

Research on Marketing Strategy for the Male Market Luxury Industry — Taking Dior as an Example

Haohong He, Yunfei Jiang, and Yue Wang

Abstract—Men make a contribution to the luxury market's sales. For years, luxury brands have been researching effective female marketing strategies and adapting them for males. Nevertheless, comparable marketing strategies must be demonstrated to be effective. The impact of men's expectations and the brand relationship between male customers and luxury brands will be examined in this study. Establishing connections with customers and motivating them to purchase products via social media is challenging. Additionally, the segmentation of high-end customers fails, and luxury product expectations are not met. According to research, the platforms on which luxury goods are promoted on social media are critical. Men's content should be tailored to their preferences, as they may prefer a more centralized marketing approach. The commercial value of this paper is that it suggests a new approach to marketing to males. Additionally, to ascertain what customers think of the current marketing strategy.

Index Terms—Marketing strategy, male market, luxury industry, Dior.

I. INTRODUCTION

A. Research Background

In recent years, men contributed a lot of sales revenue to luxury goods. According to data provided by the Statista website, men contributed around 40% of sales in the entire luxury industry from 2007 to 2013 [1]. According to data from the index.baidu.com website, men who search for major luxury brands (LV, Gucci, Chanel, Dior, Hermes) account for 30% of the total number of people searching [2]. Even Chanel, a brand with only a few products for men, has a more than 30% of male search ratio.

In the last few years, the leading brand in the luxury market has focused on designing marketing strategies by investigating female spending patterns. The ratio of sales and brand searches proves that luxury goods have a certain male audience. Likewise, with the increase in male spending power, leading brands in the luxury market attempt to apply a similar marketing strategy to males. For example, the brand invites male spokespersons. Female spokespersons are useful to capture the female market, as most women want to acquire the same items with the spokesperson or imitate the spokesperson's outfit. Conversely, it remains to be verified whether the spokesperson will influence the spending pattern

of men. It is necessary to examine whether the brand's investment in the male market is worthwhile.

There is an increasing trend to expand the market for luxury goods. In order to expand the share of men's consumption in the luxury sector, the behavior and spending habits of male consumers need to be adequately researched. Analyzing the successful marketing strategies of individual brands targeting the male market will enable brands to target a clearer segment of customers and design pertinence marketing strategies.

B. Literature Review

Several studies have researched the impact of gender on the luxury market. Nicola E. Stokburger-Sauer [1], Karin Teichmann found that women had different attitudes towards luxury. Women are more positive about luxury and more concerned with the quality, uniqueness, and social value of products [3]. Research also indicated that the brand should be adjusted to society in addition to express its values. Female consumers prefer luxury brands because of the uniqueness and status that luxury brings [3]. Otherwise, Elyette Roux a, Eric Tafani a, Franck Vigneron concluded that females still occupy a large percentage of the luxury market due to their consumptive power, and the gender gap is decreasing. The journal also mentions that men prefer luxury products that emphasize elitism and exclusivity [3]. Furthermore, Won-Moo Hur, Minsung Kim, and Hanna Kim proposed that brand trust is more likely to motivate men to buy luxury goods than brand loyalty [4].

The studies indicated that women's attitudes towards luxury are different. The increased value of men's spending on luxury goods deserves the attention of brands.

Extant articles have examined the gender differences in willingness to purchase luxury goods, the impact of gender-differentiated values on luxury brand consumption, and the impact of brand trust on male consumption. Most scholars have found this by understanding the male spending patterns. An academic has compared the prices between female and male luxury items found that prices for female luxury brands are, in most cases, significantly higher than for male luxury brands. In addition to this, some studies proposed that female and male values and life orientation are different by observing their attitudes to other products, such as perfumes and watches.

In contrast, very few scholars have studied media marketing to the male market. Furthermore, extant articles mentioned that build trust between customers and brand is more important than establishing brand loyalty. However, establish brand loyalty is also a method to increase male spending that marketers should not ignore.

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C. Research Framework

This journal will focus on evaluating the effective marketing strategy for increasing the market share of men. First of all, a questionnaire will be published to capture the general characteristics of the male consumer of luxury goods. Then suggest targeted media marketing strategies for the characteristics of the customer group. Secondly, to give solutions to establish strong brand loyalty, this journal will analyze a successful marketing strategy from a brand that establishes strong brand loyalty with consumers. Finally, to provide insight into effective marketing strategies for the male market, the paper will analyze the existing literature to examine the factors that influence brand loyalty.

