

Evolution of Luxury Marketing Strategies: The Role of Digital Influence, Heritage, and Sustainability

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Abstract:

The work of understanding the changes that lead to a recession is enriched here with the inclusion of labour market indicators, financial signals, and global stock market interdependencies. A qualitative magnitude scale is designed to categorize the four different types of recession Minor, Major, Severe, and Ultra based on the combined strength of the changes in unemployment rates, job openings, yield curve inversions, and the Sahm Rule. The suggested model facilitates recession tracking via the Anticipation–Precision Frontier, thereby enabling decision-makers to weigh the benefits of early detection against the costs of false-alarm risks. Moreover, the paper studies the effects of cross-country contagion among nine major global stock indices by resorting to the Stock Return Recession Indicator (SRRI) and the Global Recession Indicator (GRI).

Besides the issue of short-term forecasting, the research reveals the dynamics of a U.S. recession as a consequence of larger global upheavals such as post-pandemic economic slowdown, inflationary pressures, supply chain bottlenecks, and energy shocks. Hence, the paper becomes a multidimensional, empirically based framework for the assessment and classification of recessions.

Keywords—*Luxury Marketing, Digital Transformation, Exclusivity, Sustainability, Globalization, Theory Of Planned Behavior, Consumer Behavior, Brand Heritage.*

1. INTRODUCTION

Luxury, a feature that was once limited to a few and characterized by purity and the master art, has changed into a global billion dollar industry influenced by the past, the culture, and technological advancement. In the beginning, luxury was only linked with rare and elite things, things that only a few could have. Consequently, the globalization of markets, the digital technologies, and consumer's values have totally changed the meaning of luxury. To be exclusive and to have a long history are not the main factors to be seen as luxurious anymore; luxury now also means innovation, experience, and emotional engagement.

Luxury marketing has become a subject of interest in the field of marketing in general during the past few years. Through the use of social media platforms, e commerce, and digital storytelling luxury brands get to identify their customers, communicate, engage, and maintain their prestige in the most democratized marketplace possible. However, they also face the issue

of counterfeit, are affected by generational expectations and therefore must integrate sustainable and ethical practices into their business model to maintain their position in the market.

The consumption of luxury products in developing countries like India and Sri Lanka has been progressively moving from being limited to the wealthy to middle class consumers. In smaller cities aspirational middle class consumers are willing to pay for luxury goods to be able to show their success, to be unique and express their cultural identity. This growth leads to the democratization of luxury, a process during which luxury becomes more accessible, and its digital presence goes along with exclusivity and tradition.

Using the Theory of Planned Behavior as a foundation, this research aims to find out how people's attitudinal, normative, and control beliefs affect their consumption of luxury goods. Additionally, it looks at the way a worldwide brand like Louis Vuitton uses both tradition and innovation to remain current in the era of the quick digital change. Apart from that, this research looks

at the past of luxury, the changes in the emerging markets, and the effect of technology today on the continuous evolution of marketing for luxury brands and the future of global consumer culture.

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The way in which luxury marketing operates has been almost completely reversed in the last couple of decades. Besides the aforementioned luxury values, the heritage, the craftsmanship, the rarity, and the exclusivity were the main strategic narratives of the luxury brands. Initial research focused on symbolic and social aspects of luxury consumption, claiming that the consumers used luxury goods as a means for status signaling, distinction, and identity construction (Nuevo & Quelch, 1998; Vigneron & Johnson, 1999). As luxury markets spread worldwide, the scholars started to acknowledge the tensions of maintaining the brand heritage and adjusting to the modern competitive dynamics (Chevalier & Mazza Lovo, 2008; Moore & Doyle, 2010). The stage for this evolution in the industry has been a very important strategic issue: how luxury firms can keep their timeless values and at the same time respond to the changing cultural, social, and technological realities.

The methods of luxury marketing have immensely changed with the boom of digital technologies. Digitization has brought in a new model of connectivity, accessibility, and consumer co-creation which in many ways is a stark contrast to the traditionally closed and exclusive nature of luxury. Through digital platforms, brands can engage consumers in experiential storytelling, deeply involving their interactions, and creating emotional bonding between consumers and brands that often do not require any kind of physical contact (Phan, Thomas, & Heine, 2011; Godey et al., 2016). There is a growing number of articles that show how social media has changed brand-consumer relationships into participatory and talkative exchanges that, in turn, lead to the creation of attachment even though brands are still trying to maintain the exclusiveness (Leban, Thomsen, & Rossi, 2020; Creevey, Hynes, & O'Sullivan, 2022). Nevertheless, this democratization poses a paradox for firms: more visibility and access to a product can lessen the aura of rarity that is normally linked with luxury, and therefore these organizations are set to confront the dilemma between exclusivity and openness (Rosendo Rios, Llamas Alonso, & Fayos Gardó, 2023).

