

Master of Business Administration

Marketing Management (LCMB7024)

Portfolio: Brand Development

A Sustainable Brand Extension for UNIQLO

UNIQLO LIFECARE

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Table of Contents

Table of Contents	2
List of Figures and Tables	Error! Bookmark not defined.
1. Element 1: Sustainable Brand Extension Poster.....	3
2. Element 2: Segmentation, Targeting, Differentiation and Positioning	4
2.1 Segmentation	4
2.2 Targeting	5
2.3 Differentiation	6
2.4 Positioning	7
3. Element 3: Marketing Mix	8
3.1 Product	8
3.2 Price	8
3.3 Place	9
3.4 Promotion.....	9
3.5 People	10
3.6 Process.....	11
3.7 Physical evidence	11
3.8 Critical evaluation and measurement	11
4. Element 4: Reflection	13
References	15

1. Element 1: Sustainable Brand Extension Poster



A SUSTAINABLE BRAND EXTENSION FOR UNIQLO

LIFECARE

Clothes that last longer, wear better, and create less waste.

UNIQLO can move beyond selling essentials and help customers care for what they already own.

Module: Sustainable Brand Management
Student: [Your Name]
Date: August 2026



The fashion industry must shift from more to better.

LIFECARE is a brand extension that helps customers extend the life of the clothes they love, reduce waste, and live LifeWear more sustainably — every single day.

UNIQLO
LifeWear



100bn
garments are produced worldwide every year



7
times is the average garment worn before it is thrown away



20–30%
of clothing's impact can be reduced by extending product life

01 Who UNIQLO is

UNIQLO is a global apparel retailer known for simple, functional, everyday essentials under its LifeWear philosophy. The brand focuses on quality, practicality, and innovation at a fair price, delivering reliable clothing to millions of customers worldwide.

02 The sustainable requirement

Fashion is under pressure from overconsumption, textile waste, high water use, and greenhouse gas emissions. Customers, universities, and investors increasingly expect brands to offer longer-lasting products and responsible consumption models that reduce environmental impact while delivering real value.

03 The extension idea

LIFECARE is a new brand extension: an in-store and online garment-care range and service ecosystem that helps people care better, repair easily, and extend the life of their clothes — so they wear more and waste less.



STEAMER
refresh instead of over-washing



FABRIC SHAVER
restore knitwear and basics



REFRESHER
between-wear deodorising spray



MENDING KIT
repair hems, buttons and small tears

the garment goes back to the wardrobe, not the bin

04 Why the market will buy it

Consumers want value, durability, and low-effort sustainability. Trends show growing interest in conscious consumption, capsule wardrobes, and care-driven fashion. LIFECARE appeals to current UNIQLO customers because it is practical, affordable, and easy to adopt.

05 How it aligns with sustainability goals

Extending the active life of clothing reduces replacement frequency, lowers waste, and supports circular habits. LIFECARE strengthens UNIQLO's LifeWear positioning while delivering benefits for customers and investors: stronger loyalty, differentiated brand value, and measurable sustainability storytelling.

06 Conclusion

UNIQLO already tells customers how to make clothes last — shave off the pilling, air garments instead of washing, store knitwear folded. It does not sell a single product that makes any of this possible. LIFECARE closes that gap: a genuinely new category for UNIQLO, built on a promise the brand already makes to its customers every day.



Less waste
Reduce what we throw away.



Longer wear
Care better. Wear more.



Circular value
Keep clothes in use, for good.

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Figure 1: UNIQLO LIFECARE poster presentation (author's own, 2026)

2. Element 2: Segmentation, Targeting, Differentiation and Positioning

Before setting out the strategy it is worth establishing what kind of growth this represents. Kotler et al. (2024) distinguish four routes to brand development according to whether the product category and the brand name are existing or new. LIFECARE applies an established name to a category UNIQLO has never traded in, placing it in the brand extension quadrant rather than the line extension quadrant where most fashion sustainability initiatives sit. The distinction matters commercially too, since Volckner and Sattler (2006) find perceived fit between parent and extension predicts success more strongly than parent brand strength.

