Cultural Communication Strategies of Luxury Brands in The Era of New Media

Wenyun Cai[1, *]

[1] Department of network and new media, Zhejiang Gongshang University, Hangzhou, China

* Corresponding Author Email: 2019130321@pop.zjgsu.edu.cn

Abstract. With the development of media technology, network and new media increasingly affect people's way of life and cultural dissemination. At the same time, in the enterprise competition in the 21st century, besides product quality and service value, the contest of brand culture also occupies the core position. Based on LV and Gucci's e-commerce and online marketing cases, second-hand materials and literature review in recent years, this paper analyzes the effect and impact of luxury brand culture communication strategies and puts forward suggestions. The research found that the creation and development of a luxury brand can not be separated from a strong cultural core. The brand usually has a long history, artistic halo, sense of dignity, and cultural precipitation, which makes each luxury unique. How to rely on new media technology to formulate a cultural communication strategy in the new media era is an urgent problem for the luxury brand. If the communication strategy is used properly, it can bring good benefits to the luxury brand and give a more profound cultural connotation.

Keywords: New media; luxury brand; cultural communication.

1. Introduction

In the 21st century, the world has entered the digital era. The invention of digital technology has not only changed people's living habits and living standards but also changed human cognitive style and narrative representation. People can buy online, take online classes, work online, and pay by scanning codes. The Internet has become an ecological element of social life, like water and electricity. Everyone in the digital economy is not only a participant but also a promoter. Through the identification, selection, filtering, storage and use of digital knowledge and information, human beings realize the economic form of high-quality economic development. Under the concept of information breaking time and space and spreading rapidly and the global village, the representation of reality by the media has gradually become the leading role in constructing people's cognition and triggering behavior. Knowledge has become easier to obtain, people's aesthetics has been improved, and people have paid unprecedented attention to fashion. Fashion has gradually become a modern "belief system". Luxury brands that used to face a small number of people turned to the public, revealing the mystery; The cultural communication of luxury brands has also changed from one-way communication to two-way communication, increasing interaction with the audience and profoundly affecting consumers' values [1].

Digital technology can effectively improve the efficiency of enterprise management, enrich management means, reduce the uncertainty of operation, and increase profits quickly and accurately for enterprises. Nowadays, more and more luxury brands use the network and new media technology to disseminate their culture. Various dissemination methods and wide dissemination platforms add new ways and a large number of audiences to the cultural dissemination of luxury brands [2]. In addition to fashion blockbusters, advertising implants, and short videos, there are also live webcasts, key opinion leaders deliveries, mini-games and more. Today's fashion field even gives birth to virtual fashion, Emerging things like virtual idols and virtual shows. Consumers are exposed to brand culture in virtual space-time to expand brand influence further [3]. When luxury brands master digital technology and expand the cultural development of virtual space, they will attract more new consumers from different regions, ages and cultures.

At present, the luxury market is gradually saturated in the West, while China, with its steadily increasing economic strength, increasing consumption capacity, large population base and well-controlled epidemic situation, has become an indispensable place for the luxury brand to expand its business scope. According to market analysis by Bain Consulting's Luxury Research 2020, Chinese citizens, who bought 70% of their luxury items from abroad last year, were the primary force behind 90% of the rise in the luxury sector. Travel restrictions have been put in place in a number of nations as a result of the international spread of new crown pneumonia, making it impossible for Chinese nationals to purchase overseas. As a result, a large number of Chinese consumers are now buying luxury goods at home. As the first major economy to emerge from the new coronary pneumonia crisis, Chinese consumers will account for more than 50% of the global luxury market by 2025, according to Bain. Over the past few months, Chinese luxury brands have had to adapt their marketing strategies quickly to post-epidemic Chinese consumer habits. Due to the cultural differences between China and the West, the cultural dissemination of luxury goods needs to use localized means of dissemination appropriately to conform to the preferences and psychology of Chinese consumers. In this cross-cultural communication process, the use of networks and new media has become indispensable media for luxury brands [4,5]. In addition, according to the trend of younger luxury consumption, and young groups are the main force in using networks and new media, it is necessary for luxury brands to formulate new media and cultural communication strategies.

