its search for improved design and enhanced technology. The brand also stresses its commitment to social and environmental responsibility and its intention to positively impact communities and the planet. Nike promotes various initiatives dedicated to sustainability.

Overall, Nike seems to promote its search for innovation and presents itself as a cultural icon and market leader in sportswear. It seems to focus on proposing a large range of products to attract a wider range of consumers. It also seems to focus on crucial and current concerns such as sustainability.

#### Chapter 4: Sustainable Communication on Veja's Website and Instagram

This chapter is dedicated to understanding and investigating what is communicated by Veja in terms of sustainable practices. It is divided into three parts, each one of them focusing on one aspect of Veja's digital communication: its website, its e-commerce, and its Instagram.

##### 4.1. Veja's Dedicated Tab to Sustainability

Veja's website dedicates one section to sustainability, called "Veja Project". In this section, the company presents its values and sustainable practices. As mentioned in section 3.1, this dedicated tab is directly identifiable on Veja's website. It is showcased on the landing page top and bottom (Figures 16 and 17).

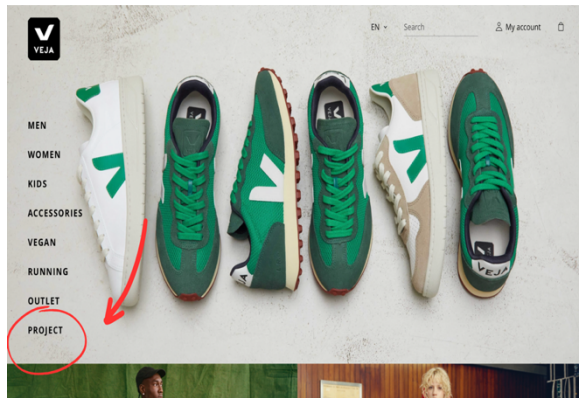


Figure 17: Veja's top landing page

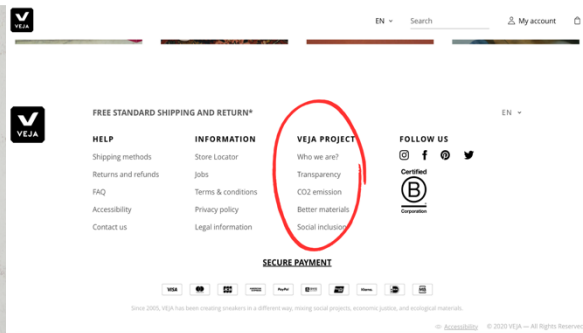
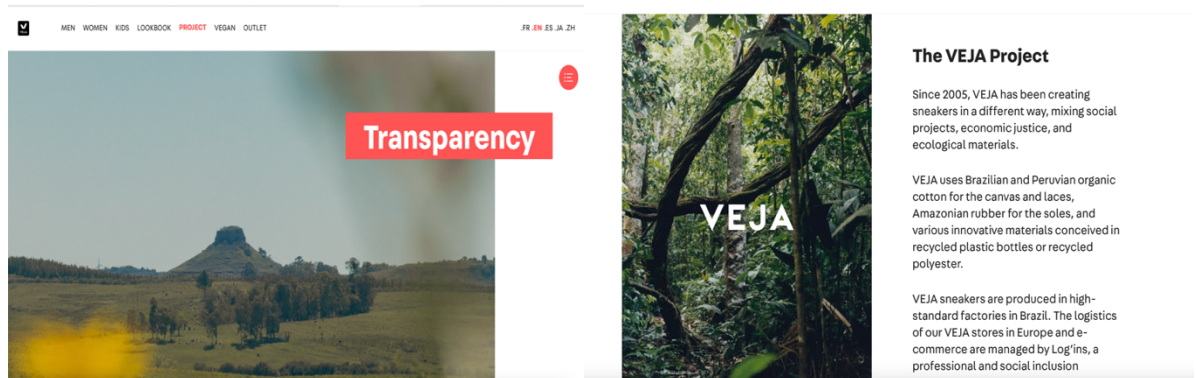


Figure 16: Veja's bottom landing page

This segment of Veja’s website is divided into several subsections, but this MRP only investigates four of them: “Who are we?”, “Transparency”, “Better materials” and “Social inclusion” (cf. section 3.2). Each of these subsections, illustrated with pictures, videos, or graphs (Figures 18 and 19), varies in length. The shorter text consists of 80 words (“Who are we?”), while the longer one contains 1,545 words (“Transparency”). The content also varies as the subsections focus on several aspects of sustainability.



Figures 18 & 19: Example of Veja's subsections

#### 4.1.1. Who are we?

The subsection “Who are we?” leads to a page presenting Veja’s sustainable project. It briefly summarizes the company’s main goals and practices, linked to social responsibility, material choices, and production methods.

The text is accompanied by a video playing multiple pictures that illustrate the production methods and steps (Figure 20). Figure 20 is for instance a video of the recycled bottle the company uses to produce



### The VEJA Project

Since 2005, VEJA has been creating sneakers in a different way, mixing social projects, economic justice, and ecological materials.

VEJA uses Brazilian and Peruvian organic cotton for the canvas and laces, Amazonian rubber for the soles, and various innovative materials made from recycled plastic bottles or recycled polyester.

VEJA sneakers are produced in high-standard factories in Brazil and Portugal. The logistics of our VEJA stores in Europe and e-commerce are managed by a professional and

Figure 20: "Who are we?" section

their products. Another video following the text presents Veja's history, told by the brand's founders: Sébastien Kopp and François-Ghislain Morillion. The video is not part of the data investigated as this MRP only considers textual content.

Based on Figure 1 (cf. section 3.1), the thematic coding of the textual content showed that this article serves as a brief introduction to Veja's sustainable practice. Despite its shortness, the text mentions most topics linked to sustainability: production methods, sustainable initiatives, transparency, and societal implications (see Figure 21).

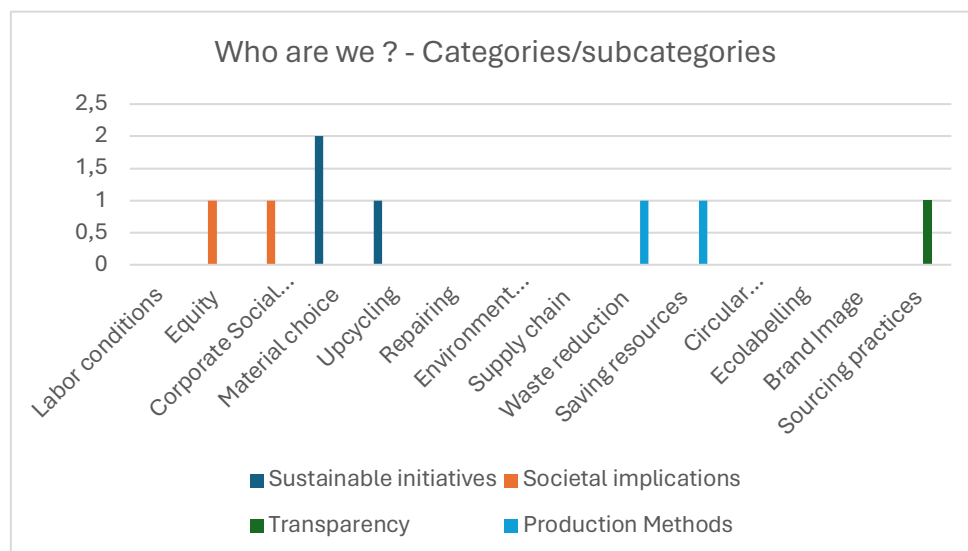


Figure 21: "Who are we?" mentions of sustainability

Out of the segments collected on this page (cf. Appendix 1 and section 3.1), 25% mentioned production methods (2 segments out of 8), 38% highlighted sustainable initiatives (3 segments out of 8), 12% were information linked to transparency (1 segments out of 8), and 25% explained the societal contribution of the brand (2 segments out of 8). This page therefore serves as an introduction to the brand. It emphasizes the significant role given to sustainability as it mentions the four categories of sustainable communication equally.

4.1.2. Transparency

This subsection is the longest of the four investigated<sup>2</sup>. It is accompanied by various pictures, graphs, and numbers (Figures 22 and 23). Several documents are also embedded in it, such as the “VEJA Restricted Substances Policy” or Veja’s code of conduct, since the article mentions them (Figure 24). The accompanying material enhances and reinforces the text, as it illustrates the points made in the article.