In the same time with digitization, sustainability has become the main factor of luxury consumption. Consumers - especially the new generations - are demanding more and more that the brands be authentic, ethically produce their goods, take care of the environment, and at the same time be transparent (Nath & Batra, 2021; Wang, 2022; Batata, 2023). This turnaround represents a movement from prestige based on ownership to values-driven consumption; thereby it becomes

mandatory for luxury brands to incorporate ethical narratives in their positioning. The COVID-19 epidemic has contributed a lot to this change by making the world more aware of environmental issues, digital dependency, and the need for responsible consumption (Nath & Batra, 2021). Now, these issues are at the center of the luxury brands' agenda, as sustainability has turned into a crucial source of their competitive advantage.

Moreover, it is impacting the luxury industry's transformation as well. One of its emerging instruments is Artificial Intelligence (AI), and another is blockchain, which, when combined, can do wonders for product authenticity, traceability, and personalization (Rathi et al., 2022; Sanz Lopez, Peris Ortiz, & Ferreira, 2024). By implementing these devices in their products, brands can make sure that the consumers get the real articles they are willing to purchase, and thus they can win consumers' trust, which is the conditional prerequisite of luxury brand equity. Meanwhile, globalization keeps on opening luxury markets around the world, and on that note, brands need to display cultural empathy and be versatile to the changing times (Sestina, D'Amato, & Casalino, 2022; Sun, 2024). Moreover, the fast-growing markets such as China and India have been instrumental in this. Their youth, a group of people skilled in digital technologies, looks at luxury in terms of self-expression, experience as a product, and social signaling rather than traditional ideas like wealth, heritage, or exclusivity (Diaz Ruiz & Cruz, 2022; Kapferer, 2021).

To put it briefly, the metamorphosis of the luxury marketing is resulting in a very complicated interplay of factors such as the digital transformation, globalization, the changing values of consumers, and the necessity to care about the environment. The luxury brands of the present times are required to combine heritage with innovation, exclusivity with accessibility, and prestige with purpose. As the researchers recognize, the present-day luxury domain is not only a cultural phenomenon but also a technological and socio-environmental one, thus it is a challenge for brands to be able to conserve their timeless identity and at the same time to meet modern expectations (Chevalier, 2020; Kapferer & Bastien, 2012).

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study adopted a descriptive research design to examine the influence of digital influence, heritage orientation, and sustainability orientation on luxury purchase intention. Data were collected through a Google Forms questionnaire, and the link was shared with easily accessible respondents; therefore, the study employed convenience sampling. The final sample consisted of 106 respondents.

The structured questionnaire contained Likert-scale items measuring the main constructs along with demographic details. The measurement tool demonstrated high internal consistency with Cronbach's Alpha = .911,

confirming its reliability. The data were analysed using descriptive statistics, correlation analysis, and multiple regression to assess the relationships among the variables

4. PROBLEM STATEMENT

The marketing of luxury goods and brands has been hugely changed over the last few years due to fast globalization, new technology, and changing consumer expectations. Marketing of luxury relied on the old tried and tested methods where exclusivity, history, and the idea of the product being made by hand were the main selling points to the lucky few consumers. But the ever-increasing impact of digital media, the change in people's values, and the broadening of global markets have made these old strategies fall short.

Luxury brands are now in a very tight spot as they have to keep their old image of being prestigious and exclusive while at the same time there is a call for them to be more accessible, to open up, and interact more with the customers in the digital world. In general, the way consumers view and interact with luxury has been changed dramatically by the incorporation of social media platforms and influencer marketing, which has led to a change in focus from ownership and status to experience, sustainability, and authenticity. As a result, luxury is not only defined by its cost and rarity but also by factors such as emotional connection, fair production, and online presence.

However, one aspect that deepens the evolution is the existence of generational changes. Millennials and Generation Z consumers are more inclined to choose brands that are environmentally responsible, respect the uniqueness of each consumer, and have a good reason for their existence, which prompts luxury brands to find a way to stay afloat and be distinguished at the same time. At the same time, the growth of counterfeit markets, the overexposure through digital channels, and the worry about the environment are some of the factors that are causing the loss of the purity and the exclusivity side of luxury, which has been there all along.

