



NATURE IS UNDEFEATED.

Show up anyway.

Brand Analysis & Campaign Development

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THE CATEGORY MOVED. COLUMBIA DIDN'T.

Gorpcore turned technical outdoor gear into mainstream fashion, and the cultural windfall went to four brands. Columbia, despite deeper technical credentials than most, was not one of them.

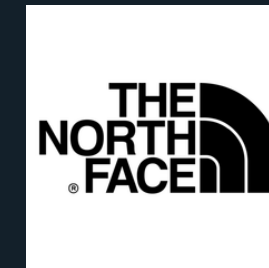
It is considered capable, not desirable.

1.3B #gorpcore views on TikTok: the heat Columbia didn't capture.

Who the culture crowned



Arc'teryx
Technical luxury



The North Face
Streetwear staple



Patagonia
Values & status



Salomon
Fashion's trail shoe

Columbia: *not in the conversation*

STRONG ON TECH, WEAK ON CULTURE

The business is being carried abroad while the home market and the next generation slip away.

The asset that should drive desire — Columbia's patented thermal tech — sits unseen.

The Strength

Genuine technical authority — Omni-Heat, OutDry, decades of patents and “tested tough” heritage. The product delivers.

The Liability

No cultural pull with younger consumers. Credibility doesn't convert to cool — so the gear gets respected, not bought.

-4%

U.S. net sales, FY2025,
even as international grew

Footwear

a soft, declining line in the
category that mints cool

50%

of U.S. outdoor participants
are now Gen Z or Millennial

THE INSIGHT



Everyone sells the summit. No one owns the struggle.

The myth

The outdoors is a serene golden postcard:
the brochure shot you'll almost
never live.

The truth

The best days outside are the ones that
beat you up, cold, soaked, miserable, but
also make for the best stories.

The outdoors isn't loved despite the suffering. It's loved because of it. The misery is the memory, and that's the one feeling no outdoor brand has ever claimed. Columbia — the brand literally built for brutal conditions — is the only one with the product truth to own it.

The community already has a name for it:

TYPE 2 FUN

TYPE 2'S: 18-29

The generation that measures the outdoors in stories.

Urban-adjacent and outdoors-curious.

They grew up with the outdoors as identity and content, not conquest.

They're priced out of ,and put off by the \$900 gatekeeping of "real" outdoor brands, and they're fluent enough to smell a brand trying too hard.

"I want the summit, but I NEED the story."

What's true of them

Document everything

The miserable hike is the post. Their suffering is the shareable reel.

Reject Perfectionism

"Type 2 fun" is their language; the epic-summit ad feels fake.

Value earned over expensive

Belonging beats logos. They want in, not up.

CAMPAIGN MESSAGING

For the generation who measures the outdoors in stories, not summits, Columbia is the brand that turns brutal conditions into a badge of honour, because only Columbia makes warmth you can see. While rivals sell the perfect day, Columbia ensures you have the best time, even on the worst days.

Frame

The outdoor brand for the imperfect, real outdoors.

