Czech University of Life Sciences Prague

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Diploma Thesis

Marketing Communications of Luxury Brands: a Case Study of LVMH

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DIPLOMA THESIS ASSIGNMENT

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Economics and Management

Thesis title

Marketing communications of luxury brands: a case study of LVMH

Objectives of thesis

The aim of the thesis is to determine the specific of marketing communications in luxury industry and find the reasons of changes in buying decision process. The research aims to develop the complex of marketing communication programs focused on increasing the efficiency of market activities and form a new way of relationships with consumers.

Methodology

1. The theoretical part of given Thesis will be based on literature analysis and statistical data analysis. The practical part and own input will be based on marketing research, data processing, SWOT analysis and BCG matrix.

The proposed extent of the thesis

Approx 60 pages

Keywords

luxury brands, marketing communications, consumers' behavior, communication channels

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Recommended information sources

1. KAPFERER, J., BASTIEN, V. The Luxury Strategy: Break the Rules of Marketing to Build Luxury Brands (2nd edition) (2012). ISBN-10: 0749464917
2. OKONKWO, U. Luxury Online: Styles, Systems, Strategies (2010). ISBN 978 0 230 55536 5
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Expected date of thesis defence

2015/06 (June)

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Electronic approval: 7. 3. 2015

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Electronic approval: 10. 3. 2015

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Declaration

I declare that I have worked on my diploma thesis titled "Marketing Communications of Luxury Brands: a Case Study of LVMH" by myself and I have used only the sources mentioned at the end of the thesis. As the author of the diploma thesis, I declare that the thesis does not break copyrights of any third person.

In Prague on 30th of March ______________________

Maria Dolgova

Acknowledgement

I would like thank Ph.D. Richard Selby for his advises, support and assistance during processing my diploma thesis. I would like also to thank my parents for their continuous support and faith in me.

Marketing Communications of Luxury Brands: a Case Study of LVMH

Summary

The aim of the given diploma thesis is to determine specific features of marketing communications in luxury industry and find reasons for changes in the process of consumers buying decision-making. The study examines effects of cross-cultural influence on luxury brands consumers regarding their perceptions of luxury brands, factors affecting purchase decision and choice of the most attractive marketing communication channels. The study was conducted in the form of surveys between Russian, French and Chinese consumers thus providing comparative information about consumers from different cultural groups. Using SPSS statistics gathered data from surveys was processed and transformed into specific findings allowing answering raised research questions. On the basis of the study findings set of recommendations was given to the selected company in order to create and develop effective and successful international marketing strategy.

Key Words

Luxury brands, communication channels, consumers' behavior, LVMH, cross-cultural, purchase intention, perceptions.

Marketingové Komunikace Luxusních Značek: Případová Studie LVMH

Souhrn

Cílem dané diplomové práce je určit specifické rysy marketingové komunikace v luxusním průmyslu a najít důvody pro změny v procesu rozhodování o nákupu spotřebitelů. Výzkum zkoumá účinky cross-kulturních vlivů na spotěbitele luxusních značek ohledně jejich vnímání luxusních značek, faktory, které ovlivňují rozhodnutí o nákupu a výběr nejatraktivnějších marketingových komunikačních kanálů. Výzkum byl proveden v podobě průzkumů mezi ruskými, francouzskými a čínskými spotřebiteli, a tím pádem poskytuje srovnávací informace o spotřebitelích z různých kulturních skupin. Pomocí programu SPSS statistics shromážděné údaje z průzkumů byli zpracovany a transformovány do konkrétních nálezů umožňujících zodpovězení položené výzkumné otázky. Na základě vzsledků byla dána řada doporučení pro vybranou společnost s cílem vytvořit a rozvíjet účinnou a úspěšnou mezinárodní marketingovou strategii.

Klíčová slova

Luxusní značky, komunikační kanály, chování spotřebitelů, LVMH, cross-kulturní, nákupní záměr, vnímání.

Contents

1. Introduction

1. Introduction

Luxury sector has been growing rapidly over the last decade; therefore, in order to satisfy the growing demand for luxury products in better way marketers need to understand how to develop communications with sophisticated consumers. Marketing of luxury brands has always been the most challenging and problematic issue since it is completely different from traditional marketing and requires a different approach to all components of the marketing mix.

