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Social Media Marketing Activities Impact on Trust and Customer Loyalty

How social media marketing activities impact luxury brands
customers trust and loyalty?

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Master Thesis

presented as partial requirement for obtaining a Master's Degree in Data-Driven Marketing

NOVA Information Management School
Instituto Superior de Estatística e Gestão de Informação

Universidade Nova de Lisboa

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SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING ACTIVITIES IMPACT ON TRUST AND COSTUMER LOYALTY

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by

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Master Thesis presented as partial requirement for obtaining the Master's degree in Data-Driven Marketing, with a specialization in Digital Marketing and Analytics

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November, 2024

STATEMENT OF INTEGRITY

I hereby declare having conducted this academic work with integrity. I confirm that I have not used plagiarism, any form of undue use of information or falsification of results along the process leading to its elaboration. I further declare that I have fully acknowledged the Rules of Conduct and Code of Honor from the NOVA Information Management School.

[Lisbon, 30th of November 2024]

DEDICATION

Completing this thesis has been one of my goals, and I am genuinely happy to have reached it. It would not have been possible without each one of you.

A heartfelt thanks to my family and friends, who stood by me with endless encouragement, patience, and listening ears. Thank you for making me laugh on days when I felt tired or overwhelmed.

To my mom, thank you for never letting me give up and for always believing in my abilities, even when I doubted myself.

I'm immensely grateful to my boyfriend, whose unwavering support and encouragement helped me throughout this process.

Special thanks go to my orientator, Professor Raquel Soares, for her guidance and insightful advice, and to the master's thesis support staff at NOVA IMS for their valuable help along the way.

Finally, to a very special manager—thank you for believing in me and pushing me to always give my best, even when I couldn't see it.

ABSTRACT

The present study seeks to advance the understanding of consumer-brand relationships within the luxury retail sector by examining how social media marketing activities can influence customer trust and loyalty. Focusing on renowned retail brands like Gucci, Versace, and Louis Vuitton, this study investigates how social media activities fosters trust and customer loyalty. An online survey of 189 valid responses was conducted and analyzed using SPSS to explore these relationships. Findings reveal that social media marketing activities significantly build consumer trust, which in turn cultivates loyalty, underscoring the critical role of personalization and engagement in effective social media strategies. These results suggest that luxury brands can achieve long-term customer loyalty by centering their social media efforts on trust-building activities. While this research offers valuable insights into luxury consumer behavior, it acknowledges limitations, such as its cross-sectional design and reliance on self-reported data and encourages future research to adopt longitudinal approaches and incorporate behavioral metrics for a more nuanced understanding of how social media marketing activities shape trust and loyalty across diverse contexts.

KEYWORDS

Social media marketing; Luxury Brands; Trust; Customer Loyalty; Personalized Marketing

Sustainable Development Goals (SDG):



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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

SPSS	E Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
WOM	Word of Mouth
CUSTOM	Customisation
ENTER	Entertainment
INTER	Interaction
TREND	Trendiness

1. INTRODUCTION

Personalized marketing strategies have become increasingly popular among marketers, particularly in the luxury sector. This digital landscape allows for rapid collection and analysis of customer data (Shah & Murthi, 2021), enabling brands to deliver unique, relevant content tailored to individual consumers (Oberoi et al., 2017). By analyzing customer data—such as demographics, purchase history, and social media interactions—marketers can develop highly relevant content and offers, fostering engagement and loyalty (Kallevig et al., 2022; Kawada et al., 2019). This approach appeals to increasingly sophisticated consumers who value products and messages tailored to their unique identities (Grandhi et al., 2021; Moreau et al., 2020). However, balancing these personalized strategies with the need to maintain trust and data privacy remains a critical challenge (Aguirre et al., 2016).

Luxury brands, traditionally reliant on brand equity and customer loyalty, now face increasing competition and evolving consumer expectations (Kim & Ko, 2012). While personalized products align with consumer tastes and enhance perceived value (Moreau et al., 2020), excessive customization can dilute the exclusivity central to luxury branding (Borstrock, 2018). To navigate this complexity, brands must foster trust through transparent data practices while delivering tailored experiences that create lasting connections (Martínez-Navalón et al., 2023).

Trust has emerged as a pivotal factor in the success of luxury personalization strategies. Reliance on customer data requires transparent, ethical practices (Custance et al., 2012; Miranda & Klement, 2009). Social media has further transformed how trust is built, offering opportunities for meaningful interactions and community engagement that enhance consumer-brand relationships (Kim & Ko, 2012; Labrecque et al., 2019).

Social media serves as an excellent medium for delivering personalized communications (Oberoi et al., 2017). This one-to-one marketing strategy (Guelman et al., 2015) creates tailored experiences that resonate with consumers, making them feel uniquely valued. Automation enhances these efforts, streamlining data management and delivering relevant messages efficiently (Dawn, 2014; Jusuf, 2023). Despite these advantages, research gaps persist regarding how social media marketing activities influence trust and customer loyalty in the luxury sector (Grandhi et al., 2021; Rosário et al., 2023). Additionally, the mechanisms through which trust mediates the relationship between social media engagement and loyalty remain underexplored (Abakouy et al., 2019; Länsipuro & Karjaluoto, 2021).

The primary objective of this study is to examine the impact of social media marketing activities influence on trust and customer loyalty within the luxury retail industry. Additionally, it seeks to explore the mediating role of trust in the relationship between social media marketing activities and customer loyalty, a relationship that remains relatively underexplored in the literature. By examining these connections, this study provides insights that can guide

marketers in crafting effective strategies that resonate with consumers and address privacy expectations.

This dissertation is structured as follows: it begins with a literature review on the luxury marketing, consumer privacy concerns, and luxury brands and social media. Next, it outlines the conceptual model, and the methodology employed to empirically test this model. The results of these tests are presented and analyzed within a theoretical framework. Finally, the study concludes with a discussion of the findings, limitations, and potential directions for future research.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. OVERVIEW OF THE LUXURY MARKET

The definition of a luxury is not universally agreed upon and has changed over time, largely due to the subjective nature of luxury, which varies among individuals, cultures, and regions (Mortelmans, 2005, Kapferer & Bastien, 2009; Cristini et al., 2017). For example, Marie Antoinette's alleged statement, "let them eat cake," reflects an era where cake symbolized luxury, whereas today, such an item may not carry the same connotations of exclusivity or prestige (Yeoman & McMahon-Beattie, 2011).

For many, luxury is associated with non-essential or comfort-driven products, with individual factors like age, gender, and geography shaping these perceptions (Cambridge University, s.d.; Cabigiosu, 2020b). Some scholars have proposed baseline definitions, such as Nueno and Quelch (1998), who define luxury brands as those offering low functional utility relative to price but high intangible value. Similarly, Pitt et al. (2009) identify three central dimensions of luxury brands: a tangible dimension reflecting physical attributes, a subjective dimension tied to personal satisfaction, and a social dimension symbolizing prestige. Recent research by Ko et al. (2019) compiled various foundational definitions of luxury, underscoring that these definitions share common themes such as rarity, premium pricing, and high quality.

Historically, luxury fashion brands have relied on robust brand equity and a loyal customer base. Today, the luxury fashion sector faces distinct challenges due to increasing market competition and rapid changes in consumer behavior (Fionda & Moore, 2009). The influx of new fashion brands into the luxury sector has heightened competition, significantly altering market dynamics (Kim & Ko, 2012). The demand for luxury goods in emerging markets like China, India, and the Middle East presents new opportunities for growth while intensifying the need for brands to differentiate through product quality, craftsmanship, and personalized offerings (Kim & Ko, 2012). Modern interpretations of luxury, emphasize consumer perceptions of exclusivity and accessibility within the context of brand heritage and international growth strategies, as seen in the case of Burberry's global expansion and product innovation (Quan & Shen, 2017).

