

Chapter 6

Strategies for Luxury Fashion Brands' Targeting the Young Audience:

How to Link Celebrity Endorsements and Brand Extensions With Social Media

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this chapter is to analyse luxury fashion brands' interactions with consumers, especially on social media. In this sense, we firstly propose a hypothesis relative to how luxury fashion brands can use celebrities (in general, and particularly music and TV idols) and social media to influence on young consumer behaviour. Lately, we try to response this question through a case study based on one of the most South Korean luxury fashion brands. Using members of social media has been a constant in brand strategy. Especially when targeting the young audience. They big consumers and fans of music and audio-visual entertainment products, show a high level of loyalty. This leads them to copy the behaviour and consumption of the same products and brands of their idols. They are big users of social media and the Internet, where they express their feelings, experiences and opinions about their music idols as well as the brands and products they use. This being the case, technology offers empowerment to young people. This allows them not only access to more information but allows the possibility to create their own new content. Thus both roles are important regarding branding. We can use the example of how Korean luxury fashion brands and how they use young music idols to establish a strong emotional relationship with their consumers. They do this by increasing their participation and involvement with their brands in social networks.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The use of social media members has been a constant in brand strategy. Through a double association and transfer process between the brand and the person -that prescribes a product-, it is possible to create a strong link between them. This link is really important to consumers, especially during image formation. If they consider how the member fits in with the brand, the brand image will incorporate member associations (Chan et al, 2013).

This phenomenon is particularly relevant for brands targeting the young audience. Teenagers constitute a segment of consumers that are very attractive to companies. Teenagers and young people have been an important consumer demographic ever since. According to Akcay (2012), the total amount of money spent by or for teenage consumers is about be \$208.7 billion per year. Young people also make such valuable consumers because they influence the purchasing decisions of their friends and family. From a marketing point of view, they are highly influenced by the latest social trends. They are especially, big consumers of music and audio visual entertainment products (music bands, and TV series). As fans, they show a high level of loyalty that leads them to copy the behaviours and consume the same products and brands of their idols. Also, they are big users of social media, where they express their feelings experience and opinions about their music idols and the brand and products they use.

The technology offers empowerment to young people that allow them to play one of two roles: apostle or terrorist. If the brand is able to choose the correct member type it will be able to get young people to associate the brand with their music idol. The idol becomes part of the *universe of the brand*. A strong connection between the young-brand-idol is created. This brand-idol connection gets young people to get involved emotionally with the brand, and act as apostles, and offer favourable opinions about the brand.

Considering the last ideas, this book chapter proposes to analyse how Bean Pole, a luxury south Korean fashion brand, uses k-music idols with a double objective: firstly, by creating a strong relationship between the brand and the consumers, taking advantage of the admiration that young feel for their musical idols. And secondly, by using young people as apostles of the brand, in getting them to use social media as a channel in which to express favourable opinions and experiences about the brand

The chapter is divided into two different sections. The first one reviews the theoretical framework describing how brands can adopt traditional strategies (such as the use of members) to a social media channels, and how social media users can adopt a double role relative to brand: as apostle or terrorist. The second section presents the case of the Bean Pole, a South Korean luxury fashion brand that uses k-music idols to promote their brand, and establish a relationship between the brand and young people. The objective is two-fold: first to create an emotional relationship between the brand and the consumer, and then to use social media as channel to explain positive opinions and experiences about Bean Pole.

2. LUXURY FASHION BRAND STRATEGIES: THE ORIGIN USED AS THE BASIS FOR CREATING A MARKETING POSITION.

The market for luxury fashion is turbulent and dynamic. This means that there is not a clearly defined approach that luxury fashion companies can adopt to attain a sustainable competitive position.

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