



## The Brand Loyalty of Sportswear in Hong Kong

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### ABSTRACT

*This paper reports the results of brand loyalty of 280 university students, aged from 18 to 24 years old. This study explores brand loyalty behavior on sportswear and examines key brand loyalty factors: brand name, product quality, price, style, store environment, promotion, and service quality. Consumers are classified into two categories by their degree on brand loyalty: hard-core loyal consumers and brand switchers. The study concludes that brand name, style, and promotion are the key brand factors which can distinguish hard-core loyal consumers and brand switchers. Brand name and style have more influence on the brand loyalty of hard-core loyal consumers, while promotion influences more on that of brand switchers. Product quality is perceived by both groups as the most important factor affecting their brand loyalty.*

*Keywords: Brand Loyalty, Hard-core Loyalty, Brand Switching, Sportswear Market*

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### Introduction

The market trend for wearing sportswear is particularly emerging in Hong Kong. Nowadays, sportswear becomes a common and popular category as it gives young people a more relaxed lifestyle and greater versatility and comfort. Consumers wear athletic apparel not only in sports activities, but also at home, in school, at work, or at leisure time. Moreover, there is a prominent trend in the sportswear industry, for which the casual design and athletic design is converging. Sports lovers combine their sports activities with leisurewear in order to look smart and fashionable when they do exercise. A positive trend is confirmed in Italy on sales of sportswear for

spring/summer 1999 (Dusi, 1999). As a consequence, different line of fashionable sportswear targeting the youth market has been successfully launched by Adidas, a traditional sporting goods company, teaming up with a well-known fashion designer – Yohji Yamamoto (HKTDC, 2004).

In the West, brand loyalty is recognized as an asset and consumers are willing to pay more for a brand (Wernerfelt, 1991). However, there are fewer but more powerful retailers in the sportswear market, so the competition is fierce in the sportswear market. Well-established brand names continue to contribute investment and time in upholding brand identity, preserving brand loyalty and developing new sports