As the page is quite long, its content dives into different topics related to the company’s sustainable practices.

Production processes are first mentioned as the company details the production steps, the chemicals used, the materials chosen, fair trade, and the production costs. As shown in Figure 22, Veja aims to reinforce its sustainable commitment by comparing its current production cost with the potential cost if it were producing its goods in China.



Figure 22: Veja's Transparency article



Figure 23: Veja's Transparency article

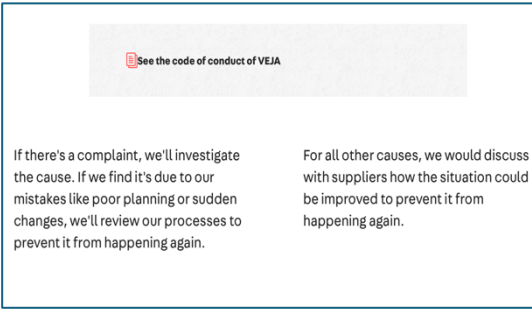


Figure 24: Veja's Transparency article

<sup>2</sup> At the time of the data collection.

Going even further on the sustainable initiatives, the company details its “preferred” materials and its chemical tests. Two embedded documents follow this fragment of the article: VEJA Restricted Substances Policy and chemicals tests realized by Veja over the year. By giving access to these documents, Veja reinforces its transparency and statements.

The page then delves into Veja’s social involvement, as it explains how the “B Corp certification” defines Veja’s functioning in terms of labor conditions or equity. CSR is also mentioned on several occasions. The company refers to its collaboration with Log’ins<sup>3</sup>, a “company that promotes social and professional integration”, but also refers to its code of conduct to explain that its goal is to create a safe workplace for each employee.

Veja’s search for transparency goes as far as openly acknowledging parts of the company structure that could be improved. For instance, they mention the efficiency of its governance structure by stating that it might not be the most effective, given the absence of a board or investors. The page dedicated to “Transparency” finishes by highlighting that products are being tested to measure their quality.

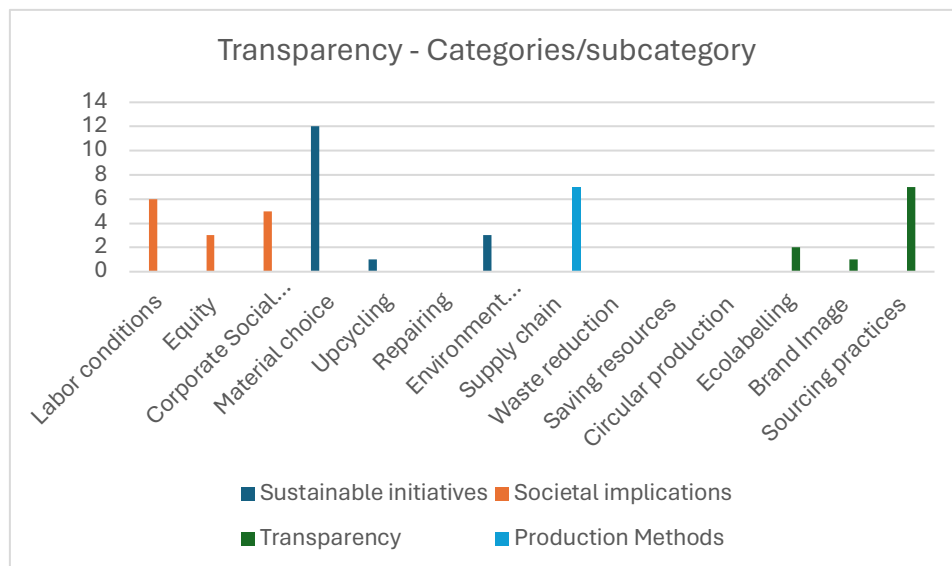


Figure 25: “Transparency” mentions of sustainability

<sup>3</sup> At the time of the data collection. This passage had been removed in a recent update of the website.

Figure 25 shows that Veja covers various aspects of sustainability, reflecting its commitment to being transparent about its sustainable practices. Specifically, the analysis reveals that 34% of the segments investigated focus on sustainable initiatives (16 segments out of 47), 29% address societal implications (14 segments out of 47), 22% emphasize transparency (as defined in section 3.1) (10 segments out of 47), and 15% discuss production methods (7 segments out of 47) (cf. Appendix 1). Thematic coding confirms that this part of Veja’s website effectively communicates details about the four main dimensions of sustainability (cf. section 3.1). The company also accentuates its statement by adding pictures, graphs, and documents to the text. Within the “Transparency” section, the subcategory “Material choice” appears to be the most frequently mentioned aspect, as the company often references “organic cotton” throughout the text. The mentions of the subcategories “Labor conditions”, “CSR”, “Supply chain”, and “Sourcing practices” are also part of the most mentioned topics. Their mentions are fairly equal in number, but significantly less frequent than “Material choice”, leaving sustainable material initiatives as the main addressed topic.

#### 4.1.3. Better Materials

This subsection, also called “Upcycling”, largely focuses on Veja’s sustainable initiatives and production methods, as the company focuses on and details the fabric composition of its goods. Similarly to the other pages, this subsection is illustrated with pictures and videos. The two videos illustrate the production processes, but also the recycling process of the bottles used as a material for the shoes. An embedded document containing Veja’s C.W.L Carbon 14 test is also put at the end of the passage presenting Veja’s vegan leather alternative and innovation, called C.W.L.

The company also mentions the composition of its products and details which parts of the shoes the different materials are used for. They refer to concrete examples, such as the “Rio Branco Hexamesh Gravel – Brittany” shoe (Figure 26) or the “V-10 B-Mesh White Nautico” shoe. (Figure 27).



Figure 26: Example of product details

Figure 27: Example of product details

The subsection’s focus on presenting sustainable initiatives is visible in Figure 28. The predominant categories mentioned throughout the page are “sustainable initiatives” and “Production Methods” (cf. section 3.1). “Sustainable initiatives” represented 56% of the collected data (24 segments out of 43), “Production Methods” was mentioned in 37% of the segments (16 segments out of 43), and “Transparency” was detected in 7% of the segments (3 segments out of 43) (cf. Appendix 1).

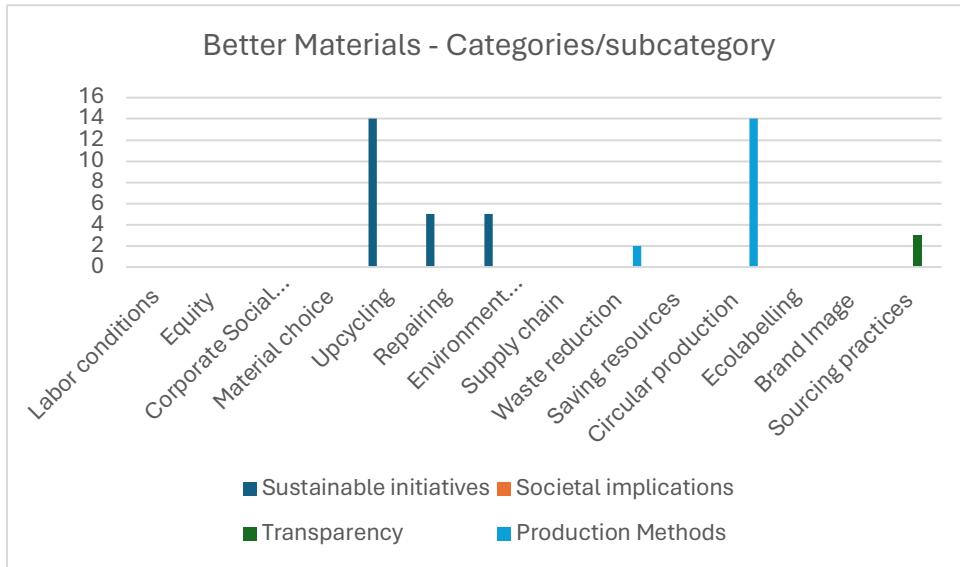


Figure 28: “Better Materials” mentions of sustainability

The subcategories “Upcycling” and “Circular production” are equally referred to, which is unsurprising since Veja advertises its use of recycled bottles or polyester on various occasions in this subsection. It appears that the two subcategories are strongly intertwined since upcycling is a process that is linked to the principle of circular production (cf. section 2.1).