Research indicates that consumers assign greater value to personalized products, as they better reflect their tastes, preferences, and identities (Moreau et al., 2020). The luxury sector's embrace of these trends—despite the risk of diluting traditional markers of exclusivity and craftsmanship—demonstrates its adaptation to evolving consumer expectations and the desire for self-expression (Borstrock, 2018; Rosenbaum et al., 2021). For instance, the luxury fashion brand Jacquemus demonstrated this trend with its popular "Le Petit Chiquito" bag, which highlighted consumer demand for unique, trendy, and often exclusive items despite their minimal functional utility (Miller & Mills, 2012; Infographic, 2019).

2.2. TRUST

Trust is fundamental in the relationship between luxury brands and their customers, especially as these brands navigate the digital and social media landscapes. Defined as a willingness to be vulnerable based on expectations of positive actions from another party (Mayer et al., 1995).

Consumer trust in a brand, which relies on positive perceptions, is highly fragile and can be easily compromised by adverse information (Banerjee, 2017; Miranda & Klement, 2009; Yannopoulou et al., 2011). When brands engage in irresponsible, unethical, or unlawful actions, it can significantly damage both the trust and confidence that consumers have in them (Custance et al., 2012; Dawar & Lei, 2009; Shim & Yang, 2016). Even minor breaches of trust can lead to consumer skepticism, which can harm the brand's reputation and consumer loyalty over time (Eggers et al., 2013; Miranda & Klement, 2009).

Research shows that customers are more likely to trust brands that prioritize data transparency and give consumers control over their personal information, such as the ability to opt-out or delete data (Aguirre et al., 2016). These measures can foster trust, as customers are more willing to engage with brands they perceive as responsible with their data. Privacy and security, therefore, have become pivotal in luxury branding strategies, as data misuse could erode trust and impact customer loyalty (Ehigie, 2006). As luxury brands become more data-driven, balancing personalization with privacy will be key to maintaining consumer trust (Bleier et al., 2015; Dwivedi et al., 2021). For instance, brands like Gucci utilize data analytics to understand customer behavior and deliver tailored messages that resonate on a personal level, enhancing engagement and trust (Kim & Ko, 2012).

Social media also plays a critical role in trust-building. Effective social media strategies that include entertainment, interaction, and customization can foster a sense of community and reinforce trust (Kim & Ko, 2012). By aligning their social media and data-driven strategies with consumer expectations of integrity and ethical practices, luxury brands can strengthen their reputation and maintain a loyal customer base (Labrecque et al., 2019; Martínez-Navalón et al., 2023).

2.3. CUSTOMERS LOYALTY

Customer loyalty remains essential for sustaining competitiveness, profitability, and growth, especially in the digital marketplace. Anderson and Srinivasan (2003) emphasize that loyalty not only helps companies retain customers but also drives sustainable growth and long-term viability. Similarly, Reichheld and Schefter (2000) argue that cultivating loyalty is now vital to a company's success. Loyal customers are valuable assets, not only because they buy more frequently but also because they exhibit higher tolerance for issues and a willingness to pay premium prices (Zeithaml et al., 1996).

In online settings, loyalty often takes the form of e-loyalty, defined by Srinivasan et al. (2002) as a favorable attitude towards an e-retailer that leads to repeat purchasing. This extends beyond single transactions to encompass an intention to return and recommend the brand, thus generating positive word of mouth (Islam et al., 2012; Zeithaml et al., 1996). Positive experiences with a retailer increase the likelihood of repurchase, benefiting brand reputation and growth (Islam et al., 2012). In digital environments, where switching is easy, loyalty offers brands a competitive edge.

Additionally, the functional attributes of a brand's offerings—such as product quality, usability, and the ease of digital interactions—are crucial in shaping loyalty (Coelho & Henseler, 2012). Researchers emphasize that customized experiences are instrumental in deepening loyalty, as they enhance perceived value and emotional engagement with the brand (Vilkaite-Vaitone & Skackauskiene, 2020).

2.4. SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING ACTIVITIES

The shift to social media marketing has created new opportunities and challenges for luxury brands. While social media platforms offer expansive reach and engagement, they contrast with luxury's traditional image of exclusivity and controlled communication (Okonkwo, 2009). Despite this, social media has become indispensable for building brand equity and customer engagement (Ríos, 2016). By transparently sharing brand stories and values on social media, luxury brands can enhance customer loyalty and respect, often referred to as "lovemark"—a concept combining brand love and respect that drives emotional connections with customers (Fetis et al., 2022). Social media's impact on brand perception varies but contributes significantly to loyalty by nurturing long-lasting, trust-based relationships. Millennials and Generation Z expect brands to uphold these values on social platforms, which serve as both a channel for engagement and a test of authenticity (Dobre et al., 2021).

The digital revolution has driven luxury brands to adopt broader communication strategies, integrating online and offline channels, with some in-store purchases now heavily influenced by online engagement (Ríos, 2016). As luxury brands embrace digital strategies, they must carefully manage how they collect, use, and protect customer data, particularly considering the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), which mandates transparency and explicit consent for data collection (Pikulík & Štarchoň, 2019). When brands demonstrate accountability in data handling, it fosters customer confidence, contributing to a sustained sense of loyalty and trust (Martínez-Navalón et al., 2023). While initial digital efforts were slow, brands like Burberry have embraced these strategies, setting benchmarks in luxury marketing (Okonkwo, 2009).

The rise of fictional models, influencers, and celebrity endorsements has further broadened audience reach and facilitated message conveyance beyond traditional channels (Gurzki, 2022). Gucci, for example, has successfully utilized social media to target specific customer segments through data analytics, delivering highly personalized marketing messages that

resonate with individual consumers and strengthen engagement (Kim & Ko, 2012). Campaigns featuring public figures like Kendall Jenner and Bad Bunny reflect how luxury brands can maintain authenticity while aligning with contemporary digital trends to shape a distinctive social identity (Wilson & Yllka, 2017).

Kim and Ko (2012) identified five core social media marketing activities: entertainment, interaction, trendiness, customization, and word of mouth. Arrigo's (2018) review further highlights the value of connectivity and collaboration in luxury social media strategies. Liu et al. (2021) investigated customer engagement on platforms like Twitter, using regression analysis to examine the impact of Social Media Marketing Activities on consumer behavior. Findings indicate that activities enhancing entertainment, interaction, and trendiness positively impact engagement, though customization had limited effects, possibly due to Twitter's limited personalization options for luxury brands.

2.4.1. ENTERTAINMENT

Social media operates as both an entertainment hub and an information-sharing platform, drawing users in with enjoyable and engaging content (Lee & Ma, 2012; Mäntymäki & Islam, 2016). For luxury brands, this dual role offers a chance to connect with audiences through visually appealing and creative campaigns that align with their aspirational image. By integrating memes, short videos, and dynamic reels, brands can convey their identity in a way that feels both accessible and exclusive. These tactics not only boost engagement but also deepen emotional ties with consumers, fostering loyalty over time (Apuke & Omar, 2020; Sampat & Raj, 2022).

However, prioritizing entertainment on social media can pose risks. Highly engaging formats, such as viral trends or humorous posts, may sometimes obscure the intended message (Balakrishnan et al., 2022; Sampat & Raj, 2022). Brands must carefully navigate these challenges, ensuring their content entertains while staying true to their image (Al-Zaman, 2021; Thelwall and Thelwall, 2020).