Luxury is a subjective concept that is why the ideas of luxury brands vary in different consumers markets. Moreover, cultural differences and social stereotypes play a significant role in the perception of luxury brands as well as in the formation of intentions to purchase.

The given thesis is composed of two main parts. The first part is intended to investigate main issues of luxury brands marketing and dissimilarities from traditional marketing that are presented in the scientific literature along with examination of cultural environment impacts on consumers of luxury goods. Further research exploring deeply the topic of luxury brands marketing with an emphasis on the practical part on selected company's consumers cross cultural differences in Chinese, Russian, and French markets, the influence of differences on shaping buying behavioral patterns, perceptions, and the choice of preferential communication channels.

The study findings, which are based on the analysis of cross-cultural differences of selected brand's consumers, give answers to questions raised in the study explaining that cultural differences are prevailing in a particular society significantly influence on the choice of communication channels. Familiarity with these cultural features as well as preferences of communication channels with the brand will help the company in profound comprehending of the cultural environment influences on formation of consumers' preferences and perceptions.

As the selected brand does not pay significant attention to its consumers cultural differences, study findings also provide a set of important recommendations for Chinese, Russian, and French market allowing for creating the most effective and successful international marketing strategy.

2. Aims and Objectives

The aim of the thesis is to determine specific features of marketing communications in luxury industry and find reasons for changes in the process of buying decision-making. The research aims at developing a package of marketing communication programs focused on increasing the efficiency of market activities and forming a new way of relationships with consumers.

According to the main purpose of this research the following **objectives** were determined:

- To compare classic marketing mix and conception of marketing mix that luxury brands apply;
- To analyze luxury consumption behavior model and determine the factors of influence on luxury consumers decision-making process
- To analyze cross-cultural perceptions of luxury brands and consumers' intentions to make luxury purchase
- To examine consumers' attitude towards different marketing communication channels as a part of luxury brands' marketing complex, using LVMH as a sample company;
- To study consumers' attitude towards digital activities, using LVMH as a sample company;
- To provide recommendations for improvement of marketing communications system in a selected company on the basis of comparison of theoretical and statistical data with own research results.

The given study will be undertaken in order to answer the following research questions:

RQ 1. What are the main differences in cross-cultural perceptions of luxury brands?

RQ 2. What are differences in cross-cultural intentions to purchase LV's products?

RQ 3. What are the most effective LV's marketing communication channels on three markets?

RQ 4. How do the cultural differences of LVMH's consumers influence on the preferences of marketing communication channels?

RQ 5. What are consumers' cross-cultural attitudes towards LV's Internet presence?

3. Methodology

The following methodological tools will be applied in the study:

1. Marketing research

The research will be held in form of surveys with the main purpose to address research issues. Questionnaires will be composed of 22 questions and placed on online survey software kwiksurveys.com as well as will be distributed in written form between Russian consumers. Questionnaires consist of two parts: the first part includes personal information about the respondents, the second part relates to the research problems and includes questions about respondents' attitudes towards Louis Vuitton's communication channels. The cross-cultural research will be held between consumers of Russian, Chinese and French markets.

2. Data processing and analyses

Acquired data will be processed through SPSS program out of necessity to conduct gender, age, and country of origin cross-tabulation.

3. BCG matrix construction

The construction of the matrix is held on the basis of financial reports due to the necessity to educe strategically important product groups of LVMH's portfolio and analyze consumers and their communication preferences of the chosen group.

4. Literature Review

4.1 Concepts of Luxury

4.1.1 Definition of Luxury Brands

In the modern literature the idea of luxury brands was defined in many ways. Competitive environment makes marketers to draw consumer's attention and make product more desirable using term "luxury" in every possible occasion. Due to abundance of terms many words was invented to describe concept of luxury brands that are commonly used in literature: masstige, premium, trading up, hyperluxury [1]. The problem of a good deal of new concepts makes the real concept of luxury brands confusing and difficult for understanding. In the following chapter more precise definitions of luxury brands, their specific characteristic, and types will be given.

