



Luxury Industry's Chinese User Experience Design

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Abstract. The Chinese consumer market has gradually become an abattoir for well-known foreign luxury brands. Different brands are competing as they adopted all kinds of ways to attract the Chinese millennial. However, the differences in lifestyles and cultures of China and the Western countries have created disparities in the users' behavior habits, so foreign brands cannot reproduce the design from the experience of the users in their motherland but should consider the difference in two cultures. This article explores the difficulties from cultural differences to the experience design of foreign luxury brands in China and provides corresponding solutions to give foreign luxury brands some reference and help them to create interactions for Chinese consumers. Shopping would be easy and enjoyable with a full-process service experience which increases the market share in China.

Keywords: Luxury brands · Millennials · Chinese and Western culture · Difference-complementary · User experience

1 Introduction

The luxury is a category of goods that exceed the basic needs of survival and development of people [1]. They are usually scarce and expensive. Different from other products, the luxury is not necessary. It can neither create practical value, nor provide basic functional needs for human daily life. It is the result of the spiritual needs after the prosperity of material civilization. With the continuous rise of China's economy and the growth of China's "millennial", more and more luxury companies are aware of the importance of entering the market of China. Using various modern technologies, building service platform with quality, and adopting customer-friendly policies to provide a high level and personalized digital luxury service for Chinese users, and by doing this, they can take a preemptive opportunity in China. The Swiss Richemont and the Kering have all launched and taken actions in China.

2 Characteristics and Behaviors of Chinese Consumers

In China, the consumer groups of luxury goods are becoming younger, and the “millennials” have now become the new major consumers. The millennial generation in China refers to a generation born between 1982 and 2000. From birth to adulthood, they are in the period of rapid development of the Chinese economy, and the economic conditions of family prosperity make them have more personalized consumption habits than the previous generation [2]. As millennials are mostly only children and loved by their elders, they can more directly transfer the purchasing power from their parents and even their ancestors, their spending power is strong, and they will even consume ahead of time. In general, the millennial consumer behavior has three main characteristics.

2.1 Pursuit of High Quality

The first is to pursue high quality products and focus on the excellent experience of the entire consumption process. Since the 21st century, China's economy has developed at a high speed. The millennials who have grown up at this time have not experienced the material shortages and hardships experienced by their parents and ancestors, they also don't have heavy academic loans, and many parents buy them real estate. Therefore, China's millennials are “free consumers” who can spend a greater proportion of their income on consumption. They have a higher level of disposable economy and enjoy a more urban and modern life. In addition, most of them are well-educated, have a high aesthetic value, as well as a clear understanding of the product and a strong sense of autonomy. They are hard to be fooled by appearances and will pay more attention to the true value of the products. They are highly eager to live a better life rather than just satisfying their basic needs. Therefore, when making consumption, they are more carefully to select and more willing to pay for quality. And they are more focused on the consumer experience, more concerned about the convenience of consumption and a smooth digital experience and expect to turn consumption in the digital economy into “social activity.”

2.2 Pursuit of Personalization

The second characteristic is the pursuit of personalized products. The millennial generation of China is affected by the global environment and multiculturalism in the process of growth. They have active thinking, pay more attention to the aesthetics of new things and do not like to be like people, whether in terms of consumption and self-expression, they are pursuing uniqueness. They dare to innovate and dare to transcend themselves. They are keen to innovate the use and form of various products. For luxury goods, they not only value their aesthetic attributes, but also pursue a unique experience of multiple integrations such as fashion, personality and cultural connotation. Brands with artistic, cool, extravagant, cultural and other qualities can help them to show their taste and personality, which is more popular with them.

2.3 Rapid Consumption

The third characteristic is the rapid consumption. Millennials are the Internet generation, and there are more and more channels for discoveries of luxury goods, information gathering, shopping, payment, delivery methods, and after-sales activities for them to choose, and the speed is getting faster and faster. Most of them get product information through various online platforms and online social media. Shopping is no longer limited to offline stores, and there are endless ways to buy online brands such as online official malls, WeChat brand public accounts, WeChat mini programs and third-party social media. The network has shifted most of their attention, especially in some mobile super applications like WeChat and Weibo. Compared with their parents, they are less influenced by traditional advertising, more willing to believe in promotion on social platforms and are more willing to explore and discover good products and share them with friends. Social shopping is becoming more and more popular in the Chinese luxury goods industry. The millennial generation has a fast pace of life. For them, the products must be the latest and the most fashionable, and the purchase speed should be faster and more convenient. Any unsmooth shopping experience will cause the loss of millennials.

