

## Research on the Artistic Construction of Luxury Brands from the Perspective of Brand Culture Communication——Take Curating Activities of Luxury Brands as an example

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**Abstract.** With the rejuvenation and diversification of the luxury market, luxury brands face the challenge of maintaining economic growth while considering the challenges of brand image building and customer loyalty. There is growing evidence that the younger generation of customers will gradually become the protagonists of the luxury market. One of the customer journeys they care most about is matching personal and brand values and the consumption experience. From this perspective, this article uses case studies, comparative studies, and literature research, taking Cartier Beyond Boundaries - Cartier Palace Museum Crafts and Restoration Special Exhibition as the main case. By comparing with other luxury brands' art exhibitions in Asia, Analyze and study why contemporary luxury brands have increased their artistic construction and the relationship between luxury brand curatorial activities in the Asian market. By implementing the recommendations in this paper, Cartier can create a digital environment within the experience of its artistic curatorial events, facilitating interaction with their products, stories, and artworks.

**Keywords:** Curating activities, Luxury brands, Brand culture communication, Curating activities.

### 1. Introduction

#### 1.1 Research background:

With the democratization of luxury that began in the 1980s, owning luxury is no longer just a privilege for the few. Traditional commercial bodies have been unable to meet young people's emotional and experiential needs. Luxury boutiques must have symbolic significance for the fast-growing consumer group [1], who want to express their individuality through luxury goods and a hedonic attitude. However, the challenge for luxury retailers such as Carter is to satisfy younger consumers' desire for innovative in-store boutique experiences while fostering digital engagement [2-5]. Data suggest that Generation Y, born between 1980 and 1995 [6], and Generation Z, born between 1996 and 2010 [7], are the future New Frontiers in Luxury Markets [6]. These "younger generations" will account for at least 55% of global luxury purchases by 2025 [6, 8]. These generations value innovative ideas that redefine luxury [9] while also craving unique collections that reflect their identity [10]. Material abundance makes decision-making difficult. With the development of the economy and the improvement of living standards, too many too frequent new product launches overload consumers with choices, and ultimately no decisions are made. Big data increases efficiency but reduces personalization and spontaneity. Luxury boutiques ultimately have symbolic value for young customers, a rapidly growing consumer group who wish to express their individuality and hedonic attitude through luxury goods [1]. Curating offers new perspectives on consumption and leisure, promoting freshness, relevance, and inspiration, covering everyday affairs and surprises. When people encounter surprising joy or desire around something they don't think they can grasp, they're willing to pay for it [11]. Taking Cartier brand curatorial activities as an example, this paper regards curatorial activities as an important brand strategy and studies the artistic construction of luxury brands from the perspective of brand culture communication, which helps help the globalization of luxury brands such as Cartier. On this basis, the process and the relationship between this phenomenon and the Asian market and the future further discuss the specific strategies and principles of artistic construction of brands.

## 1.2 Literature review

Genevieve, Elena Cedrola, et al. found that many companies in the fashion industry are increasingly forging close relationships with the art world, associating artistic value and meaning with their products and brands [12]. Tendency to use this strategy to connect them. The products are transformed into real works of art to solve the commoditization problem caused by high volume. Globalization and the opening of fast-growing new markets such as Asia have led these luxury groups to increase sales but fail to meet a fundamental characteristic of such commodities: rarity. The arts-based strategies implemented by luxury companies primarily help support the end consumer's perception of rarity. This article examines how consumers can build positive associations with brands in four dimensions: awareness, image, quality, and loyalty. The study found that when a brand is "artistic", consumers' free association with the brand is associated with the art world, the evaluation of brand image points to a stronger positive association, and most importantly, consumer loyalty to the brand increases. For this article, curation is more of a marketing and cultural communication activity, so it is important to study the relationship consumers build with brands through art.

The study by Lee et al. extends that of Genevieve, Elena Cedrola et al. with two studies using the Louis Vuitton (LV) brand, demonstrating that the connotations of art for luxury, class, and prestige can be transferred to related products, thus enhancing the significant value associated with social status and perception [13]. Secondly, the exclusivity of art can enhance the perceived unique value of a product, a luxury brand with artwork can enhance the perceived quality value of the brand, and the connotations of luxury, class, and prestige in the art can satisfy consumers' emotions and self-esteem for perceived hedonic value Reward demand. Furthermore, art as an experience increases creativity and imagination, thereby increasing the hedonic value of objects. Finally, art's connotations of luxury, class, and prestige can enhance consumers' self-concepts and replicate perceived affluence stereotypes of extended self. Thus, it enhances the perceived extended self.

