

**Slow Fashion + Retail Design: Designing experiences to influence sustainable consumers behaviors**

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**Abstract**

Driven by increased demands for ethical responsibility towards environmental and social sustainability by Millennials and GenZ, the design and purpose of apparel retail stores is transforming. These generations demand authentic and transparent retail storytelling to create a connection between their beliefs and the value they place on the products they purchase. Kate Fletcher, who introduced the concept of slow fashion, states: “Sustainable fashion is about a strong and nurturing relationship between consumer and producer” (Fletcher, 2008/2014). The retail store environment is a critical link in establishing this relationship. However, many slow fashion retailers lack elements within their store design to foster this relationship, missing an opportunity to communicate their sustainable story through the physical space where consumers experience fashion. Therefore, we must broaden slow fashion’s reach, extending into the design of the physical retail environment, and establishing slow retail experiences.

Utilizing Fletcher and Grose’s principles of transforming slow fashion, this paper presents four slow fashion retail case studies, examining the spatial elements necessary to foster stronger relationships between consumer and producer. The case studies examine how retail store designs successfully apply design elements through physical, human, and digital touchpoints to use the store as an educator on sustainable apparel practices. Serving as guiding examples, these case studies illustrate how other sustainable fashion retailers can leverage storytelling elements within their own retail environments. Retailers and designers can use the examples presented to better connect, communicate, and educate their customers on their brand's core sustainable values to encourage changing behaviors.

**Keywords:** Slow Fashion, Retail Design, slow Retail, Sustainable Design, Millennial Generation

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