3 Difficulties and Challenges Faced by Luxury Brands in China

For a foreign luxury brand, it is difficult to bring the best experience to Chinese customers. The differences regarding political, economic and cultural factors will bring different degrees of challenges. The most important factor should be the culture. The cultural differences warn foreign luxury brands that it's not feasible in China if they copy the design forms for other countries.

The differences between Chinese and Western cultures are not only manifested in the external aspects of language, diet, customs, but also in the internal aspects of people's values, ways of thinking, and behavioral habits [3]. In general, the differences between the Chinese and Western cultures are mainly in three aspects: One is the difference in superficial material culture at the respect of daily lives; the other is the difference in behavioral culture at the social level; and the third is the difference in ideological culture.

3.1 Superficial Material Culture

The superficial material culture refers to the summation of the material production activities and the physical achievements of people. It is a culture with material that can be concretely perceived. It contains a wide range of ways of clothing, eating, residence and transportation. It is the foundation of all cultural elements and mainly to meet people's basic needs of life - wearing, food and the shelter, which can directly reflect the level of development of the national social productivity [4]. In general, solid culture can be divided into two parts: production modes and lifestyle. Due to the different geographical conditions, scientific and technological conditions in each country, the

production modes would be in different degrees. This article focuses on the impact of different lifestyles in Chinese and Western countries on foreign luxury brands, especially the differences in technological platforms.

In recent years, the daily life style of the Chinese people has been deeply affected by the development of science and technology, especially the emergence of mobile phone, mobile applications and high-speed networks, which has gradually cultivated some habits different from the past. In China, to a large group of people, especially after 90s and 00s, mobile devices such as mobile phones have become an indispensable part of their lives. There are various types of applications on mobile phones, which involve all aspects of life. By browsing news applications, they can quickly know the most important events happening on the day, and they can comment and express their opinions as well. Through communication applications, they can instantly chat with friends, and intelligently make friends quickly. Through shopping applications, shopping becomes more convenient. You can go around and search products that are more suitable; in addition, mobile apps can help you pay for products more easily, and send email, rent apartments or apply for jobs more quickly. Luxury brands need to understand the current lifestyles of Chinese consumers and explore the opportunities, so that they can bring a pleasant experience to their whole consumption process. Otherwise, if any small process is missing or is contradict with daily lifestyle of people, it will cause the loss of a large number of users.

3.2 Behavioral-Level Culture

The behavioral-level culture at the social level refers to the behavioral norms and behaviors formed in people's daily activities [5]. It includes various rules and regulations, ethics, customs and behavioral habits. It is a behavior of a group, not a result of one person, and it is obvious that China and the West are significantly different in terms of laws and regulations, ethics and customs. In terms of ethics, when dealing with people, the Chinese obey the concept of "benevolence" and "ritual" in Confucianism. Among them, "benevolence" is not only the standard to be achieved by individual personality, but also the basic norm in dealing with interpersonal relationships; and "ritual" is a moral norm of daily behavior. The "ritual" is the external manifestation of "benevolence", and "benevolence" is the inner spirit of "ritual". Only by combining "benevolence" and "ritual" can we truly realize the harmony of interpersonal relationship and even social relations. Chinese consumers are hoping to be respected by brands during the process of consumption, and they should be provided with quality services to feel "benevolence" and "ritual".

3.3 Ideological Culture

The ideological culture, at the level of consciousness, refers to an ideology produced by human beings in material production activities. It uses words, language, music, dance, etc. as the medium of communication, including philosophy, religion, literature, art, science and technology, etc. The core content is also the level that best reflects the cultural differences between the East and the West. China has a cultural history of more than 5,000 years. Under the influence of this profound cultural heritage, China has

formed certain values and has been inherited and developed, affecting people's daily behavior. Taking Confucian culture as the leading factor, the integration of the overall culture of Buddhism and Taoism has had a profound impact on the way of thinking of the Chinese nation, and this influence is sustainable. So far, in modern times, most people's minds are still influenced by the traditional culture of "Nature and man in one" and "the doctrine of the Mean". When looking at things, they pay attention to the whole and do not partially describe the total. They like to analyze things with dialectical thinking, and advocate that all things and activities must be carefully grasped, and everything should be moderate. Chinese people and this kind of value is difficult to change in a short time, so luxury brands should pay attention to the moderation in China. Over-design, over-packaging, over-marketing, etc. are not desirable. They should focus on giving consumers a modest overall experience.