2.4.2. INTERACTION

Interaction is central for successful social media strategies. Research shows that influential users—those who frequently engage in conversations or interactions—play a crucial role in shaping group dynamics and amplifying brand visibility (Butler, 2001; Xu & Zhang, 2016). These influencers can act as informal ambassadors, guiding discussions and reinforcing brand values through their participation.

Social media often exhibit high reciprocity rates and clustering tendencies, making them ideal for creating exclusive, interactive brand communities (Xu & Zhang, 2016). By encouraging dialogue, whether through personalized responses, live events, or interactive features like polls, brands can cultivate a shared social identity among their audiences. This sense of community not only strengthens emotional connections but also enhances perceptions of

exclusivity and belonging, key elements of the luxury experience. Ultimately, fostering rich, interactive environments helps brands build trust, maintain consumer loyalty, and reinforce their prestigious image (Lamont et al., 2023).

2.4.3. WORD OF MOUTH

Word of mouth is a powerful factor in shaping consumer perceptions and driving purchase decisions, particularly in the luxury market. Traditional face-to-face WOM is often more personal and closely tied to retransmission intentions, driven largely by emotional motivations and influenced by social and functional factors like self-enhancement and social validation (Lovett et al., 2013; Eelen et al., 2017). Word of mouth in social media is often more associated with valence and purchase intentions (Baker et al., 2016).

While WOM can broaden reach and create buzz, it is also subject to unique challenges. For example, consumers may be hesitant to share their opinions on social media due to concerns about perceived social risks, such as judgment or oversaturation of content (Eisingerich et al., 2015). Despite these barriers, WOM can be a powerful tool for building brand awareness and reinforcing brand narratives (Eelen et al., 2017).

2.4.4. TRENDINESS

Trendiness is defined as providing the latest information about a product or service (Bruno et al., 2016). It is essential for attracting users who are constantly connected to digital platforms and increasingly seek brands that reflect their dynamic lifestyles. The adoption of social media strategies that showcase innovation, like interactive content and influencer collaborations, helps brands maintain relevance and appeal to younger audiences. These allows brands to curate experiences that reflect luxury and trendiness, which is vital for sustaining consumer interest in a competitive market (Strauss & Frost, 2012; Lievens et al., 2005).

Moreover, consumers today associate certain attributes, such as stylishness, power, and credibility, with brands that leverage contemporary digital tools (Moore & Benbasat, 1991). Luxury brands that utilize trendy digital strategies, such as influencer marketing or interactive content on social media, are perceived as more influential, fashionable, and relevant in an increasingly digital marketplace (Madia, 2011).

2.4.5. CUSTOMIZATION

Customization on social media involves more than just adjusting content, it's a tool for companies to communicate their unique content about brands and can increase loyalty preferences (Martin and Todorov, 2010). It encompasses creating a tailored user experience that reflects individual tastes, preferences, and the latest trends. This consumer-driven customization fosters a deeper emotional connection between the brand and its customers, making them feel valued and understood (Seo & Park, 2018).

Bilqin (2018) emphasizes that customer satisfaction, which stems from personalized interactions, plays a critical role in driving loyalty. As consumers actively engage with customized content, they are more likely to form strong emotional bonds with the brand, leading to increased brand loyalty and long-term engagement.

2.5. HYPOTHESES AND CONCEPTUAL MODEL

With the analysis of the literature review, three hypotheses were formed with the aim to answer the research questions ‘How do Social Media Marketing Activities influence trust, and customer loyalty in luxury brands?’. These hypotheses are presented in figure 1, Social Media Marketing Activities will be considered as the independent variables of this study. While trust is the mediating variable and customer loyalty the dependent variable.

Social Media Marketing Activities —such as entertainment, interaction, and customization— are critical in establishing and reinforcing trust between luxury brands and consumers (Kim & Ko, 2012; Arrigo, 2018). Research has shown that by providing engaging, interactive content, brands can create a sense of community and trust among their audience (Fetais et al., 2022). Kim and Ko (2012) found that luxury brands utilizing these activities not only enhance engagement but also build trust through consistent, tailored communication. Additionally, Liu et al. (2021) demonstrated that Social Media Marketing Activities which emphasize entertainment and trendiness increase trust by creating enjoyable brand interactions, which are further linked to positive consumer perceptions and brand loyalty.

Based on what was discussed above, the hypothesis below was formulated:

H1: Social Media Marketing Activities have a positive effect on trust.

Trust plays a central role in fostering customer loyalty, as it strengthens consumers’ commitment to a brand (Aguirre et al., 2016). Trust reduces perceived risk and enhances the emotional connection between consumers and luxury brands, making consumers more likely to repurchase and recommend the brand to others (Labrecque et al., 2019; Reichheld & Scheffer, 2000). Research by Martínez-Navalón et al. (2023) highlights that trust, especially in data transparency and ethical practices, is crucial in retaining loyal customers in the luxury sector. Similarly, Banerjee (2017) emphasizes that even minor trust breaches can damage loyalty, underscoring trust as a key factor in long-term consumer relationships.

Based on what was discussed above, the hypothesis below was formulated:

H2: Trust enhances customer loyalty.

The unique nature of social media allows luxury brands to deliver tailored, exclusive content that resonates with consumers, thereby fostering loyalty (Oberoi et al., 2017). According to Ríos (2016), social media has become essential for enhancing customer loyalty, as it enables brands to connect personally with consumers. By delivering content that aligns with customer preferences and values, luxury brands can strengthen emotional ties and cultivate a loyal

customer base (Kim & Ko, 2012; Dobre et al., 2021). Moreover, Arrigo (2018) notes that effective social media strategies—particularly those involving influencer collaborations and exclusive experiences—encourage loyalty by reinforcing a sense of exclusivity and community, both key to luxury brand appeal.

Based on what was discussed above, the hypothesis below was formulated:

H3: Social Media Marketing Activities positively impact customer loyalty.

Based on the preceding arguments, this research proposes the following conceptual model:

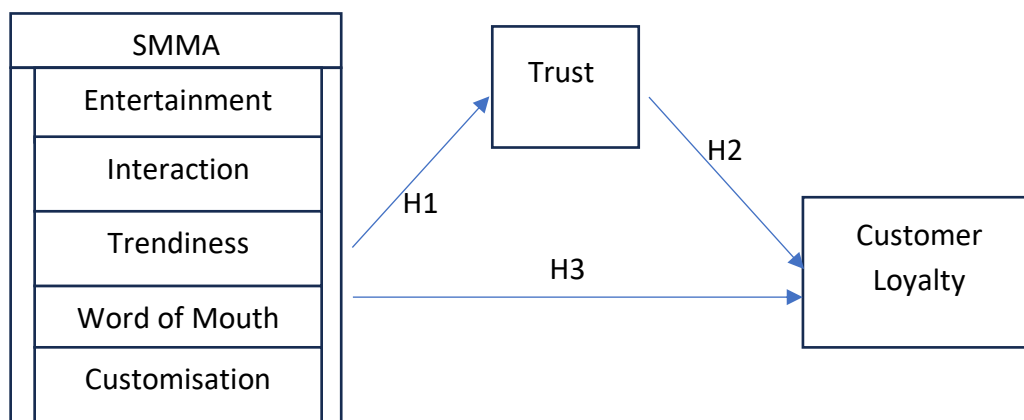


Figure 2.1 – Conceptual Model

3. METHODOLOGY

This research intends to examine how social media marketing activities influence trust and customer loyalty within the luxury retail sector. Specifically, it investigates the role of trust as a mediating factor between social media marketing activities and customer loyalty, addressing a gap in the literature on the mechanisms by which social media marketing activities builds trust and fosters loyalty in the luxury sector. By investigating these relationships, the study aims to provide insights that can guide marketers in crafting effective marketing strategies that resonate with consumers. This central question is ‘How do Social Media Marketing Activities influence trust, and customer loyalty in luxury brands?’. A quantitative research approach was employed, utilizing an online survey to analyze relationships between variables, following Creswell's (2009) guidance on testing objective theories. When the term ‘luxury brands’ is mentioned within the survey, we are considering textile brands, like Gucci, Versace, Louis Vuitton, Prada, Burberry, Chanel, Dior and Hermès.