In order to clarify the meaning of luxury brands it is useful to start from the basic understanding of the "brand" term and different approaches to its determining. To begin with, the American Marketing Association defines brand as a set of specific features that help to distinguish goods or services of one producer from the other [2]. According to Kotler's point of view brand can be examined in three different dimensions: firstly, it helps consumers to identify the producer and make decision making process quicker, based on previous positive experience with the products of the brand. Secondly, the firm can benefit from owing strong brand in its portfolio in terms of intellectual property rights that make brand more attractive for investment. Thirdly, it can create consumers' loyalty that determines their desire to make repurchase and readiness to pay higher price and ensure high demand and profit. [3] With the development of different visions of brands it became obvious that brands are more than tools for distinguishing one producer from the other, but connection with consumers on the emotional and psychological levels. Kapferer argues with Keller that to define brand it is not enough to focus just on mental associations. [4] He insists that core of brand's understanding is emotional aspect and relationships with consumers built over the time. [5] In this case more suitable definition of brand can be as a set of both emotional and functional characteristics that distinguishes awareness and attitudes towards certain brand in consumer's consciousness [6]. In spite of the fact that brand definition causes big disputes among marketing experts, all definitions of brands have common origin - the way to form impression on consumers. [7] In this context it seems necessary to conduct analysis of different existing definitions and approaches of luxury brands and indicate specific features that transform regular brand to luxury brand. The major ideas of luxury brands will be discussed below.

The concept of luxury might seem very easy and simple for understanding, but in the reality it remains difficult for identification yet. With hindsight to the society's development, it becomes obvious that luxury was presented in all times, but its form and appearance changed and keeps on changing with the course of time. For this reason, it is almost impossible to give the definition of luxury in general meaning and luxury brands in particular [8]. It is also important to note that the problem of luxury concept is not only misunderstanding, but also the number of another reasons that attract the experts' attention. On one hand, environmental aspect is a subject for discussion, because luxury goods' consumption is usually perceived as conspicuous consumption and wasting of materials. But on the other hand, hasty growth of emerging countries' purchasing power provides increasing demand of luxury goods and as a consequence growth of world economics [9]. Hence, summing up foregoing deep understanding of luxury concept and its influence on the modern society is deemed appropriate.

As it is seen from foregoing discussion, luxury brands are rather complicated concept, and there is no commonly accepted definition. Kapferer insists that product cannot become luxury without the brand. According to Kapferer's vision, luxury brands are not based on the high price of goods or services as the indicator of luxury. He points out that the main distinction between brand and luxury brand is in so-called distance. While mass-market brands are focused on their target groups, luxury brands create the image of inaccessibility and go beyond existing customers' equity. This distance creates trough such indicators as luxury brand's personality - connection with the founder or character, selective distribution and brand's identity [10].

Jean Louis Duma-Hermès considers luxury brands as approach where three conditions are met: combination of beautiful design, consumers' orientation, and freedom in decision-making. Chevalier and Mazzalovo argue with this definition explaining it by the fact that concept of beauty is no longer the definition of luxury as well as orientation to the consumers, because it is not necessary to be luxury brand to communicate with the target group. However, they are strongly agreed with the last point in the definition, considering that the essence of luxury brands is divergence from generally accepted norms. According to Chevalier and Mazzalovo, luxury brands can be defined as exceptional, unique extraordinary brands, refusing standards and prosiness [11].

Radón defines luxury brands as those who create strong brand identity, and this identity, in her opinion, is created not merely through recognizable logo, but through creation of desire on the basis of brands' exclusiveness, "myths and stories" around the brand [12].

Mortelmans proposed another approach to luxury brands' comprehension. According to his point of view, luxury brands should be examined in two senses: narrow and broaden. In narrow sense luxury brands can be identified as those that have following characteristics: high quality of products in portfolio, rarity, and extra value added. Nevertheless, to give definition of luxury brands based only on their narrow characteristics is not sufficient. It is more rational to consider luxury brands in broader sense based on the difference between their use and sign values. The essence of luxury brands is high sign value that provides consumers with certain social status. In this case luxury brands can be defined as those whose sign-value is put before functional and economic values [8]. Heine defines luxury brands as "…images in the minds of consumers that comprise associations about a high level of price, quality, aesthetics, rarity, extraordinarity, and high degree of non-functional associations" [13, p.32]. This definition is opposite to Kapferer's vision, because Heine's opinion is based on the assertion that luxury brands should be associated with their core and icon products and not vice versa. He insists that brands cannot become luxury without wide portfolio of luxury products [13]. Thus, with due consideration of the definition given above, main characteristics of luxury goods can be derived.