#### 4.1.4. Social Inclusion

Also called “Inclusion”, this page exclusively focuses on Veja’s workforce and the social aspect of sustainability. The content of this page is accompanied by pictures and a video (Figure 29). The video presents the workforce organization in their warehouse and their work conditions. Some numbers can be found, as they illustrate Veja’s social initiatives and CSR (Figure 30).

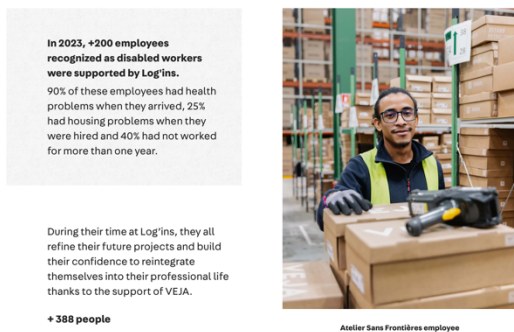


Figure 29: Social Inclusion page

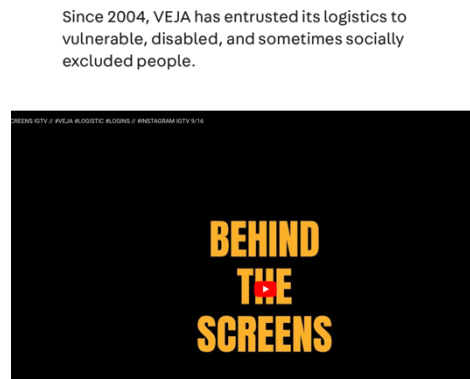


Figure 30: Social Inclusion page

CSR and equity are frequently mentioned, as Veja refers to the company’s warehouse logistics and its collaboration with Log’ins and Atelier Sans Frontières as part of integration programs. The thematic coding of the page proves that “Societal implications” seems to be the only sustainable topic referred to in this subsection (cf. section 3.1). As illustrated in Figure 31, out of 11 extracts from the subsection, 1 mentioned “Labor conditions”, 5 addressed “Equity” and 5 were related to “Corporate Social Responsibility”.

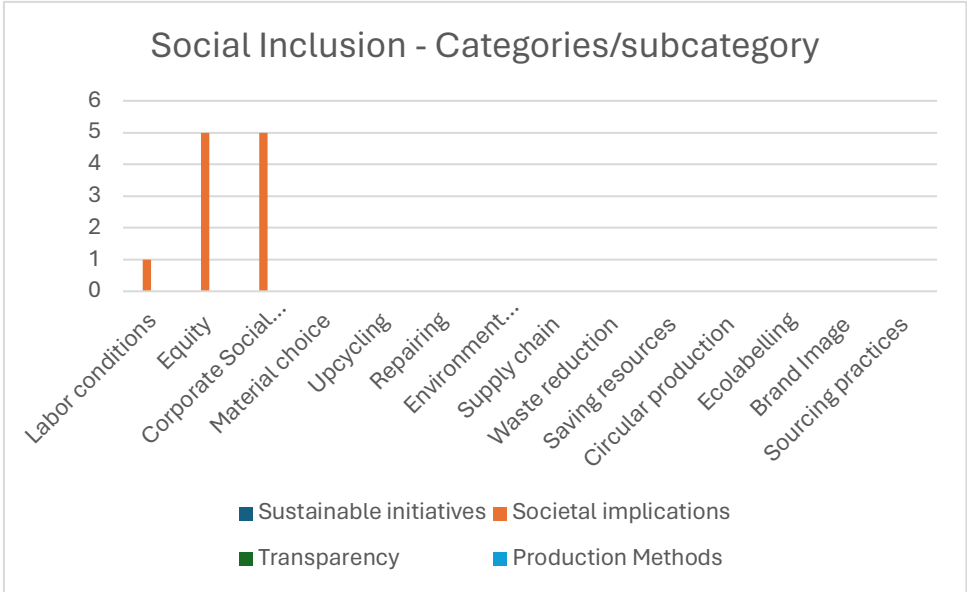


Figure 31: “Social Inclusion” mentions of sustainability

## 4.2. Veja's e-commerce

This second section goes through Veja's e-commerce to find mentions of sustainability, by analyzing the "product details" tab (cf. Appendix 3 and Figure 32). Out of the fifteen shoes appearing on the e-commerce the day of the simulation (cf. section 3.2), each one of them had mentions of sustainability in their "product details" section. The subcategories of Figure 1 (cf. section 3.1) were used to categorize those mentions.

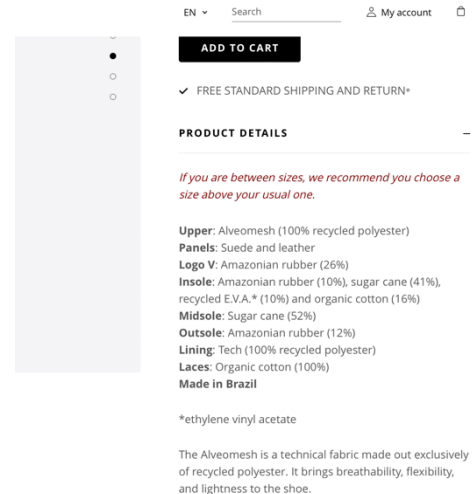


Figure 32: Example of « Product details » on Veja e-commerce

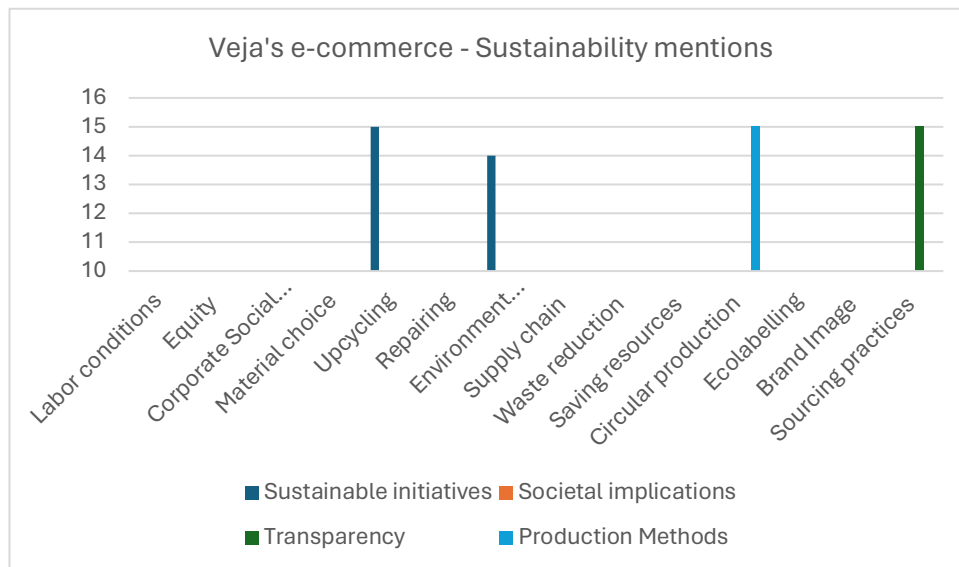


Figure 33: Veja's e-commerce mentions of sustainability

Figure 33 reflects that the subcategories "upcycling", "environment protection", "circular production" and "sourcing practices" are mentioned in an equal amount (cf. section 3.1). "Sourcing practices" was detected on each shoe detail as the description mentions where the shoe was produced. As stated before "Upcycling" and "Circular production" are often linked, in this case, they were both mentioned since each pair of shoes was made of recycled materials. "Environment protection" was identified in most sections since the company highlights its effort to avoid using toxic substances and reduce its waste.

### 4.3. Veja's Instragram

This last section investigates the company's Instagram to find possible hints at sustainability. To investigate Veja's sustainable communication on Instagram, 62 posts' captions were collected. Three categories were used to classify hints of sustainability: "yes", "no", and "maybe". The results (Figure 34) showed that 92% of the captions were not hinting at sustainability (57 posts out of 62), 6% were maybe hinting at sustainability (4 posts out of 62), and 2% of the captions did hint at sustainability (1 post out 62) (cf. section 3.2 and Appendix 4).

