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# EVOLUTION OF FASHION MARKETING AND COMMUNICATION: SYSTEMATIC LITERATURE REVIEW

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## ABSTRACT

**Purpose** - The research objective is to analyze the development and evolution of digital tools in luxury fashion companies.

**Design/methodology/approach** - A search for specific criteria and boolean algorithms is carried out in Web of Science and Scopus on "Marketing digital" [AND] "Fashion", once the results are obtained, a selection of the most cited is made, and critical and analytical reading is carried out.

**Findings** - The relationship between digital marketing and fashion companies is reviewed from a perspective of economic growth and, more specifically, from the industrial sector's communication and marketing described above. However, the review clarifies that using social networks as virtual channels in managing reputation and engagement is not sufficiently addressed. In this sense, in a pandemic environment such as the one currently experienced, luxury fashion companies have assumed and understood the role of digital channels in building image, reputation, and desire to purchase by consumers in an environment that allows them to generate know the trends of stakeholders.

**Originality/value** - Reviewing the evolution of digital tools in luxury fashion to build trends becomes essential with the increased use of social networks. There is little research with a targeted approach to the evolution of digital marketing in luxury fashion. For this reason, the study attempts to compile the theoretical and reflective discussion in this regard, contributing to the understanding of consumer behavior in the digital environment today.

**Paper type:** Literature Review

**Keywords:** Fashion Marketing, Social Networks, Luxury Brands, Consumer Behavior, Revision Systematic, Communication, Marketing, Fashion.

## INTRODUCTION

Marketing represents the fundamental axis of companies' economic growth and all recognizable spheres in society's life. It allows the creation of value for customers and the development of solid relationships with them, obtaining in return the value of the aforementioned (Kotler & Armstrong, 2003).

Marketing, like almost all communication and persuasion strategies, has evolved. Its development and growth have been projected in various areas. As has happened with institutions, technology, and the environment, it has also transformed, specializing, and progressing with the purpose, not only of keeping up with market dynamics but also of keeping ahead of it in step and gaining the most significant possible advantage (Mendivelso-Carrillo & Lobos-Robles, 2019). This study's main objective is to know and understand the logic and functioning of the new

interaction processes between the actors and factors involved in marketing to unveil how consumers value brands and respond to various experiences. Therefore, a literature review by the most important databases (Scopus & JCR) will allow us to know the fashion world's latest marketing applications.

Digitalization and marketing have played a strategic role in the fashion industry (Pérez-Curiel & Luque-Ortiz, 2018). This industry's worldwide circulation occurs and increases thanks to the emergence of the latest informational and global economy. Consequently, fashion results from a series of interconnected practices: market and economic, technological developments, and a series of more artistic techniques, such as marketing and design (Martínez-Barreiro, 2006).

In this sense, the fashion industry has developed its form of communication, which is crucial to understanding its marketing (Frutos-Torres, 2019). Marketing allied to fashion demands society's interpretation within its social, cultural, or psychological context and its translation into clothing products, accessories, and services (Del Olmo et al., 2018; cited by Frutos-Torres, 2019). How consumers value brands and respond to various experiences has been a central theme in the marketing literature for decades. In this regard, the literature systematization conducted by (Gürhan-Canli et al., 2018), which collected a total of 129 articles published between 1992 and 2016 in 8 globally recognized journals, identified two fundamental research perspectives on fashion marketing: global-local branding and the influence of culture on consumer-consumer interactions. Global-local brand research was found to be influenced by cross-cultural research. The review results revealed that the literature was mainly condensed into information processing, self and identity, consumer culture theory, and psycholinguistics to investigate the relationship between culture, brands, and consumers.

The work carried out by these authors differs from previous work in that it focuses mainly on the behavior of consumer-brand relationships in the global environment, focusing on behavioral-cultural factors such as attitudes, perceptions, and beliefs. It should be noted that the objective of the work carried out by the authors mentioned above (op. cit.) was to facilitate a future research agenda of greater significance.

As a result, a bibliometric analysis was carried out, using the "WoS" and "Scopus" databases, using the research terms: "Digital Marketing" and "Fashion", a total of 177 articles published in "Scopus" and 256 in "WoS" were counted.

The results suggest that, among the various approaches and areas they refer to, those concerning its logic as a driver of business innovation, the development of new products and services, and brand consumers' experience in the processes of creation and shared design stand out in particular. However, the study also revealed some gaps in the references that evidence the imperative need for further research on the subject (Alves et al., 2016).

