

Marketing Fundamentals



By: Lorian Georgescu

Lecturer's name: Tushara Balendran

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YEEZY

BLOG

The History of Yeezy and Kanye “Ye” West’s vision of future



Who is Kanye “Ye” West?

Kanye “Ye” West has been born in Atlanta on June 8, 1977 and has been raised in Chicago. He is a singer, record producer, actor, visionary, fashion designer, entrepreneur, songwriter.

After his mother, “Donda C. West” has divorced from Kanye’s father, “Ray West”, young West would drop out of Chicago State University college one year after he started attending, just to pursue his dream, in this case being music. Very early, young Kanye has demonstrated his music producer abilities to an artist called Jermaine Dupri, producing his album called Life in 1472. After he has relocated to New York, Kanye would see a bigger success after producing for Rock-A-Fella Records, owned by his fellow, Jay Z.

What set Kanye apart from other producers was his high alert beats known as 808. He rose to fame in 2004 after the release of his first studio album called The College Dropout which amassed a huge success. After his musical career took off, Kanye would start his own record label known as GOOD Music. Following his success as a prolific music producer, West has stepped into the world of fashion once more by collaborating with Adidas in the year of 2006. This would have later been called one of the most successful acquisitions in the fashion industry.

YEEZY. A VISION OF FUTURE

Even if the 2006 shoe collab between Yeezy and Adidas didn’t see the light of the day, Kanye would later collab with the prolific Japanese designer Nigo on his signature trainers called Bapesta “College Dropout” which is a rare piece and attracting high resell prices.

Following the success of his Bapesta shoe, Ye has collaborated with none other than the infamous Louis Vuitton, Giuseppe Zanotti and Nike.

The Nike collaboration has met a huge success as he has released the Yeezy 1 and Yeezy 2 trainers. The whole market was taken by surprise as a new silhouette shoe has claimed their interest. But the clothing line hasn’t received such a warm embrace from the public this leading to the falloff between Yeezy and Nike.

5 years later, after the contract between Nike and Yeezy has ended, Kanye would be approached as the new creative director of their future partnership.

Adidas has offered West to pay 15% royalties for his designs plus a whopping 10-million-dollar deal.



After the 10 million dollars acquisition has finalised, Kanye would later create the YEEZY Season 1 range containing his infamous Yeezy 750 boot, containing a full upper in suede leather, full length zipper, the cross strap and a very comfortable and iconic boost sole from Adidas.

As 2015 was a huge success for Mr West, the following release by his Yeezy line would be the Yeezy 350 sneaker, such a unique design with woven-prime knit upper and boost technology from Adidas would soon find a major success. As some of the hypebeast collectors would call them a collector's item.

In 2020, Kanye would struck a massive 10 year contract with GAP, later on known as YEEZY GAP, followed by the release of their first product, a futuristic blue puffer jacket, which sold out in hours.

As Mr West has told Vogue "It is a vision come true to work with Gap and Demna, the creative director of Balenciaga, to make incredible product available to everyone at all times.", his vision consisting minimalistic design, improved availability and utilitarianism would later be achieved.

The next project of West would be the opening of Donda Academy, named after his late mother Donda C. West, a tuition-based prep school based in Simi Valley, California whose teachings would involve an ethic of care and integrity in the process of creating next generation leaders.



YEEZY

THE LOGO

As the title would suggest, Kanye has found his idea through his close friend and idol Jay Z, also called Hov, shortened from Jehovah, meaning God in Hebrew influencing him to opt out for Yeezy, as he was inspired by the name of the son of God, Jesus. Also, his sixth studio album released in 2013 has also been called "Yeezus".

Kanye West has been influenced by the heavy usage of "eezy" in the Hollywood scene resulting in him adding it to his nickname "Ye".

Fellow artists such as Aubrey Drake Graham, Maurice Christopher Brown and Lil Wayne have used the addition of "eezy" to their nicknames resulting in Dreezy, Breezy respectively Weezy.