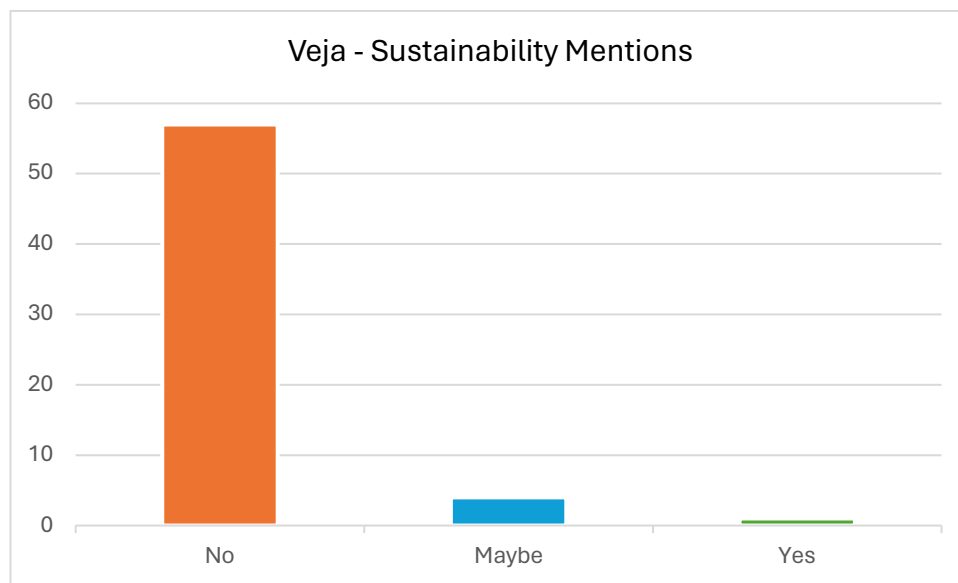


Figure 34: *Veja's Instagram captions sustainability mention*

Three of the four posts "maybe" hinting at sustainability were part of a black Friday initiative: Veja offered to repair shoes for free. The initiative was never advertised as a sustainable one, even though repairing is usually considered part of slow fashion movements. The captions were "We were wrong collectively, let's try something else. VEJA decided to reboot Black Friday.", "Free Friday", and "Stop buying, start repairing" (Figure 35). The fourth post hinting at sustainability was a short clip showing how to clean a pair of Veja shoes (Figure 36).

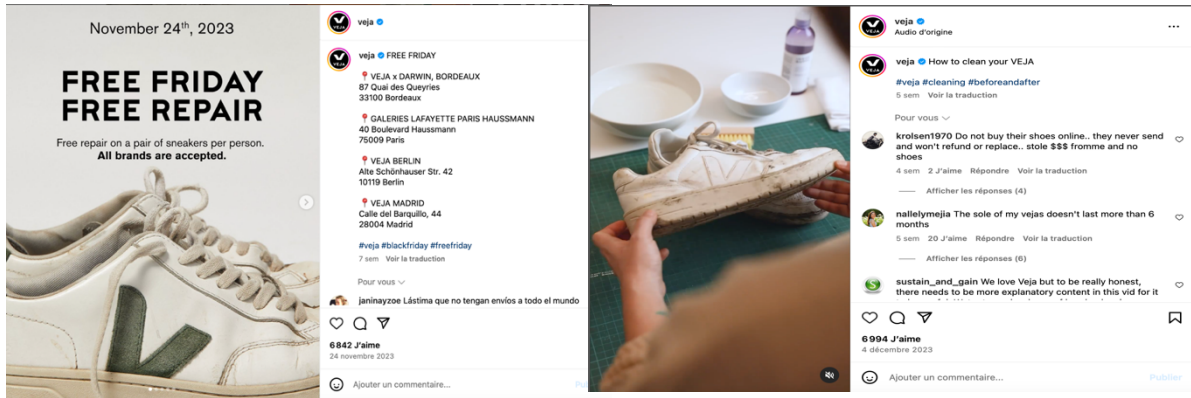


Figure 35 and 36: Veja's post hinting sustainability

The caption categorized as hinting at sustainability was a post presenting a documentary made about Veja and its engagement to save the Amazon rainforest (Figure 37). The caption also refers to the producers they work with, and the wild rubber materials used to produce Veja's shoes. This post hints at the company's sustainable engagement by mentioning three categories from Figure 1 (cf. section 3.1): Sustainable initiatives, Transparency, and CSR.

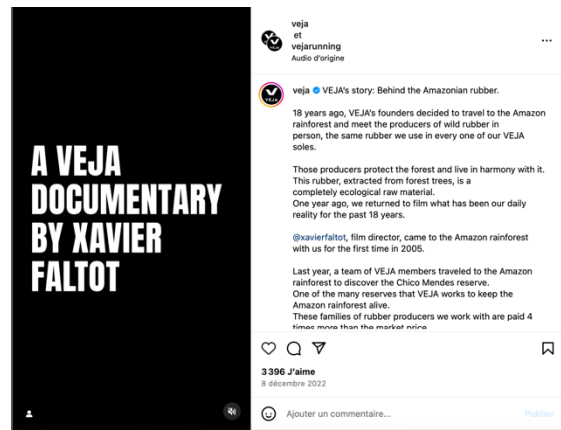
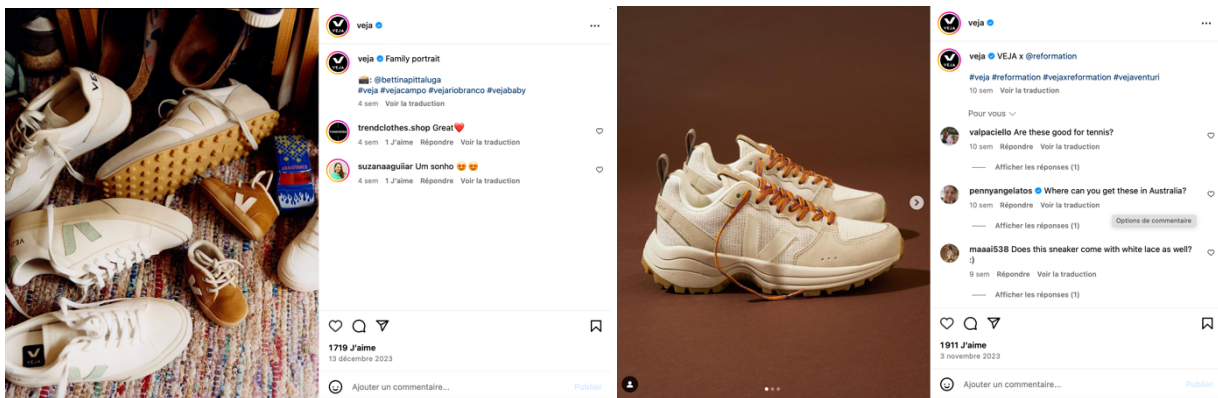


Figure 37: Veja's post hinting at sustainability

The majority of Veja's posts on Instagram promote the brand's goods, without mentioning the sustainable commitment of the brand (see Figures 38 and 39).



Figures 38 and 39: Veja's post not hinting at sustainability

## Chapter 5: Sustainable Communication on Nike's Website and Instagram

This chapter goes through three types of digital communication to investigate Nike's communication about sustainability. It is divided into three parts, each one of them focusing on one aspect of Nike's digital communication: its website, its e-commerce, and its Instagram.

### 5.1 Nike's Dedicated Tab to Sustainability

Nike's website dedicates one section to sustainability, called "Sustainability". As mentioned in section 3.1, this dedicated tab is not directly identifiable on Nike's website as it is located at the bottom of the landing page (Figure 40).

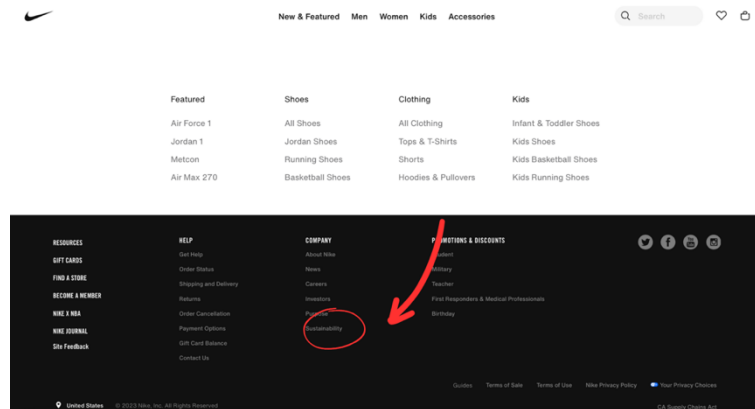


Figure 40: Nike's dedicated section to sustainability

In this webpage section, the company presents its sustainable effort under the name "Move to zero". This movement is defined as "Nike's journey toward zero carbon and zero waste, helping to protect the future of sport" (Figure 41).