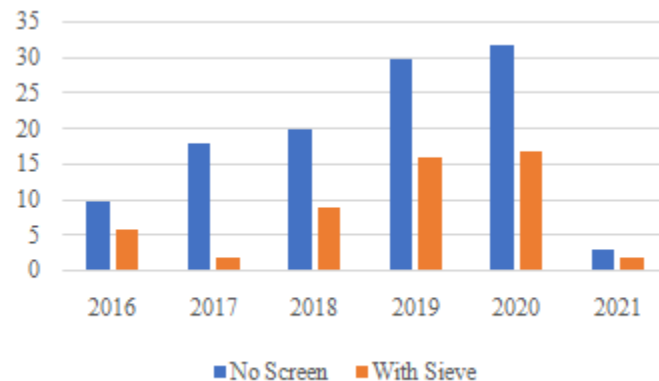
## **Selection of the Corpus**

To achieve this research's objectives, exploratory and descriptive analysis is carried out based on the current literature review (2016-2021) on digital marketing in luxury fashion. The main aim is to analyze the development and evolution of digital tools in luxury fashion companies.

The study's development was structured in two phases:

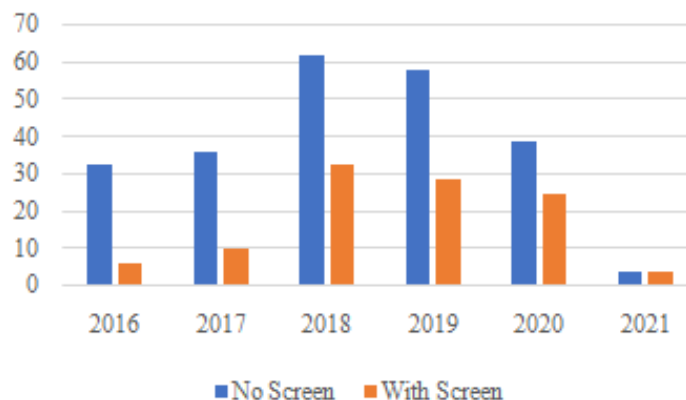
- i) Collecting specialized literature on digital marketing and fashion, and
- ii) The analysis of the information extracted. During the first phase, to understand the evolution of online marketing in the fashion sector, an exploration of the most relevant databases, in this case, WoS and Scopus, was carried out.

In Scopus, the search criterion was "digital marketing" with the boolean algorithm "and" intersection with "fashion". For the search refinement, we opted to select emerging documents 2016-2021 from the area of social sciences and Business, Management and Accounting; document type articles; and source type journals. Before the first screening, 177 documents emerged, which after refining became 52. It is detected that during the years 2019 and 2020, there has been an increase in scientific contributions concerning this topic. The journals with the highest number of publications are Journal Of Global Fashion Marketing and Journal Of Fashion Marketing And Management.



**FIGURE 1**  
**SCOPUS RESULTS**

In WoS, the same search criteria were used, and 437 documents appeared in the first filtering. For the refined search, the period 2016-2021 was selected, only in the social sciences, document type article, obtaining 112 documents from this screening. In this case, it detects an increase in literature from 2018, and the journals leading the most significant number of articles coincide with those of the Scopus database. To avoid duplicities, each of the duplicate items per each database was eliminated, understanding that there are journals that overlap in both. A literature review (maing) and grounded theory review were carried out with which the same epistemological, ontological, and theoretical forms would correlate.



**FIGURE 2**  
**WOS RESULT**

### **Criteria for Document Selection (Screening)**

The documents' selection was made according to the thematic relationship and the paper's topicality, emphasizing the most recent (2016-2021). Thus, 177 articles were analyzed in Scopus and 437 in WoS, refining only those related to the study object. After this screening, 52 were selected in Scopus and 112 in WoS, as mentioned above (Figure 1 & 2). Finally, the relevance and immediacy factor is taken into account, of all the emerging documents, only those most cited (immediacy factor 2016-2019) were taken into account, understanding that these are the ones that have the most significant weight in the international academic community, finally analyzing a total of 30 documents.