3.1. MEASUREMENT

The measurement items for the study's variables were sourced from various authors identified through an extensive literature review. To align with the current research, these items underwent minor modifications. The items used to measure Social Media Marketing Activities, as presented in the appendix b, were adapted from Kim and Ko (2012). For trust, items were drawn from the study by Martínez-Navalón et al. (2023), while customer loyalty was measured using items adapted from Ehigie (2006). The survey employed a 9-point Likert scale, where 1 is Strongly Disagree and 9 is Strongly Agree. Research highlights the advantages of 9-point Likert scales for capturing nuanced responses, offering higher sensitivity and reliability compared to shorter scales (Taherdoost, 2019). These scales balance detail and usability, avoiding central tendency bias while accommodating subtle variations in preferences and attitudes (Lawless & Popper, 2010). For demographic questions, we utilized text entry and/or multiple-choice formats. In addition, for the scale “Customer Loyalty”, the items Q8_2, Q8_4, Q8_9 and Q8_12 were reverse, as they indicate the opposite of loyalty, we used SPSS “Recode into Same Variables” to transform values 1 into 9, 2 into 8, 3 into 7, 4 into 6, 6 into 4, 7 into 3, 2 into 8 and 9 into 1.

3.2. DATA COLLECTION

The method of data collection was a structured survey questionnaire designed to test the hypothesis presented in figure 1 to understand how Social Media Marketing Activities impact trust and customer loyalty. This questionnaire comprised closed-ended questions, enabling participants to select the responses that best represented their views.

The questionnaire was organized into 6 sections corresponding to the key variables of interest: social media engagement, customer loyalty, and trust. A copy of the questionnaire is included in the appendix c, with distinct segments that began with an introductory text and a consent

form, followed by questions pertaining to each variable. In addition, it contained a few socio-demographic questions to gather participant information. The sole criterion for participation was that respondents must follow at least one luxury brand account on social media. The questions were designed to be clear, concise, and pre-tested for clarity and reliability. To ensure honest and unbiased responses, the questionnaire guaranteed participants' anonymity. The survey was administered electronically via the Qualtrics online platform and distributed through email and social media channels (WhatsApp, LinkedIn, Facebook, and Instagram).

The quantitative approach will make it possible to collect numerical data and conduct statistical analysis and find relationships, trends, and patterns among the variables. The research design aims to objectively measure and analyze the investigated phenomena.

From August to September 2024, the survey was created and pre-tested on a subset of academic participants before being distributed to the final respondents. Data analysis took place in October 2024.

3.3. DATA PREPARATION AND SAMPLE

As mentioned earlier, before the survey was distributed, the questionnaire was pre-tested on a subset of participants to gather feedback and identify any areas for improvement. Based on the results of this pre-test, minor adjustments were made before finalizing and distributing the survey. 285 answers were collected. To enhance the accuracy of the study, participants who provided incomplete answers, those who did not agree to participate in the survey, and those who did not follow at least one luxury brand on social media were excluded. This was done using Microsoft Excel to clean the data. After this we had 189 valid responses for analysis. From the analysis carried out on the answers given in the sociodemographic questions block, as can be seen in Appendix D, 51.5% (96) of the sample were female, 48.4% (91) were male and 0.5% (1) preferred not to say. The ages of the respondents vary from 21 to 60 with most participants being either 24(8.5%) or 28(6.4%). 43.6% were married, while 25.5% were single and 21.3% were in relationships. Bachelor's degree was the highest level of education of 41% (77) of the sample, followed by 26.1% (49) with a Master's degree. Most of the sample 45.7% (86) were employed full time, 19.1% part time and 13.8% were working students. 31.9% of the participants have a monthly household income between 1001 euros and 2000 euros, followed by 26.6% between 501 euros and 1000 euros.

4. RESULTS

The responses from the questionnaire were analyzed using IBM SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) in the version 30.0.0.0 (172), a global statistical software that facilitates a rapid and structured presentation of results, enabling the acceptance or rejection of the tested hypothesis.

4.1. RELIABILITY ANALYSIS

To assess the reliability of the scale items, the Cronbach's Alpha reliability indicator was utilized. According to Zeller (2005) rule of thumb for adequate measurement, Cronbach's alphas mirror instructional grades:

A—0.9 or higher are considered excellent.

B—0.8 to 0.9 are adequate.

C—0.7 to 0.8 are marginal.

D—0.6 to 0.7 are seriously suspect.

F—less than 0.6 are totally unacceptable.

Hair et al. (2017) agrees that a value exceeding 0.7 is generally considered indicative of internal consistency and reliability.

Table 4.1– Reliability Statistics of the “Social Media Marketing Activities” scale

Cronbach's Alpha	Nº of items
.935	11

"Social Media Marketing Activities " has a Cronbach's Alpha value of .935, suggesting that the items within this scale demonstrate internal consistency, effectively measuring the concept of Social Media Marketing Activities. This reliability indicates that the scale is a reliable instrument for evaluating Social Media Marketing Activities in this research. Social Media Marketing Activities constructs all proved to have values above 0.7. “Entertainment” has a Cronbach's Alpha of .747 with 2 items, “Interaction” has a Cronbach's Alpha of .825 with 3 items, “Trendiness” has a Cronbach's Alpha of .745 with 2 items, “Customisation” has a Cronbach's Alpha of .764 with 2 items, and “Word of mouth” has a Cronbach's Alpha of .829 with 2 items.

Table 4.2 – Reliability Statistics of the “Trust” scale

Cronbach’s Alpha	Nº of items
.909	7

For “Trust” the Cronbach's Alpha value scale is .909 which indicates that the items within “Trust” are internally reliable and consistent.

Table 4.3 – Reliability Statistics of the “Customer Loyalty” scale

Cronbach’s Alpha	Nº of items
.841	13

The Cronbach's Alpha value for the "Customer Loyalty" scale is .841 which indicates a high level of internal consistency and reliability.

4.2. DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS

“Social Media Marketing Activities” is separated into “Entertainment”, Q3_1 and Q3_2, “Interaction”, Q4_1, Q4_2 and Q4_3, “Trendiness”, Q5_1 and Q5_2, “Customization”, Q6_1 and Q6_2, and “Word of Mouth”, Q7_1 and Q7_2, to assess the perception of each participant when using luxury brands social media. Participants are generally rating this scale favorably. The standard deviation values, which measure the spread of responses, varied from low to high, suggesting participants see Social Media Marketing Activities in a different way.

The "Trust" scale measures the extent to which users trust luxury brand mobile applications. Like the "Social Media" scale, participants' ratings for the "Trust" scale fell within the neutral to positive range on the nine-point Likert scale. The variability in responses was low to moderate, suggesting some differences in trust perceptions without any significant outliers.

The "Customer Loyalty" scale assesses respondents' loyalty and commitment to luxury brands. The average ratings for this scale were generally neutral, but the standard deviation values were relatively higher. This indicates a moderate level of response dispersion, suggesting that respondents' views on customer loyalty varied more significantly than those observed in the previous two scales.

For more information about the descriptive analysis consult appendix e.