Growing foreign markets such as Asia have reduced the exclusivity of luxury brands and commoditization in the eyes of their consumers. Masè and Cedrola proposed that luxury brands could partner with artists to spread exclusivity and prestige through strategic art sponsorships, charitable campaigns, and limited collections to alleviate this commodification. These events connect luxury brands with the art world, forming an art strategy [14]. This article uses LV's collaborations with contemporary Japanese artists Takashi Murakami and Yayoi Kusama as examples. Qualitative analysis identified how these art-based strategies leverage different touchpoints from the art world, from sponsorships to advertising to product design, to convey luxury brands' exclusivity and prestige image. Louis Vuitton "implemented virtual rarity tactics to construct itself as art" to avoid commuting digitization effects. Cartier and LV, as luxury brands that also have a long history and want to expand into the Asian market, this article can be used as a case study of competitors to compare with Cartier, the focus of this study.

## 1.3 Research gap

In contrast, digital transformation is also a game-changer in fashion, luxury, and fast fashion retailing. Today's fashion system faces the challenge of updating business models to intercept changes in buying and consumption behavior. Competition is manifested in the ability to create multi-channel business models. From a retailer's perspective, online channels' success and digitalization have dramatically changed how people live and buy patterns. Omnichannel consumers use multiple sales channels simultaneously during the buying process: online channels, mobile devices, and brick-and-mortar stores [15]. Omnichannel retailing conceptualizes the integration of all digital and physical channels, intending to provide consumers with a more engaging, comfortable, and uninterrupted experience. Research on the new omnichannel retail paradigm is limited, especially for omnichannel fashion retailing. Consumers view sales and marketing channels as a whole and experience a non-stop shopping experience regardless of the type of channel used [16]. In terms of luxury curatorial activities, taking Cartier as an example, it lacks research on digital curation and the

introduction of technology into offline exhibitions or physical stores. This article will further study how to make luxury brands artistic in Asia.

#### **1.4 Research framework**

First, this article will analyze the relationship between curatorial activities and the artistic construction of luxury brands. Secondly, this article will critically analyze the curatorial activities of the Cartier brand, its artistic construction, and drawbacks. Finally, this article will demonstrate through comparative analysis that as the younger generation of consumers occupy the luxury consumer market more and pay attention to omnichannel customer experience, how should luxury brands represented by Cartier behave in the ever-changing Internet environment? Ensure that the artistic construction of the brand is carried out effectively and positively impacts the brand.

### **2. Methods**

#### **2.1 Case analysis**

This paper will use a qualitative-empirical case study paradigm to preserve the integrity of the events used in the text to study their meaningful characteristics. Compared with other research methods, the case can be described and systematically understood to obtain a more comprehensive view. This paper will use this method to study the brand curation activities of Cartier as an example and use the SWOT model to analyze the advantages and disadvantages of Cartier, providing a more specific entry point for the research direction of the artistic construction of luxury brands in this paper.

#### **2.2 Comparative analysis**

Comparative analysis is the method that compares objective things to find out the similarities and differences between them, aiming to understand the laws of things and make correct evaluations. This article will compare Cartier and other luxury brands. Such as the curatorial activities and artistic strategies of LV, Gucci, etc., to explore their similar concepts and differentiated results. Analyze whether this strategy is useful in Asia and what needs to be done by comparing its commercialization benefits, customer reviews, and brand promotion. Researched and refined sections.

### **3. Results**

#### **3.1 Status of the Asian luxury market**

The relationship between luxury brands and art can be traced back to the 19th century. However, the integration between luxury and art today is more about incorporating art into the brand's core business, reshaping the brand image by building an artistic identity and opening The art of the brand (artification) process. For a long time, the core values of luxury goods have been based on the scarcity of materials, exquisite craftsmanship, and a high sense of superiority. However, as the luxury goods market has become bottlenecked by the rapid economic and technological development, curatorial retail has begun to play a role in commerce, presenting the retail environment in the way curators create art galleries. Over the past ten years, the overlapping of the luxury and art industries has become the norm, and the creative directors of luxury brands have drawn inspiration from works of art. However, most of the time, luxury brands exist in the art world as the object of consumerism and materialism criticism, so it is difficult for the art industry to give positive feedback to luxury brands at first. The appropriation and ridicule of each other's image by both sides have put the relationship under tension. But in accelerating the globalization of the luxury industry, luxury brands need to inject freshness into their high-end images. Since Murakami's collaboration with Louis Vuitton in 2003 has been a huge success in sales and communication, other brands have seen the significance of brand marketing, and artists have found that this kind of collaboration can help their artistic creations improve. Multiple funding and exposure. And, since luxury brands usually don't expect to drive sales

through artist collaborations, artists usually have more freedom in the collaboration process. However, not all artist collaboration series can achieve the expected goals. Luxury brands will not dilute their image through frequent collaboration, and limited artist series will always have a limited role in shaping the image. In this regard, luxury brands have begun to set up art foundations and frequently sponsor art projects to output values that have a longer-term impact by diluting the commercial color. For example, the Cartier Contemporary Art Foundation has formed an influence in the global art industry and has held many major exhibitions. Although it claims to operate independently of Cartier, the two parties' images are bound and influence each other. The curation activities of luxury brands used to be mostly for high-end image considerations, but in recent years these activities have been given a more direct marketing purpose.