II. METHODS

A. Survey

In order to better understand the consumption of luxury goods and explore effective marketing strategies in the luxury industry to further explore the male market, the researchers designed a related questionnaire. Subjects were mainly Asian male consumers. The questionnaire was released through the platform named SO JUMP. The questions involved product categories, knowing channels, purchase frequency, preferences for product design, and 101 effective samples were collected. Statistics show that men learn about luxury goods mainly through social media, and high-end customers want special treatment.

Moreover, male consumers may repurchase some products because they trust a certain luxury brand. Their expectations for product design are inconspicuous and simple. The researchers expect to provide solutions to the social media promotion and product design innovation presented in this paper by analyzing the findings.

B. Case Study

Starting with the Dior brand, this paper mainly analyzes the successful olfactory marketing case of the SAUVAGE male perfume in its perfume category. SAUVAGE used the sense of smell to explain the brand personality. By studying the case, the researchers have learned that the scent of the perfume helps consumers quickly establish a good impression of the brand. Second, consumers use smell as a symbol of status and identity. Third, the perfume uses the uniqueness of the scent to reinforce the consumers' memory of Dior. In addition, the smell can also be used as a standard to divide different consumer groups. It is expected to inspire luxury brands to enhance consumers' trust and loyalty through this case.

C. Literature Analysis Method

Based on previous research, the researchers have understood the changing trend of consumer groups and the current market situation in the luxury industry. Roux, E. *et al.* (2016) proposed gender social structure theory and luxury value and gender: hypothesis development [5]. Vigneron and Johnson (2004) held that "consumers' need for uniqueness (CNFU) drives exclusivity in luxury consumption" [5]. Hen *et al.* (2010) have stated that "patricians ("old money") who have a lower need for status signaling would prefer quiet

brands, while the parvenus ("new money") who have a higher motivation to signal their status to others would prefer loud luxury brands" [6]. Hanna Kim, Minsung Kim, and Won-Moo Hur (2014) have pointed that the hedonic value of brands is positively correlated with consumers' trust and loyalty to brands, while the brand risk is negatively correlated with consumers' trust in brands, especially the male consumers [4]. These theories provide the theoretical architecture for this article, in-depth analysis of the luxury industry for effective marketing strategies of the male market.

III. RESULTS

A. Limitations of Social Media Communication Promotion

In recent years, the appearance of luxury industry consumers has gradually changed, the proportion of male consumers is increasing, and the level of male consumers is higher than women. Besides, user-centric multimedia apps such as Facebook, Twitter, TikTok, LinkedIn, and YouTube have broad prospects [7]. The rapid rise of social media has become a bridge between people, broadening the channels of two-way communication and interaction between brands and consumers. Luxury brands are gradually aware of the importance of social media and use related platforms such as TikTok and Facebook as important means of marketing promotion. Brands hope to use social media advertisements to inform product content, strengthen consumers' brand recognition, stimulate purchase desire, and improve the market conversion rate.

However, the researchers found that despite the growing proportion of men in consumer groups, luxury brands on social media are targeted mainly at women [8]. The researchers believe that this is because advertising has greatly promoted the construction process of building new identities. After consumers see the positive image created by advertising, they will unconsciously replace themselves and construct new identities. As the status of women increases, the image of women in advertising becomes more confident and successful. Men are said to be uneasy about this situation [9]. In addition, according to the related literature and the findings of questionnaires, male consumers pay more attention to product quality and professional, practical functions. Still, at present, luxury brands' social media advertising make cosmetics, exhibitions, fashion shows as the main theme, this does not satisfy men's inner desire for luxury advertising.

This shows that the current social media communication mode of luxury brands can no longer accurately reflect the changes in the consumer market. It cannot effectively connect with male consumers in a meaningful way, which leads to a failure to fully mobilize the male consumers' positive sentiment and willingness to purchase the products shown in advertising.

B. Deficiencies about Deeping into the High-End Male Market

According to Morgan Stanley's analysis of the beauty industry released in 2021, Dior is Europe's largest luxury skincare brand, ranking seventh in penetration and 10th in

brand loyalty. [10] In addition, we have learned that 70% of its Dior customers are not those customers who are willing to repurchase and that a handful of top elite groups contributes more than 30% of the sales of its products. [11] From these data, researchers found that customers have a low repurchase rate and cannot expand their elite proportion, which has become a serious challenge for many luxury brands. Because men and women have differences in consumption decisions [12], men prefer to simplify the shopping process, ensure the value of products while saving as much as possible, and buy the products they need most in the fastest time. Therefore, the male comparative behavior when shopping is not obvious.

