



AUSTRALIAN SWIM AND SURFWEAR: THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CULTURAL IDENTITY AND LIFESTYLE APPAREL NICHE DEVELOPMENT

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The objective of this research was to analyse and evaluate the success of Australian swim and surfwear within this specific lifestyle apparel market through analysis of this sector's development in relationship to Australian national and cultural identity, in particular the image of "the beach."

Data were collected using an Interpretivist methodology. This included a diverse range of literature: apparel and trend forecasting, cultural theory and surfing subcultural publications, and interviews with leading Australian swim and surfwear labels. Roland Barthes' *Mythologies* has been used as the theoretical basis through which interpretation of the image and expectation of the Australian beach have influenced and aided the development of these apparel sectors.

The outcome of the research is an analysis of the significance of the relationship between the image of the Australian beach and surfing, the expectations of a way of life, and the subsequent development and marketing of a lifestyle apparel product.

Barthes, R. (1972). *Mythologies*. New York: Harper and Collins.