## **RESULTS**

### **Digital Marketing and Luxury Fashion**

Luxury represents the aspiration of a good part of consumers (Frutos-Torres, 2019), so luxury brands reinvent themselves in their marketing and business strategies to adapt and face emerging markets eager to consume luxury fashion. They position digital marketing as an essential tool for leading brands in the market with younger audiences (González-Romo & Plaza-Romero, 2017). Under this perspective, (González-Romo & Plaza-Romero, 2017) conducted research focused on identifying which are the current strategies in digital marketing allied by brands in the luxury fashion sector and on knowing the most significant aspects in the communication of brands with their target audiences (stakeholders) in the virtual scenario. To achieve their objectives, they resorted to qualitative techniques, such as content analysis and in-depth interviews. The results of the study mentioned above showed that, among others, storytelling is one of the critical strategies in digital marketing. This format is found in video strategies, social media, events, and exhibitions open to the public, searching for interaction with the public and showing its story. However, it is worth highlighting that:

This co-creative turn in luxury fashion marketing has also raised some concerns regarding brand integrity and control (Jin, 2012) as social networks shift power away from marketers, who no longer "unilaterally define and control" the brand experience (Vallaster & von Wallach, 2013). In this sense, luxury marketing still lacks proactive management of consumer-generated media (Shao et al., 2015; Berthon et al., 2009; Koivist & Mattila, 2020).

To contribute to expanding knowledge and clarifying doubts about emerging issues in this knowledge area, (Koivist & Mattila, 2020) developed a conceptual analysis examining User-Generated Content (UGC) within experiential marketing events and demonstrating how a brand exhibition can facilitate the co-creation of visual content and its dissemination on social networks. The research comprises an illustrative analysis of the visual UGC framework developed by studying Instagram ads depicting consumer experiences during an experiential event for French luxury brand Louis Vuitton.

The implications of the research reach both the theory and practice of luxury fashion marketing in social media. The study presents a new perspective on the dynamics of company-consumer co-creation. It exhibits the application of a novel methodology for the "visual" analysis of luxury, facilitating the understanding of consumer image meanings (perceptions). In terms of practice and management, it sheds new insights on UGC in social media marketing, especially related to product interaction.

An investigation that offers advances in the theory and practice of brand advertising effectiveness, particularly luxury, by decoding consumer engagement with the brand through narrative pathways, is that developed by (Kim et al., 2015), which was created using a qualitative semi-structured online questionnaire for the application of a modified Thematic Perception Test (TPT) projective technique.

Although participants expressed cultural differences in how they write about their experiences, the results showed an implicit form of engagement that is equally effective across the cultures analyzed. This research represents an essential contribution to the advertising of luxury fashion brands. It explores how implicit meaning is conveyed through narrative, and it shows engagement with luxury advertising images in different cultural contexts.

In the same line, and intending to deepen the communication and marketing models of luxury fashion brands to achieve visibility and profit in sales portals, (Pérez-Curiel & Sanz-Marcos, 2019) conducted a study focused on the Gucci brand, which showed that the application of the online strategic plan, the renewal of the corporate image (restyling) and the consumption criteria of younger audiences, constitute the differential values of success and current popularity of the fashion brand.

(Choi et al., 2018) note that how divergences in advertising strategies can enhance the effectiveness of luxury advertising in the context of social networks has rarely been investigated, and to fill this gap, (Choi, et al., 2018) present work on how persuasion can be predicted and enhanced through the use of attribute-based or benefit-based messages according to the underlying mechanisms of psychological distance, social attitude functions, and cultural context.

The personal luxury and experience goods markets have been the predominant drivers of the slow but steady growth rate of the overall luxury market, whose projected value estimate for 2021 is €1015 billion, with 465 million consumers (Achille, 2014; cited by Ajitha & Sivakumar, 2017).

In the context of consumer behavior, values are a fundamental construct for understanding and reaching consumers (Ajitha & Sivakumar, 2017). With this frame of reference, and to investigate the role of values, attitudes, and behavioral patterns of women consumers of luxury cosmetic products, (Ajitha & Sivakumar, 2017) conducted research in which data were collected from 372 women users of the Chanel, Lancome, Dior, Elizabeth Arden, Giorgio Armani, and MAC brands, who completed a survey in a self-administered manner. Hedonism and status value was found to have a highly significant relationship with attitude, while wearing behavior is influenced by materialism and status value. Therefore, consumers' symbolic and psychological traits will reflect their purchase intention and preferences for luxury cosmetic brands. This study's findings provide valuable information for understanding consumer trends, attitudes, and behaviors in the luxury cosmetics market, shedding light on this topic and suorting the development of successful marketing strategies.