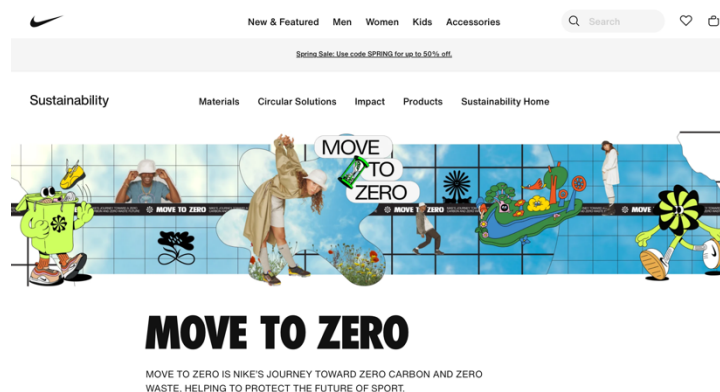


Figure 41: Nike's dedicated section to sustainability

This part of Nike’s website is divided into five subsections, but this MRP only investigates three of them: “Materials”, “Circular solutions”, and “Sustainability Home” (cf. section 3.2). Each of these subsections, illustrated with pictures, is divided into smaller categories composed of shot texts (Figure 42). The content also varies as the subsections focus on several aspects of sustainability.

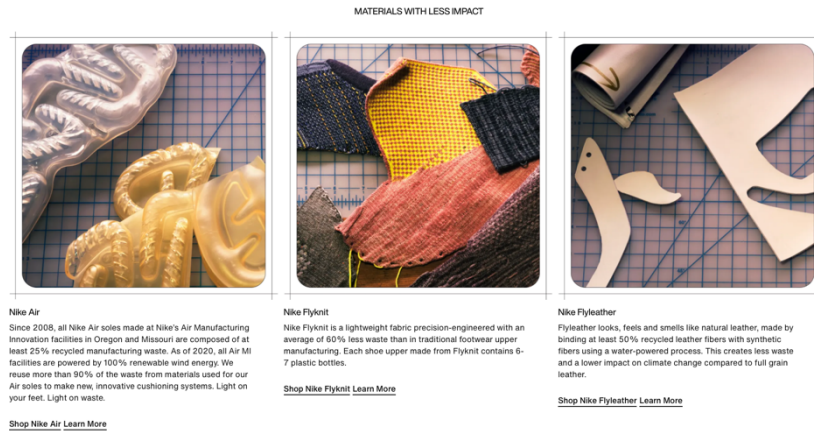


Figure 42: Example of Nike's dedicated section to sustainability

Each of the three sections investigated ends with the same paragraph titled “Taking action, together” which explains the origins and significations of the logo associated with the movement “move to zero” (Figure 43). An embedded button named “Join Us” following the paragraph leads to a page proposing to buy a membership.

### 5.1.1. Materials

The subsection “Materials” leads to a page presenting Nike’s sustainable materials and innovative textiles. The page is divided into small categories (see Figure 42), each one presenting a different material used by the brand: “Nike Forward”, “Nike Air”, “Nike Flyknit”,

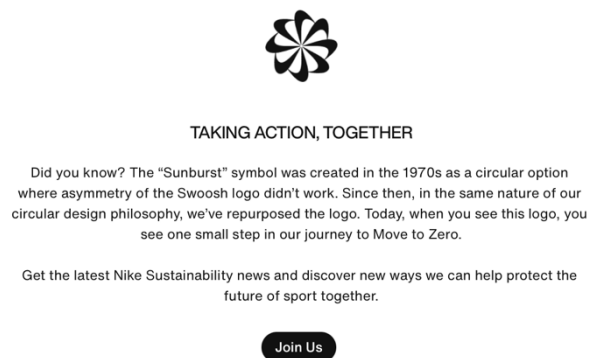


Figure 43: Nike’s ending paragraph

“Nike Flyleather”, “Recycled Polyester”, “Sustainable Cotton”, and “recycled nylon”. Each one of these textiles is presented as a material aiming to reduce the impact of fashion.

The investigation of the segments collected on this page (cf. section 3.1 and Appendix 2) showed that the majority of communication about sustainability was focused on “sustainable initiatives” and “production methods” (Figure 44). More specifically, 39% of the segments mentioned “Sustainable initiatives” (15 segments out of 39), 54% referred to “Production methods” (21 segments out of 39), 2% brought up “Societal implications” (1 segment out of 39), and 5% were linked to “Transparency” (2 segments out of 39).

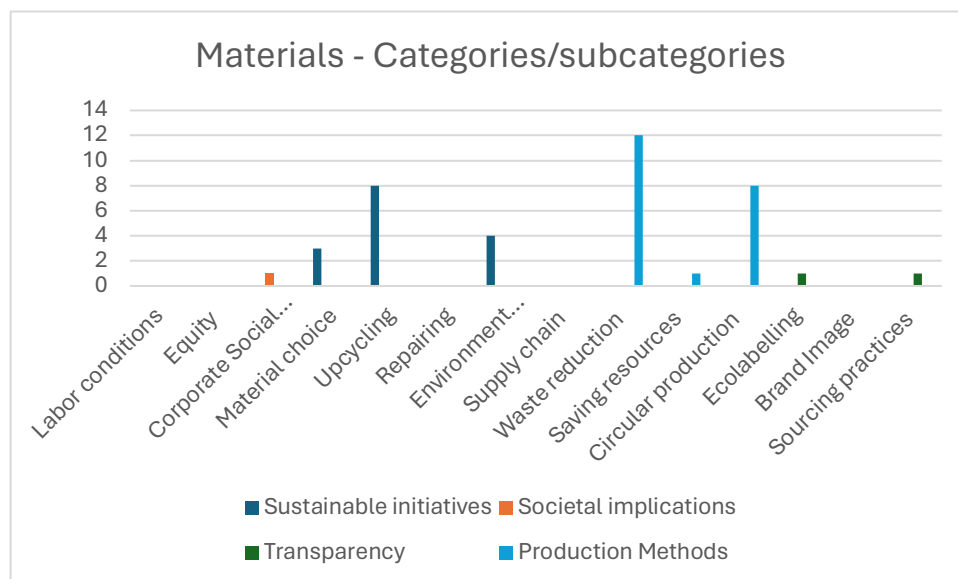


Figure 44: “Materials” mentions of sustainability

In addition, the three subcategories most mentioned were “Upcycling”, “Waste reduction” and “Circular production” which might be explained by the fact that Nike often highlights its waste reduction effort through the use of recycled materials such as recycled nylon, recycled polyester, and recycled leather fibers. The brand also refers to its innovative textiles, produced to reduce the environmental impact of production.

Pictures in this section do not seem to be used to illustrate statements made by Nike, as they mostly hint at the production of goods and the materials mentioned. They show these materials displayed on a sewing workshop table (Figure 45).

Interactive buttons are attached to the articles presenting sustainable materials. The buttons

lead to a section of Nike’s e-commerce where products containing sustainable materials are displayed. Examples of these buttons can be seen in Figure 45: “Shop Recycled Polyester” or “Shop Sustainable Cotton”. These embedded buttons highlight that Nike is aware that this section aims at a specific portion of consumers looking to buy sustainably.



Figure 45: Nike’s use of pictures on the “Materials” page

### 5.1.2. Sustainability Home

When users navigate to the 'Sustainability' section from the landing page of the website, this is the initial content they encounter. The content is dedicated to different topics. There is first a short text briefly presenting Nike’s sustainable initiative, followed by a button leading to the website dedicated to Nike’s Impact Report (Figure 46).

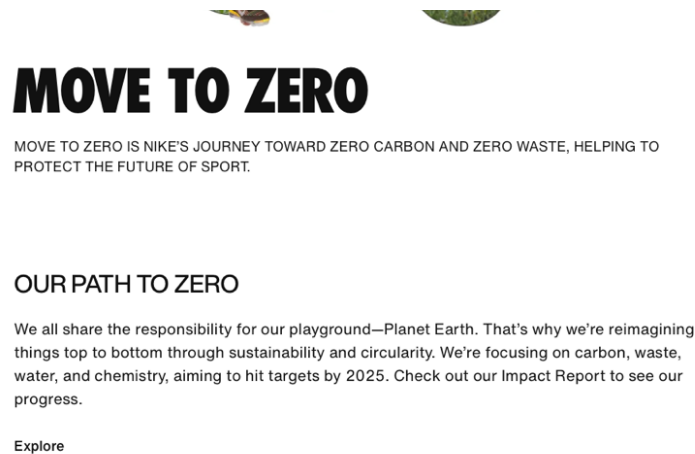


Figure 46: Nike’s “Sustainability Home” page

Nike's 2025 targets are then introduced in numbers. The use of picture is used to highlight the numbers (Figure 47).