The luxury brand is one of the hot topics discussed in recent years, but there are few studies on luxury brand case analysis from the perspective of new media. Each luxury brand has its own unique brand culture or is related to the founder's experience, exquisite craftsmanship, or history of development. In fact, luxury goods are typical spiritual and cultural products and should not be labeled as "commercial" or "vanity". The design and cultural connotation of luxury goods have become a kind of spiritual experience. Just like art, the value is not the picture itself but the inner enjoyment and philosophical experience brought by the artworks.

From the perspective of luxury goods and new media, this paper focuses on the cultural communication strategies of LV and Gucci brands. Previous studies mainly focus on marketing strategies, while cultural communication strategies are scarce. This paper focuses on the cultural communication strategies of LV and Gucci brands in the new media era.

The study found that on a diverse new media social platform, luxury brands are basically registered with official accounts, the latest design and activities of the brand can be published and pushed in time, feedback and comments from fans can be obtained, and interaction with fans can enhance customer stickiness. The traditional voice power of luxury brands has been disrupted in the new media age, and luxury brands need to learn to distance themselves from their audiences in new media [6]. Moreover, win-win partnerships are the way to grow. Star effects and brand partnerships can increase the exposure of luxury brands and provide continuous momentum, especially in the Chinese market. Often, partnerships between luxury brands and stars have a marginal effect and short-term benefits. there are risks in working with stars, such as the collapse of stars. the marginal effect of star cooperation shows a decreasing trend.

2. Analysis

2.1. The Current State of The Spread of Luxury Culture

In China, luxury consumers have an earlier average age and a stronger understanding of digital technology than Western consumers. Luxury brands adapt to the fast-paced environment of China's Internet for sustainable development. Software such as Weibo, WeChat, Douyin, Little Red Book and Tmall are popular new media marketing channels under China's modern digital construction, as well as the main battlefield for luxury brand cultural dissemination in the Chinese market [3].

Everyone on Weibo is we media. In addition to better adapting to mobile devices, Weibo is easy to get started. It is suitable for fragmented time, strong interaction and social communication. The main content of luxury brands' work in Weibo marketing is: First, advertising on account or hashtag;

Secondly, inviting stars or high-quality bloggers to comment or write professional articles; Then, creating a Weibo operation team; Finally, monitoring operations [5].

Douyin, TikTok's Chinese counterpart, relies mainly on short videos and live broadcasts for online marketing and has been the preferred short video platform in China after the 1990s. Live marketing has a strong real-time interactive type, can obtain accurate users, can achieve real-time generation and transformation, and the network operation cost is low. Brand Hot DOU List is a list launched by Douyin to gain insight into the overall volume of the brand on Dither. More and more brands have used the hot DOU list as an important reference for "short-term marketing (measuring the effectiveness of marketing activities) and long-term marketing (measuring the value under the brand position management)" in Douyin. There are 29 issues in the luxury brand list so far, which has generated much attention [7].

2.1.1 The Environment For The Spread of Luxury Culture

The concept of luxury culture was born very early. Because of the division of social strata and the pursuit of personalized human nature, human beings need something special to show their identity and distinction. Usually, these special things include precise techniques and rigorous research and the spirit of pursuing perfection, which create a treasure full of artistic life. Luxury goods may have been exclusive to the upper class, but after entering the Internet era, the massive information has lowered the knowledge barrier, and the luxury brand culture has become more user-friendly and less mysterious [6]. At the same time, in the context of the improvement of the economic level, people's awareness of consumption has gradually improved, and more and more attention has been paid to spiritual consumption.

Luxury shoppers today look for style in their preferred brands. They want to maintain a low profile while simultaneously educating people about the luxury implications of their consumption. Thus, in order to effectively communicate the brand spirit and meaning of luxury to the target population, luxury culture must choose a good point of distribution [2].

2.1.2 Communicators and Audiences of Luxury Culture

After human beings entered the Internet era, the way of cultural communication was no longer one-way communication, and the discourse power is no longer concentrated in the traditional sense of "communicator". Each person can express his or her own views or refute others' views only by moving his or her finger. The equal and open Internet environment makes the boundary between the communicator and the audience gradually blurred, and the direction of information transmission appears.