Moreover, considering the scarce evidence available on how social media marketing activities influence brand equity building and consumer behavior towards a brand, (Godey et al., 2016) explored these relationships by studying pioneering brands in the luxury sector (Burberry, Dior, Gucci, Hermès & Louis Vuitton). Based on a survey of 845 consumers of Chinese, French, Indian, and Italian nationality, followers of these luxury brands, they developed a structural equation model that helps address gaps in previous literature on brands in social media. One contribution this study offers is confirmation that components of luxury brands' social media marketing efforts positively affect brand equity and on the two main dimensions of brand equity: brand awareness and brand image.

Social media marketing as a form of two-way communication has gained popularity. It makes it easier for companies to communicate with their customers and potential customers and respond to them more easily (Brandão et al., 2018).

In this regard, (Chung et al., 2018) conducted a study in which they found that online service agents provide pleasant and quality communication that positively affects customers' perceptions of marketing efforts.

"Luxury customers expect exclusive experiences" (Chung et al., 2018; p. 592).

Luxury brands have also been immersed in the digitalization trend, making social media use in their relationship with consumers more and more. It is recognized that brand users' participation increases brand loyalty intentions.

In this same research area, (Roozen & Raedts, 2020) empirically investigated whether the promotion of environmental and social externalities (negative audiovisual and printed information), derived from the production process of the "fast fashion" industry influences the attitudes of potential consumers towards this sector in terms of liking, recommendation, loyalty, satisfaction, and purchase intention. In their research, the authors also wanted to determine the differences between consumers and how the attitude towards "slow fashion", fashion involvement, and consumers' ethical and environmental awareness significantly influences such information on consumers' attitudes.

Unlike most experimental studies, the design of this research, consisting of three lessons based on good outdoor advertising material, tested the impact of natural (not fictitious) advertising. Working with existing brand names made it possible to measure brand attitudes in a more externally authentic environment. The results confirmed how damaging negative publicity can be to the image of fast fashion and how complex it is to "recover" through positive publicity. Likewise, it was shown that negative publicity has a severe impact on consumer attitudes towards fast fashion brands, without significant distinctions between social and environmental issues. This confirms the importance of the fast fashion industry taking both seriously.

### **Luxury Fashion Digital Marketing and Social Networks**

Advances in Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) have posed a challenge for all sectors, forcing marketers to rethink the most appropriate ways to access an increasingly younger audience, accustomed to using digital devices and interacting with brands (González-Romo & Plaza-Romero, 2017). Social networks have crystallized as the backbone of promotion and a robust loyalty tool for lifestyle fashion brands (Del Olmo et al., 2018; cited by Frutos-Torres, 2019).

Digital environments currently articulate new possibilities for a dialogue in which advertising has a challenge. That is the amplification of its messages to settings, even external, to the so-called target (López-Paredes, 2018). Social networks help brands' marketing, including customer service, vicarious experience, creative advertising options, and new business opportunities (Kim & Kim, 2020).

Despite the current interest in determining and understanding the relationships between social media and consumer behavior, few academic works focus on the luxury fashion industry and the specific topic of marketing strategy perspectives within this domain, so some issues require further research (Ananda et al., 2017).

There is a need to identify the critical success factors of social media strategy and how it affects organizational performance. To shed light on these issues, (Wu et al., 2020) developed a study that provides a comprehensive research framework for social media, environment, marketing strategy, and performance. The research was conducted using data from 207

Taiwanese fashion brands obtained through a mail survey. Structural equation modeling and qualitative comparative fuzzy set analysis were used to test the research hypotheses' empirical relationships. The results confirmed that social networking strategy is positively affected by an organization's business, market, and innovation orientation. These findings may prompt organizations to foster their entrepreneurial, demand, and innovation readiness. In conclusion, the results suggest that fashion brands should be engaged in identifying opportunities, taking risks, producing proactive innovations, alying creativity, and developing new versions of their products (Wu et al., 2020).

A social media marketing strategy creates two-way communication (P2P) between organizations and current or potential consumers to improve CRM (Customer Relationship Management). Consequently, the social media strategy provides brand visibility and suorts market research. Companies can conduct market research, communicate with their customers and collect customer feedback (Wu et al., 2020).