4.3. CORRELATION ANALYSIS

Using the Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient, commonly known as Pearson's correlation, measures the strength and direction of the association between two continuous variables. It generates a coefficient, denoted as r , which quantifies how well the data points align with a line of best fit drawn through the variables. The value of r ranges from -1 , indicating a perfect negative linear relationship, to $+1$, indicating a perfect positive linear relationship. A value of 0 signifies no linear relationship between the variables, meaning the data points do not fit the line.

All correlations are statistically significant ($p < .025$). Therefore, it is highly unlikely that these relationships occurred by chance, reinforcing the reliability of these associations. Multicollinearity problem is not expected.

The correlation between Social Media Marketing Activities and Trust is $r=0.791$, $p<0.001$, indicating a strong positive relationship. This implies that as Social Media Marketing Activities increase, trust among customers tends to rise, suggesting that social media engagement is an effective strategy for fostering trust.

Between Customer Loyalty and Social Media Marketing Activities the correlation is $r=0.680$, $p<0.001$. This positive relationship implies that as social media engagement increases, customer loyalty also rises, reinforcing the notion that social media activity helps cultivate long-term customer relationships.

The correlation between Trust and Customer Loyalty ($r=0.633$, $p<0.001$) supports the concept that increased trust is associated with greater customer loyalty. This highlights the importance of trust as a foundation for loyalty, which luxury brands can potentially leverage through focused Social Media Marketing Activities.

Table 4.4 - Pearson Correlation Matrix for Social Media Marketing Activities, Trust, and Customer Loyalty

	Social Media Marketing Activities	TRUST	Customer Loyalty
Social Media Marketing Activities	1	.791	.680
Trust	.791	1	.633
Customer Loyalty	.680	.633	1
p	<.001	<.001	<.001
N	188	188	188

All Social Media Marketing Activities have a strong and positive correlation with both Trust and Loyalty. Among the sub-constructs of Social Media Marketing Activities, Customization has the highest correlation with Trust ($r=0.747$, $p<0.001$) and Customer Loyalty ($r=0.625$, $p<0.001$) suggesting that personalized approaches are particularly influential in building both trust and loyalty.

On the other hand, Trendiness has the lowest correlation with Trust ($r=.663$, $p<0.001$) and Customer Loyalty ($r=.546$, $p<0.001$), indicating that while trend-based activities are beneficial, they may not be as effective as other social media marketing activities components in fostering deep trust or long-term loyalty.

These findings indicate that for brands looking to enhance customer trust and loyalty, focusing on customized social media interactions might be more beneficial than merely participating in trend-driven activities. This analysis aligns with and supports our hypotheses around the effectiveness of Social Media Marketing Activities in building trust and loyalty.

Table 4.5 – Pearson Correlation Matrix for Entertainment, Interaction, Trendiness, Customization, Word of Mouth, Trust, and Customer Loyalty

	Trust	Customer Loyalty	ENTER	INTER	TREND	CUSTOM	WOM
Trust	1		.675	.695	.663	.747	.679
Customer Loyalty		1	.599	.605	.546	.625	.595
ENTER	.675	.599	1	-	-	-	-
INTER	.695	.605	-	1	-	-	-
TREND	.663	.546	-	-	1	-	-
CUSTOM	.747	.625	-	-	-	1	-
WOM	.679	.595	-	-	-	-	1
p	<.001	<.001	<.001	<.001	<.001	<.001	<.001
N	188	188	188	188	188	188	188

4.4. MULTIPLE LINEAR ANALYSIS

A mediation analysis was conducted using the PROCESS Model 4 by Hayes in IBM SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) to investigate the relationships among Social Media Marketing Activities, Trust, and Customer Loyalty in the conceptual model. The aim of this analysis was to assess the direct, indirect, and mediated effects of these variables, specifically examining whether Trust mediates the relationship between Social Media Marketing Activities and Customer Loyalty.

The results of the mediation analysis indicated a significant total effect of Social Media Marketing Activities on Customer Loyalty ($b=0.5666$, $t=12.6613$, $p < 0.0001$, $CI = [0.4783, 0.6549]$). Additionally, the direct effect of Social Media Marketing Activities on Customer Loyalty remained significant ($b = 0.3993$, $t = 5.5666$, $p < 0.0001$, $CI = [0.2578, 0.5408]$), suggesting that Social Media Marketing Activities independently contribute to building Customer Loyalty, therefor supporting H3.

When examining the indirect effect of Social Media Marketing Activities on Customer Loyalty through Trust, the analysis revealed a significant mediation effect ($b=0.1673$, $BootSE= 0.0653$, $CI = [0.0454, 0.2987]$). This indicates that Social Media Marketing Activities not only have a direct impact on Customer Loyalty but also an indirect effect by fostering Trust, which in turn positively influences loyalty, which supports H1 and H2.

The completely standardized indirect effect was also significant ($b = 0.2009$, $BootSE = 0.0763$, $CI = [0.0544, 0.3514]$). This standardized effect emphasizes the strength of the mediating role of Trust, reinforcing that Trust contributes meaningfully to the pathway by which Social Media Marketing Activities influence Customer Loyalty which supports H2.

Table 4.6 – Hypothesis Validation

H1: Social Media Marketing Activities have a positive effect on trust.	Supported
H2: Trust enhances customer loyalty.	Supported
H3: Social Media Marketing Activities positively impact customer loyalty.	Supported

5. DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

With the rise of digital channels, brands face increasing competition not only in terms of product offerings but also in customer engagement, where digital experiences can either strengthen or weaken consumer relationships. This research reinforces the pivotal role social media activities play in shaping customer loyalty, as aligned with recent studies. Social media platforms allow brands to offer tailored experiences, from customization options to interactive features, and these aspects have been shown to enhance trust, as shown by Liu et al. (2009). Consistent with these theories, the study found a strong positive correlation between Social Media Marketing Activities and trust, indicating that well-executed social media strategies are critical for building consumer trust.

The central objective of this study was to explore whether trust mediates the relationship between social media activities and customer loyalty in the luxury sector. Analysis of survey data indicates that social media marketing activities indeed have a strong positive effect on customer trust, with customization emerging as the strongest predictor, aligning with findings by Martínez-Navalón et al. (2023), which highlight the importance of transparency and personalization in fostering trust. This supports our first hypothesis (H1), which posits that social media activities, such as entertainment, interaction, and customization, contribute positively to trust-building. Furthermore, Mayer et al.'s (1995) definition of trust as a willingness to be vulnerable underscores its importance in maintaining consumer relationships. In this context, social media platforms act as tools to build trust by promoting transparent communication and fostering authentic connections (Kim & Ko, 2012; Lamont et al., 2023).

The study's findings also provide strong evidence supporting the second hypothesis (H2), showing that trust plays a critical role in enhancing customer loyalty. This aligns with theories by Reichheld and Scheffer (2000) and Labrecque et al. (2019), which argue that trust strengthens emotional ties and customer commitment. Additionally, the emphasis on trust reflects the fragile nature of customer perceptions in the luxury market, where breaches can lead to skepticism and damage long-term relationships (Banerjee, 2017; Eggers et al., 2013). The mediation analysis further demonstrates that trust partially mediates the relationship between social media activities and loyalty, suggesting that while social media marketing can directly impact loyalty, trust enhances the effect by deepening customer commitment to the brand. This finding aligns with recent research suggesting that data privacy and transparency are critical factors in fostering trust in digital settings (Aguirre et al., 2016). Brands like Burberry exemplify this approach, using social media to balance trust-building through transparency with the creation of aspirational experiences that resonate with luxury consumers' expectations (Okonkwo, 2009; Martínez-Navalón et al., 2023).