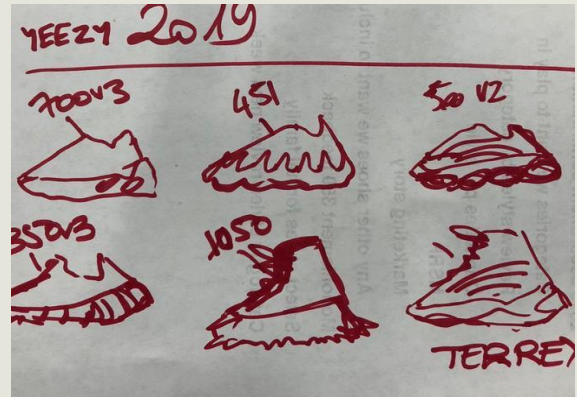
Yeezy. Art Of Design

With the rapid success of his Yeezy sneaker line, Kanye West's journey through fashion has met a new tipping point, as his products have shifted towards a more cultural necessity, such as the Jordan brand.

Still, after this huge success, Kanye's motive as a designer wasn't simply watching his fans flood the sneaker shops, but one much greater, impact the whole world through his design decisions. After his interview at the Cannes Lions International Festival of Creativity, the music mogul has delivered a speech about the process of creation, innovation, fashion and the relationship between culture and brands.

Being a visionary, Kanye gave an insight into his sporadic madness, his personal philosophies and the importance of merging design with influence. Since the apparition in the fashion industry, the Grammy winning music producer has proven his taste in design and fashion numerous times.

By elevating the exposure to taste, this could spark cultural movements pushing the culture forward.



While his delivery might start some controversy at times, West's comments about the sense of taste are rather precise.

Considering today's social climate or the access to resources, it might sound a bit idealistic, but the training or refined taste might change the world as we see it by designing the culture. Kanye "Ye" West might not be considered as the most successful designer, but many would consider he has put his imprint on this fashion era.

As a part of his Forbes cover, Kanye has spoken freely about his creative process and the influences he has used in his designs. One of these influences is the Japanese anime film Akira, Kanye explaining, "My mom took me to see the movie when I was really young and the shapes and the colour palette and the general mood of the film has always been a big inspiration for Yeezy."

Ye cites also the moment he went to a car trade show with his father, marking the first time the young musician has seen the Lamborghini Countach, "There's a little bit of Lamborghini in everything I do. Yeezy is the Lamborghini of shoes."



Products

Yeezy 750 OG

After a rough depart from Nike and no news from the Adidas x Yeezy collaboration, Kanye has teased the first Yeezy sneaker, the 750. Many would argue that this is not a new design from Kanye, but more like an evolution of the same design language which he has used before, Nike Air Yeezy.

With a design consisting of an upper suede, an iconic strap across the front, side zipper and Adidas inspired sole, the Yeezy 750 has taken the sneaker market by surprise. This sneaker would be later considered a holy grail by the hypebeast community.

The sneaker community felt like they have been let down by the price increase of the new silhouette which Yeezy and Adidas have introduced, coming at around 350 American dollars, a big increase considering the 245\$ price tag of the Nike Air Yeezy.



Yeezy 350

Following the release of the 750 sneaker, Kanye would later introduce a new silhouette called the Yeezy 350. Adopting a primeknit upper with a unique pattern, the first Yeezy low top sneaker, achieved huge success from the community. Yeezy 350 comes in different colourways such as, turtle dove, moonrock, pirate black and oxford tan.

“The 350 introduced Kanye’s first low-top style. With the boom of the Adidas Ultra Boost and consumers gravitating towards running styles, the Turtle Dove colourway dropped at the perfect time. The Turtle Dove is more than likely to be the most iconic of all the Yeezy 350 styles.”