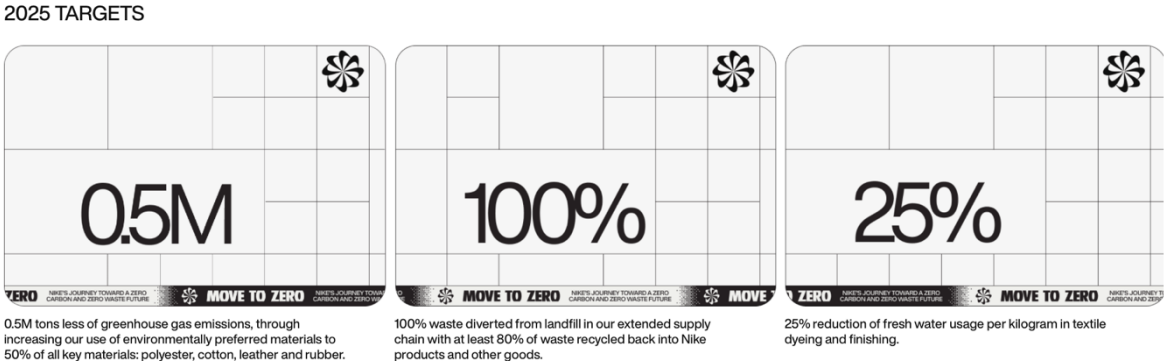


Figure 47: Nike's 2025 targets

The second topic discussed on this page is Nike's search for innovation. A video explaining Nike's effort is joined to the text, but its content was not investigated as videos are not part of the data investigated by this MRP (Figure 48).

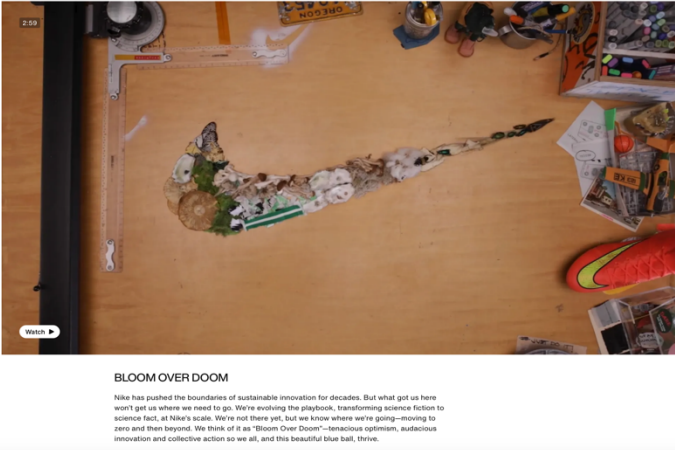


Figure 48: Nike's search for innovation

The third topic focuses on circular solutions, as it presents some actions organized by the brand to reduce waste (Figure 49).

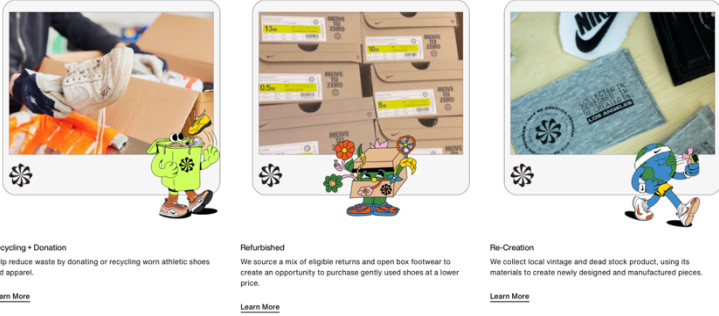


Figure 49: Nike's circular solutions and initiatives

Figure 50 shows that Nike exclusively focuses on “Sustainable initiatives” and “Production methods” on this page (cf. section 3.1). The percentage of mentions is almost equal, as 47% of sustainable references were about “Sustainable initiatives” (8 segments out of 17) and 53% were about “Production methods” (9 segments out of 17) (cf. Appendix 2).

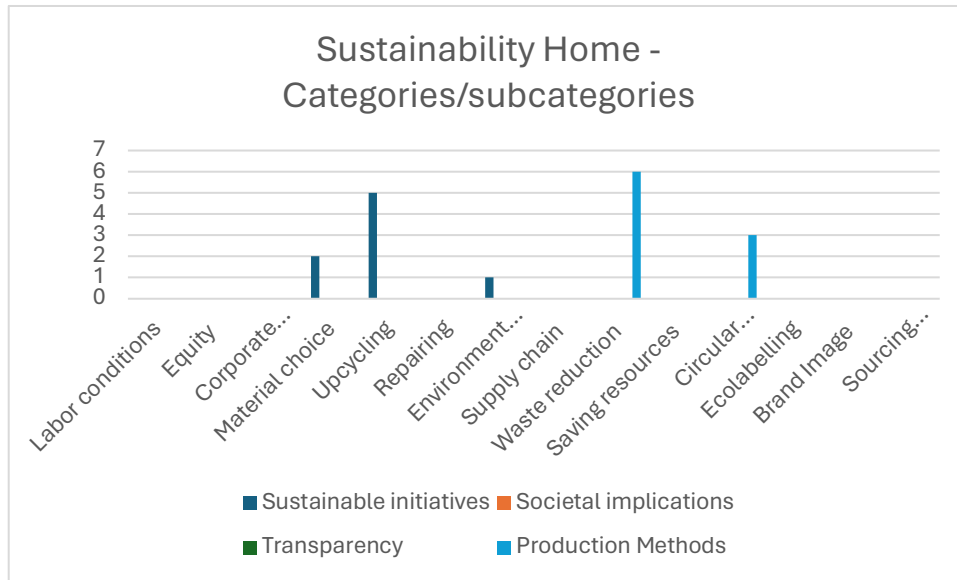


Figure 50: “Sustainability Home” mentions of sustainability

The two subcategories most mentioned were “Upcycling” and “waste reduction”, but as mentioned in section 5.1.1, Nike often links them.

### 5.1.3. Circular Solutions

This page presents Nike’s actions to reduce the impact of the industry. The brand communicates about its recollection and recycling of used goods, and its resale of returns and open boxes footwear at lower prices. They also mention repairing to extend the lifetime of goods. The textual content found on this

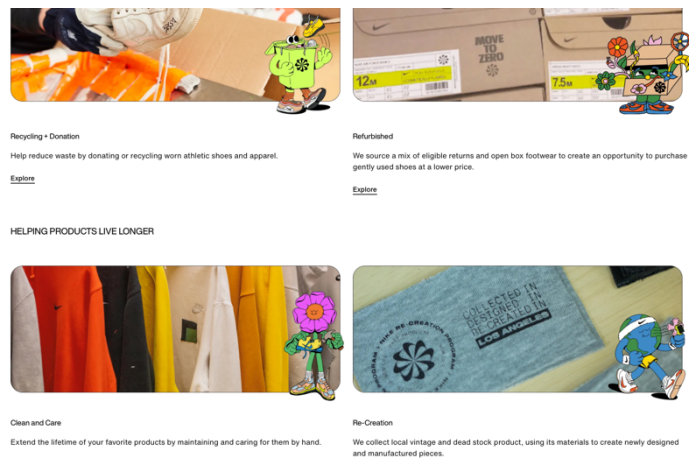


Figure 51: Nike’s “Circular solutions” page

page is short, with paragraphs mostly containing one sentence only (Figure 51).

Most of the information displayed in this section is also found in the section “Sustainability home”. The textual and visual are the same as well (Figures 49 and 51). The only new pieces of information are the section about taking proper care of the goods, and the small introduction at the beginning of the page (Figure 52).

#### CIRCULAR SOLUTIONS

We're creating new ways to advance a circular vision and protect the future of sport. This means designing your favorite footwear, apparel and accessories to last longer and, when it's time, give those products and their materials new life. We invite you to check out the sustainability services offered at your local Nike store. We can only get to zero by moving there together.

