

Lululemon Sustainability Perception - Summative Paper

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Part I: Situation Analysis

Lululemon launched Impact Agenda 2030 this year, setting goals for where they want the company to be in the future. Part of the agenda established a formalized commitment to company-wide social and environmental goals (Lululemon, 2025). Specifically, Lululemon wants to “minimize emissions from product creation, transportation, and [their] operations,” develop circular product solutions for guests by extending product use through repair and resale, create products with 25% preferred materials, and “deepen [their] focus on nature” (Lululemon, 2025, para 6). These goals were an extension of their original Impact Agenda launched in 2020, which aimed to make waste obsolete, use less water and better chemistry, innovate sustainable materials, create circularity, and act on renewable energy and climate change (Lululemon, 2020). This proved to be successful in some areas, such as product innovation with recyclable materials and circularity programs. However, it did fail in that Lululemon still did not significantly reduce fossil-fuel reliance and supply-chain emissions (OpenAI, 2025).

Despite Lululemon's value on sustainability. We wanted to test if individuals resonated with their current efforts. Through research, it was our goal to delve deeper into current brand perception and see what Lululemon could do better in terms of messaging to prove that they are an environmentally conscious brand. Overall, it is this conducted research that we feel would be of benefit to Lululemon in helping their stakeholders to support the organization's environmental sustainability initiatives.

Part II: Critical Assessment

The qualitative discussion guide was created collaboratively, with feedback from our professor, Jackson. We prepared a set of 18 questions: one opening question, four introductory questions, two transition questions, 10 key questions and one ending question. Some of our questions did have explanations written or further probing and prompt questions to aid in a better conversation.

To conduct our qualitative research, we interviewed 12 participants who we selected based on a convenience non-probability sample. With the set discussion questions, each group member interviewed four people 1-1. Seven of the interviews were in-person, and the other five were conducted over Zoom, with them lasting anywhere from 15 to 35 minutes. We then recorded the interview, with consent given, which was later transcribed and compared to

conclude. Similar to our qualitative discussion guide, our quantitative survey was a group effort. We drafted questions together and then revised them based on the Professors' feedback. Once survey questions were finalized, we created a Qualtrics survey.

Our Qualtrics to administer the quantitative survey was made publicly available on November 17 and closed on December 4, 2025. We sent out the quantitative survey over text to groups of individuals and posted about it on Instagram to selected followers. Participants who completed the Qualtrics also sent it out to their network as well, enhancing the overall visibility and participation of the survey. The quantitative survey had 26 questions, of which 3 were about participants' demographics. Of the 26 questions, three were open-ended questions. These were "What makes the message 'Made to Move, Made to Last' authentic coming from Lululemon?," "What makes the message 'Made to Move, Made to Last' inauthentic coming from Lululemon?," and "If Lululemon could do one thing to demonstrate/validate its commitment to environmental sustainability, what would you hope the company would do?," which required additional individualized review and categorization.

For both our qualitative research and quantitative research, we utilized non-probability convenience sampling to recruit all of our participants. For our interviews, we reached out to individuals who were aware of what Lululemon is, were past consumers, or current consumers of the brand. Utilizing a convenience sample saved us time and resources to find individuals who worked well to conduct interviews that will give us good insights, as they were familiar with the brand and somewhat familiar with Lululemon's sustainability efforts. For our quantitative research, we additionally utilized snowball sampling as we relied on group chats and human communication chains to keep sharing the link to the survey to get as many responses as possible. We also relied on social media to share information about the survey and have a wider reach to even those who are not current shoppers but might be interested in it after learning more about their sustainability efforts.

We had a similar timeline but slightly different as we all used our personal methods to share the survey. All group members sent out the survey to potential respondents on November 18, 2025, except Brynn, who sent it out on November 21st. Dani shared the survey through direct messaging and email. She personally reached out to every possible participant, but did not reach out again after the first message. As for Manuela, she made use of the "Close Friends" feature on Instagram and published the link on her stories. Additionally, she reached out to a couple of

people through direct messaging, asking them to share the link with their friends. Brynn and Wendy used the same recruitment method. They sent the link to a group chat and relied on those who were in it to share the link with their friends and so on. Likewise, none of the other team members reached out again after sending the first initial message. With the different methodologies used to recruit participants, we had a total of 160 potential respondents and a total of 81 respondents by December 4, 2025.

