

# NATHAN JOHNSON | APOSTOLIC CLOTHING

Analysis by Jacob Tapia

## **Introduction**

The business analysis found in this review is intended to be a broad analysis of Nathan Johnson's business, Apostolicclothing.com. From a recent discussion with the owner, it appears that the company is losing market share and is in the process of changing strategies by transitioning to a wholesaler.

This analysis is intended to briefly explore the SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats) that are evident to the author, a website review, some thoughts on competing websites, and a few forward-looking suggestions.

## **SWOT Analysis - Apostolicclothing.com**

This analysis is intended to bring to light some of the different aspects of the company and the surrounding elements. It is intended to spark ideas and discussion for future planning.

### *Strengths*

Social media presence - The owner has presented that there are over 100k social media followers indicating a deliberate focus on marketing.

Developing this type of the following is not an easy task but something that must be developed over the years and closely maintained. This denotes the company is an influencer in the Apostolic clothing space and has a strong marketing strategy.

Mission - This company has a strong focus that seeks to provide clothing that is “modest yet trendy”. This is fulfilling a need in the Apostolic churches and elsewhere.

Knowledge - The owner has a background in the overseas market because of prior shipping and importing experience.

Personnel - The employee lineup is comprised of both foreign and domestic partners working together to create a dynamic team. They have been trained by the owner and appear to work well together.

Image - The feeling that is shown through the marketing of the clothing is one of fashion excellence and being “classy”. The image appears to be one of “normal” people wearing great clothes (see competitor analysis for contrasts).

### *Weaknesses*

Single focus - Modest clothing appears to be the only source of revenue. It is understandable given the fact that the company is trying to provide modest clothing. The competitors have

Global - Because of an importing approach, the costs of importing could be an issue if there were changes in the government, taxes, shipping times, etc.

Competition - The competition has grown over the past few years making it more difficult to distinguish ones self the different modest clothing stores. The “glossy” feel of some of the newer websites can over-run even the most robust and aged online store.

### *Threats*

Market Share - The biggest factor that can threaten market share is more and more “modest” clothing stores coming into the market place. The pie will get smaller as these companies continue to become a competing factor.

Technology - As websites become easier to handle, the “glossy” look will be more readily available. This will threaten a more mature site that has been around for a while and would be harder to change.

Trending Styles - If the styles begin to turn to a more generally modest fashion, brick and mortar retail stores could begin carrying similar clothing. This could be a drawback for market share and would increase competition.

Social Media Volume - With over 100k followers, it will be harder and harder to make a personal connection with each individual.

### *Opportunities*

Wholesaling - Act as a hub for these mediums and provide them with quality help in making their businesses grow through providing excellent products at wholesale value.

Consulting - Become a knowledge base for all clothing companies. With over 200 of these companies started, there should be many business-to-business opportunities.

Resources - Writing books and articles to further aid those who want to get into this niche. This would result in residual revenue.

Mobile App - Create a mobile app that would help people in their day-to-day shopping. Some of the features could include basic styles for different body shapes, color charts, and buying tips.

Website templates - This could be a basic template that is tailored for the needs of a small business clothing company. Could also offer support for a certain amount of time.

Coaching - As a veteran company, the opportunities for taking a business to the next level are apparent. Most businesses fail in the first year and many more by year five. Only a small fraction survive and go on to be successful adult companies. There is definitely a need for someone to walk through the process for a newbie.

EBook - This could be a series on getting started in this business. This type of product offers the promise of residual income.

Investing Club - This could be formed to offer financing by partnering with new companies and offering loans to qualified retailers. The retail and business experience that can be offered by Mr. Johnson can be a help to new companies when partnered with financial backers.

Website - Create a hub website of all modest retailers and offer a rating system for them.

## **Website Analysis**

### *Overview*

ApostolicClothing.com was started 5 years ago and it currently has over 100k social followers and gets close to 9k hits/day. This analysis is primarily from the author's review of the front page of the website.

## *Website Elements*

Front Page - At first glance, this website is laid out well and the elements all fit together well.

Responsive - The website was responsive and aligned well with the different devices.

Layout - The layout was good in that it allowed the user to make an immediate decision as to where to go next. Users will be able to begin shopping immediately without much movement.

Models - The models appear to have a “holy glow” and are beautiful examples of modest women who have an emphasis on being “holy” than “hot”. Different ages make the site appear to have a selection for everyone.

