

TABLE A-9

**Case study: Zozosuit**

(Innovation failure summary)

Variable	Description
Innovation	Sensor-covered bodysuit works with an app to upload customers body measurements to Zozo, allowing creation of customized casual clothing, launched in 2017
Radical or incremental	Radical
Category	Process
Sector	Clothing
Failure timing	Growth stage, failure in 2019
Failure root cause	<p>Insufficient complementary assets</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Production bottlenecks prevented Zozo from fulfilling large number of custom clothes orders in a timely fashion</li> <li>• Company shipped non-customized off-the-rack items to customers, many of which were often ill-fitting</li> </ul>
Failure root cause timing	Product development
Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Zozo overseas expansion, which relied on the Zozosuit, was largely a failure</li> <li>• Zozo stock lost 20% in value March 2018–March 2019</li> <li>• Some customers used suit only to keep track of their measurements and never bought any clothes</li> </ul>
Business insight into the innovation process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Changes to one part of the customer delivery process must be examined for their impact on other parts of the process</li> <li>• "Perfect fit" is not as critical to casual clothes as to formalwear</li> <li>• Enthusiasm about a free technology platform does not necessarily predict sales</li> </ul>
Pivot	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Zozosuit repurposed as personal measurement system for custom formalwear (phased out for casualwear)</li> <li>• New sizing database based on data collected by Zozosuit created for Japanese market to correlate small number of body measurements (e.g., height and weight) with off-the-rack sizes for casual clothes</li> </ul>
Pivot enabler	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Formalwear volume is lower than casualwear, enabling timely order fulfillment</li> <li>• Formalwear is more expensive than casual wear, thus increasing profit margins per Zozosuit</li> </ul>

**Source(s):**

National Center for Science and Engineering Statistics and SRI International, special research (2020) of 2010–20 open-access articles, including *MIT Technology Review*, *New York Times*, *Fast Company*, U.S. General Accountability Office, and *Defense News*.