Time and space have been disrupted by the development of the internet, which has also united everyone on the planet and made the idea of a global village a reality. According to McLuhan, the essential meaning of the term "global village" is not that people now communicate in a more advanced way or that social and cultural norms have changed much, but rather that the developed media has made the world smaller. The advancement of transportation once caused the ancient "villages" on Earth to become urbanized, necessitating direct communication between individuals to be replaced by indirect and literal communication. The "re village" anti-urbanization strategy, which the electronic media implements, diminishes the city's power concentration and resumes the importance of individual-to-individual connection [1].

2.1.3 The Application and Effect of Luxury Culture

This paper focuses on the cultural dissemination of LV and Gucci in China, which relies on new media.

Gucci's Douyin approach includes developing a number of label challenges to promote brand engagement; the most popular challenge, with over 73.5 million views, was the Chinese Valentine's Day challenge. This occasion deftly makes advantage of brand localization and cross-cultural communication [8,9].

Live fashion shows have become an unavoidable way to adapt to the global outbreak of new coronary pneumonia. LV explores the other side of live broadcasting, partnering with Little Red Book, China's largest social e-commerce application, as the first luxury brand to formally open an account on Little Red Book and present interactive, original live content, LV has gained over 150,000 page views during live broadcasting and active involvement of Chinese consumers [5].

2.2. Analysis of The Communication Theory of Luxury Culture

The brand is an important ideographic symbol in consumer society. Luxury brands improve the meaning of the brand and endow the brand with unique quality. Products are upgraded to ideographic tools, thus establishing the "myth" of the consumer society.

2.2.1 The Development of Luxury Brands

Louis Vuitton, the brand founder of LV, is one of the greatest masters of leather design in French history and opened the first suitcase store under his own name in Paris in 1854. A century later, LV became the top brand in leather products and a symbol of the upper class. Today's LV is no longer limited to leather but has developed many product lines such as fashion, accessories, perfume and more, becoming a huge trend indicator. LV always adheres to its brand spirit and does something different. The Canvas material and Monogram of LV have become a timeless classic in the fashion world [10].

Gucci was founded in Florence, Italy, in 1921. It started with high-end luggage accessories and equestrian equipment as products. In 1994, Tom Ford reshaped Gucci dramatically, transforming the traditional brand into a brand new modern spokesman, making Gucci a fashion icon for the younger generation. Gucci products include fashion, leather, watches, scarves, perfumes, and household and pet products. In 2015, Alessandro Michele became the brand's brand-new creative director, giving Gucci artistry, retro, romance and poetry its bizarre aesthetic that combines history and local characteristics. Today Gucci is a luxury brand with a strong artistic and cultural color [11].

2.2.2 The Cultural Connotation of Luxury Brand

LV initially served the royal family and nobles and created classics with high-quality leather goods. LV's brand image is the art of travel because the brand's main positioning is low-key luxury but comfortable and convenient travel life, which can be clearly seen from its official advertising. LV, a century-old brand, advocates exquisite and comfortable "travel philosophy". The spirit of charm and individuality is embodied by Louis Vuitton. Its century-long history, distinctive ethnic meaning, LV alphabet combination diagram, and noble and exquisite disposition all serve as reflections of its personality. The LV brand image's emotional component derives its concept from its emotional bond with customers. Luxury companies provide customers not only a tangible object but also something with spiritual qualities and potent emotional repercussions that transcend the object as consumers turn away from the material desire of luxury products and toward spiritual quest [10]. LV is the expression of people's emotional appeal at a deeper level, which reflects a way of life, life attitude and consumption concept. Brand luxury goods all reflect a way of life and its concept. Over the years, LV has launched a number of classic designs. After more than a century of development, LV has become one of the symbols of the world's classic leather goods [4].