Luxury goods should correspond to the following characteristics:

- High price;
- High quality;

This category includes such indicators as durability, upscale raw materials, craftsmanship (usually handicraft), additional features that increase use-value and strong support service.

- Aesthetic qualities;

Luxury goods should not only be high qualified, but also satisfy all the ideas about aesthetics [13]

- Rarity;

Rarity can be represented in two dimensions: objective and virtual. Objective rarity conditioned by the limited amounts of luxury goods due to the limited amount of materials. Having considered that, in case of luxury goods it is more important to create subjective or so-called virtual rarity. Subjective rarity achieved by selective distribution and creation in consumers' consciousness the feeling of being privileged from owning the good or service.

- Symbolism

According to Heine, luxury goods reflect certain lifestyle, because their possession perceived as belonging to the upper-class society. The symbolism is usually created through either highly recognizable design, even beyond the target group, or the information about product such as connection with well-known person or historical events [14].

Analyzing all specific characteristics of luxury goods mentioned above it is possible to distinguish them from the other goods. While major products serve to satisfy basic human needs, mass-market products focus primarily on desire satisfaction, luxury goods are strongly connected with their non-functional values and dreams created by them [10].

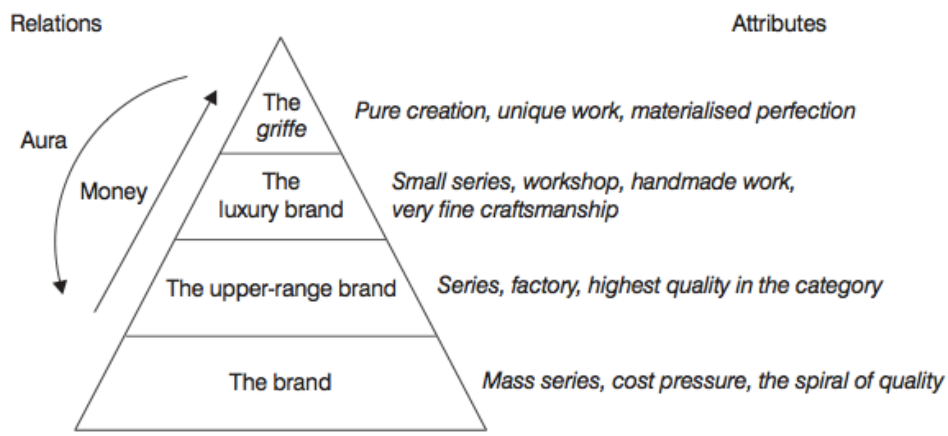
4.1.2 Luxury Brands Construction

Before starting analysis of existing types of luxury brands and similar concepts it deems necessary to mention that not all goods in luxury brands' portfolio may be referred to the true luxury category. Companies use different models of products expansion to provide more accessible products to the market with the purpose to increase brand awareness [5]. There are two different approaches of the products expansion:

1. European pyramid model or vertical expansion, based on brand's history, craftsmanship, and product as an outstanding and unique work;
2. American constellation model or horizontal expansion, based on fabricated stories, distribution, and merchandising [15].

Two main models of luxury brands' portfolio construction are presented in the figures below.