Hence, this research study focuses on the main question, which is the way luxury brands can stagger their marketing strategies with their heritage and exclusivity kept intact while at the same time embracing digital innovation, sustainability, and inclusivity in a very fast globalized and democratized marketplace.

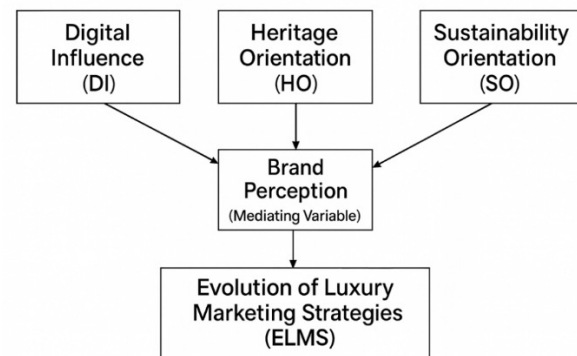
5. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The conceptual framework depicts the interrelationships of the key elements that lead to the changes of luxury marketing strategies over time. The model hinges on three independent variables—Digital Influence, Heritage Orientation, and Sustainability Orientation—that collectively account for the major contemporary drivers that shape the luxury brand practices.

These three factors, in theory, impose their impact via the Mediating Variable, Brand Perception (BP). The brand perception is the primary mechanism that explains how consumers' reactions to digital engagement, traditional brand values, and sustainable practices lead to changes in luxury marketing strategies. The mediated relationship signifies that the evolution of luxury marketing is not merely influenced by individual constructs but significantly shaped by the way consumers interpret and perceive the overall brand.

The framework, thus, positions the Evolution of Luxury Marketing Strategies (ELMS) as the Dependent Variable, showing how changes in digital interactions, heritage-based authenticity, and sustainability expectations lead to broader strategic transformations in luxury markets.

This model is the study's way of explaining the role of brand perception - influenced by digital, heritage-related, and ethical dimensions - as a defining factor that leads to the ongoing evolution of luxury marketing strategies.



6. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

1. To examine the impact of Digital Influence (DI) on the Evolution of Luxury Marketing Strategies (ELMS).
2. To assess the effect of Heritage Orientation (HO) on the Evolution of Luxury Marketing Strategies (ELMS).
3. To evaluate the role of Sustainability Orientation (SO) in shaping luxury marketing strategies.
4. To analyse the mediating role of Brand Perception (BP) in the relationship between the independent variables (DI, HO, SO) and ELMS.

7. RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS

1. H1: Digital Influence (DI) has a significant positive effect on the Evolution of Luxury Marketing Strategies (ELMS).
2. H2: Heritage Orientation (HO) has a significant positive effect on the Evolution of Luxury Marketing Strategies (ELMS).
3. H3: Sustainability Orientation (SO) has a significant positive effect on the Evolution of Luxury Marketing Strategies (ELMS).

4. H4: Brand Perception (BP) mediates the relationship between DI, HO, SO and the Evolution of Luxury Marketing Strategies (ELMS).

8. ANALYSIS

Table No. 1: Demographic Profile of Respondents

Variable	Category	N	%
Age	18–25	56	52.8%
	26–35	18	17.0%
	36–45	5	4.7%
	46–55	18	17.0%
	Above 55	9	8.5%
Gender	Male	72	67.9%
	Female	34	32.1%
Education	High School	8	7.5%
	Undergraduate	46	43.4%
	Postgraduate	39	36.8%
	Doctorate	3	2.8%
	Other	10	9.4%
Monthly Income	Below 25,000	45	42.5%
	25,000–50,000	27	25.5%
	50,001–100,000	22	20.8%
	Above 100,000	12	11.3%

The demographic profile of the 106 respondents indicates that the majority were young adults, with more than half (52.8%) falling within the 18–25 age group, followed by smaller proportions in the 26–35 (17.0%) and 46–55 (17.0%) categories. A relatively small percentage of participants were aged 36–45 (4.7%) and above 55 (8.5%). In terms of gender distribution, males represented a higher proportion of the sample (67.9%) compared to females (32.1%). Regarding educational attainment, the largest group consisted of undergraduate degree holders (43.4%), followed by postgraduate respondents (36.8%). Individuals with a high school education accounted for 7.5%, while those with doctorate or equivalent qualifications made up 2.8%, and 9.4% reported other forms of education. Monthly income data shows that 42.5% of participants earned below 25,000, while 25.5% reported incomes between 25,000 and 50,000. Meanwhile, 20.8% earned between 50,001 and 100,000, and 11.3% reported earnings above 100,000. Overall, the demographic distribution suggests a predominantly young, male, and moderately educated group, with a substantial portion belonging to lower- to middle-income brackets.