Gucci's brand culture originates from the exclusive equestrian sports of nobles. The classic designs of slub bags, such as saddle-shaped designs, saddle buckles, green-red-green ribbons, and bucket bags in the shape of a knight's hat, all share the same origin as an equestrian. When Gucci was the creative director of Alessandro Michele, he gained a richer brand culture, formed a new aesthetic system with his forceful expression, complicated images, details worthy of consideration and creative background, and penetrated into all areas of design. The fearless use of colour, pattern, pattern repetition, filling the entire visual space, and the reconstruction or combination of fantasy and art all make Gucci's culture and maximalism skillfully combined [11,12].

2.3. Strategies For The Spread of Luxury Culture

The long history and profound cultural heritage endow luxury brands with unique connotation values so that cultural communication can enhance brand value with the help of cultural connotation. In today's increasingly fierce brand competition, cultural communication is an important means for luxury brands to win.

2.3.1 Interactive Communication

On the Internet, people can interact with luxury brands and increase their understanding. Interaction can shorten the distance between consumers and luxury brands. On the other hand, it also helps to increase the popularity of luxury brands.

Driven by the network platform, luxury brands began to take the civilian route to serve a wider group. In the process of spreading culture, luxury brands not only interact with the audience by means of comments, lottery, live broadcasts, and more, but also try game marketing. The game is a content carrier with both entertainment and interaction, which can establish a new type of interaction relationship, such as the retro parkour "Endless Runner" launched in the autumn and winter of LV2019, and the "LOUIS THE GAME" congratulating Mr. Louis Vuitton on his 200th birthday [13]; Since Gucci launched its official independent application software in 2017, it has launched three small games, namely "Gucci Bee", "Gucci Ace" and "Gucci Grip".

2.3.2 Targeted Communication

Today, after the flow dividend period, the full coverage promotion mode is no longer suitable for the cultural communication of luxury brands. Directional push, also known as refined operation, luxury brand new media operators can use big data to push the content of luxury brands to specific groups accurately, thus improving publicity efficiency.

The user analysis database of luxury brands can record and analyze user behavior, label users, and finally, draw user portraits. In the era of big data, it is very important to make use of existing resources to make products more accurately pushed to applicable users [6]. Only by making data become the resource and soil of activities can cultural communication be conducive to invincibility .

2.3.3 Digitization

Digital marketing has the advantages of low cost, wide shrinkage and strong controllability. It has become one of the necessary ways for almost all brands in the marketing process. Chinese consumers generally choose a guaranteed Tmall flagship store, Vipshop and other platforms when purchasing genuine [6].

LV is not the earliest luxury brand to enter the Internet in China, but it is the most active brand on the Internet. On the official website, LV adds online shopping functions and links to Tmall. On Weibo, LV is the first luxury brand in China to dare to give its official account to NetRed by playing with major social media and inviting well-known NetRed advertising products. In December 2012, LV became the first luxury brand to open a WeChat service account. With big data push, brand advertising can be precisely pushed to a specific audience. In December 2018, LV launched static, video-opening pages and streaming ads in dithering and added commodity purchase links to its advertising pages. Up to now, LV has 213,000 fans in dithering and 69,17,000 have been praised. The luxury brand has gradually become more popular and lifelike. In the search marketing mode of Little Red Book, LV has a large number of vegetarian product evaluations. In 2019, LV joined forces with the game LOL (League of Legends) to design a skin for a hero Qiyana [14]. On Bilibili, a 450 million Z-generation clustered video community platform; LV launched a section called Bilibili & LOL AR Filter, which adds a legendary color to the game competition.

2.3.4 Celebrity Effect

Collaboration between luxury brands and stars is usually a win-win marketing tool. By cooperating, stars can increase their exposure and get more heat. For luxury brands, it will strengthen brand concept, build personality and realize cash flow through stars [15].

Most of the brand ambassadors LV invites to serve in China are stars who have much traffic, wear and understand fashion. LV's Chief Executive Officer said LV is experiencing "unprecedented" huge growth in China. Choosing Chinese celebrities as brand spokespersons is the easiest way to eliminate "cultural alert" in the Chinese market and the most significant strategy for brand sales growth in the target market. Apart from the factors contributing to China's purchasing power growth, the brand's strategy of Localized Advertising Spokesperson has achieved initial results. In January 2021, LV officially announced that Liu Yifei was the spokesman for the brand. Liu Yifei was both handsome and gentle, which matched the hard and gentle temperament the brand pursued [5].