Social networks are particularly significant in marketing and advertising because they offer interactive network channels for consumer branding. In brand management research, it is plausible to implement a social networking aroach based on LinkedIn, Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, and other similar social networks to develop marketing strategies (Wu et al., 2020).

For example, (Navarro-Beltrá et al., 2017) conducted a study to examine fashion brands' communication through Twitter. Based on the content analysis of 1,135 tweets published in 2016 by H&M, Zara, Ralph Lauren, and Hugo Boss, they found that although there is no total alignment among the brands studied, it is possible to state that, in general, Twitter possessed a broad dialogic potential that fashion brands are not fully exploiting due to the conception that their main activity is the communication of images, news, and novelties. Likewise, the analyzed brands seem to pay little attention to maintaining the "dialogic loop", at least in Twitter, since, as the authors mentioned above acknowledge, the research was limited to this platform. These results offer an invitation to a research line focused on examining fashion brands' communication on other digital media, such as Instagram or Facebook.

## **Research on Luxury Fashion Marketing on Facebook**

The most valuable social networks for capturing leads for Business to Customer (B2C) type businesses are Facebook and Twittersince they share content in a non-intrusive way with advertising campaigns that provide information and content of interest to the user (López et al., 2019).

There are 2.13 billion monthly active users on Facebook (Facebook, 2018a), along with 60 million dynamic business pages (Facebook, 2018b). It is safe to say that social media has gone viral. More than 2.5 million businesses pay to use Facebook advertising, and 75% of brands pay to promote posts on it (Smith, 2016; Kawafa & Istanbuluoglu, 2019).

(Azar et al., 2016) point out that, although social media have focused on a progressive number of studies, there remains a need for empirical research on consumer-brand interactions on Facebook®, especially concerning consumer motivations, to attract brands to social networks. To that end, they conducted research that could provide additional information to brand managers on how to adapt their aroaches and strategies to increase consumer interactions with brands on Facebook. The study, which involved a convenience sample of 160 users, was based on alyingKatz's gratification theory. The intention was to develop a new consumer typology based on consumers' motivations for interacting with brands on this network (social influence, information seeking, entertainment, trust, and reward), determining the type and intensity of such interactions. The new categorization created and exhibited encompasses four different groups of



consumers defined as the "brand independent", the "brand profiteers", the "brand buddies," and the "brand dependent". This novel classification provides brand managers with information that favors the development of more effective strategies according to consumer groups according to interest.

Meanwhile, (de Silva, 2019) facilitated a framework for relationship-building through customer engagement on Facebook Brand Pages (FBP) and researched with a sample of 327 university users in Sri Lanka. He developed a conceptual model that he tested using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) in AMOS vs. 21 statistical software. Among the results yielded by the data analysis, it was found that customer motivations positively influence customer engagement with FBOs in terms of information, remuneration, social interaction, and personal identity on apparel/fashion FBPs, but not so concerning entertainment. Additionally, it was observed that customer engagement appears positively related to trust and commitment to the BPF.

The Spanish brands Zara and Mango, of recognized prestige in practically all continents, were the study by (Cristófol et al., 2019) to check whether promotional or corporate actions on the Facebook platform contribute better results in terms of audience reach. A content and quantitative analysis methodology were used to evaluate, on the one hand, the main characteristics of the posts that obtained the most significant impact in the period considered and, on the other hand, the ability of these brands to generate conversation and community with their fans. The main results indicated that even though Mango's activity is comparatively half that of Zara, virtualization and engagement are eight times higher in the case of Mango, which leads to the conclusion that a more significant number of publications does not imply more outstanding relational quality in the community of users around the brand.

Today, buyers read reviews and experiences of other buyers posted in virtual communities before purchasing a product or service (Lu et al., 2010; cited by Klavaech, 2018). Since reviews are in the public domain, this can become a primary concern for managers in negative thoughts and a significant opportunity in positive ones (Purnawirawan et al., 2015; cited by Kawafa & Istanbuluoglu, 2019).

However, it is essential to note that research on customer reviews and likes on Facebook® remains unclear about the relevance of their role across sectors. For example, customer reviews appear to be of great significance for technology products, but generalizing this to apparel and fashion is complex. Indeed, in the fashion industry, the unknown remains about how consumers construct their experience of exposure and interactions related to social media (Kawafa & Istanbuluoglu, 2019).

