

## ○ CHAPTER– 20

# CASE STUDY OF STORY MFG., BRAND PROTECTING FOR ANCIENT INNOVATIONS

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Story mfg., is the brainchild of Katy and Saeed Al-Rubey, from the UK. The brand is founded on the principles of craft, being the most important thing, and being earth-friendly and animal. Legally, it was founded in 2013 but interestingly no products were made till 2014. And now it successfully selling products varying from unisex clothes to homeware like candles and more.

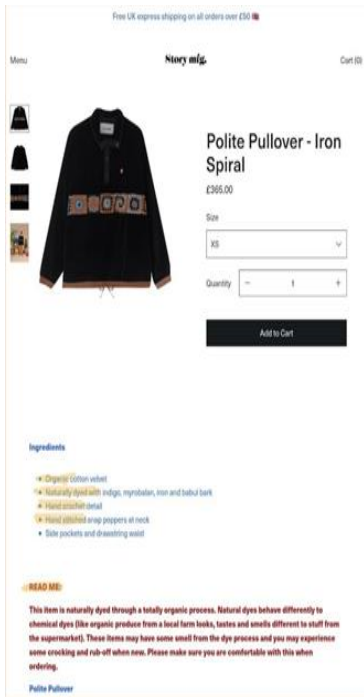
At a time when people are asking for manufacturing insights and not just some piece of aesthetically pleasing products, Story mfg. has gone to considerable lengths to ensure their operation is done in the least environmentally impactful way. They do all those things total transparency ensuring their costumers and the world that they have nothing to hide.

The brand started in 2013. Later in 2014, they moved their production to India and the story got interesting. Unlike other brands, this move was intended for creative endeavour and cost- cutting. They moved to India looking for traditional dyeing and weaving technique that isn't based on harmful and toxic dyes and bleaches. Started working in a small village from southern India, with a dye house which knows of over hundred years giving a boost to artisans skills and crafts.

At the time when fashion was demanding change at high rate, this brand created a counterculture with its slow fashion and took its chance in the industry. Growth rate was slow but it was not a negative sign. They took that time period to provide consumers with meaningful, good looking garments with full consciousness and with highest quality. Their products and handmade, hand dyed with ancient practices but in modern styles. It is a perfect bridge filling the gap between the two and reflecting co-existence.

They make everything from scratch. For a lot of things they buy the cotton, make the threads and then hand-or machine- weave it and naturally dye everything. When it was first started they could only do denim, the next season they were able to do denim and shirts, so the collection got a bit bigger. It goes like that. Every time they want to do something, they have to make the fabric from scratch. It took them three years to make corduroy. It took them five years to make t-shirts because it's very hard to make eco- conscious t-shirts the way they prefer it. It took them five years to do screen printing, it took them three years to get patterns. It was only SS20 where they had woven patterns. So it kept working really slowly until the point they are now. Since everything takes so much time, energy and research they sometime have to restrict the orders. They haven't had to do it too much in the past because stores are cautious about a young brand but this season they have really started to have to be strict and say no to big orders because of the amount of handwork. As an example, to make enough woven

fabric for a garment it might take one person a whole day (or more). If a company wants to grow, like ours, usually what happens is that they get a faster weaving machine and grow vertically. It's all about automating and faster machines. But the heart of this get more and more people involved. Also it is powered by renewable energy, everything is local.



Story Mfg. clothes are genderless, ready-to-wear, utility wear inspired by work uniforms to street wear. Story Mfg traveled 5000 miles to Tamil Nadu, India for craftsmanship. Clothes are made there from scratch, as founders believe it has that magic mix which inspired them and let Story Mfg grow. Dyeing process is done by the company called 'The Colors of Nature'. From yarn to buttons everything is made and dyes naturally. Vibe of Story Mfg. can be expressed in just two words as vintage-outdoor. Every piece is combined with a traditional and slow hand craft like the Polite Pullover- Iron Spiral which is a sweatshirt starts as organic cotton velvet. The velvet then naturally dyed in iron and mordant. After fine tailoring, hand done spiral crochet is stitched on top of the pullover.

All pic credit- [www.storymfg.com/](http://www.storymfg.com/)



Photo Essay: "E-Mash-Mash"

Photo Essay: "Kittens' First Delivery"



Photo Essay: A Lockdown Lookback



Existence of the Hand: Raaginis on the coast of craft, the root of sustainability, the root of everything

### Grassroot by Anita Dongre



Pic Credit - <https://www.anitadongre.com/grassroot>

Grassroot  
All  
Dresses  
Tops  
Kurtas & Tunics  
Jackets  
Bottoms  
Sarees  
.....

Grassroot collection is an ultimate line by the Designer revolves around the empowerment of craftsmen and artisans. It is a social development project. It doesn't work according to seasons but demands and flow of the artisan. It is the request for the craft that decide its release date despite of season and time. Every garment is a work of love. It is an art and it is timeless.

This collection is Socially Sustainable and Slow but Fashion, with a conscience. Conserving traditions and embracing artisanal skills and craftsmanship is the whole idea of it. The supreme goal to this collection is to provide solution to the current fashion-pollution scenario.

"Anita Dongre Grassroot is the embodiment of my core passions - to design clothes that are beautiful & hold a purpose. My heart lies with the women artisans in villages who are custodians of ancient Indian crafts, and my goal is to create design that sustains the crafts, does good for them and for the planet." - Anita Dongre

## NATURAL DYES



Credit- <https://edibleindy.ediblecommunities.com/things-do/true-colors-creating-natural-food-dyes-home>

Throughout history, people have dyed their textiles using common, locally available materials, producing brilliant and permanent colors from plants, minerals, roots, berries, insects, bark, leaves, seeds, and wood.

Typically, the dye material is put in a pot of water and heated until the dye is extracted. Then the textiles are added to the pot, which is heated and stirred until the color is transferred. The result is beautiful earthy colors with zero negative footprints.

Until the late 19th century, plant-based dyes such as indigo, kadukkai (myrobalan), and madder were produced commercially and were important trade goods in the economies of Asia and Europe. Today, the textile industry is one of the most polluting industries in the world - mostly because of chemical dyes. There is a joke going around that you can tell what color will be in fashion the next season just by looking at the rivers!

However, now with changing times it is important to read back in time and understand ancient techniques to become more earth friendly than ever. In fact, natural dye and dyeing process does not even need extreme chemical understandings. It is easy to earn and practice at home using vegetables or fruits or plants available in the hands. Some easy way to extract colors is to extract primary hues and then mix it with each other to achieve various ranges of hues. For example,

- Indigo for blue,
- turmeric for yellow,
- Beet root for red.

**These are not the only ways to obtain these colors. For example,**

- Blue from red cabbage + lemon
- Yellow from onion skins
- Red from balsam flowers

Different plants, vegetables or fruits have been in practice depending on local availability.

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