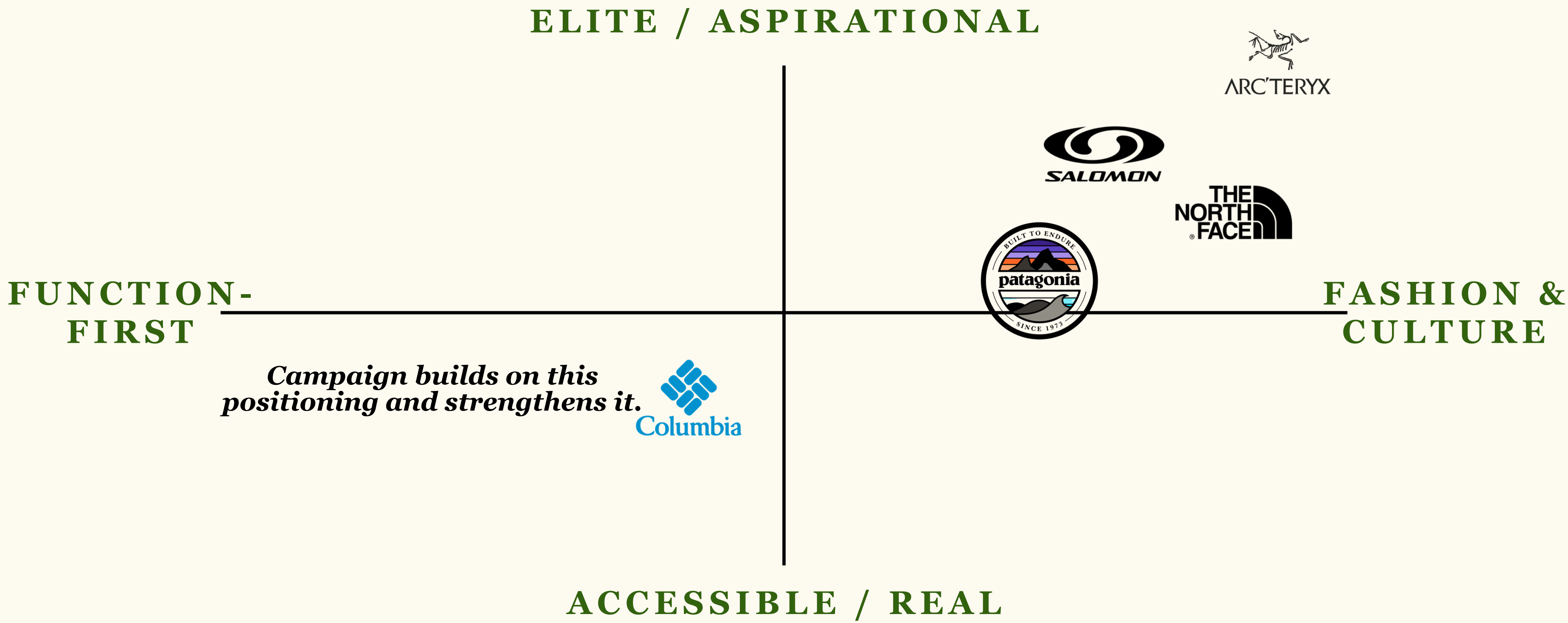
Differentiator

Visible thermal tech rivals can't replicate.

Tone

Deadpan, tough, self-aware, and accessible.

COMPETITIVE POSITIONING: PERCEPTUAL MAP



A scenic background image of a mountain landscape. In the foreground, a calm lake reflects the surrounding green forest and the golden light of a low sun. The middle ground is filled with dense evergreen trees. In the background, rugged mountains with patches of snow rise against a sky with soft, wispy clouds. The overall mood is serene and majestic.

NATURE IS UNDEFEATED.

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Columbia doesn't promise you a beautiful day.

It's the reason you can keep showing up to the ugly one, until eventually the misery becomes the memory.

We don't survive nature, we conquer it.

GLOW THROUGH IT

Every Columbia Omni-Heat product — jackets, gloves, boots, base layers — is lined with the same dot-matrix of reflective silver discs that trap and reflect body heat.

It's the most distinctive piece of IP Columbia owns, and today it sits on the inside, unseen.

The idea began with one question: **what if the lining became the look?**

Flip the garment inside out, print the dot pattern on the outer shell, and the thermal tech itself becomes the most recognizable thing on the rack.



ACTIVATIONS & COLLABORATIONS

Type 2 Fun: The Games

The race where finishing last is the point.

A Columbia x run-club endurance event built for the conditions everyone else cancels for. Every finisher gets an inside-out dot jacket as the medal, worn home with the cold still on them. Nothing makes the jacket feel more earned.

Columbia x Cold Therapy

Go in cold. Come out glowing.

A thermal-cam station at cold-plunge events and run-club dips. Fifty people in 34° air, glowing in silver dots while everyone else goes blue, the OOH is real on-site footage. The gimmick and the product truth are identical: it doesn't claim warmth, it shows it.

CONTENT STRATEGY

Show us your Type 2 Fun



A UGC franchise built on the miserable-outdoors clips everyone already films — the wipeout, the downpour, the gear that survived.

Real-time Reactivity



When a nature-fail goes viral, Columbia is in the replies the same day — deadpan, and sometimes shipping the person a jacket.

Type 2 Fun Forecast



A recurring content franchise that celebrates the worst weather of the week, not the best. “36° and sideways rain — get out there.”

12 MONTHS, 3 GEARS

LAUNCH

Months 1–3 · 45% of spend

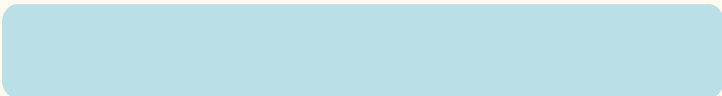
DROP

Months 4–6 · 30% of spend

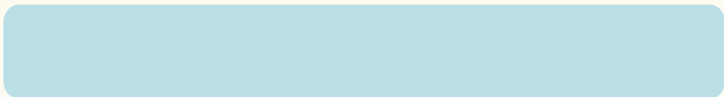
SUSTAIN

Months 7–12 · 25% of spend

Brand film · CTV / OLV



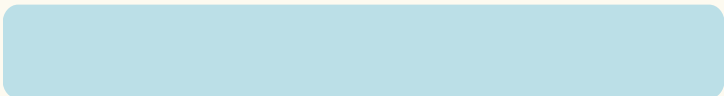
OOH & weather-triggered



Paid social & digital



Creators & UGC engine



Retail & DTC drops



Experiential · plunge & games



INTENSITY

 Lead

 Support

 Sustain

PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Four objectives across the funnel, from cultural attention to U.S. register rings.

STAGE	TARGET	HOW WE MEASURE
Awareness	+6–8 pts	Unaided brand awareness among U.S. 18–34, vs. baseline: brand tracker, pre/post.
Perception	4×+ EMV	Earned media value vs. paid spend; “a brand for me” lift among 18–34.
Participation	50K+	Type 2 Fun UGC submissions; social engagement at 2× category average.
Commercial	Growth	U.S. footwear back to growth; +15% DTC among under-35: sell-through data.