As an opportunity to open a window in generating knowledge that contributes to the theoretical understanding of consumer perception and online shopping experience in the social media environment, (Kawafa & Istanbuluoglu, 2019), grounded in Personal Construct Theory, set out to explore the role of customer opinions on social media pages, particularly on Facebook. They also studied how customers perceive brands' social media marketing activities in the context of the online fashion industry. The study contemplated purposive sampling for customers' participation with recurring online fashion shopping experiences, including shopping experiences and post-purchase experiences. Data were gathered from 25 repertory grid interviews, the analysis of which reveals information that challenges the current understanding of the role and relevance of customer reviews and Facebook® pages in online fashion shopping, thus emerging a paradox of online fashion shopping.

Additionally, structural equation modeling analyses revealed that perceived source credibility (both celebrity endorsing their brand and Facebook profile owner) mediates the relationship between the experimental conditions (celebrity as aspiring outgroup member vs. same school student as ingroup member vs. different school student as outgroup member) as well

as outcome variables (interpersonal attraction to the celebrity, ad involvement, and ad credibility) in viral marketing on social media platforms (Jin & Ryu, 2018). These findings highlight the value of perceived credibility in celebrity endorsement in social commerce and consumer suort for viral marketing brands.

The literature on the experience and behavior of intermediate consumers about fashion adoption and consumption is limited, especially regarding the characteristics of their Fashion Change Agents (FCAs), so Baker, et al., (2019) researched in that regard. This study identifies intermediate fashion consumers' profiles with Fashion Change Agent (FCA) characteristics andfashion innovativeness and opinion leadership. It looks at how tween FCA characteristics influence their internet innovativeness, interest in online co-design participation, and brand engagement. With a sample of girls and adolescents obtained by snowball sampling, the data obtained were analyzed using MANOVA and multiple regression, areciating the positive effects of preteens' FCA character around Internet innovativeness and interest in online participation co-design and brand engagement. The results obtained suggest to marketers and retailers more innovative marketing practices in fashion, mediated by the Internet, interactive and brand-oriented.

### **Research on Luxury Fashion Marketing on Instagram 3.2.2.1.**

To date, research on the interaction of fashion brands with users on social networks has mainly focused on other social interaction platforms other than Instagram, so (Bonilla et al., 2019) conduct an exploratory, non-experimental type of study using a content analysis procedure. An initial classification was made and subsequently a statistical treatment of the content of all the posts published by H&M on Instagram throughout 2017. Three categorization systems were used for the analysis to determine engagement from the point of view of message content, the company's communication strategy, formal aspects, and the category of products presented in the post. The results helped to clarify those aspects of H&M's Instagram posts that generate a more significant number of interactions with users and those aspects that positively or negatively affect responses through comments and likes, having identified which attributes of the posts generate greater or lesser business from each of the three theoretical models of post-selection. Similarly, those variables that generate asymmetric responses in comments and likes were determined. Because of the variable degree of engagement they imply, they pave the way to assess whether these differential impacts can be exploited to reformulate brands' digital communication strategies.

On the other hand, in the case of luxury fashion brands, they leverage the power of Instagram and fashionistas for strategic brand management. With this in mind, (Jin & Ryu, 2019) studied the interaction effects between the source type of the aforementioned social network and luxury brands (brand vs. fashionista), visual image type (product-centric vs. consumer-centric), and consumer characteristics (vanity, opinion leadership, and fashion awareness), on brand recognition and trust. Using an experimental design, a sample of 377 participants recruited from Amazon Mechanical Turk (MTurk), and logistic regression analysis, two-way interaction effects between sources and visual images were found on brand recognition. Brand recognition was higher for product-focused images when the original was the fashionista as the prescriber. In contrast, brand recognition was equivalent regardless of image type when the source was the brand. Logistic regression and multiple regression analyses revealed moderating effects of references and visual images on the association between consumer traits and brand outcomes. With this, guidelines are obtained in marketing management in terms of brand placement and product positioning in the Instagram/Fashionista of luxury brands as prescribers.