		PRODUCT CATEGORY	
		Existing	New
BRAND NAME	Existing	Line extension New colours or sizes of an existing product	Brand extension UNIQLO LIFECARE
	New	Multibrands A new brand in a category already served	New brands A new brand in a new category

Figure 2: Brand development strategies, adapted from Kotler et al. (2024)

2.1 Segmentation

Segmentation follows the four bases described by Kotler et al. (2024) and is summarised in Figure 3.

Geographically, launch should be limited to the United Kingdom and Western Europe rather than the larger Japanese market where UNIQLO holds deeper penetration. European regulation is moving towards mandatory durability standards, and WRAP (2025a) reports that UK Textiles Pact signatories are already embedding circular design requirements ahead of legislation, which creates a policy tailwind absent elsewhere. Dense urban housing with shared or absent laundry facilities also makes frequent washing costly, and it is that inconvenience the range primarily addresses.

Demographically the broader segment spans consumers aged roughly 22 to 39 in early or mid career. This group buys clothing frequently but cannot easily absorb repeated replacement costs, and households of one or two people rarely run a full wash load economically.

Psychographically the target holds a buy better and keep longer orientation, attentive to sustainability yet price sensitive. This needs careful interpretation. Hao and Zhang (2025) find stated environmental concern to be a weak predictor of actual apparel purchasing, and Mishra et al. (2023) report similar gaps between awareness and behaviour. A proposition resting mainly on green credentials would therefore be likely to underperform, so LIFECARE is built on appearance and economy first.

Behaviourally, benefit sought is the most useful variable. Knitwear buyers form the clearest subsegment, since pilling is the most visible care problem across the UNIQLO fleece, wool and cashmere lines (UNIQLO, 2020). Schiaroli et al. (2025) note that use phase solutions such as care and repair remain markedly under-researched compared with purchase phase alternatives, suggesting a genuine opportunity.

GEOGRAPHIC • UK and Western Europe • Dense urban housing • Small flats, shared laundry	DEMOGRAPHIC • Aged 22 to 39 • Early or mid career • One and two person homes
PSYCHOGRAPHIC • Buy better, keep longer • Aware but price sensitive • Design conscious	BEHAVIOURAL • Knitwear buyers • Wants clothes to look new • Already shops at UNIQLO
PRIMARY TARGET Urban renters aged 22 to 35 who already shop at UNIQLO	

Figure 3: Segmentation bases applied to UNIQLO LIFECARE (author's own, 2026)

2.2 Targeting

A concentrated strategy is recommended at launch, focused on urban renters aged 22 to 35 who already shop at UNIQLO. Although the broader segment is defined above as 22 to 39, the primary launch target is narrowed to 22 to 35 because it combines the

highest residential mobility with the smallest laundry capacity, and so feels replacement costs most acutely.

The segment satisfies the standard evaluation tests. It is substantial, given that roughly 100 billion garments are produced each year and the average garment is worn only seven times before disposal (Earth.Org, 2023). It is accessible through existing stores and the application at almost no additional cost, and differentiable, since its care needs are unlike the general appliance market.

The principal alternative is a mass market approach across the whole UNIQLO base. That would enlarge the addressable market but would require establishing credibility in an unfamiliar category. Since Volckner and Sattler (2006) show acceptance depends on perceived fit rather than brand strength alone, broad targeting would raise acquisition costs while weakening the fit argument on which the extension rests. Concentrating initially on existing customers therefore allows the extension to be tested at lower risk.

The strongest justification comes from UNIQLO itself. Published guidance recommends using a fabric shaver to lift pilling, avoiding hangers because knitwear stretches, airing garments rather than washing them every time, using a fabric freshener, storing knitwear folded, and avoiding friction from bags and belts (UNIQLO, 2020; UNIQLO, 2026). Four of those six recommendations imply a physical product and UNIQLO sells none of them. The brand identified the need, published it, then directed customers elsewhere to satisfy it. LIFECARE therefore recovers demand the company generated and surrendered rather than creating it.

