

4Youth: Brand Love Letters

February 2023



4 Youth: Brand Love Letters

With Valentine's Day in mind and in keeping with the theme of love, we asked the 4Youth Community to write a love letter to their favourite brand.

We asked them to explain the best things about the brand, shared values, how the brand could improve the relationship and what sets them apart from other brands.

Here are a few of our favourites.



Common Themes:

Affordability

It's clear that the cost of living crisis has had an impact on spend amongst 4Youth, with many seeking out brands that offer lower price points and discounts - yet, in terms of fashion, not at the expense of style. This also emerged as a key theme in 2018, with cost at the forefront of purchase decisions for many.

Sustainability

There remains a growing pressure from 4Youth for brands to demonstrate an ongoing commitment to sustainability, through the provision of environmentally friendly products - particularly amongst fashion brands. There was also praise for brands that encouraged second hand buying and selling, along with an appetite for more organic and plant-based products.

Quality

High-quality products proved a key draw for 4Youth, particularly when tied with affordable price points - durability & functionality of products were highlighted as important.

Customer Service

Respondents tend to favour brands that provide a high level of customer service, including quick and helpful problem solving, a level of empathy & understanding and being responsive to messages and issues that may arise, e.g. relating to delivery or quality of products.

Range & Inclusivity

Brands that cater for wider audiences, e.g. shape/size/health, appealed to 4Youth, particularly in fashion and food industries - there was lots of positivity surrounding varied style and product ranges.

The most popular brands to write to in 2023 were clothing brands.

In 2018, there appeared a stronger alignment to technology/digital/travel brands amongst 4Youth, with a heavy focus on the theme of connection - this has now shifted to a greater emphasis on fashion, health & wellness and sustainability.

Big Love for Brands...

ebay

Will's Vegan Store

sneaky



THE NORTH FACE



boohoo

CAMPAIGN AGAINST LIVING MISERABLY CALM

amazon

GOOSE & GANDER
UNISEX CLOTHING

SHEIN

CeraVe
DEVELOPED WITH DERMATOLOGISTS

The Ordinary.

HAWKINS & JOSEPH

Simple

WEEKDAY



ZARA

deliciously ella^{de}



MISFITS



VICTORIA'S SECRET

ASOS

Nintendo®

SAMSUNG
Calvin Klein



world of books

URBAN OUTFITTERS



URBAN DECAY

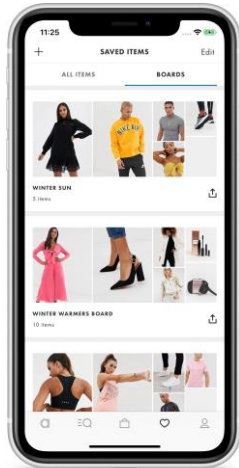
Dear ASOS

Female, 21

My love for you has grown throughout the years but I can't deny what first attracted me to you, your **wild discounts** and **variety of clothing** that only a completely indecisive person like myself could truly appreciate. You were a dream - all my favourite brands at my fingertips. Every day you enhance my life, and I don't know where I would be without you (well I'd be shopping IN PERSON, which would be the worst fate).

I'm able to reach out to my phone, click on your beautiful black and white app and swipe to my heart's content. I see you (and your best friend the postman) every day, all year because of you and your magnificent **premium delivery option** for just £9 a year. It's as if you looked into my soul, knew I was dying for a bargain and came into my life at exactly the right time. I know this will be a lifelong commitment as we share the same values - we both love to stay true to ourselves, **dress completely unique** and stand out from the crowd. We're authentic, creative and disciplined. Together we will take over the world, probably in a fancy pantsuit or pair of parachute pants.

We've been through the best of times and the worst of times. I appreciate you for sticking it out with me, even when my eye wandered to the likes of Boohoo, and you waited until I realised that nobody compares to you. There is nothing we could do to improve this strong relationship (unless you wanted to give me an unlimited gift card to redeem whenever I wanted of course hehe, just kidding). Our bond is nothing like any other brand. Where one brand is limited and stagnant, **you are growing - getting bigger, better and bolder**. You are set apart by the **level of service** you provide me. I've never had a problem with a delivery that you couldn't solve. I've never sent a message that you didn't reply to. I'll never think about Pretty Little Thing or Boohoo again. You are the crème de la crème of the online fashion retailers. Thank you for being you.



Dear North Face

Male, 21



THE NORTH FACE®



Happy Valentine's Day! I hope this letter finds you well. I am writing to express my love and admiration for your brand. What first attracted me to you was your **commitment to creating high-quality outdoor gear and clothing**. I was impressed by the **durability and functionality of your products**, as well as your **commitment to sustainability**.

