

The Process

Collect

deadstock, overstock, and returned textiles



Sort

textiles by brand, material, and colour



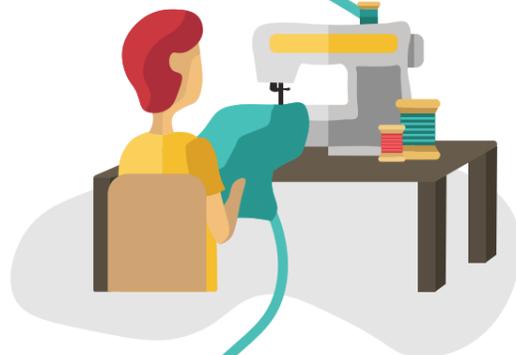
Recycle

textiles back into spools of thread



Return

thread to brands to be reused



Sell

new textiles made from recycled thread



The Problem

20% of industrial water pollution comes from just dyeing and treating textiles.



The fashion industry produces more CO₂ emissions than aviation and shipping combined.



The fashion industry is the third largest user of water. One cotton t-shirt requires 2,700L of water.



85% of old clothes end up in a landfill, releasing methane, a dangerous greenhouse gas.



Fast fashion has increased shopping cycles from 2 to 50+ micro-seasons, pressuring companies to produce clothing at a rapid rate. Consequently, little consideration is given to the environmental impact of their decisions. Therefore, clothing is currently produced linearly only to be used, not reused.

Everthread's Problem Statement:

How might we close the loop in the fashion industry by reintroducing the returns, dead-stock, and overstock from brands back into the manufacturing process?

How it Works: Partners and their Roles



Clothing Brands are a key partner because we are transporting and sorting their unwanted textiles so that they can be recycled and reintroduced into their manufacturing process.



Textile Recyclers are a key partner because they are responsible for recycling the collected textiles back into yarn to replace virgin materials.



Consumers are a key partner because they will have the opportunity to return their unwanted clothes to be recycled.

Social Impact

Benefits for Clothing Companies

Companies waste more than USD \$100 billion because of unsold clothing each year.

We take this clothing and integrate it back into their manufacturing system.

60% to 70% of the cost to make a new garment is just the price of fabrics.

We save companies money by using recycled yarn from unwanted clothing.

In 2015, sustainable brands saw a 4% increase in sales while others only grew 1%.

Our partnership will increase brand popularity among the environmentally conscious.

Benefits for Consumers

More than 15 million tons of used clothing is wasted in the US alone every year.

We provide consumers with accessible and familiar outlets to recycle used clothing.

Benefits for Textile Recyclers

Although there are many garments to recycle, there is a shortage of people buying recycled textiles.

We provide recyclers with large brand deals with guaranteed buyers for their recycled materials.

Everthread empowers companies, consumers, and recycling facilities to make environmentally conscious decisions related to fashion. Clothing brands have the opportunity to produce less waste and save on production and destruction costs. Consumers have an accessible way to upcycle their textiles and recycling facilities get a guaranteed profit off of their recycled yarn so they can keep their operations going.

Environmental Impact

Using Our Process Means...

- ✗ No excessive water usage
- ✗ No new farmland
- ✗ No pesticides
- ✗ No fertilizers
- ✗ No dyes

A t-shirt made from recycled cotton can save **2,700** litres of water



Everthread effectively uses resources by taking clothing that would be burned or sent to a landfill and recycling them instead. This means that the materials can be reused to produce something new. Not only are we decreasing the amount of wasted clothing, we are decreasing the need for more virgin materials in the production process.

Viability Testing

Mailchimp Landing Page

We created a Mailchimp landing page that we sent to real companies to generate leads. This page outlined our process and showed how we help businesses reduce their waste and save money without altering their manufacturing process.



75%
of brands indicated
interest in Everthread

This part of the landing page features the form companies filled out to indicate their interest in our program.

Animation Explaining Everthread

We made a clear and simple animation to explain our process in detail. It also includes our financial case study with roots to show our viability. This video was a very effective way to pitch our concept directly to a company and gauge viability.



Feedback

We received a lot of awesome and encouraging feedback from a variety of clothing brands, from large corporations to smaller indie brands, as well as everything else in between.

“We are constantly looking for new solutions dealing with deadstock. We have numerous systems set up to responsibly dispose of deadstock. However, recycling textiles is an industry crux. If a program such as that was set up and met all of MEC’s standards we would be interested in taking part.”

