Sizable Subject: The Plus Side of Fashion
Allyson Ancona, TMD Major

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Summary by Emma Weinreb

The fashion industry has always struggled with the perception that it is only a game for skinny people to play, but Allyson Ancona asks, “are plus size women discriminated against in the world of fashion?” First of all, the definition of a plus size women is a woman who wears a size 14 or larger. However, a plus size model in fashion is a woman who wears a size 6 or larger. This is a huge discrepancy, and it is clear why women have problems with the way plus size fashion is presented to the public. Therefore, the relationship between the fashion industry and plus size women is untrustworthy and questionable. Ancona went on to discuss a reverse SWOT analysis, a TOWS, of the plus size fashion industry.

Threats:
- There is a negative connotation with plus size; “fear the fat”.
- Popular brands almost exclusively advertise using skinny models.
- There is a lack of consideration from top designers for plus size fashions.
- There is a general unwillingness to produce or mention plus size clothing.
- Many brands are built on discrimination, such as Brandy Melville and Abercrombie and Fitch.

Opportunities:
- Transitioning plus size clothing from online stores to brick and mortar stores.
- Updating the original plus size stores.
- Bring attention to the #PlusSizePlease movement, where women add to a worldwide database of clothing they want but can't access.

Weaknesses
- Technological abilities – every plus size person is different so it is difficult to create a template.
- There is a lack of data for sizing.

Strengths
- There are certain brands leading the way for plus size fashion, such as Torrid, H&M, Target and Aerie.
- Plus size models are becoming more popular and recognized, like Ashley Graham.
- There are many plus size fashion blogs, or “Fatsionista” blogs such as The Curvy Fashionista, Curvy Girls Chic, and Girl With Curves.

In conclusion, Ancona asks where do we go from here? While the progress that has been made has been tremendous, there is still a long way to go. Perhaps if a top
designer jumped on the bandwagon of plus size fashion, it would change the public perception.