4 Strategies that Foreign Luxury Brands Can Adopt

For the difficulties mentioned in the previous article, foreign luxury brands can consider creating a better customer experience for Chinese consumers in the following aspects:

4.1 Dig Deeply into the Aesthetic Form of China's Mainland

For a period of time, many foreign brands have released some specific limited-edition products in order to narrow the emotional distance with Chinese consumers during traditional Chinese festivals such as the Spring Festival and Chinese Valentine's Day. However, many times, these products have not received good market response, but have caused strong dissatisfaction from consumers. This is because many luxury brands have launched products that are very rigid, and the products that Chinese consumers want to integrate Chinese culture are not simply to build Chinese elements on products. Luxury brands should conduct in-depth research on the aesthetic form of China and find a suitable style to integrate with their own products.

The popular aesthetic forms in China are mainly divided into three types: the traditional aesthetic form unique to the Chinese nation, the Western aesthetic form that has been localized and the aesthetic form that is appreciated by both China and the West. The aesthetic form accepted by both China and the West is universal and popular, and it is difficult to meet the preferences of Chinese luxury consumers. The root cause of the popularization of the localized Western aesthetic form is the full exploration of the traditional Chinese aesthetic form. This article only studies the first form here.

There are many kinds of traditional aesthetic forms unique to the Chinese nation, including "neutralization", "spirit" and "artistic conception".

Neutralization is the most primitive aesthetic form and the foundation of Chinese traditional cultural spirit. It has been running through the development of ancient Chinese aesthetics. The aesthetic characteristics of neutrality first emphasize moderation, not only in the moderate form of matter, but also in the gentleness of emotion and the harmony between personality and spirit [6]. The second feature of neutrality is the unification of multiple aesthetic factors. As a kind of spiritual consciousness,

aesthetics has many forms, and the beauty of neutralization is the unity of aesthetic diversity, which is embodied in the harmonious beauty of the combination of elegance and strength. The highest level of neutrality is the harmony between man and nature, which is the soul of Chinese traditional philosophical thinking and aesthetic culture. The “Yin and Yang” and “Heaven and Man” emphasized by Taoism and the concept of “neutralization” proposed by Confucianism are all explaining this point. “Moderate” is the fundamental state of the world, and “harmony” is the ultimate destination of the world. When the “neutralization” realm is reached, the world is in harmony and everything is flourishing. The aesthetic form of neutrality requires that the design of luxury goods should be subtle and achieve a harmonious unity of various aesthetic factors.

Spirit is developed based on neutrality, and it is an aesthetic realm created by people in the aesthetic activities with the spirit of life and of freedom. Spirit emphasizes the vitality of life and the charm of nature. It requires the aesthetic object not only to have vitality, but also to have the rhythm generated by the release and convergence, the tension and relaxation, the movement and the static and the virtual and the reality. The outside is not a blunt patchwork of various pieces of debris, but an organic whole with flesh and blood and vitality, which is inseparable. Spirit's aesthetic form requires the design of luxury goods to avoid the simple patchwork of various elements and to give the product vitality and rhythm.

Artistic conception is the aesthetic form of the highest realm, and its most fundamental aesthetic connotation is the unity of subject and object [7]. The unity of the subject and the object refers to the unity of the subject (including the person's emotion, will and cognition) and the aesthetic object as the object in the mind. Artistic conception has the characteristics of blending scenes, combining virtual and real, and endless rhyme. Among them, rhyme refers to the endless aesthetic effects contained in the artistic conception, including emotion, reason, meaning, taste and taste. The aesthetic form of artistic conception warns luxury brands that the consumer's buying behavior does not mean the termination of the product aesthetic process, and only products that can bring endless aesthetic feelings to users can truly attract customers.

Only by deepening the exploration of the Chinese form that Chinese consumers like, the brand can create high-quality products, which is the basis for ensuring a good experience for consumers.

4.2 Select the Appropriate Sales Methods

Millennials have obvious characteristics. They are used to browsing information quickly, like to express their personal opinions, attach importance to sensory experience, and are younger, livelier and more passionate about socializing, which means that traditional offline marketing is difficult to break down the communication barriers between users and brands. Online channels are very important if foreign luxury goods want to win the favor of Chinese millennials. Thanks to the rapid development of online shopping and mobile e-commerce, retail industry in China is undergoing earth-shaking changes. Mobile phones have gradually become the main way for people to shop online and browse the web because of its convenience. Especially in the millennial generation, the mobile phone and the Internet are more popular. Millennials

tend to make friends, shop, learn and communicate online, and mobile apps are a toolkit for them in their daily lives.