Figure 52: Nike's introduction to the “Circular solutions” page

This page is largely devoted to “Sustainable initiatives” and “Production methods” (Figure 53). The thematic coding of the page proves that 55% of the content refers to “Sustainable initiatives” (6 segments out of 11), 36% of the segments mention “Production Methods” (4 segments out of 11), and 9% were linked to “Transparency” (1 segment out of 11) (cf. Appendix 2 and section 3.1).

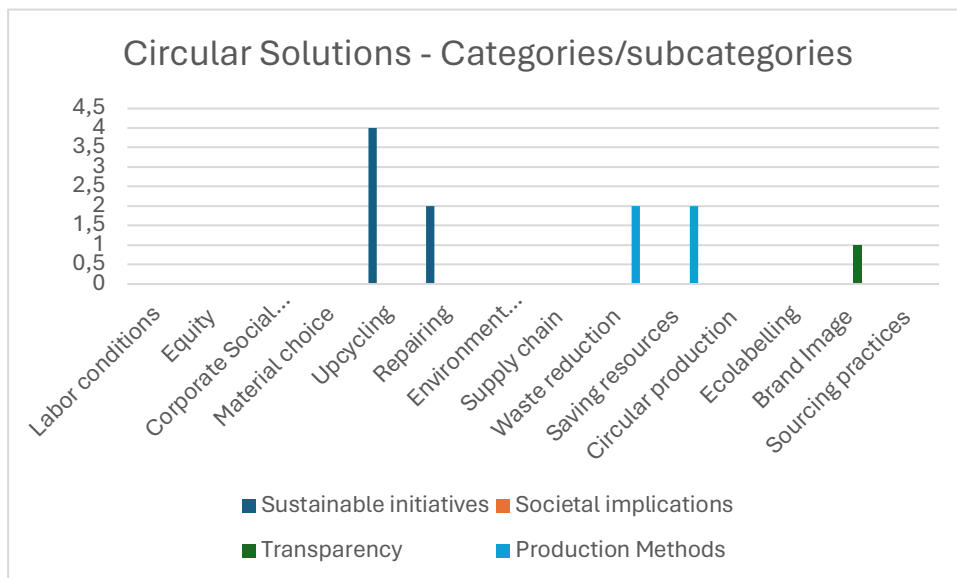


Figure 53: “Circular solutions” mentions of sustainability

The subcategory “Upcycling” represents almost half of the sustainability mentions, as it was identified four times within the 11 segments studied (cf. Appendix 2).

## 5.2. Nike's e-commerce

This second section goes through Nike's e-commerce to find mentions of sustainability, by analyzing the "product details" tab (Figure 54) (cf. section 3.2 and Appendix 3). Out of the fifteen shoes appearing on the e-commerce the day of the simulation, only two included mentions of sustainability in their "product details" section (cf. Appendix 3), making only 13% of the data related to sustainability. Both descriptions emphasized the proportion of recycled materials used in the shoe's construction (see Figure 55)."

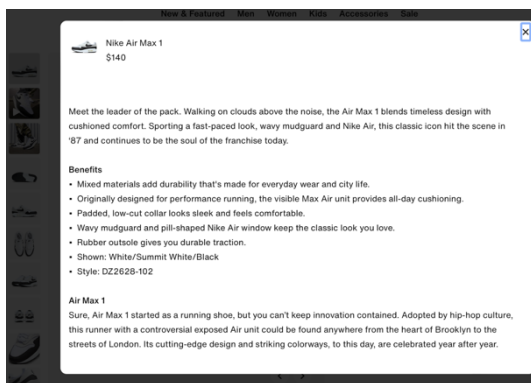


Figure 54: Example of "Product details" on Nike's e-commerce

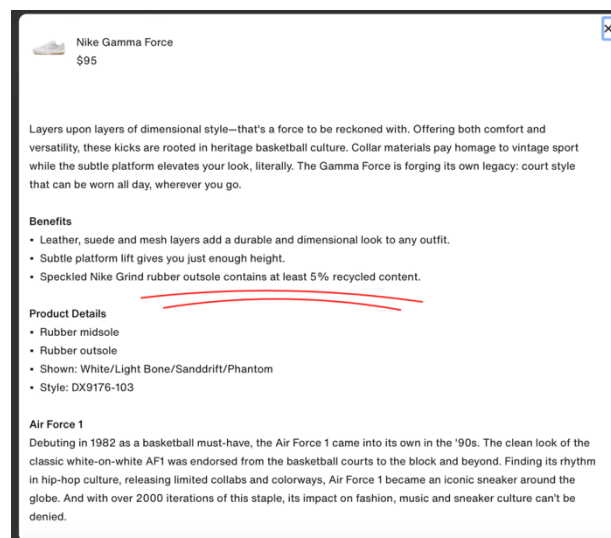


Figure 55: Example of sustainability mentions in Nike's product details

However, three of them, including the ones with direct reference to sustainability in their "product details", had information about sustainability in a grey square located in the product description, below the "product details" tab (Figure 56). The three mentions were all stating that the product was made of "at least 20% recycled content by weight" (Figure 56).

This information was however not further developed in the product details, even in the two shoes' details mentioning sustainability (see Figure 55).

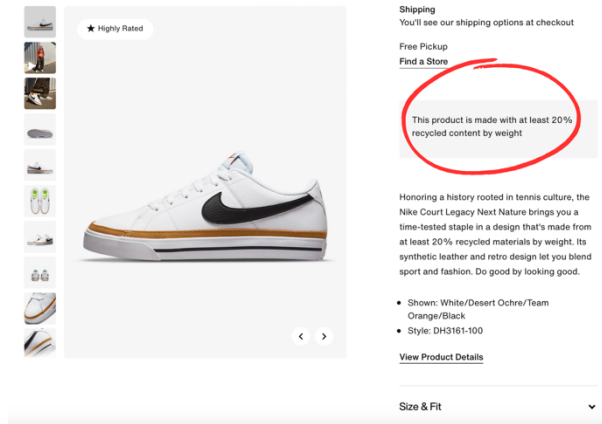


Figure 56: Example of sustainability mentions on Nike's e-commerce

As represented in Figure 57, only two subcategories were referred to in Nike's e-commerce "product details" section: Upcycling and circular production (cf. section 3.1 and Appendix 3). Upcycling and Circular production were both mentioned three times, as Nike referred to recycled materials.

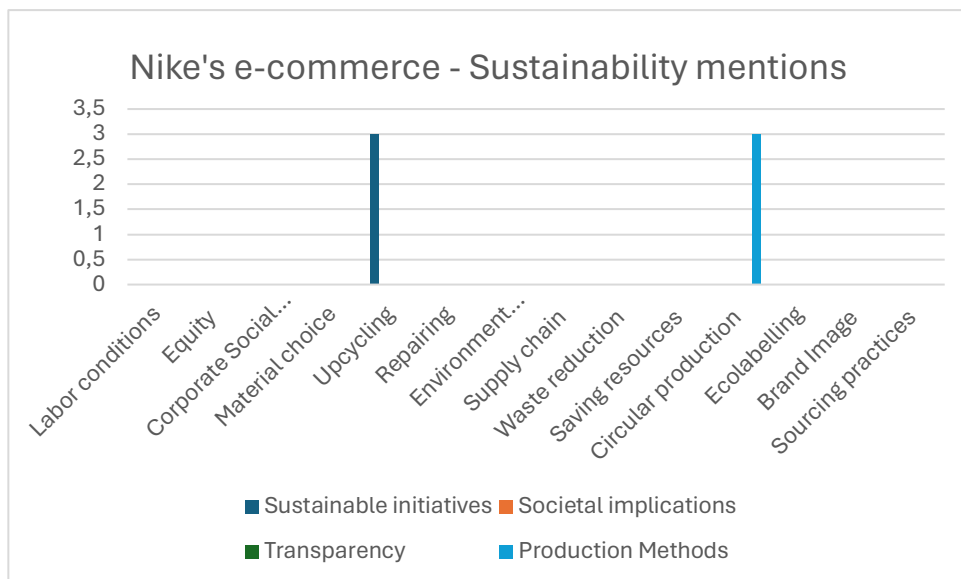


Figure 57: Sustainability mentions in Nike's e-commerce

### 5.3. Nike's Instagram

The examination of Nike's Instagram posts (cf. section 3.2) revealed that out of the 38 posts collected on Nike's Instagram page, none mentioned or hinted at sustainability (cf. Appendix 4). Most Instagram posts were only promoting new products (Figure 58), or congratulating athletes for their achievements (Figure 60).

