


Chapter 12

Audiovisual Storytelling Approaches in the Marketing of Luxury Clothing Brands

Álvaro Jiménez Sánchez

Technical University of Ambato, Ecuador

María Rosa Frontera Sánchez

 <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-6737-5371>

Universidad Tecnológica Indoamérica, Ecuador

ABSTRACT

Since ancient times, clothes have served to distinguish between different social classes. The marketing of luxury brands has been characterized by changing and full of multiple strategies. One of them is the use of storytelling, called the art of storytelling. This chapter delves into the use of audiovisual storytelling within the main brands of haute couture worldwide: Chanel, D&G, Versace, Dior, Prada, Burberry, Armani, Hermès, Louis Vuitton, and Gucci. The objective of the investigation is to analyze elements such as the narrative, the characters, the plot, or the aesthetics used. The sample consists of more than 50 ads, of which 24 were taken as storytelling. The results show different styles in the use of the narrative, as well as different archetypes in the characters and various aesthetic, formal and content patterns according to the brand under investigation.

INTRODUCTION

The history of luxury fashion begins with the earliest civilizations. Ancient Egypt, Greece, or the Roman Empire stand out for their differentiation of social classes through attire and accessories. This relationship between conspicuous luxury and the status of the ruling or upper classes persisted and could be found throughout medieval Europe and the Middle East. The aristocracy of the Renaissance, Baroque and later periods continued to assert their social position through their dress, with the ruling classes of the 19th century French and British empires being the last examples of this relationship. However, from the twentieth century, the democratization of luxury fashion began, a process that continues today (Okonkwo, 2007).

DOI: 10.4018/978-1-7998-1859-5.ch012

The use of luxury garments as a manifestation of status is no longer directly associated with the aristocracy, yet there remains a strong association with wealth and outfits and accessories continue to be an important method of differentiating the socio-economic status of humans in all societies. However, a process of popularization has been identified (Kapferer & Bastien, 2015) since, despite the expense of high-end fashion, in recent decades, the group of consumers able to access these products has become increasingly heterogeneous, including elite athletes, famous musicians, actors, models, politicians, leading entrepreneurs and any individual with sufficient direct or indirect purchasing power.

BACKGROUND

The communication and advertising strategies of fashion brands have been characterized by being especially changing (Fionda & Moore, 2009; Jin & Cedrola, 2017). Audiovisual advertising is one of the most important aspects of this business marketing. Among the many styles and formats commonly used is storytelling, a cross-media approach conceptualized as the “art of storytelling” (Miller, 2014; Scolari, 2009; Woodside & Sood, 2016).

Briefly, storytelling is based on telling a narrative, usually following classic Aristotelian patterns. Its use dates back to the first civilizations, and it is in the twentieth century that it acquires a new dimension in spaces such as marketing, especially since the 50s with the *narratif turn*. Principal elements common to such stories are the exposition-climax-denouement structure, the use of conflict, turning points and identification with the characters, all couched within various character typologies and established plot devices (Salmon, 2016). “Storytelling outside the context of entertainment, where the narration progresses as a sequence of patterns impressive in quality, relates to a serious context, and is a matter of thoughtful process” (Lugmayr et al, 2016). These authors develop and emphasize the serious storytelling model taking into account the “4C” (Context, Content, Course and Channel).

Given the effectiveness of these elements and their cross-media nature, brands have historically used them in multiple formats and in different ways (Editorial Team, 2018; Fog et al, 2010; Sergeant, 2014; Woodside, 2010).

Luxury fashion has certainly used storytelling for marketing leverage, either to promote a specific product or the brand itself and the study described here follows the analysis contained in various reports and research into this phenomenon (Donzé & Wubs, 2018; Kim et al, 2016; Wed, 2016; Perdomo, 2015; Timson, 2017).

In addition, new possibilities offered by digital marketing platforms have renewed the utility of storytelling in the multi-media promotion campaigns of *haute couture* companies, and this phenomenon has also been analyzed in numerous small-scale studies (see, for example, Beuloye, 2018; González et al, 2017; Hughes et al, 2016; Kretz & Valck, 2010; Lettly, Jun 6, 2016). However, there is a need for a broader study of leading brands in this area with a deeper level of analysis. This is the background to the research described here, which surveys the online commercials of the main luxury fashion brands for their use of the storytelling approach, analyzing their composition, use of characters and other aspects in order to evaluate their strengths and weaknesses.

19 more pages are available in the full version of this document, which may be purchased using the "Add to Cart" button on the publisher's webpage:

www.igi-global.com/chapter/audiovisual-storytelling-approaches-in-the-marketing-of-luxury-clothing-brands/245140

Related Content

Corporate Social Responsibility as an International Strategy

Cristina Márquez-Moreno and Jose Luis Durán-Valenzuela (2022). *Research Anthology on Developing Socially Responsible Businesses* (pp. 1011-1031).

www.irma-international.org/chapter/corporate-social-responsibility-as-an-international-strategy/302311

Motivators to Adopt Green Supply Chain Initiatives

Amarpreet S. Kohli and Ellen Hawkins (2019). *Corporate Social Responsibility: Concepts, Methodologies, Tools, and Applications* (pp. 1366-1379).

www.irma-international.org/chapter/motivators-to-adopt-green-supply-chain-initiatives/207020

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) in Hotels in Austria, Pakistan, and Indonesia: Small and Medium Enterprise Spillover of COVID-19

Muhammad Nawaz Tunio, Lenny Yusrini and Ghazala Shoukat (2022). *Research Anthology on Developing Socially Responsible Businesses* (pp. 1483-1500).

www.irma-international.org/chapter/corporate-social-responsibility-csr-in-hotels-in-austria-pakistan-and-indonesia/302333

Balancing the Old With the New: Creating a Typology for Explicit-Implicit CSRS Interaction

Richard Peters, Cary Caro and Peggy Golden (2019). *Corporate Social Responsibility: Concepts, Methodologies, Tools, and Applications* (pp. 564-583).

www.irma-international.org/chapter/balancing-the-old-with-the-new/206976

A Review of the Literature on IFRS Adoption From the Perspective of the Value Relevance

Melik Erturul (2019). *Handbook of Research on Global Issues in Financial Communication and Investment Decision Making* (pp. 367-394).

www.irma-international.org/chapter/a-review-of-the-literature-on-ifrs-adoption-from-the-perspective-of-the-value-relevance/228068