Millennials are accustomed to shopping online, and they hope that this online shopping experience can be efficient and personalized. Brands that truly understand the changes of consumer demand and are responsive to meeting their needs are likely to succeed. Therefore, for the experience design of Chinese users, Weibo, WeChat public accounts and mini programs are platforms that luxury brands should pay close attention to. The emergence of mini programs has opened up new opportunities for luxury brands' retail platforms, which opens up the boundaries between online and offline, linking social and business behavior. Brands can use mini programs to build their brand's official malls, through a variety of product capabilities of mini programs to complete a series of business goals such as brand awareness, user precipitation, efficient conversion and attracting fans. The luxury industry's use of mainstream tools commonly used by Chinese users such as mini programs can bring basic convenience to Chinese customers.

It should be noted that although the digital retail channel is very important, it is not the only choice for millennials, the experience in the store is also important to them. Offline activities are an important means for luxury brands to interact with users and build brand image. Foreign luxury brands should combine offline high-end experience with online youth marketing, Foreign luxury brands should combine online sales channels with offline experience and make use of the rapidly rising online channels to better promote and drain offline events.

4.3 Adopt Younger Marketing Approaches

Compared with traditional marketing methods, they prefer the promotion of social networks (such as Weibo, WeChat, Tmall, JD.com) and short video platforms (such as Douyin and Miaopai), and the network community consisting of Chinese stars and popular bloggers also has considerable influence on them. They like to show themselves online through WeChat moments, posts, blogs and status, share their daily life with friends, and enjoy using their mobile phones to learn about their favorite brands on social media platforms. In response to this, luxury brands can adopt some young marketing methods, such as scene marketing, social marketing, celebrity marketing and cross-border marketing, to provide consumers with two-way dialogue opportunities, which will attract more millennials and gain their loyalty to the brand.

Scene marketing refers to the marketing behavior that a brand performs in the process of constructing a specific scene to attract and stimulate customer's desire to purchase [8]. To achieve its value, brands must have specific scenes. Luxury brands can build virtual scenes through the network based on current technology, or they can use real-life scenes to conduct marketing activities. The emergence of the Internet has shifted the attention of customers from traditional shopping malls and offline stores to the Internet. From the perspective of scene marketing, it is easier for technology to realize the construction of some virtual scenes, and with some scenes of advertising, not only can bring a stronger visual experience, but also make people feel the noble sense of luxury itself. The real scene marketing not only helps to shape the brand image, but also helps to deeply explore the real needs of customers. The combination of

the two kinds of scene marketing makes the effect of the scene marketing of the product obvious and stimulates the purchase desire of the customer to a greater extent.

The worship of celebrities is a very common phenomenon in modern society, especially for millennials, most of them have their own idols, and they are more likely to accept products recommended by their idols. In recent years, it is common for the current popular celebrities to endorse the brand, and the celebrity endorsement is conducive to improving the high-quality image of brands. Celebrity marketing allows customers to establish an emotional connection with the brand, that is, customers will associate with the brand when they see celebrities, which will lead to sales increase. However, not all celebrity endorsements can promote brand sales. Many brands use celebrities who are inconsistent with their product positioning, failing to meet the consumer's psychological expectations and achieving the opposite effect. Luxury brands should consider the purpose of marketing when choosing celebrity endorsements. When choosing a celebrity endorsement, luxury brands should consider the purpose of marketing, identify celebrities that match their own brand tonality and have their own label attributes, so that consumers can gradually understand the characteristics of this product.

Contacting consumers through traditional methods requires a lot of money, but it does not achieve the desired results. With social platforms such as WeChat and Weibo with strong user groups and social attributes, luxury brands can market and promote to consumers who are difficult to reach under the premise of controlling costs, resulting in a fissile effect. In addition, social marketing can quickly narrow the gap between millennials and luxury goods, through modern technology, it spreads fashionable and interesting content to consumers and promotes their sharing with friends, thus achieving the radiant diffusion effect in the circle.

Millennials are a generation that emphasizes individuality, and cross-border marketing is a good way for them. The combination of luxury brands and home, design, food and other fields can radiate their brand concept to all aspects of consumer life, increase the exposure of the brand itself, and let consumers feel the unique tonality of the brand.