Finally, the study confirms the third hypothesis (H3) by establishing a direct positive relationship between social media activities and customer loyalty. This finding highlights the

independent value of well-executed social media strategies, supporting the notion that social media engagement—through interaction, trendiness, and exclusive content—can directly foster loyalty, a conclusion echoed in Ríos (2016). Activities such as interaction and word of mouth emerged as significant contributors, with the latter reflecting the power of social media in amplifying brand narratives and fostering advocacy (Lovett et al., 2013; Eelen et al., 2017).

Interestingly, trendiness, while beneficial for capturing attention and maintaining brand relevance, plays a limited role in driving loyalty compared to other constructs like customization and interaction. This reflects its inherently fleeting nature and suggests that luxury brands should complement trend-driven strategies with more enduring approaches that prioritize deeper consumer engagement (Madia, 2011). Customization's leading role in both trust and loyalty outcomes emphasizes the need for brands to focus on consumer-centric strategies, as tailored experiences generate stronger emotional connections and perceptions of value (Martin & Todorov, 2010).

In summary, this research reveals that while trust amplifies the impact of social media on loyalty, social media activities themselves serve as a powerful, direct pathway to customer loyalty. These insights challenge traditional models emphasizing trust as an intermediary and reaffirm the importance of social media as a critical tool for luxury brands in the digital age.

6. CONCLUSIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

This research investigated the complex relationships between social media marketing activities, trust, and customer loyalty within the luxury brand sector. Specifically, the study sought to address the research gap concerning the mechanisms through which social media marketing activities influence customer loyalty, particularly the mediating role of trust. By systematically analyzing these dynamics, the study contributes to filling this gap by providing evidence that social media marketing activities influence loyalty through two distinct pathways: directly and indirectly via trust.

The study confirmed that trust partially mediates the relationship between social media marketing activities and customer loyalty, supporting the traditional understanding of trust as a critical factor in loyalty-building. At the same time, the results showed that social media activities—especially those emphasizing customization and interaction—have a direct, independent effect on loyalty, challenging the view that trust is the sole pathway to establishing long-term customer relationships.

These results demonstrate that luxury brands can effectively build loyalty by emphasizing immersive, personalized, and interactive social media strategies. This approach is particularly relevant in today's digital landscape, where immediacy, relevance, and dynamic engagement are increasingly prioritized by consumers. By uncovering these dual pathways and their respective impacts, this study advances both theoretical understanding and practical applications in the field of luxury brand marketing.

6.1. THEORETICAL IMPLICATIONS

This study makes significant theoretical contributions to the literature on luxury brand marketing by examining the dual pathways through which Social Media Marketing Activities (SMMA) influence customer loyalty—directly and indirectly through trust. While prior research has largely emphasized the mediating role of trust in fostering loyalty, the findings here challenge this one-dimensional perspective. By demonstrating the independent effects of SMMA on loyalty, this study broadens theoretical frameworks, underscoring the evolving dynamics of consumer-brand relationships in the digital age.

The research highlights customization as the strongest driver of both trust and loyalty. This insight expands on existing theories of personalization by situating customization as a core construct in luxury branding strategies. Unlike general consumer markets, where personalization often focuses on functional convenience, the luxury sector leverages customization to enhance emotional brand alignment and perceived exclusivity. This theoretical positioning aligns with Borstrock's (2018) notion that bespoke strategies not only meet consumer expectations but also reinforce brand prestige, thereby sustaining long-term competitive advantages.

Additionally, the study identifies interaction and word of mouth as critical SMMA elements that deepen customer loyalty through community-building and advocacy. This finding builds on theories of emotional engagement by Dobre et al. (2021), emphasizing that active, reciprocal engagement fosters relational depth and consumer trust. Importantly, these interactions are not limited to transactional communication but extend to shared experiences that resonate with the aspirational nature of luxury brands.

Interestingly, the relatively weaker influence of trendiness on trust and loyalty nuances existing theories on digital engagement strategies. While trend-driven content can capture short-term attention and maintain relevance, its fleeting impact underscores the importance of complementing these efforts with more enduring strategies, such as customization and interaction. These findings challenge traditional models that prioritize trendiness as a primary driver of digital engagement, suggesting a more balanced approach that integrates both immediate and long-term engagement strategies.

The research also redefines trust in the context of digital luxury branding. By extending Mayer et al.'s (1995) trust framework, the findings emphasize the growing role of transparency, ethical data practices, and interactive communication in trust formation. This positions trust as a multidimensional construct that integrates traditional relational factors with emerging digital expectations, such as data privacy and ethical use of consumer information (Dwivedi et al., 2021; Martínez-Navalón et al., 2023). Furthermore, the study supports Labrecque et al.'s (2019) assertion that trust interacts with direct engagement strategies to influence loyalty, rather than operating as an isolated construct.

Overall, this study advances theoretical understanding by bridging gaps in existing literature, particularly in the luxury sector, where digital interactions increasingly shape consumer perceptions. The findings call for a nuanced approach to loyalty-building models, recognizing the interplay between trust and direct social media engagement in fostering emotional and relational brand connections. These insights pave the way for future research exploring the evolving interplay between digital innovations, consumer trust, and long-term loyalty in high-value markets.

6.2. PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS

These findings offer critical and actionable insights for luxury brand managers seeking to strengthen customer loyalty through effective social media marketing activities. Social media platforms are now indispensable tools in a manager's arsenal, providing unique opportunities to shape consumer perceptions, foster brand affinity, and gain a competitive edge. This study underscores that customization is particularly impactful, making it essential for managers to prioritize strategies that emphasize tailored content, such as personalized recommendations, exclusive access to limited-edition virtual products, and live interactive events. For instance, luxury brands could create bespoke digital campaigns using augmented reality (AR) or virtual

reality (VR), offering customers immersive experiences like virtual product trials, participation in fashion shows, or direct interaction with designers. These creative initiatives enhance engagement while fostering emotional connections that contribute to long-term loyalty.

While trendiness plays a lesser role in cultivating deep loyalty, it remains valuable for capturing attention and maintaining relevance. Managers can strategically leverage trend-focused content—such as influencer collaborations, viral challenges, or behind-the-scenes glimpses—to attract younger audiences and drive initial engagement. However, these efforts must be balanced with trust-building and relationship-focused strategies to ensure sustained loyalty. Given increasing consumer concerns about data privacy, managers should also prioritize transparency in digital interactions. Clear and ethical data management practices, such as customizable privacy settings and proactive communication about data use, can reassure consumers and strengthen trust. For example, loyalty programs that reward ethical data sharing and initiatives to enhance data security can differentiate a brand and reinforce its reputation for integrity.

In an oversaturated digital marketplace, luxury brand managers must continuously innovate to stand out. Creating visually captivating, high-quality content that reflects the exclusivity and craftsmanship associated with luxury is essential for reinforcing brand identity and attracting loyal customers. Utilizing advanced technologies like AI, brands can deliver hyper-personalized marketing campaigns and host exclusive social media events that blend entertainment with product launches. Social media is no longer merely a platform for engagement but also a revenue driver. Managers can capitalize on features such as "shoppable posts" or exclusive product drops on platforms like Instagram or TikTok, transforming consumer interactions into measurable sales. This dual role of social media—building loyalty and driving revenue—makes it an invaluable strategic tool.

This research demonstrates that social media marketing is more than a vehicle for brand awareness, it is a central driver of customer loyalty and trust. Managers who align these findings with strategic objectives can tap into real-time consumer behaviors, swiftly adapt campaigns, and forge meaningful connections. By integrating trust-building, personalized engagement, and trend-focused content into their strategies, managers can significantly influence customer loyalty, ultimately enhancing brand equity and profitability. The ability to combine data-driven personalization with creative trust-building initiatives empowers managers to meet the evolving expectations of luxury consumers. Social media thus becomes a cornerstone of competitive differentiation, enabling luxury brands to thrive in an increasingly digital and consumer-driven marketplace.