Part III: Results of Summary

After our recruitment process, we were able to obtain a total of 81 respondents who completed the survey. The total population of potential respondents was 160 people, split between group chats and social media, as stated before, resulting in a response rate of 0.5 (80/160). Furthermore, our key demographic data included 88% women and 75% aged 21-25, current college students or recent graduates, who the majority of them were familiar with the brand Lululemon, and some of them had not heard about the brand before.

Then, our key insights from qualitative and quantitative findings yielded unique and interesting results. For starters, 44.7% of participants were familiar with the brand Lululemon; however, 61% disagreed or strongly disagreed that Lululemon is sustainable. These insights had a significant impact on how we chose to proceed with creating our campaign strategy, shifting our efforts to improve those percentages for Lululemon with a strong message and recommendations that highlight Lululemon's sustainability efforts. Then, 34.3% of participants are more likely to believe brands are credible when they provide third-party certifications, but 50% are unwilling to pay more for sustainable apparel. With these results, we concluded that, since Lululemon is already in the high-end price range, consumers are mostly reluctant to pay more. Combining those insights with the fact that 50.8% of participants had never seen any Lululemon sustainability messaging, we focused on creating a message that felt authentic to consumers. The message "Made to move, made to last" resonated authentically with 70.9%. The participants' reaction to this message impacted our overall strategy and made it the center of it.

Moreover, some confirmations we got from our data were that most participants would be familiar with the brand Lululemon; however, many wouldn't be familiar with its sustainability efforts, since it isn't one of the brand's main things it's known for. The data showed that although 89.4% are familiar with the brand, only 7% associate it with sustainability. This insight strongly

influenced our final recommendations, as it shifted our focus to developing a strategy that would inform consumers about Lululemon's sustainability efforts. Another confirmation we had, but led us to do an interesting cross-analyzing, was that, because Lululemon's pricing is already at the high end of the athleisure apparel market, consumers would not be willing to pay much more, even if the clothes are marked as sustainable and they care about brands making sustainable efforts. The data shows that even though 73% are concerned about sustainability, 50% are not willing to pay more. Finally, the biggest surprise we had was that 76.9% of the participants authentically resonated with the messaging "Made to move, made to last." This key insight led us to focus our final recommendations around that messaging.

It would have been beneficial to keep the survey open longer and allow more time for snowball sampling. Having a focus group approach could have varied the information differently and provided more insights into consumer perceptions. In our outreach, our group prioritized women, so our results skew more towards the female gaze. Lululemon provides services to both men and women, therefore including male participants, expanding beyond college-aged women, and introducing broader age variation across both the qualitative and quantitative sections would have strengthened the overall data.

While our current findings are insightful, they represent an initial stage of Lululemon's sustainability strategy. If we were to continue this project into a new phase, we would recommend continuing message testing. This would allow us to refine and validate the themes that emerged from our qualitative and quantitative insights.

From our qualitative and quantitative research, we found that our participants prefer to receive information from social media, third-party certifications, and verifiable sustainability reports. In this second stage, we could expand upon this by launching a campaign with these initiatives. We would post them on social media, evaluate real-time audience reactions, and conduct sentiment analysis. After this, we should redo the study and see whether Lululemon consumers still believe Lululemon is unsustainable.

Part IV: Learning Reflection

Hi LinkedIn,

I just wrapped up my first semester of **USC grad school in the Annenberg School of Communication and Journalism, studying Public Relations and Advertising**. Here's an end of the semester catch up! In my PR class: Storytelling with Data Intelligence, my group and I conducted a developmental, two-phase design involving qualitative and quantitative research elements for Lululemon's sustainability efforts.

Some themes we discussed were:

- **Consumer Awareness & Perception of Lululemon**
- **Trust in Sustainability Claims**
- **Authenticity & Expectations from Lululemon**

In this study, we found that although Lululemon has a strong sustainability program, its important work is not being translated to their audience. Their consumers trust third-party certifications, verified sustainability reports, and prefer to see information about Lululemon's sustainability efforts on social media.

Lastly, their current messaging, "Made to Move, Made to Last," had the biggest impact on our survey participants. 76% (n= 50) felt it resonated strongly and said it feels authentic because it highlights the durability of their products and longevity feels "sustainable" to consumers. We suggest Lululemon leverage this and use it further in their sustainability messaging.

If you would like to hear more about our work, please contact me at johnsd@usc.edu.

Part V: Appendices

The rest of the appendices will be included as PDFs along with the paper submission.

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