Pricing - After reviewing the pricing of this website, I noticed the particular strategy being used here with the slashed pricing. This gives the shopper the feeling of getting a bargain. At the same time, the strategy can make the product appear undervalued. Why the slashed pricing?

Diversity - One thing I appreciated about this website is the diversity. All of the competitors lacked anything other than Caucasian models. This can definitely be a selling point in the future.

Photography - The photographs were all very different and lacked consistency with the models. Some looked very professional and others appeared to be stock photos. Consider redoing past clothing and removing old items to create a more streamlined approach.

Colors - There appeared to be several different color themes going on with the slider and thumbnail photos. This mismatch of colors can be visually

overwhelming at times for the viewers. For a more visually appealing site, consider adopting a consistent color palate.

Graphic Design - There were several different fonts used on the front page. Consider streamlining these fonts for readability and consistency.

Favicon - The favicon design does not match any graphic on the front page. It seems a little out of place and a favicon that somewhat matches the logo may be a better fit.

### *Final Thoughts on the Website*

In general, it appears that the website has been “built” over time and could use an upgrade or a more streamlined approach to solidify a more professional appearance.

### **Competitor Analysis**

Shabbyapple.com - The first impression from this site is that the emphasis is on glamour and style. The creative and “staged” setting makes it appealing to a high-end buyer. This site does not have any “modesty” values other than being more modest than normal women's clothing retailers. This is evidenced by the short sleeves and skirts, tight clothes, makeup, jewelry, etc.

Koshercasual.com - Basic design and simplicity seem to be the main focus of this site. Limited selection and a “just the facts” make this a drawing for those who are looking for functionality over fashion. This clothing is for the woman who is in the trenches and supplies a grayscale and drab approach to modesty. Lower prices and “90’s” feel beg the question as to the website’s goal of modest clothing for the modern lifestyle. *Nothing modern here!*

Mikarose.com - The tag line, "Reinventing Modesty", and a bikini photo were the first to greet me on this website. It appears this site has attempted to bring a level of modesty to "high class". The feeling of this site is for adult women who are looking for corporate or special occasion products. The models are poised to project a classy feel for every outfit. Lots of color and glamour style photography make this a site for those seeking high fashion with modest design.

Sweetsaltclothing.com - On first glance, this website seems to focus on quality and excellence as a retailer. The lack of staging, backgrounds, etc. make this site seem somewhat clinical and "J.C.Penny"ish. It appears the emphasis is on young-adult, professional, motherly, and Caucasian women. These "modest" clothes appear to be day-to-day staple wardrobe for the blogging-working mom who wants to be classy while shopping or out for dinner.

## **Strategy Analysis**

The owner of ApostolicClothing.com has stated that, "My goal for this company is to build it as a brand that can be sold in shops around the country which is why I am teaming up with modestwholesale.com and a few other wholesale channels. We are at a phase where we know that we need a revamp and to push our wholesale line a bit further."

Without knowing the internal goals and trajectory, one can only project options that could be available to this company. That being said, there are many opportunities available to the company. Here are my closing thoughts as to some ways the owner and ApostolicClothing.com can grow and expand.

## *Suggestions*

Competitive Advantage - Who are you going to be? This needs to be clearly defined. As a company ages and matures, it will begin to take on a different form. One must consistently revisit the purpose and mission of the company in order to keep it connected to the vision of the leadership and the needs of the customer.

Consider going smaller - Cut down your least performing stock and consult your sales database to determine your best selling items. Place an emphasis on your highest profit items.

Go quality - As more and more sites come along, it will be imperative that companies try to bring quality into every aspect of the business. This could involve consulting, online training, or specific courses for graphic design, photography, business, etc. One proverb states, "A rising tide lifts all boats." As the leadership seeks to grow and develop, the level of quality will continue to grow and keep this company competitive for years to come.

Network - Your connections have no doubt grown over the past several years. It may be time to become a major player in the field by getting to know your competition and creating goodwill among this particular niche.

## **Conclusion**

After 10 years of marriage to an Apostolic lady, the author has discovered this truth; one does not "accidentally" dress modestly! Modest clothing must be sought out intentionally and carefully. I applaud your efforts to help Apostolic ladies find modest clothing options. Our hope is that this brief analysis will help you reach greater heights as you strive for excellence and growth in your company.

—Jacob Tapia