The best things about you are your **commitment to innovation, quality, and sustainability**. Your products have enhanced my life by allowing me to explore the great outdoors with confidence and comfort. Whether I am hiking, camping, or just enjoying a walk-in nature, your gear and clothing have become a staple in my life. I see you often, both online and in-store.

I visit your website frequently to stay up to date on the latest product releases and I visit your stores when I am in need of new gear or clothing. The values we share are a **love of the great outdoors, a commitment to sustainability, and a focus on innovation and quality**. These values align with my personal beliefs, and I am proud to support a brand that shares my values.

There have been moments of tension, such as when I am faced with the difficult decision of choosing between multiple products, but I have always been able to overcome these challenges by focusing on the **quality and durability** of your products. If there is anything you could do to improve our relationship, it would be to continue expanding your offerings in the **sustainable and environmentally friendly product categories**.

Compared to my other relationships with similar brands, you stand out for your **commitment to innovation, quality, and sustainability**. Your focus on creating products that are both **functional and environmentally responsible** sets you apart, and I appreciate the positive impact you have on my life and the environment.

Thank you for being a part of my life. I look forward to continuing our relationship for many years to come.

Dear Shein

Female, 22

When I have first seen you, it has been love at first sight. Your beauty and style are what attracted me to you. You have made my life easier. You have taught me that I **don't need much money** to follow fashion, and that beauty comes with style.

I am aware that since the **cost-of-living crisis** I am only visiting you once every couple of months. I however wanted to let you know that I always check your pictures on Facebook and make plans about what to do when I'll see you again. I often delete these plans and make new ones, until the time when I will see you comes. I know we both share the value of **creativity**.

Even though many people think we just copy others, I believe we are **authentic**. I know in our relationship there have been some misunderstandings and lack of trust, but you have **always managed to solve them**. That's why every time something goes wrong, I know I can always get a "refund" from you! There is only one thing you could do to improve our relationship. Please make these rumours about your bad reputation at work stop. I don't want to believe that you take advantage of your employees, and I hope you're not such an unethical person as your ex-girlfriends describe you. This is something I have never heard about my ex-boyfriends Zara and Primark.

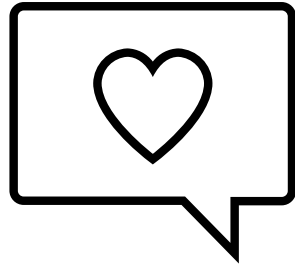
You are however better, because I can see in you the best part of myself, and I have never felt it was so **easy and affordable** to be in a relationship! I am looking forward to seeing you again.



SHEIN



ZARA



Affordability

Customer Service

Range & Inclusivity

Quality

Dear Zara

Female, 17

I first became attracted to Zara when I saw their clothing in the store. Their pieces were **stylish, yet affordable** and they had a **wide variety of styles** that appealed to me. It was clear that Zara put a lot of thought into the design and **quality** of their products which really drew me in as a consumer.

The best thing about Zara is definitely how often they release new collections with **fresh designs** for each season. This keeps my wardrobe up to date without having to break the bank on expensive designer items every few months! The brand also has **great customer service** which makes shopping easier and more enjoyable overall; this has certainly enhanced my life by allowing me **access to fashionable clothes at an affordable price** point!

I usually visit them once or twice per month either online or in store depending on what type of item I am looking for - if it's something small like accessories then I will go online but if it's clothing then visiting one of their stores is always better so I can try things out before purchasing them. Zara **values quality fashion at an accessible price** point, something that resonates with many people regardless of age or economic background - this is why they have become such a successful global brand today!

We both share similar values around **affordability** combined with **high standards** when it comes to fashion items - these are core principles we both strive towards together as customers and retailers alike. Thankfully there haven't been any moments where tension arose between us during our relationship thus far. They could improve our relationship further by introducing **loyalty programs** offering discounts/rewards based upon purchase history, creating **more personalized experiences** tailored specifically towards individual shoppers needs & wants!

Finally, compared against other brands within its same category, what sets Zara apart from everyone else is its commitment towards providing **trendy yet timeless** pieces all year round while maintaining **competitive prices** across all ranges - making them truly stand out amongst competitors!



Dear Lidl

Male, 21

I hope this letter finds you well. I am writing to express my love and admiration for your brand. What first attracted me to you was your **commitment to providing high-quality products at affordable prices**. I was impressed by your **wide range of products**, from groceries to household items, and the fact that you **prioritize sustainability and ethical sourcing**.