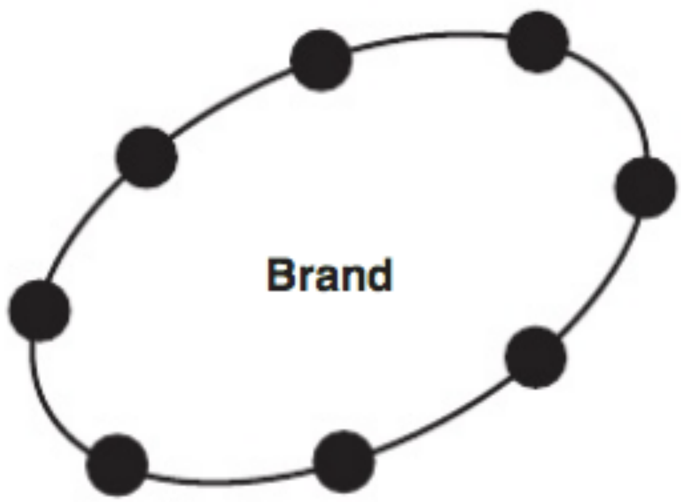
Figure 1. Pyramid Model



Source: KAPFERER, J.N. The New Strategic Brand Management p. 96

The European approach is based on the traditions, longstanding history of the brand and rarity of products. The model above is based on the hierarchy of luxury goods within the portfolio of company. At the base of the pyramid are situated goods produced by the company that belong to the masstige category - mass production but still high quality, with strong brand identity (such products as perfumes and cosmetics can be included into this category). [5]. The higher is level, the more luxurious goods are generated; series of goods become smaller and more exclusive; handcrafted products and selective distribution appear. On the top is located the griffe - the core person and creator of brand identity who is not only in charge for brand's personality creation, but also for products' launching, and distribution. Anyway, this model has disadvantage connected with the democratization of goods at the bottom level, because accessibility of mass-produced sub-brands can destroy the image of core brand at the top [10].

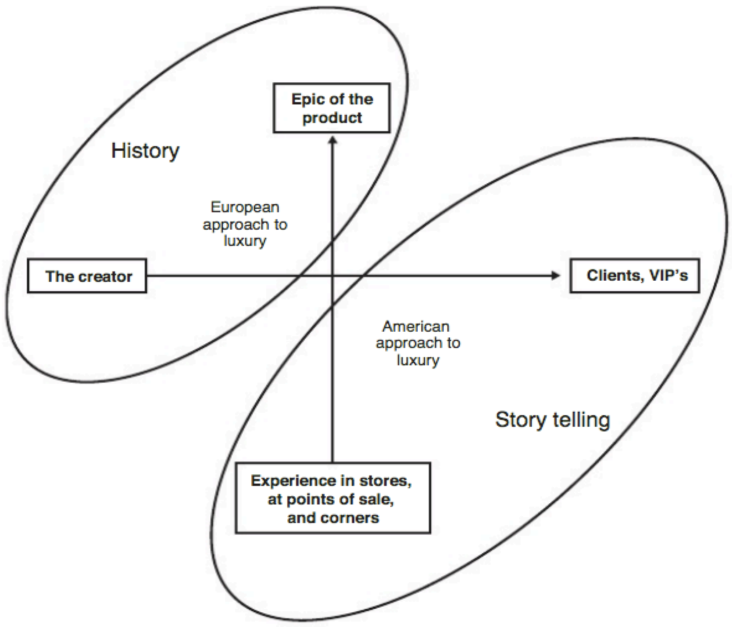
Figure 2. Constellation Model



Source: KAPFERER, J.N. Luxury Strategy: Break The Rules of Marketing to Build Luxury Brand p.141

The second model was created in the United States and represents product expansion of new and young luxury brands that do not have enduring history and traditions. The idea of the model is that the core brand is in the middle and all sub-brands that reflect core values of brand and its identity are situated on the same distance from the center (cosmetics, apparel, home furniture, and restaurants can be included here). That leads to the fact that company pays an equal attention to the all product families for the reason that hey are commensurately represent the same brand's strategy and influence on the formation of core brand's vision. As it was previously mentioned brands using this model emphasize on merchandising and distribution. Prevalent practice of such brands is to create a special atmosphere at the point of sales through different attributes and designs that reflect brand values and certain lifestyle. Furthermore, owing to diversified distribution channels and different groups of products in the portfolio the price ranges of goods are very wide. Thereby, implementation of this model helps companies strengthen the brand awareness in each segment it is presented and increase brand recognition [5].