On the one hand, high-end luxury brands such as Dior have accumulated a certain number of male consumers. However, because of the large number of customers, brands cannot take into account the personalized needs of each consumer, especially the deep understanding of the top elite groups. It means that luxury brands cannot more accurately segment the high-end male market, resulting in the actual audience of marketing campaigns inconsistent with the ideal audience. On the other hand, male consumers are not very loyal to the brand. In Dior's entire category of products, only a few products, such as the SAUVAGE male perfume, are popular with male consumers through odor marketing. Still, most of the other products are not considered sales. This indirectly reflects that high-end male consumers preferentially choose other brands over Dior when simplifying the shopping process and comparison links, indicating that their trust and loyalty to brands is not very high. To sum up, researchers believe luxury brands still lack in dividing high-end male consumers.

C. low Correlation between Product Content with Men

Based on gender concepts, researchers learned that men are more independent than women and prefer exclusive and elitist [3]. This view was also confirmed in the results of the questionnaire. In this questionnaire, we collected 60 valid male subjects. Among them, for the two questions on the relationship of luxury and personal identity status and the main role of luxury, 55% of the subjects believed that the choice of luxury goods was greatly correlated to highlighting their identity status. And besides, the goods can meet the practical needs of the basic function, and subjects most hope that luxury can meet their personality and vanity. Male consumers' psychology of buying luxury goods tends to show their status with the goods they have.

However, once the brand makes mistakes in product promotion and product positioning, it is easy to weaken consumers' purchase mood and negatively affect them. Dior replaced its brand ambassador in China in 2017 amid heated discussion online, with most comments containing dissatisfaction. When the spokesperson's image is inconsistent with the brand positioning, it will reduce the brand's identity in the hearts of consumers, and the purchase behavior will be reduced accordingly. When the brand reduces its standards to expand the consumer group, cater to the public taste, and obtain traffic, it also damages the trust of loyal consumers in the brand to a certain extent. In addition, the charm of fashion largely lies in the mystery. Still, Dior's promotion of the new saddle bag shows the process of a young woman buying a saddlebag in a short video, which has

once again become a hot topic among netizens. This video itself had targeted groups of women, taking the initiative to exclude the male group. The correlation between product content and men is very low, and video's obvious selling orientation will undoubtedly weaken more loyal consumers. They think that there is no substantial help about buying this kind of goods to reveal their identity.

Therefore, it can be seen that luxury goods' decisions on product content and publicity can not well meet the shopping needs of male consumers. The "exclusivity" and "elitism" in product content and advertising positioning are not obvious, which is difficult to target the male market effectively.

D. A Mismatch of Product Design and Male Consumers' Expectations

Product design is an important embodiment of the source of luxury value, and the expensive pricing of products serves a strong aesthetic appeal. External attraction is often more important than the actual functional value. The size of the logo and the futility of the product design contribute to the loudness of luxury brands, but the appearance of the product design, if too fancy, does not meet the inner needs of consumers. Previous studies on high-profile and low-profile luxury brands showed that consumers' preference for highly visible luxury brands is largely driven by their motivation to indicate socioeconomic status [6]. However, the consumer group that luxury brands need to pay attention to is the top elite. Such consumers no longer need large trademark patterns on the appearance of the product to highlight their identity. They want to find excellent peers at the same level more. The more mature men are, the more inclined to low-profile brands and their product designs.

At present, more and more consumers are willing to pay a premium for less obvious luxury goods; according to the survey collected results, consumers value product design, and 86.67% of subjects prefer simple and inconspicuous elements. But most of the current luxury products tend to be exaggerated designs, and rare, bold, distinctive elements are more obvious. That is inconsistent with male consumers' expectations.

IV. DISCUSSION

The primary purpose of this research is to examine whether the investment in the male market is worthy. After investigation, researchers gain three main factors that block males from engaging more in the luxury market: limitations of social media promotion, lack of depth for high-end male market, and weak connection between males and products. Therefore, related to other studies, improvements can be done to these strategies.

A. Social Media Promotion

Many studies show that social media is also named "Women's World". According to Pew Research Center, for internet users, women play the main role on Facebook, Pinterest, and Instagram than men. Many researchers suggest that it is a big problem for advertising to the male market. However, to see the chart provided by Pew Research Center, without considering other elements, men still stand for some proportion of media. The Pew study showed that 72 percent

of all women online and 62 percent of all men online have Facebook profiles. [13] The first thing to keep in mind is that men are also on the internet. So it is still possible to use media to reach the male market. Choosing which media is vital. As we talked earlier about women dominating Pinterest, it will be better to advertise to males on Youtube with 62 percent of the population instead of 5 percent on Pinterest.