Gucci's brand spokespersons are usually personalized, retro and stylish stars. For example, in 2016, Gucci announced that Li Yuchun became the brand's new image ambassador for Watch Jewelry in Asia. The author believes that there are two reasons Gucci chose Li Yuchun's cooperation. On the one hand, Li Yuchun has a kind of vague beauty of gender, which has been given the symbol of awakening feminism by the public in the fashion world. On the other hand, Li Yuchun is a more self-conscious person with both trendy and retro styles. This closely matches Gucci's recent design style.

Luxury brands work with other brands or artists in addition to real-life stars. For example, the partnership between LV and Supreme in 2017 was a successful partnership between top luxury brands and trendy street brands, in which Supreme increased its visibility and attracted more young consumers. In 2017, the Spanish teenage artist Coco collaborated with Gucci, causing the considerable sensation. In addition, Gucci specially recorded the works of many collaborated artists as a reminder, making a Gucci Gift Giving Book. The painting itself conveys a youthful style and fits well with Gucci's brand cultural connotation [11].

2.4. The Advice on Luxury Culture Communication Strategies

The Internet is currently a key driver of industrial advancement, and consumer advancement is a hot concern in the era of O2O mobile internet. The intelligent use of Internet e-commerce channels is a way to develop devoted clients in a market with complex brands and an efficient technique to increase the competitiveness of the same category [6].

First of all, in the process of cross-cultural communication, we need to pay attention to brand localization. Every place has a unique history and culture. In the cultural exchange of luxury goods, the cultural concept should be consumer centred and not be too hard to export. Instead, we should spread the culture according to local cultural characteristics and local conditions and make full use of traditional Chinese culture and western trends and ideas. Second, reduce the risk of cooperation. The rampant co-branding and inappropriate spokesmen will reduce consumers' loyalty to the brand. Third, actively construct consumption rituals and advertising symbols; Baudrillard pointed out in Consumer Society, "With the continuous improvement of productive social forces and the continuous enrichment of products, consumption has become the dominant driving force of social life and production [4]. People's consumption behavior has undergone essential changes, from paying attention to the physical characteristics and practical values of products to paying more attention to the symbolic value, cultural and spiritual characteristics and image value of goods. Behind human consumption motivation, there is an understanding and recognition of symbols, making consumption a kind of interactive process with cultural significance", from product development and packaging design to characteristic services, all require progress and innovation.

3. Conclusion

Standing in the background of the times, the material foundation is more and more solid today, people's requirements for quality of life are constantly improving, people begin to pursue more spiritual and cultural satisfaction, and consumers' awareness of consumption is also gradually diversified. Luxury brands are not only selling expensive goods but also selling culture with spiritual connotations.

Firstly, luxury brands need to learn to co-exist and develop in coordination with different cultures. In the Internet era, the network can give every user an equal voice and, to some extent, eliminate the generation gap between different age groups and the time and space gap between different regions. Luxury brands face a broader audience and more diverse consumer needs. Cultural communication across different groups can control a wider market and provide more opportunities to enrich brand culture.

Secondly, luxury brands need to keep pace with the development of media technology. The development of networks and new media is an inevitable trend of the times. Only by following the trend and constantly innovating and improving can luxury culture communication obtain more living space and go further in the future. In today's ever-changing Internet ecology, social network platforms follow the rule of survival of the fittest. Luxury brands must integrate multiple platform channels and master multiple communication modes to conduct all-around cultural communication.

Last but not least, luxury brands need to pay attention to consumers' experiences, plan activities that echo hot events, and provide consumers with the best service. Select the cooperation objects, select the stars that are consistent with the brand culture concept, and terminate the cooperation with the stars who are plagued by negative news in a timely manner; Co-branding with other brands and artists should not be too frequent, or it will reduce the loyalty of consumers. At the same time, attention should be paid to protecting rights and combating counterfeit products.

All in all, the most important thing for brands and society is to spread cultural values. Therefore, luxury brands should, on the basis of the original rich cultural connotation, introduce more high-quality products with deep cultural connotations according to the needs of social and cultural development and display more good images and social responsibilities of brands.

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