Figure 3. Comparison of Two Luxury Brands Expansion Models



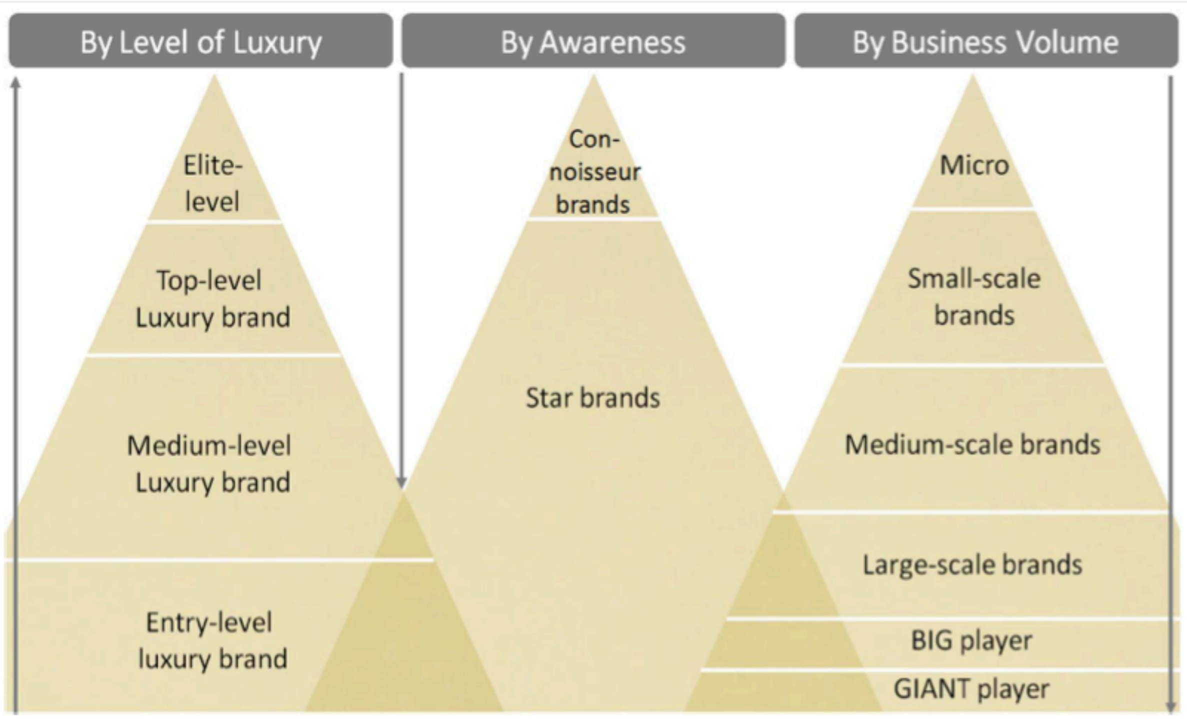
Source: KAPFERER, J.N. Luxury Strategy: Break The Rules of Marketing to Build Luxury Brand, p. 128

Comparing two existing models it is required to make the conclusion that in both cases the strategy of expansion is very dangerous because whereby the distance - feature that distinguishes luxury brands from the others can be lost. Moreover, it is a big challenge for the companies to create a product with lower characteristics, such as exclusivity and creativity, but with the high level of quality at the same time [10].Choice of multichannel distribution, and not only selective one, can also a case of the effect that brand will stop perceived as luxury. Hence, expansion of luxury brands to mass production should be carefully managed and balanced to avoid its perception as ubiquitous [16].

4.1.3 Types of Luxury Brands

Luxury brands should have a set of major characteristics and hallmarks not to be confused with the other similar concepts. According to the analyses of existing luxury brands, Heine proposed the following typology. With regard to his opinion all luxury brands should be divided into three categories: by luxury level, by awareness, and by business volume. The main types of brands under this division are depicted in the figure below.

Figure 4. Main Types of Luxury Brands



Source: HEINE, K. The Concept of Luxury Brands, p. 38

With regard to the level of luxury, brands are situated in the order of the increasing level of recognition within the segment. At the bottom of brands pyramid are those, recognition of which is still very low, but anyway brands are perceived as luxury. On the other hand, on the top are the most exclusive, recognizable, and so-called niche brands.