Additionally, producing content on the internet that can directly engage to male market is significant. A 2005 Pew Internet study stated, "Compared with women, online men are more likely to use the internet to: check the weather, get news, get do-it-yourself information, check for sports information..." [13] Based on the categories that interest men, marketers can use emitting message on the website with these functions and add to the content of advertisements like sports or cars. This comprehensive strategy increases the possibility of reaching the male market.

What's more, the difference in communication for men and women requires varied adaptations. In 2016, Richard Morgan stated, "To market to men, concrete information and data carry the most weight. However, for women, comprehensive data, combined with emotional connections, seem to yield the best results." [14] That means advisors require to develop different kinds of advertisements for genders to communicate with consumers effectively. In general, with the direct introduction of statistics or functions, central marketing is suitable for males, and peripheral marketing matches females through emotions and background. In other words, marketing for males would illustrate the potentials of buying the latest car. But for women, showing a mother putting her child in the car first sets up an emotional context some women might relate to. [14] The way marketers should do it is to invent a style more digital to fix the male's preference.

B. Depth for the High-End Male Market

Due to the result, researchers found that customers have a low repurchase rate mainly due to the limitation of brands loyalty. To eliminate this issue, researchers analyze the factors of trust. Based on background knowledge, four different facets of luxury value (social, individual, financial, and functional value) are seen as factors. Aydin and his colleagues designed a survey of 500 participants purchasing sunglasses to identify each function. Results of the study show that half of the variance in customer satisfaction with a luxury brand. If the functional and financial value rises, the individual will enjoy consuming that brand with a better experience.[15] With the awareness of usefulness, a superior quality would drive customers to turn their choice out better than expectations. Therefore, dealing with brand trust, luxury value plays the main role.

To reach the market deeper, increasing males' experience and realization of advantages is vital. Luxury companies need to determine the brand trust goals first and provide a reliable service with maintenance. After that, they offer a consistent customer experience that strengthens their trust for brands. Connecting more with male customers by organizing activities can gradually set up a net in their minds and finally become trustful.

C. The Connection between Males and Products

Nowadays, most luxuries are related to female characteristics, such as being pretty, elegant, or sexy. It is

hard to identify male products with masculinity. Based on gender identification, men are concerned with whether a product might be considered feminine rather than useful. [13] So, more male characteristics are required for product design to imitate purchase. The Old Spice Guy is one of the most famous advertisements with quick-witted humor and the tagline "Smell like a man, man". It allows males to respond to their questions on online videos and successfully receive their interest and enter the male market [14].

Besides, for males, your messages must be concise and to the point and use powerful words to prove facts. Provide solutions to problems utilizing the products that companies are selling. [16] Researchers conclude that males are easily implied with the brain's study, but females need information with emotion. For attracting males' attention, simple and precise are essential. Dramatic decoration would bore their interest to give up the brand for another one. They prefer to get the message directly without senses, such as statistics, functions, or appearance.

V. CONCLUSION

To study whether it is valuable to invest in the male market, researchers first review literature, analyze case studies, and conduct the survey to investigate the factors that hinder the product from successfully reaching the market. The results mainly focus on three elements: weak media promotion to men, lack of brand trust for deeply getting into the market, and inappropriate connection between males and products for design and identity. Based on the problems, researchers seek improvement for the choice of social media platforms, men preferring a central marketing approach, and content for adjusting the male market. Improving marketing strategy helps companies develop goods and services with the best profit-making potential and better engage with customer needs. It ensures effective departmental coordination and allows companies to make optimum utilization or investment of their resources worthwhile [17].

However, the survey still has some limitations. The population of the sample is incomplete, with only 60 people. The range of objects in focus in Asia and lack of information for high-income people. With this information, it is hard for researchers to generalize to the world. To further investigate this study, researchers would spread the range of the survey and interview some specific customers for specific details of the response to plan for efficiency improvement.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

Haohong He was responsible for the abstract and introduction. Yue Wang finished the method and result. Yunfei Jiang finished the part of discussion and conclusion. These authors contributed equally.

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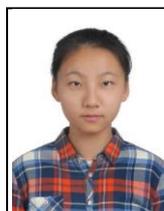
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