6.3. LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

While this study contributes to filling the research gap, it also acknowledges several limitations, each offering valuable directions for future research.

The research sample primarily consisted of consumers with high engagement in luxury brand social media activities, which may not fully represent the broader luxury consumer market. This narrow focus could limit the generalizability of the findings. Future research should seek to explore more diverse demographic groups, considering variations in socioeconomic status, geographical location, and age. By examining different luxury market segments, future studies could determine whether the impact of Social Media Marketing Activities on trust and loyalty varies across demographic groups and thus provide a more complete understanding of the luxury brand landscape.

This study did not differentiate the effects of individual social media platforms, such as Instagram, TikTok, or WeChat, on trust and loyalty. Since consumer engagement behaviours often differ between platforms, future research could conduct platform-specific analyses to assess how unique features—like livestreaming, augmented reality, or short-form video—affect trust and loyalty within the luxury sector. Understanding these platform-specific dynamics could allow luxury brands to tailor their strategies more effectively to the unique strengths and user behaviours associated with each platform.

This research employed a cross-sectional design, providing only a snapshot of social media's influence on luxury brand loyalty at a single point in time. Longitudinal studies in future research could provide a more nuanced perspective on how sustained engagement with social media marketing activities impacts customer loyalty over time, especially as trends evolve. These studies could reveal the long-term effects of consistent social media engagement on loyalty and trust, as well as explore how changes in consumer preferences—such as the rising popularity of short-form content—affect brand loyalty.

Although this study acknowledged privacy concerns in social media marketing, it did not deeply investigate how data transparency and privacy measures affect customer trust. Future research could explore the role of privacy policies, such as opt-outs, consent mechanisms, and transparency about data use, in shaping customer trust and loyalty. By examining how luxury brands manage data privacy while maintaining personalized engagement, future studies could provide deeper insights into how luxury brands can balance consumer trust with innovative marketing practices in an increasingly data-conscious world.

The study's findings primarily reflect consumer attitudes toward luxury brands in Western contexts, which may limit the applicability of these results to other regions with differing cultural perceptions of luxury and digital engagement. For instance, consumers in East Asia or the Middle East may interact with luxury brands on social media in ways that diverge from Western engagement patterns. Future studies could examine social media's impact on loyalty across various cultural contexts, highlighting how cultural differences shape the roles of trust and digital engagement in the luxury market.

By addressing these limitations, future research can extend the insights of this study, building a more comprehensive understanding of the role social media plays in luxury branding and providing valuable insights for both academia and industry.

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APPENDIX A

Ethics Committee approval



This is to certify that

Project No.: **DDMKT2024-9-126870**

Project Title: **Luxury Brands Social Media Effects on Trust and Customer Trust**

Principal Researcher: **Angela Adriana Correia Batista**

according to the regulations of the Ethics Committee of NOVA IMS and MagIC Research Center this project was considered to meet the requirements of the NOVA IMS Internal Review Board, being considered **APPROVED** on 9/12/2024.

It is the Principal Researcher's responsibility to ensure that all researchers and stakeholders associated with this project are aware of the conditions of approval and which documents have been approved.

The Principal Researcher is required to notify the Ethics Committee, via amendment or progress report, of

- Any significant change to the project and the reason for that change;
- Any unforeseen events or unexpected developments that merit notification;
- The inability of the Principal Researcher to continue in that role or any other change in research personnel involved in the project.

Lisbon, 9/12/2024

NOVA IMS Ethics Committee
ethicscommittee@novaims.unl.pt

APPENDIX B

Adapted measurement items of the constructs used in the survey

Constructs	Adapted Item	Source
Social Media Marketing Activities		(Kim & Ko, 2012)
Entertainment	Using a luxury brand's social media is fun.	
	The content shown on luxury brands' social media seems interesting.	
Interaction	Luxury brands' social media enables information sharing with others.	
	Conversation or opinion exchange with others is possible through luxury brands' social media.	
	It is easy to deliver my opinion through luxury brands' social media.	
Trendiness	Content shown on luxury brands' social media is the newest information.	
	Using luxury brands' social media is very trendy.	
Customisation	Luxury brands' social media offers customised information search.	
	Luxury brands' social media provides customised service.	
Word of mouth	I would like to pass along information on a brand, product or service from luxury brands' social media to my friends.	
	I would like to upload content from luxury brands' social media on my blog or microblog.	
Trust	Luxury Brands mobile apps offer beneficial advice and recommendations.	(Martínez-Navalón et al., 2023)

Luxury brands mobile applications care about the interests and needs of its stakeholders (customers, employees, etc)

Luxury brands digital mobile application develops actions taking into account that they will have an impact on its stakeholders.

Luxury brands digital mobile applications deliver as promised.

Luxury brands digital mobile app, when offering its services, are transparent.

Luxury brands digital mobile application shows the necessary technological capacity to be able to perform its function correctly.

Customer Loyalty

I am very particular about the luxury brands I use.

(Ehigie, 2006)

Though I am used to Luxury brands I can still stop using them.

I use more than one luxury brand.

If I end up using non luxury brands, it will satisfy me like the luxury brands I presently use.

Luxury brands are the best where I live.

Luxury brands services are of high quality.

I derive maximum satisfaction from luxury brands.

I will influence others to use luxury brands.

I will discourage present users from patronizing luxury brands.

I will introduce luxury brands to others.

I will continuously wear luxury brands.

I am thinking of closing my account with luxury brands.

I will advise all users of luxury brands to still transact business with them.

APPENDIX C

Final Survey

Q1 Dear Participant, I'm a Data-Driven Marketing student at NOVA Information Management School and this study is part of my master thesis dissertation.

This survey is designed to gather insights into consumer perception and experiences regarding luxury brands social media channels (Instagram, Facebook, TikTok and Twitter).

To be eligible for this survey you must follow at least one luxury brand in one social media channel.

The answers are anonymous and will only be used for this academy study.

It takes approximately 7 minutes to complete. If you have any further questions or concerns, please reach me at 20220266@novaims.unl.pt.

Thank you for your collaboration.

Consent form: "I declare that I am 18 years old or older and that I agree to participate in this research. I acknowledge that my participation in this study is voluntary, that I can withdraw from the form at any time without any penalty, and that all data will be kept confidential."

- I agree to participate. (1)
- I do not want to participate. (2)
-

Q2 Do you follow any luxury textile brands on social media?
For this study we are considering brands in the textile sector like Louis Vuitton, Gucci, Prada, Hermes, Chanel, etc.

- Yes (1)
- Yes, more than 1. (2)
- No (3)

Q3 Taking into consideration the following statements rate, on a scale from 1(strongly disagree) to 9 (strongly agree), how entertaining luxury brands social medias channels are.

1.Strongly disagree (1) 2 (2) 3 (3) 4 (4) 5 (5) 6 (6) 7 (7) 8 (8) 9.Strongly agree (9)

Using a luxury brand's social media is fun. (1)

The content shown on luxury brands' social media seems interesting. (2)

Q4 Taking into consideration the following statements rate, on a scale from 1(strongly disagree) to 9 (strongly agree), how interactive luxury brands social media channels are.

1.Strongly disagree (1) 2 (2) 3 (3) 4 (4) 5 (5) 6 (6) 7 (7) 8 (8) 9.Strongly agree (9)

Luxury brands' social media enables information sharing with others. (1)

Conversation or opinion exchange with others is possible through luxury brands' social media. (2)

It is easy to deliver my opinion through luxury brands' social media. (3)

Q5 Taking into consideration the following statements rate, on a scale from 1(strongly disagree) to 9 (strongly agree), how trendy luxury brands social medias channels are.