According to the level of consumer awareness, there are also niche brands on the top, but they are targeted to a very small consumer group and hardly known beyond target audience. They do not strive to increase their awareness and work only with consumers within the target group. Contrary to connoisseur brands, star brands have high consumer awareness far beyond target group. This awareness created for the reason to make people who can afford such brands, feel more privileged and special.

Finally, the division of luxury brands by business volume is made with regard to the number of employees, total companies turnover, and their generated revenues [13].

Analyzing all previously mentioned ideas it is feasible to derive the main characteristics that help brands to become luxury. To begin with, luxury brands offer more than material goods or services; their non-functional values appreciate more than use value. To be more precise, consumers' feelings of being privileged by owning brands, belonging to a small and exclusive group of people are understood under non-functional values, while the most important thing here is that luxury brands provide certain social status. Proceeding with the topic, luxury brands are highly recognizable not only owing to the logo, but also for their visual symbols such as colors, shapes, designer elements etc. Next sufficient point in luxury brands distinguishing is two dimensions of rarity: objective and virtual. Virtual rarity is strongly linked to selective distribution of luxury brands. Points of sales are usually perceived like a communication tool of physical connection with the consumers that help to have common experience with the consumers and to convey the main ideas about brand ideals and values. In conclusion, it is advisable to mention that hallmark of luxury brands is myths and stories around them, consumers are not forced to purchase, instead stories and the heritage of the brands are created as a result of the strong consumer desire to be a part of brands history [17].

As it was noted in previous sub-chapter the concept of luxury brands is very confusing. Companies use "luxury" word in order to attract more consumers and to trade-up. However, even if a brand applies experience and strategies of luxury concept, it does not mean that it belongs to the segment of true luxury brands. Based on the characteristics of luxury brands given above, it seems necessary to determine main features of similar concepts and their differences from true luxury brands. Two main concepts, similar to luxury are presented below.

- Masstige

Category masstige means prestige to the masses and very often masstige brands are created by the luxury brands as a part of trading-down strategy. The main features of masstige brands lie in the perception as prestige in the middle market, however prices are relatively low in the comparison with luxury brands, but higher than average prices in the category (examples could be Starbucks or Victoria's Secret) [10]. Luxury brands create masstige brands to provide more affordable goods to the mass market and increase brand's awareness. In spite of the fact that in this case subjective rarity is reduced, masstige brands still have strong connection with the main luxury brand and reflect its main ideals and values [13].

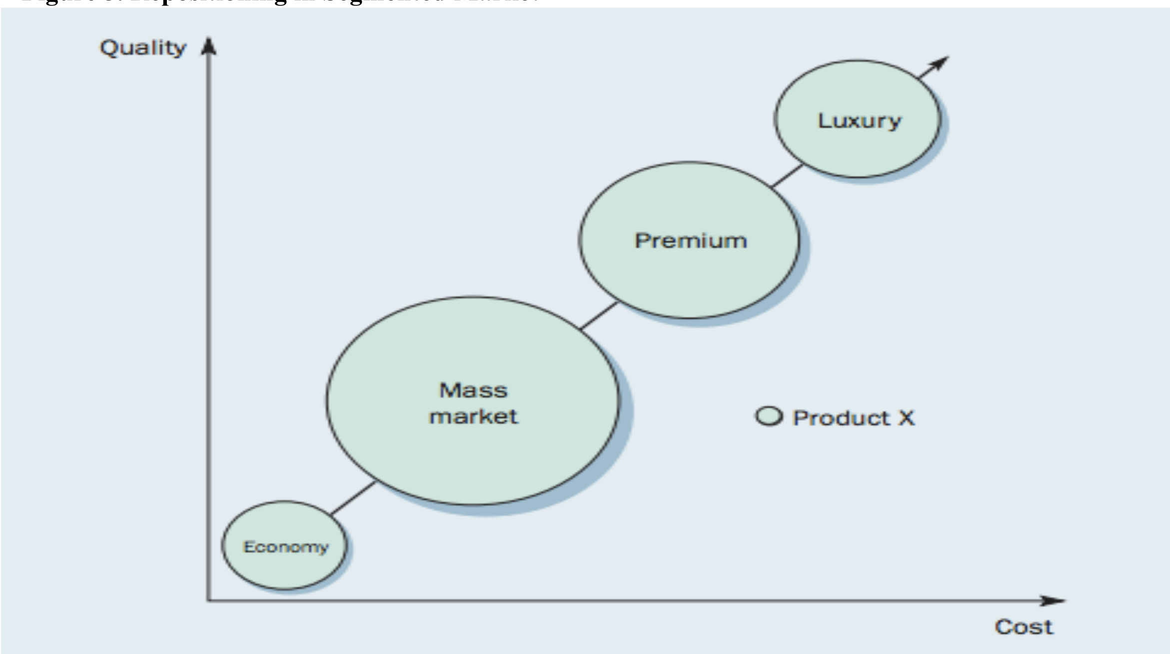
- Premium (upper premium)