In addition to the several marketing methods mentioned above, there are many other methods. Luxury brands should find a marketing method which is conducive to the development of brands in China based on their product positioning and the characteristics of Chinese consumers.

4.4 Deepen the Brand Experience

The essence of a brand is experience and perception and create value and meaning. From the perspective of strategy, strategy and execution, brand marketing, from the perspective of online and offline, the essence of brand marketing is to consider building, implementing and communicating the brand experience, which is especially true for luxury goods. The value of luxury goods lies in the symbolic meaning of social identity on the one hand and the extraordinary and innovative experience on the other. This experience comes from two levels: one is the characteristic experience of the product and the emotional experience of the brand. For the brand, how to tell the brand story and cause the emotional resonance of the consumer is the most crucial. The

second is the all-round experience of consumption. In the current experience of the economy, consumer demand has gradually become more experiential, emotional and personalized. More and more individualized product services and a good consumer experience can satisfy the psychological needs of consumers.

5 Gucci's Experience Design in China

Among the many luxury brands, Gucci is a representative of Chinese millennial generation and has achieved great success in China, which caters to the preferences of Chinese millennials in terms of product design, brand image and marketing strategy.

First of all, Gucci uses a lot of literary retro patterns and elements to make the product full of literary tones. So, for consumers, their products not only include Gucci's brand added value, but also include cultural added value. In the Spring Festival of 2018, Gucci's creative director was inspired by his dog. In order to cater to the preferences of Chinese consumers, with the theme of Chinese traditional zodiac, a series of special items for the Year of the Dog were designed for sale in Chinese boutiques and online and received high praise from consumers. The pattern adopted by Gucci is not the traditional Chinese zodiac animal image, but the animal image with Gucci's aesthetic characteristics. While maintaining the brand's characteristics, it has ingeniously integrated Chinese culture, avoiding the design misunderstanding that traditional luxury brands have combined traditional Chinese images with products. In the spring and summer of 2018 series, Gucci also incorporates many elements of Chinese style. The localization of design has aroused the resonance of Chinese consumers.

In terms of shopping channels, Gucci has started online purchasing services in China's official website since 2017 and has started to cooperate with third-party sales platforms. This younger shopping method has greatly increased its turnover in China. In terms of marketing, in addition to adopting some more traditional marketing methods, Gucci also adopted some younger ways such as digital marketing. Due to the popularity of social software in Chinese people's daily lives, Gucci collaborated with Meitu camera, a popular selfie app in China, and launched the "self-promotion" campaign, in which users can upload their own selfies and add Gucci patterns to generate their own dynamic expressions and share them with friends. Although it is common for luxury brands to launch such marketing campaigns, driven by Gucci's unique aesthetics, this event is still popular with young Chinese consumers. The dynamic imagery enhances interactivity and the consumer's sense of experience, making the event more in line with the attributes of their preferred social media.

Gucci has also collaborated with fashion blogger gogoboi, and gogoboi commented on the limited-edition products to be released in plain text, bringing the readers closer to luxury. The main content of his blog is to teach readers to unlock a new Gucci gameplay - how to get a free GUCCI: Download the official GUCCI app, upload a selfie in plain clothes, choose your favorite GUCCI logo such as GUCCI's most representative bees, butterflies, flowers and mythical characters to customize a limited-edition shirt, and finally share in WeChat moments. This "clothing" is suitable for sharing in WeChat moments, which meets the psychological needs of some consumers [9].

Whether in product design, offline store experience, shopping methods and marketing, Gucci relies on the characteristics and behavioral characteristics of Chinese consumers. Its success in China also proves the importance of marketing that luxury brands tap into China's local aesthetic form and youthfulness.

6 Summary

The changes in Chinese consumer iterations, commodity consumption and information consumption channels promote the online sales of luxury goods. The core of the luxury goods industry is not simply high-end customized products but includes business and other comprehensive service design and experience values such as product design, store construction, customer experience, marketing interaction, and membership. The essence of luxury goods is gradually shifting from being an entity to a feeling of experience of luxury. As the behavior of luxury consumer's changes, the market needs a more differentiated and more personalized connotation. The product of luxury brands must not only consider economic and technological aspects, but also accurately estimate the differences between Chinese and Western from a perspective of culture and try to understand the cultural psychology of Chinese customers, integrating them correctly to give the whole experience with eastern culture and modern humanistic feelings. By doing this, it is more likely to take the lead in the Chinese market.

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