The best things about you are your consistency in providing **high-quality products**, your commitment to making a **positive impact on the community**, and your focus on **customer satisfaction**. You have enhanced my life by making it easier for me to live a **healthier and more sustainable lifestyle**, while still **keeping within my budget**. I see you often, and I visit your stores at least once a week. I love how **easy it is to find everything** I need in one place. I see you most at your stores, but I also enjoy browsing your online offerings. The values we share are a focus on **quality, affordability, and sustainability**. These values align with my personal beliefs, and I am proud to support a brand that shares my values.

While there have been occasional moments of tension, such as when certain products sell out quickly, I have always been impressed by your **commitment to finding solutions and improving the customer experience**. There is always room for improvement, but if there is anything you could do to improve our relationship, it would be to **expand your offerings in the organic and plant-based product categories**. Compared to my other relationships with similar brands, you stand out for your **commitment to quality and affordability**. Your **focus on sustainability** sets you apart, and I appreciate the **positive impact** you have on the world.

Thank you for being a part of my life. I look forward to continuing our relationship for many years to come.



Dear Deliciously Ella

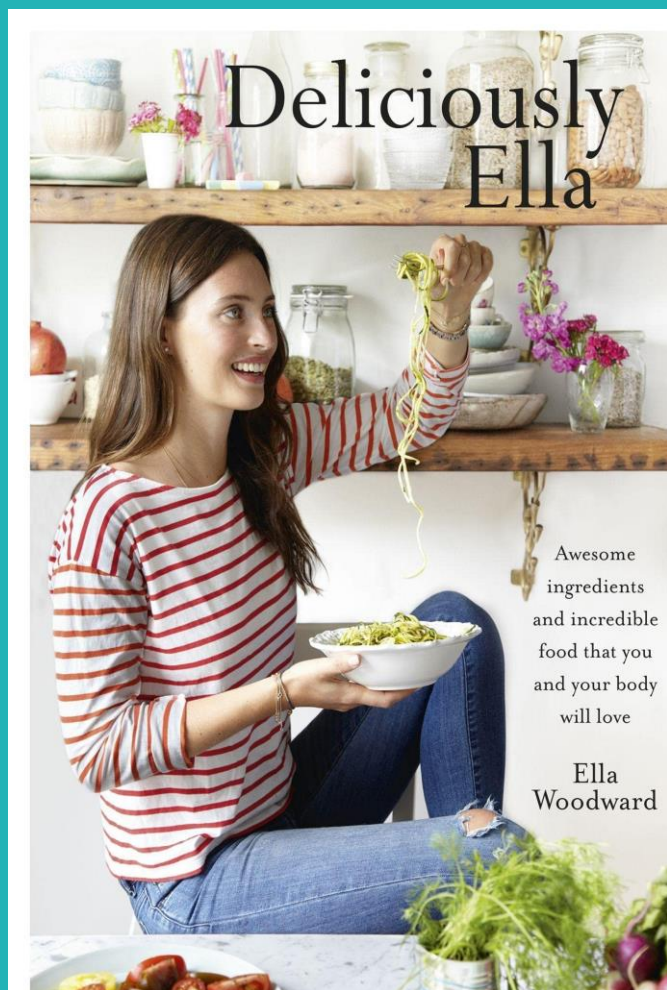
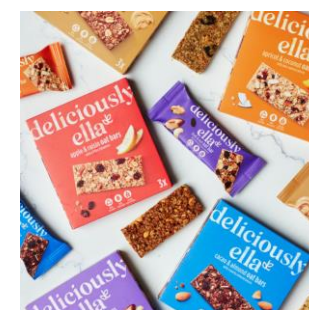
Female, 23

When I was in the thick of my teenager angst and figuring out what worked for me and what didn't, I decided to try plant-based eating. It was viewed as strange and complicated by most of my peers and I had to really go against the grain. At a young age, this **heightened my self-awareness** massively and often made me self-conscious. I remember so clearly seeing a photo on Instagram of your founders standing outside your new cafe on Weighhouse street and **resonating with the caption about healthy food**.

I followed the journey and felt excited that there was someone out there that was feeding my ambition and desire to eat and live in a certain way. The first product were these energy balls which I literally couldn't get enough of and would ask my mum to buy them whenever she saw them in shops (which at the time wasn't that common). I then went on a school trip to Dublin, and vividly remember everyone buying Tangfastics and starburst for the flight, and I managed to find an energy ball at the airport. I was so excited; I sent a DM thanking Ella for her hard work and **commitment to providing healthy options** and **making them mainstream**. When we landed, I went back on to Instagram and you had replied to me!!! Thanking me for buying them and following the page. I was so excited. Since then, it has been such a passion of mine to follow, cook your recipes, try out all your techniques and as the company and business has grown, I truly feel that I have.