(Fresco Wilson of Stadium Goods, 2015)



Yeezy 700 v2

Early in 2018, fans would spot the fashion mogul rocking an updated design of an earlier release of Yeezy 700 V1. The V2 version of Yeezy 700 featured a similar design as the precedent V1 but with additions such as reflective stripes, panelling on the upper, upper composed of roller knit, premium leather and boost technology for the midsole, made it a huge success, selling out instantly.

As the fashion industry has seen a big movement towards the dad shoe silhouette, Kanye has met support from all the industry fellows and Hollywood celebrities such as, Kim Kardashian, Scott Disick, James Harden and others.



Yeezy Gap Round Jacket

Some people may view it as a trash bag but the impact of the new Yeezy Gap collaboration has made people stir online. Its first drop in OG blue, back in June 2021 has sold out in minutes showcasing the huge success the two brands have accomplished. The buttonless puffer jacket has dropped in two more colourways black and red.



Marketing Strategy

Yeezy is considered one of the most iconic brands worldwide transcending to more of a cultural movement by setting trends which people can follow.

As Ye has stated, *"It's not that I'm not right... sometimes I'm just not right now."*, he summarized Yeezy's brand identity and marketing strategy almost looking like he is always one step ahead of the competition by innovation and design.

Unlike other brands, Yeezy's marketing strategy relies entirely on the notoriety of Kanye "Ye" West himself. Yeezy's marketing strategy starts firstly on content creation and PR stunts, by using Kanye's fanbase to create a momentum which the competition doesn't have.



Pricing Strategy

Yeezy's pricing strategy is still on the pricier side of the streetwear but not as expensive as other couture brands such as Louis Vuitton. The artificial shortage of its items contributing to the luxurious feel of the brand leading it to become a well-respected and sought in the resale market. The resale market contributing to the hype of the Yeezy brand, customers feel like they wear a piece which has been touched and produced by Kanye West himself.



Although the retail price of the Yeezy 350 V2 is 220£ in the UK, the resell price can vary from 300£ to even 1500£ depending on the colourway the customer is looking for.

YEEZY BOOST 350 V2 Price Around the World 2022

USA	\$220
UK	£220
Japan	¥65567
Australia	\$340AUD

Yeezy's Location and Distribution

According to Yeezy's marketing strategy, by mentioning the place where the yeezy products are designed (Los Angeles, California) is more than useful for a marketing success.

Yeezy's method of distribution is selective distribution, by selling certain products to chosen network of resellers, retailers and wholesalers. This method has its pros and cons, but it showed great success upon its introduction.

One of the pros of such a strategy is the reduced cost of distributing the company's products. Wider availability is another factor which Kanye has thought about, the right placement with the right retailers and outlets leads to more availability of Yeezy's products towards the consumers turning this as a profit.

A con of the selective distribution is that there is less control of the brand over some of its distribution network. By doing this, the brand's image might be impacted by third party franchises by vesting power in their hands.



Promotion Scheme

Yeezy's promotion scheme is not such a hard conversation because the face of it all is its founder Kanye West. As mentioned earlier, Yeezy uses PR stunts and content creation. As the consumers have a view of the controversial life of the fashion mogul, they feel like they are really living within it.

But, besides this, Kanye is a genius when it comes to Yeezy's product placement, by creating buzz online before every yeezy collection is being introduced. It's well known that Kanye hates paparazzi, but, at the same time it is working in Kanye's favour by having more exposure. Every time you would find Mr West fully dressed in a new yeezy collection showcasing future products which are about to drop soon.

Even his music videos and albums play a part in the marketing success of Yeezy by advertising its products in most of Kanye's projects. For an example, The Life Of Pablo album, has sought great success. It has been another marketing success when Kanye West has played for the first time the entire album to a stacked Madison Square Garden in 2016 whilst the presence of the whole Yeezy Season 3 garments.



"I feel that I'm very blessed. But with great blessings come great responsibility."

Kanye "Ye" West



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