- Oliver (MEC Service Centre Learning Coordinator)

Rigorous Research and Compelling Insights

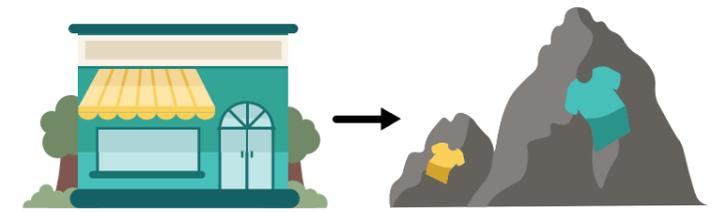
Understanding the Problem

The fashion industry is very complex with a lot of different systems and processes in place. It was important to us to really understand the problem before we tried to define it. We wanted to make sure that we understood the problems in the industry, what has caused them, and what is useful to help fix them. Some important, high-level ideas we looked at include:



How the Fashion Industry Works

The fashion industry has a take, make, dispose model because clothing is not designed to be reused because brands just want to sell products rapidly.



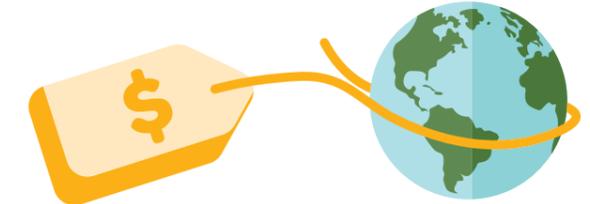
What Happens to Unwanted Clothing

Every second a garbage truck full of clothes is dumped in a landfill or incinerated and 75% of clothing sent to thrift shops fails to find a second home.



Consumer Shopping Habits

There is a green purchasing gap because although consumers care about the environment, their beliefs rarely translate to changing their purchasing behaviour.



The Impact of Fast Fashion

Fast fashion has induced cheap labour with unsafe working conditions in order to keep up with the demand for large volumes of clothing at a low cost.

Combining Existing Research with Primary Research

Originally, a lot of articles suggested that subscription boxes were the best way to make fashion circular. This is because it increases clothing utilization while still fulfilling the satisfaction fast fashion shopping brings. However, we realized that there are subscriptions for nearly every product out there, yet the problem still exists. So we decided to ask people what they thought.

We sent out a survey online to understand what people think about subscription boxes and the results were very negative. Over 60% of responses expressed disinterest in a subscription box for a variety of reasons. Some of these were that the price is too high, the idea of regularly being sent clothing seemed excessive, and that people enjoyed picking out clothes themselves.



Combining Existing Research with Primary Research

Throughout our entire process we connected with SME’s in all areas of our proposal. This included getting quotes from transport companies, speaking with textile recyclers, interviewing fashion designers, and of course contacting clothing companies. Their knowledge and experience really helped us understand the needs we wanted to fulfil and the actual viability of our proposal.

Reaching People’s Needs and Desires

We conducted a lot of research on consumers and their shopping habits to understand how they contribute to the current fashion crisis. However, what we realized was that it was unrealistic or practical to expect fast fashion shoppers to change their ingrained shopping habits. Our world has become heavily consumption focused so it is difficult to shift from this perspective.



Viability

Potential Barriers

1

In order for brands to want to participate in our program, we have to prove to be better than their current methods. Therefore, the **cost to participate in our program has to be less than the cost brands spend to on disposal**. Additionally, the cost to reintegrate recycled textiles into their manufacturing process has to be cheaper than the cost to use virgin materials. Cost refers to both finances and time.

2

The fashion industry is a very complex system that has many different timelines and processes. Many different partners are involved from the moment materials are grown to the time that consumers buy products. It is important that we create a system that will not disrupt current flows. **The time that brands' manufacturers receive recycled materials should be less than the time it takes to get virgin materials.**

3

Another potential barrier is that **large brands often do not disclose their suppliers** in order to protect their brand from copycat products. To work with these brands and reintroduce recycled materials into production lines, we would need this information.

KPI's for Success

Amount of virgin material replaced with recycled material



Amount of clothing no longer sent to landfills or incinerated



Amount of money saved from using recycled materials



Amount of total sales increase after publicly sharing recycling initiatives

Funding and Financial Stability

Our operations will be sustained by the brands we partner with. They will pay for our logistical services and their recycled textile thread.

Cost to Have Clothing Recycled

+

Cost to Use Recycled Materials



Cost of Destroying or Shipping to Landfills

+

Cost to Produce Clothing Never Sold

Viability Case Study

To truly test the viability of our solution, we conducted a case study with the popular Canadian brand, Roots. We selected Roots because of their strong brand loyalty, commitments to sustainability, customer demographic, and overall size. These factors in particular were selected because we believe that a brand like Roots can create a very large impact in the fashion industry.

