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Consulting Project International  
Market Research  
for **FLAWA Consumer GmbH**

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# International market analysis footwear industry – developments, needs, sustainability trends

Flawa Consumer GmbH intends to focus on manufacturing and designing products according to the circular economy principle. The Consulting Project aimed to analyse the footwear market in general and in terms of sustainability and outline trends and possible cooperation partners in the footwear market.

## Proceeding

To reach the goals of the Consulting Project, the team conducted primary and secondary research. As a first step, data on the footwear market was collected to get general information on how sustainability is implemented in the industry. In the next step, several footwear brands were assessed in terms of sustainability based on different criteria. Further, the project team conducted 12 in-depth interviews in the primary research part to obtain industry-specific information. As the market is quite secretive, this enabled the team to gain exciting insights and cross-check the secondary research information. Finally, the project team summarised its findings and elaborated recommendations for the client.

## Results

The footwear industry is at the beginning of a crucial transformation. The market is strongly fragmented, and competition is high. Developments such as the partial relocation of the production sites or the increasing legislation in the textile and footwear industry, e.g., the European Green Deal, will open up new opportunities. The effects of the COVID-19 pandemic strongly impacted the footwear market. However, the future outlook is promising, as the market is expected to recover quickly and return to stable growth in the midterm. It is recommended that the client should specialise itself and focus on European cooperation partners who follow similar approaches. Another advice is that Flawa should focus on circularity rather than sustainability as this development will continue in the long term, and offers a better possibility to clearly differentiate from competitors. An interesting trend is seen in health-focus products since it was found out that this area provides a higher margin, and growing demand is expected. Finally, it can be stated that there is a disagreement in the industry on how sustainability will develop in the market in future. Some experts expect more durable products, while others are waiting for the development of more circular products.

## FLAWA Consumer GmbH, Flawil

Flawa Consumer GmbH (Flawil SG) is developing and manufacturing cotton products, face masks for universal and medical purposes, and innovative insoles. The company employs over 100 people. Flawa pursues a strong focus and high-quality products and components. Sustainability, and responsible corporate behaviour are key terms.



## Client

FLAWA Consumer GmbH, Flawil  
**Claude Rieser, CEO**  
**Patrick Tanner, CFO**  
[www.flawa.ch](http://www.flawa.ch)

The consulting team had the challenging task of investigating and understanding the footwear industry. The results are remarkable and will help us in our transformation phase to establish ourselves in this new market. Thanks to the research, we were able to understand this new market faster and it gave us an external point of view that increased our success factor.



## Coach

OST – Eastern Switzerland  
University of Applied Sciences  
**Dr. Lothar Natau**

One would think that a centuries-old market no longer offers surprises. Far from it! I have never seen such a closed market full of secrecy. Well-founded research work was necessary to lift the veil. Among other things, proven procedures and theories had to be adapted. The results are surprising and impressive.



Overview of sustainability of the brands evaluated  
Source: own illustration