2.3 Differentiation

Three tiers occupy the market. Steamery sits at the premium end and positions explicitly on longevity, arguing that shaving pills away removes the reason to replace a jumper (Steamery, 2025). Philips and Tefal occupy the middle, selling steamers on functional performance with no link to any particular garment. Unbranded shavers on online marketplaces occupy the bottom, competing on price with no assurance of fabric safety.

LIFECARE differentiates on three proposed grounds. Adjacency comes first, since it would be sold beside the garments it protects. Authority comes second, because

UNIQLO specifies the construction of its own knitwear, although this becomes an advantage only if customers perceive that expertise, which would need testing. Accessibility comes third, since the Steamery position confines it to a premium niche whereas UNIQLO pricing allows garment care to be made ordinary.

2.4 Positioning

The positioning statement reads as follows. For urban consumers who want their clothes to keep looking new, UNIQLO LIFECARE is a range of simple garment care tools that extends the life of what they already own, because UNIQLO understands its own clothing better than any appliance manufacturer can.

Keller (1993) argues that brand equity transfers most effectively where an extension reinforces existing associations. Here the association is documented rather than assumed, since Fast Retailing (2025a) states that its basic premise is that good clothes should last as long as possible and reports that UNIQLO publishes care videos so customers wear garments longer.

Figure 4 plots the range against competitors using price and garment expertise as axes. The comparison suggests an accessible price and high expertise position is relatively under-served rather than demonstrably vacant, since the map reflects principal competitors rather than an exhaustive audit.

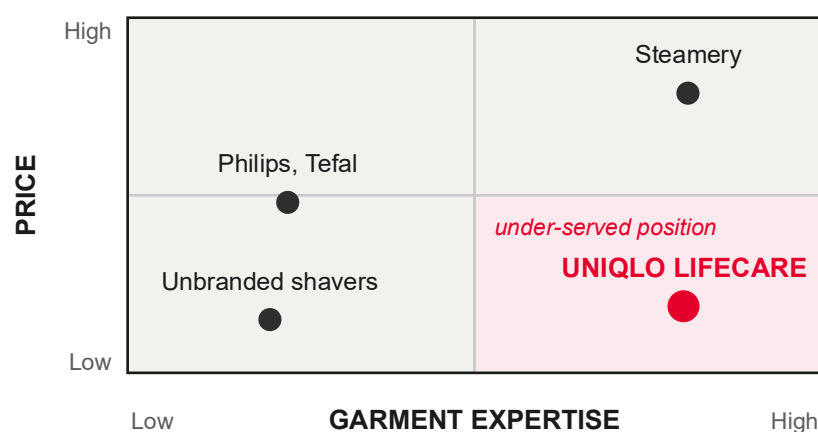


Figure 4: Perceptual map of the garment care market (author's own, 2026)

3. Element 3: Marketing Mix

The extended mix of seven elements proposed by Booms and Bitner (1981) is applied rather than the traditional four, because LIFECARE reaches the customer through a retail service environment where staff behaviour, process and physical evidence shape the experience as much as the product. Figure 5 summarises how each element supports the strategy.