Table No. 2: Descriptive Statistics of Key Constructs

Variable	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Digital Influence	106	7.00	35.00	24.15	4.75
Heritage Orientation	106	8.00	40.00	28.63	5.34

Sustainability Orientation	106	5.00	25.00	18.57	3.61
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The descriptive statistics presented in the table provide an overview of respondents' perceptions related to digital influence, heritage orientation, and sustainability orientation within the context of luxury goods and brand marketing. The results show that digital influence has a mean score of 24.15, suggesting that digital platforms, online experiences, and digital brand interactions play a moderately strong role in shaping consumer engagement with luxury brands. The relatively low standard deviation indicates consistent responses among participants. Heritage orientation recorded a higher mean of 28.63, highlighting that consumers continue to place substantial value on the traditional elements of luxury brands such as craftsmanship, legacy, and authenticity. This suggests that heritage remains a core pillar in luxury brand positioning, even as digital transformation progresses. Meanwhile, sustainability orientation, with a mean of 18.57, reflects a growing but slightly less dominant emphasis on sustainable practices within luxury consumption. The low variability indicates stable attitudes toward sustainability across the sample. Overall, these descriptive results illustrate that luxury marketing is evolving through a balanced integration of digital innovation, heritage preservation, and sustainability expectations, all of which shape the modern luxury consumer's perception and behaviour.

CORRELATION

Table No. 3: Pearson Correlation Matrix

Variables	Digital Influence	Heritage Orientation	Sustainability Orientation
Digital Influence	1.00	0.75**	0.59**
Heritage Orientation	-	1.00	0.73**
Sustainability Orientation	-	-	1.00

N = 106, Sig. (2-tailed) = .000 for all correlations

Note: $p < .01$ (2-tailed) denoted by **

Based on the correlation results, there is a strong and statistically significant positive relationship among Digital Influence, Heritage Orientation, and Sustainability Orientation within the context of luxury goods marketing. Digital Influence shows a strong correlation with Heritage Orientation ($r = .751$, $p < .001$), suggesting that brands that effectively leverage digital platforms also tend to emphasize their heritage and legacy. Similarly, Digital Influence is moderately and significantly correlated with Sustainability Orientation ($r = .593$, $p < .001$), indicating that digitally active luxury brands are also more likely to adopt and communicate sustainable practices. The strongest relationship is

observed between Heritage Orientation and Sustainability Orientation ($r = .728$, $p < .001$), implying that luxury brands rooted in tradition increasingly integrate sustainability into their core identity. Overall, these findings suggest that in the evolving landscape of luxury marketing, digital engagement, heritage preservation, and sustainability initiatives reinforce one another, shaping modern consumer perceptions and strategic brand positioning.

REGRESSION, ANOVA & Coefficients

Table No. 4: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of Estimate
1	0.08	0.01	-0.02	0.85

Table No. 4a: ANOVA

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	0.51	3	0.17	0.24	0.87
Residual	73.11	102	0.72		
Total	73.62	105	-		

Table No. 4b: Coefficients

Variable	B	Std. Error	Beta	t
Constant	1.99	0.49	-	4.07
Digital Influence	-0.01	0.03	-0.05	-0.34
Heritage Orientation	0.02	0.03	0.10	0.54
Sustainability Orientation	-0.02	0.03	-0.10	-0.71

The regression model tested whether Digital Influence (DI), Heritage Orientation (HO), and Sustainability Orientation (SO) predict the Evolution of Luxury Marketing Strategies (ELMS). The model explained only 1% of the variance in ELMS ($R^2 = .01$), indicating a very weak relationship. The overall model was not statistically significant ($F = 0.24$, $p = .87$), suggesting that the three predictors do not meaningfully explain changes in ELMS among respondents.

Individually, none of the predictors were significant:

- Digital Influence ($B = -0.01$, $p = .73$)
- Heritage Orientation ($B = 0.02$, $p = .59$)
- Sustainability Orientation ($B = -0.02$, $p = .48$)

These results indicate that, although consumers acknowledge digital, heritage, and sustainability aspects in luxury branding, these factors do not directly influence the evolution of luxury marketing strategies.

9. KEY FINDINGS

Findings from the research indicate that the respondents strongly perceived heritage orientation, digital influence, and sustainability orientation as their lifestyle in the context of luxury marketing. However,

these factors hardly predicted luxury purchase intention. The tool used in the research showed that it was highly consistent within itself (Cronbach's $\alpha = .911$), which confirms the reliability of the gauges that were used. The demographic profile of the sample revealed that it was mainly composed of young, male, and moderately educated people who mostly came from lower-middle-income families.