Now your app is a **toolkit** that I use every day for meditation, **tracking habits** and checking in with myself to see how I am really feeling. The podcast is **full of information, facts and knowledge** that I feel so grateful to be able to listen to and understand. There isn't really a day that goes by when I don't use the app for a recipe or exercise class and if I don't then I'll have one of your products on stand-by to use instead. I really feel that the brand is aligned with all my values and beliefs. It would be incredible to have the opportunity to work with or experience the company energy through an interactive community event or to take it further understand how you built the business to where it is today as it is an aspiration of mine to develop my own business and grow it like they have.

Wellness is often overcomplicated by they strip it back to what really matters. I have not come across a brand that even compares or targets the same areas in the same way and I feel so grateful and lucky to have found you at such a young age. On that note, I am going to tuck into one of your oat bars!



Awesome ingredients and incredible food that you and your body will love

Ella Woodward

Dear Snag Tights

Female/Non-binary, 23

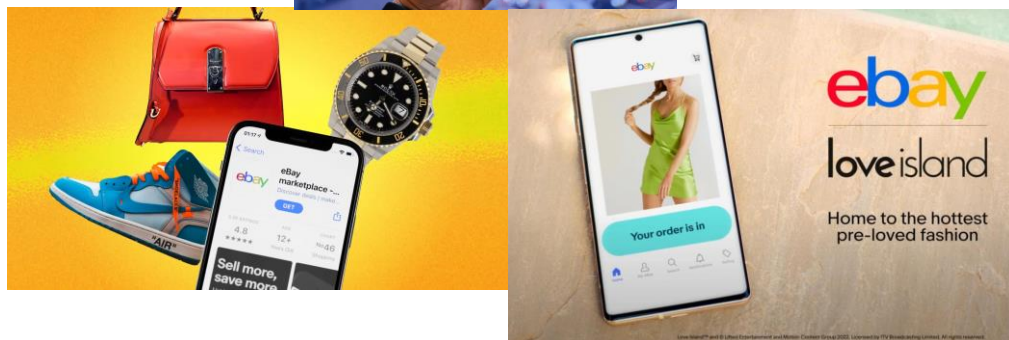
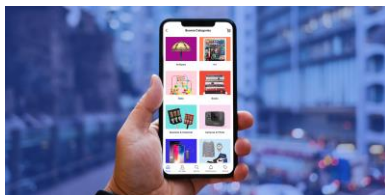
Adoration. That's all I remember feeling from the first time we locked eyes. Your gorgeous website, your enchanting selection of goods, your **thoughtful commitment to inclusivity and sustainability**... I never believed in love at first sight until I saw you. I had given up on finding that perfect pair of tights. Hosiery just seemed out of my league, a luxury for the slim and attractive, for those who prefer a life coloured in beiges and greys. Until you. At first glance on that Facebook scroll, 3am and barely awake, I convinced myself you were too good to be true. Another temptation meant for someone else. Yet you kept coming around. First on Twitter, then Instagram, then even the few channels I trust on YouTube when it comes to matters of the heart (and wardrobe).

I let myself be swayed by your words - the way you **emphasised your love of the curvy femmes and enby's**, how you **wove love and joy into every product description**, the pages on pages of your evidenced actions on **sustainable business**. So, I took the plunge. I knew from the second I opened that package that I made the right choice. Beautiful, long stretches of fabric wrapped delicately and tied with a bow. I thought I'd never dare to wear your colours- deep lilacs, warm burgundies, shimmering emeralds. Yet I couldn't help myself. Suddenly, every outfit became an expression of my love for you. And people noticed. They saw my happiness, my honeymoon swooning every time I tried another new garment. I saw their eyes widen as I showed off the deep pockets you sew with pride in every skirt, dress and pair of leggings you offer. I knew then that we would be together forever.

We've had our ups and downs. That one, fateful night, where a beautifully wrapped package became a sodden mess sat on my doorstep, your lovingly crafted gifts mildewed and crumpled. But you showed me how much you cared that day, with a **speedy replacement** and a **sincere expression of shared grief and disappointment**. You vowed to be better, and I knew I could trust you to come through. It's been almost three years now, and I wouldn't change our relationship for anything. ASOSAs I watch you **grow both in product and profitability**, I watch proudly on the side-lines, honoured to be a part of your journey. I no longer need the cheap scraps of high street stores. You, dear Snag, are a paviour of **quality and stylish goods**, from the hosiery that drew me in to the loungewear and formalwear that keeps me coming back for more. Here's to another Valentine's together, my love

snag





Dear Boohoo

Female, 16

The first thing that attracted me to the brand was the fact that they had **so much variety** for the clothes that I wanted. I am able to get products for the **value of my money** and gain satisfaction by buying as much clothes as possible with a **limited amount of money**.