1.Strongly disagree (1) 2 (2) 3 (3) 4 (4) 5 (5) 6 (6) 7 (7) 8 (8) 9.Strongly agree (9)

Content shown on luxury brands' social media is the newest information. (1)

Using luxury brands' social media is very trendy. (2)

Q6 Taking into consideration the following statements rate, on a scale from 1(strongly disagree) to 9 (strongly agree), how personalized(custom) luxury brands social medias channels are.

1.Strongly disagree (1) 2 (2) 3 (3) 4 (4) 5 (5) 6 (6) 7 (7) 8 (8) 9.Strongly agree (9)

Luxury brands' social media offers customized information search. (1)

Luxury brands' social media provides customized service. (2)

Q7 Taking into consideration the following statements rate, on a scale from 1(strongly disagree) to 9 (strongly agree), how likely you are to talk about luxury brands social medias channels.

1.Strongly disagree (1) 2 (2) 3 (3) 4 (4) 5 (5) 6 (6) 7 (7) 8 (8) 9.Strongly agree (9)

I would like to pass along information on a brand, product or service from luxury brands' social media

to my friends. (1)

I would like to upload content from luxury brands' social media on my blog or microblog. (2)

Q8 Taking into consideration the following statements rate, on a scale from 1(strongly disagree) to 9 (strongly agree), rate your level of trust on the brands mobile apps.

1.Strongly disagree (1) 2 (2) 3 (3) 4 (4) 5 (5) 6 (6) 7 (7) 8 (8) 9.Strongly agree (9)

Luxury Brands mobile apps offer beneficial advice and recommendations. (1)

Luxury brands mobile applications care about the interests and needs of its stakeholders (customers, employees, etc) (2)

Luxury brands digital mobile application develop actions taking into

account that they will have an impact on its stakeholders. (3)

Luxury brands digital mobile applications deliver as promised. (4)

Luxury brands digital mobile app, when offering its services, are transparent. (5)

Luxury brands digital mobile application shows the necessary technological capacity to be able to perform its function correctly. (6)

Q9 Taking into consideration the following statements rate, on a scale from 1(strongly disagree) to 9 (strongly agree), your level of loyalty to luxury brands.

1.Strongly disagree (1) 2 (3) 3 (3) 4 (4) 5 (5) 6 (6) 7 (7) 8 (8) 9.Strongly agree (9)

I am very particular about the luxury brands I use. (1)

Though I am used to Luxury brands I can still stop using them. (2)

I use more than one luxury brand. (3)

If I end up using non luxury brands, it will satisfy me like the luxury brands I presently use. (4)

Luxury brands are the best where I live. (5)

Luxury brands services are of high quality. (6)

I derive maximum satisfaction from luxury brands. (7)

I will influence others to use luxury brands. (8)

I will discourage present users from

patronizing
luxury brands.
(9)

I will introduce
luxury brands
to others. (10)

I will
continuously
wear luxury
brands. (11)

I am thinking of
closing my
account with
luxury brands.
(12)

I will advise all
users of luxury
brands to still
transact
business with
them. (13)

Q10 What is your gender?

- Male (1)
- Female (2)
- Prefer not to say (3)

Q11 How old are you? Please indicate numerically. (ex:23, 50, 60, etc)

Q12 What is your marital status?

- Single (1)
- Married (2)
- In a relationship (3)
- Divorced (4)
- Separated (5)
- Widowed (6)
- Prefer not to answer (7)

Q13 What is your highest level of education?

- Less than high school diploma (1)
- High school diploma (2)
- Some university, but no degree (3)
- Bachelor's Degree (4)
- Master's Degree (5)
- Doctorate (6)
- Prefer not to answer (7)

Q14 What is your monthly household income (net)?

- Less than €500 (1)

- Between €501 and €1000 (2)
- Between €1001 and €2000 (3)
- Between €2001 and €3000 (4)
- More than €3000 (5)
- Prefer not to answer (6)

Q15 What is your employment status?

- Full-time (1)
- Part-time (2)
- Unemployed (3)
- Retired (4)
- Student (5)
- Working Student (6)
- Other (7)

APPENDIX D

Sociodemographic data

Sociodemographic Variable	Frequency	%
Gender		
Male	91	.8
Female	96	51.5
Prefer not to say	1	.5
Age		
18-24	30	16
25-34	73	38.9
35-44	44	21.4
45-54	32	20.3
55-64	9	5.3
Marital Status		
Single	48	25.5
Married	82	43.6
In a relationship	40	21.3
Divorced	5	2.7
Separated	8	4.3
Widowed	3	1.6
Prefer not to answer	2	1.1
Level of education		
Less than high school diploma	9	4.8
High school diploma	18	9.6
Some university, but no degree	28	14.9
Bachelor's Degree	77	41.0
Master's Degree	49	26.1
Doctorate	6	3.2
Prefer not to answer	1	.5
Monthly household income (net)		
Less than €500	7	3.7
Between €501 and €1000	50	26.6
Between €1001 and €2000	60	31.9
Between €2001 and €3000	38	20.2

More than €3000	26	13.8
Prefer not to answer	7	3.7
<hr/>		
Employment Status		
Full-time	86	45.7
Part-time	36	19.1
Unemployed	16	8.5
Retired	3	1.6
Student	13	6.9
Working Student	26	13.8
Other	8	4.3
<hr/>		

APPENDIX E

Descriptive Statistics

Table 4.7 – Descriptive Statistics of the “Social Media Marketing Activities” scale

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Q3_1	188	1	9	7.81	1.529
Q3_2	188	1	9	7.76	1.556
Q4_1	188	1	9	6.87	1.661
Q4_2	188	1	9	6.68	1.928
Q4_3	188	1	9	6.79	1.796
Q5_1	188	1	9	6.93	1.716
Q5_2	188	1	9	6.89	1.691
Q6_1	188	1	9	6.97	1.765
Q6_2	188	1	9	6.93	1.776
Q7_1	188	1	9	6.81	1.824
Q7_2	188	1	9	6.57	2.084
Valid N (Listwise)	188				

Table 4.8 – Descriptive Statistics of the “Trust” scale

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Q8_1	188	1	9	6.93	1.713
Q8_2	188	1	9	6.63	1.794
Q8_3	188	2	9	7.02	1.607
Q8_4	188	1	9	6.91	1.662
Q8_5	188	1	9	6.72	1.609
Q8_6	188	2	9	6.88	1.552
Valid N (Listwise)	188				

Table 4.9 – Descriptive Statistics of the “Customer Loyalty” scale

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Q9_1	188	1	9	7.47	1.996
Q9_2	188	1	9	4.71	2.178
Q9_3	188	1	9	2.25	1.892
Q9_4	188	1	9	4.88	2.277
Q9_5	188	1	9	7.65	1.810
Q9_6	188	3	9	7.87	1.475
Q9_7	188	3	9	7.77	1.472
Q9_8	188	1	9	7.41	1.861
Q9_9	188	1	9	5.15	2.446
Q9_10	188	1	9	7.59	1.852
Q9_11	188	1	9	7.71	1.650
Q9_12	188	1	9	5.95	2.393
Q9_13	188	1	9	7.58	1.690
Valid N (Listwise)	188				

The logo for NOVA, consisting of the word "NOVA" in white uppercase letters on a green rectangular background. The background of the top half of the page features a pattern of thin, parallel, light gray diagonal lines.

NOVA

The logo for IMS, consisting of the letters "IMS" in white uppercase letters on a dark gray rectangular background.

IMS

The text "Information Management School" in a dark gray sans-serif font, stacked vertically. A thin green vertical bar is positioned to the left of the text.

Information
Management
School