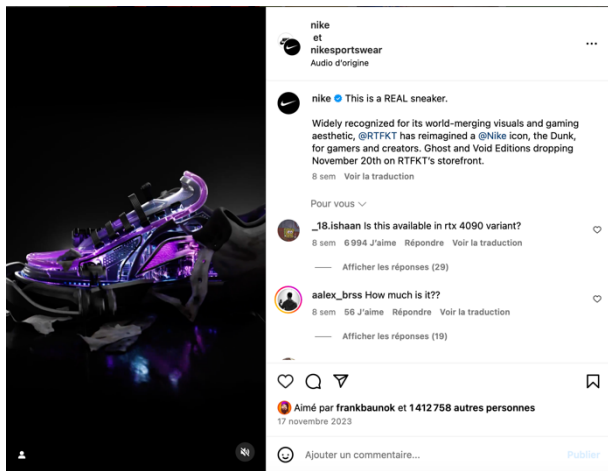


Figure 58: Nike's Instagram post promoting new products



Figure 59: Nike's Instagram congratulating an athlete

## Chapter 6: Results and Discussion

Several similarities and differences emerged from the investigation of Nike's and Veja's corporate communication about sustainability on their website, e-commerce, and Instagram page.

There was a significant difference in terms of length and details in the textual content shared by both companies. Veja's dedicated section about sustainability was very detailed and featured numerous images, numbers, and documents illustrating the company's sustainable initiatives (cf. section 4.1). In contrast, Nike's dedicated section was organized differently, with shorter and less detailed textual content (cf. section 5.1). Nike's use of illustration also differed from

Veja's, as they did not appear to reinforce or illustrate statements made about its sustainable action.

Both companies seemed to use this section of their website as a marketing strategy to reinforce their brand image. For instance, both companies' use of headlines seemed to reinforce their sustainable commitment. Nike used titles like "materials with less impact" in its "circular solutions" page (cf. Appendix 2), and titles such as "Transparency, the future of environmentalism?" were present on Veja's "Transparency" page (cf. Appendix 1). The word choice is interesting as it strengthens both companies' sustainable efforts. Veja also uses graphs and numbers to illustrate their commitment to sustainable practices (Figure 23 in section 4.1.2). A distinct use of this webpage can be identified in Nike's dedicated section about sustainability as the "Materials" page encloses several buttons leading to a portion of its e-commerce displaying goods made with sustainable materials (Figure 45 in section 5.1.1), confirming that this section of Nike's website aims at a public looking for sustainable alternatives.

Sustainability mentions on Veja and Nike websites primarily emphasized their respective "sustainable initiatives", with a specific focus on "Upcycling" and "Material choice". Both companies consistently mentioned their use of sustainable materials throughout most of the web pages investigated (cf. sections 4.1 and 5.1). Veja, however, discussed each category linked to sustainability (cf. section 3.1), and the information was evenly distributed across the four investigated pages. The investigation revealed mentions of each sustainability category and subcategory within the textual content collected across Veja's website subsections (cf. Appendix 2). In contrast, Nike predominantly addressed "Sustainable initiatives" and "Production methods", with particular emphasis on "Upcycling" and "Waste reduction". Notably, the remaining categories, "Transparency" and "Societal implications", received minimal attention, with "Societal implications" mentioned once (1 reference out of 67 segments

investigated) and “Transparency” identified three times (3 references out of 67 segments) (cf. Appendix2).

Another notable contrast between Nike and Veja was in the writing and organization of the “product details” section found on their e-commerce (cf. sections 4.2 and 5.2). While sustainability mentions were consistently present in each “product details” section on Veja's platform, only three of Nike shoe models referred to sustainability, with one failing to mention it in the “product details”. Furthermore, there was a notable disparity in the amount of information given about sustainability. Nike only referred to sustainability by mentioning the percentage of “recycled content by weight” (Figure 55, section 5.2), whereas Veja’s description was more precise. Veja not only outlined each component of the shoe but also provided specific percentages and the material's location within the shoe (Figure 32, section 4.2). The information about the materials, production, and sourcing of the shoe positioned Veja as more conscious and transparent about its product composition.

The most frequently mentioned subcategories on Veja’s e-commerce were “Upcycling”, “Sourcing practices” and “Circular production” (cf. section 4.2), a trend that aligns with the identification of “Upcycling” and “Circular production” only on Nike e-commerce (cf. section 5.2).

The investigation into Veja's and Nike's Instagram pages led to similar findings, as most Veja's posts not hinted at sustainability, and none of Nike's did so (cf. sections 4.3 and 5.3). Both companies were mostly using the platform to display their products. Veja’s captions were mostly short and usually referred to the shoe model (cf. Appendix 4). Most of Nike’s captions were longer, but the topics were not related to sustainability. The use of Instagram from both companies seemed therefore quite similar, even though some hints at sustainability were found on Veja’s Instagram (cf. section 4.3).

## Conclusion

The research showed that Nike and Veja mostly communicated about sustainability to potential consumers through their websites. Sustainability was handled in different ways by the two companies in the sections dedicated to sustainability, their e-commerce, and their Instagram page.

In the sections dedicated to sustainable efforts, Veja went further than Nike by detailing their initiatives in various and longer articles. Veja's articles contained numerous mentions of the social and environmental pillars of sustainability as the company addressed a wide range of issues related to sustainability such as sourcing practices, materials choice, and labor conditions. Nike seemed to focus mainly on the environmental aspect of sustainability, mentioning "waste reduction" and "upcycling". The results showed that Veja was however similar to Nike as it referred the most to the environmental impact of fashion. The strong focus from both companies on the environmental impact is not surprising as it is usually seen as the most predominant aspect of sustainability.

There were notable distinctions in how both companies use their e-commerce platforms. Even if sustainable mentions were identified on both platforms, Veja appeared more transparent and sustainable about its product compositions than Nike, since Veja provided more detailed information to potential buyers. The presence of sustainable information on both e-commerce and websites is however evidence that the market has evolved toward a more durable fashion. Both brands seem aware that it is a concern they need to address as consumers are starting to look for sustainable alternatives. The fact that Nike dedicated a part of its e-commerce to sustainable goods shows that sustainability has become crucial and that less-sustainable businesses had to adapt. Differences in terms of content and transparency seem however normal as Veja was created with sustainability at the center of the brand image, whereas Nike had to adapt to this concern as it established itself within the industry.

Going further on digital communication, both brands were handling their Instagram in similar ways. Even though some references to sustainability were identified in Veja and none in Nike, Veja's mentions of sustainability were rare and mostly undirect. It seems that both companies were not using this platform to share their sustainable efforts. The results however showed that sustainable firms do communicate on their social media more than less sustainable ones, even if more research would need to be done to efficiently identify potential patterns of this behavior. Both brands communicated sustainable initiatives strongly related to slow fashion. They presented alternatives to fast fashion principles, such as advice on making clothes last longer. Communication made by Nike and Veja was also centered on their effort to reduce their impact. Both brands frequently emphasized waste reduction through practices such as upcycling, recycling, and minimizing waste production to lower environmental impacts such as water pollution and gas emissions. Veja also stressed its use of "eco-friendly" materials as numerous mentions of organic cotton or wild Amazonian rubber were found.

Corporate communication plays a crucial role in shaping the brand image, especially considering the impact of CSR on a brand's reputation. It is therefore not surprising to find mentions of sustainable efforts in Nike's and Veja's digital communication, as it allows both companies to strategically position themselves in the market. The fact that both companies stressed their innovative textiles or materials is also strongly linked to CSR principles, as it has been highlighted that innovation is seen as key to reaching a sustainable business model, as it goes beyond existing fast fashion models.

Overall, Nike and Veja seem to deal with their digital corporate communication in a similar way as their use of the three platforms is comparable: mentions of sustainability were found in both the e-commerce and their website, but their Instagram did not seem to be used for sustainability communication. The differences found through the investigation seem to be

mostly related to their different levels of sustainability engagement, directly impacting the level of transparency used and the amount of information shared by both companies.

As this MRP was mostly focused on how communication was made, the selected method was not able to consider the impact of consumers nor the influence of communication on their consumption. Future research could be made by focusing on potential buyers and the impact these different levels of communication have on them.

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