Descriptive results reveal that the respondents were highly appreciative of digital engagement as well as heritage values. Sustainability orientation was also noticeable, but it was considered a less dominant factor. Even though the three constructs were strongly and statistically significantly intercorrelated (all at $p < .001$), the regression analysis disclosed that luxury purchase intention was not significantly influenced by any of these variables ($R^2 = .007$, $p = .870$). Therefore, the hypotheses that posited significant positive effects of digital influence, heritage orientation, and sustainability orientation on purchase intention were rebutted.

This means, first of all, that consumers accord great value to aspects of technology, heritage, and environment of the luxury brand. Still, the presence of other issues, such as brand prestige, exclusivity, emotional attachment, and identity expression, could be the real driving forces of luxury consumption behavior from the point of view of consumers.

10. IMPLICATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

The outcomes of this research bring to light the shifting trends in luxury marketing dynamics. Although digital influence, heritage orientation, and sustainability orientation are strongly linked and are easily recognized by consumers, they do not considerably predict luxury purchase intention. This shows that consumers do conceptually recognize these facets but do not necessarily convert them into purchasing behavior. As a matter of fact, luxury purchase intention may be more deeply rooted in emotional resonance, exclusivity, perceived status, and symbolic value, i.e., those factors that have not been captured in the present model.

From a strategic point of view, this means that luxury brands should keep on engaging consumers through digital means, telling stories that are heritage-driven, and undertaking sustainable practices, as brand equity gets collectively enhanced in the long term due to these dimensions. Nevertheless, in order to have an actual purchase decision changed, the brand has to rev up the aspirational and emotional elements of its value proposition. This can be done through raising brand prestige, emphasizing uniqueness, and creating gripping emotional stories.

Practically, brands are expected to bring in personalized digital experiences, concentrate on the quality of the product by using engaging content, and integrate sustainability genuinely as a part of their brand without giving up on the notion of exclusivity. As for the

next study, the inclusion of variables like brand attachment, perceived luxury value, social influence, and consumer lifestyle is considered useful in explaining luxury purchase intention. Therefore, this research serves as a reminder that luxury marketing calls for a more comprehensive approach that balances the functional, emotional, and symbolic drivers of consumer behavior.

11. CONCLUSIONS

The study concludes that although digital influence, heritage orientation, and sustainability orientation are recognized as important dimensions of modern luxury branding, they do not significantly predict the evolution of luxury marketing strategies (ELMS) among the respondents. The strong correlations among these variables indicate that luxury brands are increasingly integrating digital innovation, heritage preservation, and sustainability initiatives as part of their strategic identity. However, the regression results show that these elements together explain less than 1% of the variance in ELMS, suggesting that they are not the primary drivers of luxury marketing evolution.

From the perspective of the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), this finding implies that while consumers acknowledge these brand attributes, they may not be sufficient to shape the attitudinal, normative, and control beliefs that influence luxury-related intentions. Instead, deeper psychological elements—such as perceived prestige, emotional connection, symbolic value, and identity expression—likely exert stronger influence on consumers' behavioral intentions toward luxury brands. Therefore, the study highlights that luxury branding must go beyond functional and ethical propositions to tap into the profound symbolic and emotional drivers that shape luxury perceptions and intentions in modern consumer culture.

12. SCOPE OF FUTURE STUDY

The final results and limitations of the present study open up several possible topics for further research. Since digital influence, heritage orientation, and sustainability orientation were the three variables most strongly correlated but did not significantly predict luxury purchase intention, the next research should consider the inclusion of more psychological, emotional, and social factors to have more explanatory power. Some of these could be brand attachment, perceived exclusivity, self-concept congruence, social influence, and luxury value perception - constructs mostly referred to as the center of luxury consumption behavior.

In addition, future studies could gain from using larger and more diverse samples to become more representative, for instance, different age groups, income levels, nationalities, and cultural backgrounds. Likewise, qualitative methods such as personal interviews or focus groups may uncover the motivations and symbolic associations behind luxury buying decisions at a deeper

level. Research with a longitudinal design may be more appropriate to track changes in consumer preferences due to current trends such as AI-driven personalization, virtual luxury experiences, and sustainability regulations.

By expanding the conceptual model and including more behavioural variables, subsequent research will be able to explain luxury purchase intention more and will be able to change the conceptual routes of this study.

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