For luxury brands, an important benefit of artifying their products through curatorial campaigns is that brands will be expected to gain ethical and aesthetic blessings. Moreover, blurring business operations, balancing interest growth and uniqueness, and keeping the brand focused—the relationship between consistent customer experience and value-matched young customer groups. In the Asian retail industry, art and curation are beginning to attract the attention of young consumers, and curation is slowly evolving from the framework of traditional museums to a business model [17]. Unlike traditional business cognition, it transforms curation into a new retail force, tells brand stories with visual art, extends business opportunities with emotional sales, and creates a new consumer community that conveys diverse cultures and young lifestyles [20]. Contemporary luxury brands are keen to establish “complicity” with art, largely considering the characteristics of authenticity and its association with art. The authenticity of products depends not only on whether they are closely related to historical periods, places of origin, etc. Another view is that authenticity is not inherently present in an object or activity by design but is a socially acceptable construct. In other words, there is no pure truth, and it is based on people's subjective feelings, emotional needs, values, and cultural stereotypes [17]. Combined with creative marketing strategies, it can even enhance the value awareness of products and artworks, thereby enhancing the value of artworks and artists themselves, making them more in line with the shopping intentions of target consumers

Luxury customers in Asia are characterized by “conspicuous consumption,” which drives social separation and divides society into societies [21]. If the exhibition of luxury brands is regarded as a social activity, the art exhibition can be regarded as a class of public goods. The consumption of high-end artworks is a barrier that prevents others from entering the upper class and makes this part. Customers generate an exclusive active consumption for people outside the group. Cartier is the first luxury brand to introduce traditional Chinese patterns for design, and young consumers' aesthetics are increasingly inclined to simplicity and abstraction [22], so Cartier has a high possibility of long-term development in the Asian market represented by China. In the “Beyond the Boundary” exhibition held in the Forbidden City in Beijing, the works with the theme of “Lucky Bird” represented the dialogue between the western jewelry art represented by Cartier craftsmanship and the oriental embroidery art collected by the Palace Museum[23]. It directly conveys the intention of this “Inspiration China” unit: in the form of a dialogue between ancient Chinese artworks in the Forbidden City and Cartier's Chinese inspiration, to seek the relationship between Eastern and Western civilizations.

Some higher levels are tacit understanding, cultural commonality, and emotional resonance. Participating consumers develop a sense of community that helps them become more loyal Cartier customers.

### **3.2 Lack of digital experience**

However, as the younger generation gradually dominates the market, the digital experience is not a choice. Still, a way of life for Gen Z. Currently, most of the curatorial activities of luxury brands tend to be conducted offline in big cities, ignoring Some groups of consumers from small cities. As a typical user group, consumers in tier 4-6 small cities are increasingly becoming the main force of luxury consumption. Online shopping is becoming the main way for them to buy luxury goods. Data

shows that 80% of luxury stores are concentrated in the top 15 cities in China's GDP, but only 25% of luxury consumers live in these cities. There is a lack of offline exhibitions and online exhibition promotion [25]. In this part, consumers with strong purchasing power cannot fully participate in the artistic construction of the brand to generate more and further income for the brand. Cartier and other luxury brands should pay more attention to the introduction of online curatorial event experience and the importance of leveraging celebrity in their artistic construction. The "2018 China Luxury Digital Consumer Market Insights" report shows that more than 70% of young people under 30 are easily influenced by celebrity influence to make purchases [25]. Cartier can find artists who are in line with the uniqueness and diversity of the brand to cooperate, thereby accelerating the artistic process of the brand.

## **4. Discussion**

### **4.1 Bringing curatorial activities to life**

For young people in small towns who have the willingness to consume and a sense of participation in the luxury community, luxury brands are unique in marketing and promotion than mass brands. Although the sales target is a wave of people at the top of the tower, the target of publicity is the general public, and customers will be willing to pay only if the public awareness is high [26]. Therefore, the open exhibition is more likely to be a "show" for the public to see, winning more love more intuitively and experientially. The exhibition is closer to the people and endows the product with artistic value [18]. Compared with high-end closed places, the exhibition is relatively open and can be set up near residential buildings, parks, and docks. This has also narrowed the distance between mass brands and luxury brands. At the same time, such an exhibition can also allow products to be presented to everyone as artworks. For example, when Louis Vuitton visited Qingdao this year [27], the silk scarves and bags on the walls looked like works of art, which could stimulate consumers' desire to buy.