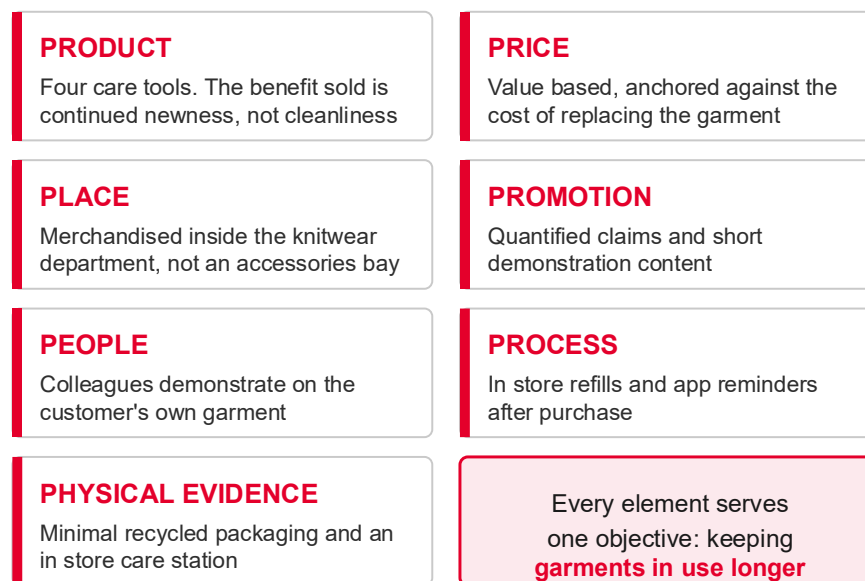


Figure 5: The extended marketing mix applied to LIFECARE (author's own, 2026, after Booms and Bitner, 1981)

3.1 Product

The range comprises a steamer, a fabric shaver, a refresher spray and a mending kit. Read through the three level model of Kotler et al. (2024), the core benefit is not cleanliness but continued newness, since the customer buys a delay to replacement. At the augmented level a care guide and application reminders turn a single purchase into a habit, which is where environmental benefit is created rather than claimed. Casings should use recycled polymer and the mending kit should avoid plastic packaging, since a sustainability range arriving shrink wrapped invites fair criticism.

3.2 Price

Pricing should be value based rather than cost plus, anchored against the cost of replacing a garment rather than against rival appliances. Indicative prices are proposed in Table 1.

Product	Indicative price	Pricing logic
Refresher spray	£6	Low cost repeat purchase driving return visits
Mending kit	£9	Low risk trial, trims matched to UNIQLO garments
Fabric shaver	£18	Accessible entry, below premium design led rivals
Handheld steamer	£45	Premium anchor within the range

Table 1: Proposed indicative pricing for the LIFECARE range (author's own, 2026)

Competitor anchoring places the shaver and steamer beneath premium garment care brands but above unbranded alternatives, signalling quality without inviting purely functional comparison. Value anchoring frames each price against the cost of replacing the garment it protects, so a shaver preserving one jumper has justified itself. The structure is also deliberately razor and blade, with durable items earning initial margin while the spray generates recurring revenue, which matters because one off appliance sales alone would not justify entering the category. The risk is that low entry prices position the range as disposable, contradicting the durability message, so packaging and product weight must carry quality signals price alone does not.

3.3 Place

Distribution carries most of the strategic advantage. LIFECARE should be merchandised inside the knitwear department rather than a separate accessories bay, placing it where the customer is already considering the garment it protects. Online it should appear on knitwear pages and inside the care guidance UNIQLO already publishes, where the advice to use a fabric shaver currently leads nowhere. Third party distribution should be avoided at launch, since electrical retailers would invite functional comparison and surrender the differentiation the strategy depends on. Placing the range alongside RE.UNIQLO Studio, which Fast Retailing (2025b) reports now operates in 67 stores across 23 countries, provides a physical anchor.

3.4 Promotion

The communications task is to make care feel ordinary rather than effortful. Short demonstration content showing a bobbled jumper restored does the persuasive work more efficiently than abstract claims. Environmental messaging must be quantified, since keeping a garment in use nine additional months reduces its carbon, water and waste footprints by roughly 20 to 30 per cent (Ellen MacArthur Foundation, 2017). Vague green claims risk greenwashing accusations and, under tightening advertising rules, may be actionable.

Technology offers the clearest development opportunity. The UNIQLO application could deliver personalised care prompts triggered by what the customer has bought, the garment type and the season, so a wool jumper bought in October generates a de-pilling reminder in February. The benefits are sustained behaviour, deeper relationships and first party data on how garments are used. The risks are equally real: notification fatigue could produce disengagement, collecting data on wardrobe contents raises privacy concerns, and customers may reasonably read care prompts as disguised selling. The feature should therefore be opt in, frequency capped, and evaluated on whether it changes care behaviour rather than on incremental sales.