On the other hand, (Casaló et al., 2019) investigated influencers on Instagram to understand that opinion leaders are important advice sources for different consumers. Instagram is the most used platform by them in the fashion industry. The study was developed to identify some key antecedents and consequences of thought leadership in this context. Based on data collected from 808 followers of a fashion-focused Instagram account, the results suggest that originality and uniqueness are crucial factors for a user to be perceived as a thought leader on Instagram. On the other hand, opinion leadership was found to increase consumer intention to follow fashion tips posted on the account, which may affect companies' sales because consumers may trust the leader's opinion given their experience with the product and perceived knowledge about it. Moreover, the influence is even more significant when the consumer perceives that their content matches their personality and interests.

Similarly, (Martínez-Sanz & González-Fernández, 2018) deepened the analysis of the fashion influencer's figure by studying the communicative resources used by the leading Spanish fashion influencers on Instagram, paying particular attention to their handling of image and text. Likewise, considering the progressive incorporation of men in this sector, they set out to determine whether the attitudes and ways of generating present engagement variations concerning the gender of the author and the type of values he/she projects. A content analysis was performed based on the communicative activity of the 13 most prominent profiles in 2017. The results evidenced a very even use of claiming techniques, mainly promotional, dubious compliance with Spanish regulations on advertising -which obliges authors to explicitly indicate any message that promotes a product or service from a contractual relationship-; and the use of images to build idyllic lives from everyday scenes.

In this regard, user reactions, responses, and behaviors on social media platforms are fertile research grounds (Ananda et al., 2019).

In the interest of expanding knowledge in this area, (Kim & Phua, 2020) conducted research to evaluate consumer responses to empowerment hashtags in social media-based fashion advertising. The results showed that branded hashtags could generate favorable consumer ratings of advertising campaigns, confirming that empowerment hashtags significantly increase their identification with the advertised brands.

It is a fact that the fashion industry has embraced social media as one of the essential marketing avenues to reach its customers online and also as an avenue to rekindle the brand passion and foster customer loyalty (Wright, 2009; cited by Ananda et al., 2017).

In the realm of brand love (lovemark), (Kurniawati, 2019) conducted a study investigating the impact of social media marketing activities on brand love. The research, which involved 280 respondents, Nike, H&M, Zara, and Adidas brands, evidenced a positive effect of networks on brand loyalty and cult communities' building. The method used for the research was a non-probabilistic sampling applying a structural equation model run by the AMOS program. The study found that social media marketing activities have a positive impact on "self-expressive" (internal and social) brands and revealed that "self-expressive" brands have a favorable effect on brand love and brand love on brand loyalty. In this regard, Kurniawati (2019) highlights the implications derived from his work, illustrating it as follows:

For example, the content tells us that the brand is used by people with disabilities and non-disabled achievers at the 2018 Asian Games. Managers can enhance "self-expressive" (inner self) brands by providing product size customization options aimed at users with unique body shapes and people with disabilities. Managers can improve "self-expressive" (social self) brands by innovating to create different designs and launch a limited edition series on certain products. Managers can increase brand love by making a membership promotion strategy for customers to get discounts and branded products. Managers can increase brand loyalty by creating product

designs that customers remember easily to focus directly on the brand and ignore competing brands.

From this comes an opportunity for managers to enhance social media marketing activities through exciting content stories that inspire the brand.

It is indisputable that the most recent research regarding marketing and communications is currently focused on the digital space, whose accelerated growth and innovation provide new interactivity options for consumers and businesses. Technology, including Artificial Intelligence (AI), predictive learning, and augmented reality, seems to define the paths marketing and advertising professionals must travel (Mendivelso-Carrillo & Lobos-Robles, 2019). Specifically in the field of fashion, according to the analysis of industry trends made by (Del Olmo et al. 2018; cited by Frutos-Torres, 2019) highlight in work "Marketing and Communication of fashion, luxury and lifestyle", very notably, the transformation that the Internet has represented for the fashion industry, both for the transactions that are made through this channel and for the significant role it has played in the dissemination of products.

## CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

It is imperative to understand the development and evolution of social networks and the changes in the buying habits and relationships between consumers and luxury fashion brands.

2020 turned out to be a turbulent year for fashion brands in the face of the temporary closures of outlets and manufacturing facilities caused by the Covid\_19 pandemic.

In this sense, perceiving interests, trends and generating the desire to buy among stakeholders is of fundamental interest when establishing the digital ecosystem's strategies.

The increase of registered users in social networks and the increase in these tools per hour per day leads brands to focus their efforts on generating emotional and committed content with consumers to generate engagement between them and luxury fashion brands.