In addition, for prospective or emerging luxury customers in third- and fourth-tier cities, it is also helpful to choose a cultural entry point that consumers are familiar with for curatorial activities. This will make it easier for consumers to associate familiar life scenes and Make exhibits more accessible. It is convenient to express the brand attitude and increase the sense of interaction and the connotation of art and culture [28]. Holiday marketing, especially during the most important Spring Festival in China, is a very helpful option for international luxury brands to convey their brand message to local consumers and show their brand personality. Cultivating young people's tastes and emphasizing "experience" is win-win wisdom. For example, major brand designers have launched many Chinese New Year collections that blend Eastern and Western cultures [29]. Behind the holiday creativity of luxury brands, Chinese consumers are gradually entering the international luxury market. Brands actively use cultural resonance to enhance the value recognition of consumers, especially the younger generation of consumers. Growing with a new generation of consumers, luxury brands pay more attention to products and content to demonstrate originality and brand genes and carry out brand traceability while highlighting Chinese elements. Many brands learn from their classic works or historical archives, mine traditional Chinese elements and reinterpret them, or carry out various forms of cross-border cooperation with Chinese creatives [30]. Affordable is one thing; feeling the quality and artwork of the product is another. And what luxury brands want to gain is the appreciation and admiration of the public. In a specific space, using a variety of elements to bring unprecedented sensory impact and emotional resonance to consumers is the original intention of brand art.

### **4.2 Curatorial Activities and New Technologies**

As far as the Chinese market is concerned, the Z generation is gradually growing, and the iteration of consumption concepts has made young people have a higher pursuit of quality. They are more eager for high aesthetics and high taste when their self-consciousness is awakened. Luxury, in the final analysis, is a lasting consumption psychological warfare. Art exhibitions allow more people to

enjoy the quality and beauty of luxury brands, as well as the sense of status brought by the experience of use, and at the same time occupy the minds of consumers more broadly. Just as Anne Hathaway's character in the movie "Queen Wears Prada" constantly contacts luxury brands in the process of advancing in the workplace and learns to wear appropriate clothes for various occasions, today's urban youth also need to be cultivated by luxury brands and potential consumers. It is important to have an exhibition at the right place and time to ensure adequate online publicity, participation, and interaction [31]. Based on cost and number of participants, frequent curation in smaller cities may not be realistic and will not bring more benefits to the brand. Low-cost fashion digital exhibition participation is one of the brand's marketing methods. At the same time, establishes the brand and this part of the community of young consumers so that the brand can reach consumers quickly and effectively. When planning exhibitions, emphasizing the "immersion" of online exhibitions will help improve the experience of young consumers and stabilize more loyal customers. Brands generate high-quality content and "communication scenes" through art installations, scene arrangements, technical means, etc. [33], allowing the exhibition to quickly ferment through social media, triggering topics, and attracting many young social media fans to dig deeper into the brand story behind it [32]. Emphasize the aesthetic value and cultural and artistic connotation of commodities to complete the brand's art and generate income from this art. For example, Cartier's "Boundless Square" exhibition, Cartier promotes through official Weibo, Douyin, WeChat applet, Tmall and Tencent Video, and other platforms, and shares the cutting-edge attitude of PASHA DE CARTIER with more people through cooperation with celebrities. The younger generation [34]. However, this event can only participate offline, and most online discussions among young people revolve around live pictures and video materials. If they can participate in the exhibition more intuitively, timely, and interactively, it may bring a lot of attention to the brand for better results.

## 5. Conclusion

Due to the changes in the global market in recent years, the curatorial activities of luxury brands have been given a more direct marketing purpose. The research found that the Asian market will be an important development sector, and young consumers from here demand convenience and experience. The experience of the environment has high requirements, especially young people from small cities will have huge development potential. By implementing the recommendations in this paper, Cartier can create a digital environment within the experience of its artistic curatorial events, facilitating interaction with their products, stories, and artworks. At the same time, this paper can significantly reduce the pain points identified in the study, such as small cities' Insufficient curatorial activities and lack of online channel publicity. Hence, the emerging consumer groups can deeply recognize the artistic image of the brand through curatorial activities. At the same time, these suggestions will help young consumers better perceive the brand culture and connotation, achieve a deeper emotional connection, and stabilize the new generation of Asian consumers with lower loyalty. This article predicts that the positive impact of these new touch points and technologies will not be limited to Cartier's younger customers but will also include Cartier-collaborating artists and other wider customers.

Nevertheless, this article still lacks direct data from Cartier, such as the number of exhibitors, customer evaluations, etc. Due to commercial confidentiality restrictions, this article uses much data from the luxury goods industry. This may not be intuitive regarding the case study method used in this article, but the data are convincing and broad enough to study the luxury industry's artistic process. For future more in-depth research on Cartier, customer questionnaires and interviews can be used to obtain more direct and real data.

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