In this economy due to inflation it's a bit **hard to be able to afford high end brands** that's why buying from Boohoo still gives me the **quality and the value of money**. I shop online from Boohoo once a week as I am **unable to buy clothes physically**. I love that Boohoo has the value to be **agile** as their **evolving nature** helps me **stay up-to-date** with the fashion trends.

There have been times their delivery times have been a bit questionable and I believe they could work on that by maybe delivering it more quickly. Compared to other fashion brands I get the **value of money** and **better quality**.

Dear eBay

Female, 24

You've been in my life so long I can't even remember how you first arrived! You introduced me to the **world of second hand** and opened my eyes. I always thought sustainable buying had to be expensive, but you showed me that isn't the case. You also taught me how I can **make money from my old things**, **reducing landfill** and helping **bring new life**. We see each other weekly as I often find new things to list or want to have a browse, but you actually contact me by email in-between as well which I like as I feel **kept up to date** with your life. We both **value the environment** and rail somewhat **against consumerism**. But we still have the odd tension when I can't get the help I need or you avoid answering my questions.

Improvement would come if you were more generous with your money towards me like **reducing your fees**. I prefer this with other brands so although you're better than them on your **detail and wide range**, the pricing bit isn't as good.

But overall your **trustworthy** and have my back.



Female, 21

Dear CeraVe

Dear CeraVe, I was feeling, as I often did at the time, utterly depressed about my skin problems. So, off I went in search of my new, next, magic treatment. I was first attracted to you because a **dermatologist on TikTok said that your face washes are the best**, and since he was a certified dermatologist, I thought I'd **trust** him. So, I bought the foaming cleanser and since have never looked back.

My skin, admittedly, first got worse after using the cleanser, but now it's clearer than before. I have since recommended you to my friends and also bought myself a day facial cream which I also love. I use that and my face cleanser every day. I assume we both share the value of skincare that works and **isn't a scam**, so that's great.

The moments of tension are when I can't find a product in the store, but I can online, and also when I saw that in America there is a much, MUCH, larger range of CeraVe products than in the UK. I wish there were **more options here in the UK** and that perhaps it was a **little cheaper**. That would certainly improve our relationship.

I think that the other skincare brands that say they are 'dermatologically tested' like Neutrogena aren't as good as yours, because I've never had good results with them. But your products help clear up any acne flare-ups I get, and they work quick. So, thank you.



Brands with double the love...



GOOSE & GANDER
UNISEX CLOTHING

WEEKDAY

Female, 20

Dear Goose and Gander

Originally I found myself intrigued by the brand as they had a sweater in a specific colour that I liked the design of. I was further invested into buying from them because they are a **small business** ran by young people who **create designs themselves** and have a **"made to order" rule** in which the clothes are only made upon being ordered.

They also promise **quick delivery** and show delivery date before orders are even made. I don't "see" them anywhere per se, as I found and seemed out the brand. It was not advertised or relayed to me from another source. But I do love wearing their clothes all the time that I have purchased and find them very **high quality and comfortable**.

It wouldn't say there's any improvements I could think of, my only one complaint might be that they frequently have certain colours and sizes out of stock for long periods of time which hurts a little. I can't think of many similar but they are certainly set apart in that they reject fast fashion, they **never overstock** and seem to have **"timeless" styles** and pieces.

Quality

Female, 21

Dear Weekday

I first saw your brand a few years ago, I'm not sure how but I loved the clothes straight away because they are very much my style - quite **classic but not boring**.

Recently I have been trying to **move away from fast fashion** and stop buying so many clothes because I'm trying to be **better for the environment**. Weekday helps me with that because the items aren't too out there so they **last for longer**. Recently while in a Weekday shop I spotted that there is a **pre-warn section**, and there's now an option to **resell old clothes** through your shop - this is such an easy way of helping me break away from fast fashion by **buying pre-loved items** and also get rid of my own clothes and I am so grateful that you can help me in this way because I find Depop and second hand a chore usually! This is a value that is very important to me as it's still **affordable**.

This sets you apart from others as it makes it more accessible to be **better for the planet** when it comes to clothes consumption.

Lots of love!

Affordability

Sustainability