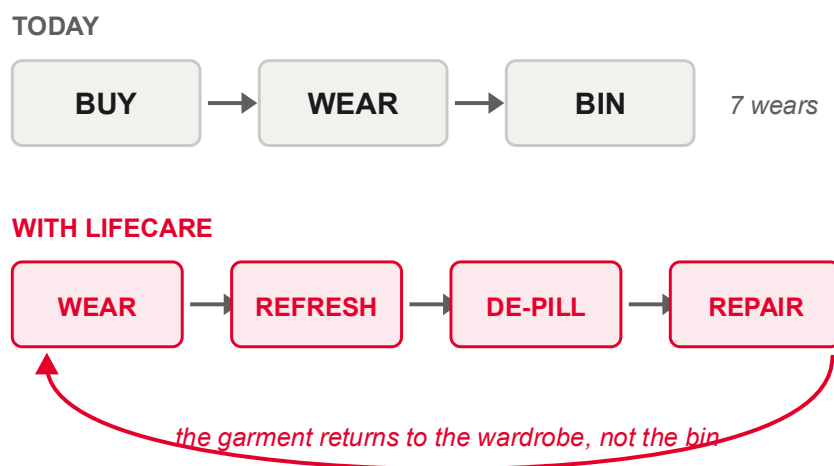


Figure 6: From a linear pattern of use to a care led loop (author's own, 2026)

3.5 People

Store colleagues are the mechanism of adoption. Because the range sells a behaviour rather than a device, staff must demonstrate a shaver on a customer's own garment, and training should sit inside existing LifeWear product knowledge so care reads as part of the garment rather than an upsell. Commission style incentives would push colleagues towards aggressive attachment selling and erode the authenticity the

proposition rests on. Effectiveness should therefore be measured through demonstrations conducted, customer engagement and subsequent repeat use of consumables, rather than units sold at the till.

3.6 Process

The purchase process should be short, with care items in the knitwear aisle, no separate consultation and no assembly. An in store refill process for the spray removes the criticism that a sustainability range creates recurring plastic waste. Service recovery matters more than is usually acknowledged for a brand new to a category, so a QR code on the packaging should link to garment specific instructions, troubleshooting and a replacement route, ensuring a device that fails does not become an argument against the proposition.

3.7 Physical evidence

Physical evidence carries unusual weight for a brand entering an unfamiliar category. Packaging should be minimal, recycled and recyclable, using the typographic restraint of existing UNIQLO packaging so the range reads as a genuine extension rather than a licensing exercise. A care station in larger stores offers tangible proof of competence. Product design is itself evidence, since a device that feels solid supports a claim about durability while a flimsy casing would undermine it.

3.8 Critical evaluation and measurement

Four risks warrant acknowledgement. A rebound effect is plausible, since customers who care for garments effectively may simply buy more, and Bocken et al. (2016) note that slowing resource loops delivers benefit only where consumption volumes hold steady. UNIQLO also does not manufacture appliances, so licensing or contract manufacture introduces quality risk in a range whose credibility rests on durability.

Less obviously, the extension carries brand dilution risk. Aaker and Keller (1990) show that consumer evaluations depend jointly on perceived fit and on whether the firm is credibly able to make the new product. Garment care scores well on the first and poorly on the second, which is why manufacturing arrangements must remain invisible to the customer. There is also a sustainability paradox, since a range designed to reduce impact itself consumes materials, electricity, packaging and chemicals. Niinimäki et al. (2020) caution that use phase interventions are frequently overstated when the

footprint of the intervention goes uncounted, and WRAP (2025b) similarly finds that assumptions about durability often fail when tested against real wear.

These tensions make measurement essential rather than optional. Table 2 proposes indicators testing whether the strategy works as claimed.