How it Works in the Real World



Roots collects and packages deadstock, overstock, and customer returns so these materials can be picked up by the Everthread team to be recycled.



Once collected, clothing is sorted based on certain properties like material type and colour so that they can be recycled properly. Next, it's packed into boxes so it can be transported to the recycling facility.



Our process doesn't require brands to redesign their manufacturing processes or hire new teams. Why? Because it is unrealistic to expect brands that have existed for decades to instantly change.



At the manufacturing facility, recycled yarn is used instead of virgin materials. Once the clothing is made, it is ready to be transported and sold.



At the recycling facility, the clothing is processed so it can be broken down into yarn. This yarn is then packaged so that it can be sent to its respective brand's manufacturing facility.

Financial Stability with Roots

In the fashion industry, **30% of clothing made is never sold**. Not only is this extremely wasteful, but it costs companies a lot of money. Essentially, brands are spending the money to manufacture this 30% only to dispose of it.

In 2018, the total cost of goods sold for Roots was \$144,059,000. If 30% of their products never met the hands of consumers, that means that **\$43,217,700 went to waste**. This does not even include the cost to dispose of these products.

In fact, just **5% of this wasted clothing costs \$7,202,950 to produce**. If Roots had these textiles put through the Everthread program to be recycled back into thread, the cost is estimated to be \$4,702,950, **saving them \$2,500,000**.

Using the recycled thread means decreasing the amount of virgin materials, costs, and environmental deterioration.

Systems Thinking

Root Causes

Some of the factors that created the fashion challenge are:

- Clothing is not designed to be recycled and reused
- Clothing brands do not spend money and time to recycle
- The complex manufacturing process is difficult to penetrate
- Downcycling is common but does not divert from landfills

The Bigger Picture

Everthread enables clothing brands to capture lost value from unsold textiles by recycling them into yarn that can be reintroduced into the manufacturing process.

A Wider Set of Issues

Integrating sustainability into clothing companies' processes is difficult for both small and large businesses.

For large brands, they have large systems in place for production. Having been in business for a long time and changing their ways would be a lot of time and money.

For smaller brands, they cannot afford to add sustainable practices into their systems and products. Often they are forced to use the cheapest and least-eco-friendly options.

That is where Everthread can help. We provide businesses of all sizes with the opportunity to recycle in a way that saves money, time, and the environment's resources.

Unintended Consequences

1

It is possible that we may disrupt the relationship between brands' manufacturers and suppliers of virgin materials. This is because we are replacing the use of virgin materials with recycled materials. However, we do not expect to completely replace virgin materials as they may be blended with recycled fibres to ensure quality is not lost.

2

Unfortunately, in order to facilitate the movement of clothing before and after it's recycled, vehicles are required. However, we consider this a low impact consequence considering the amount of pollution eliminated from recycling instead of disposing.

Creativity and Innovation

Current Solutions We Learned From

We are not the first people to tackle the waste issue in the fashion industry; we are also not the first to come up with a solution. Unfortunately, these solutions do not solve the whole problem or truly change the way we produce, use, and access clothing.



Subscription boxes are common to help with clothing utilization, but do not eliminate waste from the start to change the way that fashion is actually produced.



Creating new lines of clothing made from recycled materials helps reuse waste, but this does not impact the existing fashion industry at all because it functions independently.

The Difference Between Us and Them

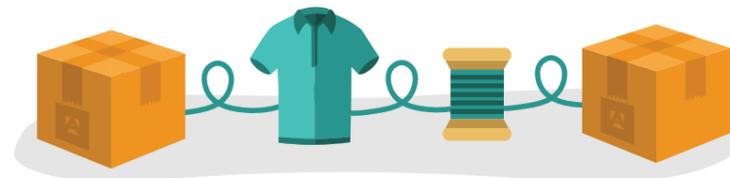
As a team, we wanted to go beyond creating a waste free business, independent of the fashion systems in place. Instead, we address the problems in the linear fashion industry at their core. The fact is, large brands with a rapid turnover of products and microseasons have created unsustainable and wasteful outcomes. Our solution lets brands close the loop without the chaos.



We allow large companies to operate business as usual, while we handle the process of recycling their unwanted textiles.



We provide smaller companies with sustainable options that once seemed out of reach due to cost, time, and energy.



Companies only get back recycled thread from their clothing which guarantees quality and usefulness.



We take care of the logistics involved with collecting, transporting, and recycling textiles.



Recycling facilities get a consistent flow of textiles to recycle with a guaranteed buyer for the recycled yarn produced.



Brands do not have to hire a new team, buy any new facilities, or equipment to recycle textiles.