In 2013, Vallaster and Von Wallach showed that fashion marketers were not sympathetic to social media because of the lack of control. In this sense, luxury marketing still lacked methods for proactive management of consumer-generated media.

Years later, in 2017, there is an increase in research on social networks and luxury fashion. (González-Romo & Plaza-Romero, 2017) detect that these media are fundamental for brands and the use of storytelling and exhibitions open to the public, which generate online content. (Navarro-Beltra et al., 2017), for their part, show that Twitter is the network with the most significant potential for the fashion world at that time.

According to (Del Olmo et al., 2018), research in this regard has been progressing and positioning social networks as an instrument of loyalty and engagement. In 2019, Pérez-Curiel & Sanz-Marcos highlighted that an excellent online strategic plan constitutes differential values of success to the brand and popularity. At this point, already a large number of authors, as observed in the theoretical framework, carry out studies on various brands (Gucci, Louis Vuitton, Prague...) and their digital behaviors, with the need to solve the unknown of how luxury brands build their image in social networks and which tools are the most effective. (Wu et al., 2020) suggest that fashion brands must identify social network opportunities, where the online consumer moves, which interacts with the brand mainly through these media.

At this point, some of the most successful behaviors are already highlighted, such as, for example, what (Cristófol, 2019) exposes in the conclusions of his research; a more significant number of publications does not imply a greater quantity or what (Casaló et al., 2019) evidence that IG is the platform most used by fashion influencers and that due to the extraordinary consumer confidence in the products recommended by influencers, all brands should carry out

actions on this platform. (Nannini, 2020) exposes that consumer 2.0 prefers to buy clothes that they have seen someone using in their day-to-day, which corroborates (Casaló et al., 2019). Social networks' importance is evident and uncovered in multiple studies, as shown by (Koivist & Mattila, 2020). They demonstrate that the joint creation between user and consumer can increase the market's visibility through an experimental event.

To conclude, this study explores the evolution of digital marketing in the world of luxury. This review reveals the initial shortcomings in the area, the lack of knowledge and confidence regarding these alternative channels, and the informal ways of interacting with them.

Today, customer, the user, or consumer engagement is focused on the interactive experience and the shared creation of value. It refers to a process in which, through reliable and sustained customer service on the part of the brand, the consumer is driven so that he/she offers his/her recommendation in blogs or forums, among others. "In online marketing, engagement describes the emotional involvement shown by the followers of a company in social networks" (Ballesteros- Herencia, 2019).

Marketers are building their repositories of consumer insights by systematically looking for ways to report what consumers think, experience, and say to each other (B2B). In an ever-ready world in which media use is migrating to digital, advertising can be skied or blocked, and content can be consumed on-demand, marketers have to find new ways to distinguish between aspects of consumer behavior that will remain the same and those that will change (Vollmer & Precourt, 2009).

The development in the online market has, according to various forecasts, a bright future and will continue to develop, which has opened up Business-to-Customer (B2C) and Consumer-to-Business (C2B) communication opportunities in which fashion companies have discovered new capabilities to reach their prospective customers. This, also, has transformed them into sustainable companies in the market, with better opportunities to create competitive advantages compared to the conventional retail environment (Kim & Lee, 2002). One of the best-known initiatives is Branded Content, which is based on creating content that attracts consumers and is closely related to the brand's values in question.

It should be noted that Branded Content, according to a report prepared by Infoadex in 2020, the 2020 report indicates that the sixth position of this ranking, is occupied by Branded Content, which accounts for 5.0% of the estimated media, with an investment figure of 357.9 million, and outstanding growth of 13.2% about the 316.3 million recorded in 2018. A position well ahead of influencers occupies the eleventh position, with an investment of 61.8 million, a 0.9% share of the total estimated media, and a year-on-year growth of over 65% in its investment figure.

Finally, and in correspondence with the research on this type of trends in online marketing strategies and the use of social networks for this purpose, (Castillo-Abdul et al., 2020), after applying a co-word analysis method, highlights the topics of most significant interest concerning Branded Content are "fashion" and "fashion films", in the search to enhance the communication of the sector, transmitting the values, history, and personality of the brand.

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## Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> "Self-expressive" brands refer to the compatibility between brands and consumers, in relation to individual self-concepts and how brands allow users to express their opinions to others (Kurniawati, 2019; p.315).

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