Indicator	What it tests
Repair and de-pilling rate among adopters	Whether care behaviour actually changes
Average garment retention period	Whether garment life genuinely extends
Consumable refill and repeat purchase rate	Depth of adoption beyond first purchase
Clothing replacement frequency among adopters	Whether a rebound effect is occurring
Packaging and material weight per unit sold	Footprint of the intervention itself

Table 2: Proposed indicators for evaluating LIFECARE (author's own, 2026)

LIFECARE should therefore be judged not on product sales but on whether it demonstrably increases garment utilisation without generating disproportionate additional environmental impacts.

4. Element 4: Reflection

This reflection follows the cycle set out by Gibbs (1988), shown in Figure 7.

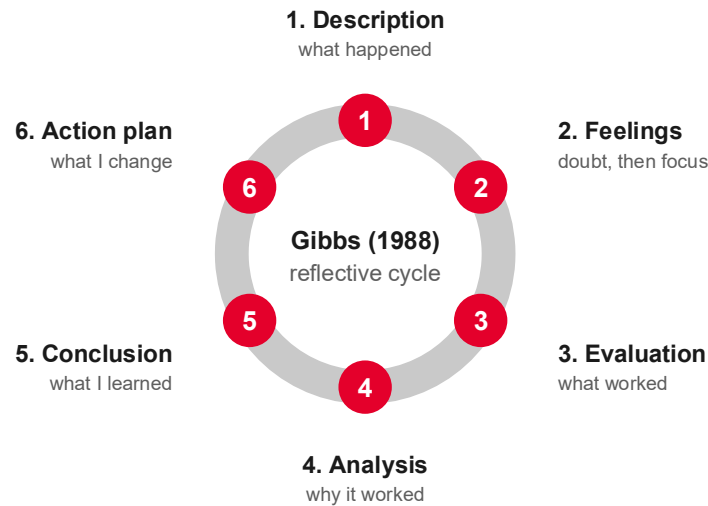


Figure 7: Reflective cycle applied to this project, after Gibbs (1988)

I was asked to develop a sustainable brand extension and present it as a poster. My first concepts did not survive scrutiny. I proposed a circular furniture service for IKEA and later a refillable cleaning range, but research showed IKEA already operates furniture rental in several markets. Similar checks ruled out sports nutrition for Adidas and recovery devices for Decathlon. Only after adopting systematic verification did I arrive at UNIQLO garment care.

I began confidently and became frustrated when two developed ideas had to be abandoned late. That frustration proved useful, because it forced a more disciplined method. Preparing the poster produced a different concern, which was compressing a full argument into roughly two hundred words. I chose to open on the gap in UNIQLO's own care guidance rather than on market statistics, because a specific verifiable inconsistency holds attention better than a large number. Rehearsing aloud against a timer showed that material reading quickly on a page takes longer to say, and I cut a further section as a result.

Evaluating the process, the verification discipline was the clear strength and the final concept holds up because it was tested rather than assumed. The clear weakness was sequencing, since I invested effort in design work before the concept was settled and repeated that work twice.

Analysing why, the central learning concerns the distinction Kotler et al. (2024) draw between a line extension and a brand extension. My discarded ideas failed on that distinction as much as on novelty, because furniture rental is a new business model inside an existing category rather than entry into a new one. I also learned that the most persuasive evidence often belongs to the organisation itself, since published UNIQLO care guidance proved more compelling than any external statistic.

What changed in my behaviour is that I now treat a claim of novelty as a hypothesis to be tested rather than a starting assumption. Abandoning two developed concepts felt wasteful, yet doing so produced a stronger proposal than persisting would have done. This matters professionally because a recommendation resting on an unchecked premise can fail in front of a client, and the cost of checking is always lower than the cost of being wrong late.

In future work I will complete a short market validation checklist covering competitor existence, category novelty, customer need and brand fit before investing time in design or production. I will record full source details at the point of retrieval rather than reconstructing citations afterwards, and I will rehearse presentations aloud against a timer, since reading silently gave me a misleading sense of length.

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