Difference between luxury and premium brands lies primarily in the price. Prices of premium brands are high, but the price is based on the excellent characteristics, quality, and utility while the price for luxury brands is paid for non-functional values and intangible characteristics (social status, symbolism). Premium brands can be determined as a reproduction of the luxury brands even though premium brands implement the same strategies as luxury; they still have lack of rarity due to the high production volume [18].

4.2 Marketing of Luxury Brands. Concept of New Marketing Mix

According to Doyle's vision of marketing in different market segments, majority of failures arise due to brands inadequate positioning and incorrect belonging to the segment. The figure below shows that all segments are situated on the same line, defining that there is a linear dependency between them. In accordance with his opinion, marketing of luxury goods does not have specific features and the main difference of marketing programs is in a level of segment and not in essence of brands within. As for the rest, luxury marketing should be the same as for mass-market brands and goods [19].

Figure 5. Repositioning in Segmented Market



Source: DOYLE, P., STERN, P. Marketing Management and Strategy (4th edition), p. 84

Kapferer, in his turn, expresses dissent with Doyle's statement insisting on the fact that traditional marketing could hardly be applied to the principles of luxury brands' marketing. He also claims that the nature of luxury brands is completely different from the other brands and as a result marketing of mass brands and even premium brands will not work in this case. Moreover, since luxury brands are fundamentally different by its nature from the other existing brands traditional marketing can furthermore bring harmful effect [1].

The author of given thesis strongly agrees with Kapferer's point of view, and consequently in the subchapters below the basic differences of luxury brands' marketing from traditional marketing will be analyzed for better understanding of luxury marketing.

4.2.1 Specific Features of Luxury Brands Marketing Mix

4.2.1.1 Product

In distinction from the other categories of products, luxury products should have two main groups of characteristics: handicraft and quality; innovation and design.

I. Handicraft and quality

Apart from the fact that decision-making process of luxury goods purchase is made based on such non-functional values that luxury products have to deliver as uniqueness, prestige, social status, experience and emotions, they also should have extremely high quality. When consumers spend money for very expensive goods they want to get high-quality products in return. In this case it is essential to mention that not only such attributes as materials and manufacturing, but also guarantee of enduring, and even timeless utilization are considered. The next characteristic of luxury goods that distinguishes them from the other goods, as it has been already mentioned in previous subchapter, is handicraft. Handicraft implies limited series of products manufactured in workshops. Moreover, craftsmanship is a hallmark in luxury goods' marketing because it adds emotional value to the products. Shift from mass production to handicraft means that the handcrafted by certain person product has character and soul and it delivers a message to the potential consumer, that it was created personally for him.

II. Innovation and design

The next major characteristic of luxury goods is their permanent innovativeness. It is very important to underline that luxury brands should create innovations and be the first in their implementation. When the innovation reaches the other segments such as premium or mass brands, and is successfully implemented there, it stops being perceived as a distinguishing feature of the luxury good. In addition to that, all innovations and changes should be interconnected with unique design and be in one line with it. As far as luxury brands are purchased in majority of cases to show social status and wealthy, the design of the product and set of distinctive features such as logos, should be highly recognizable far beyond the target group. Furthermore, packaging plays a very important role in creation of luxury brand image. In comparison with mass and even premium brands the packaging of truly luxury goods is expensive, recognizable, and sometimes also innovative [20].

In addition to the groups of characteristics discussed above it is also possible to derive equally important features of luxury products.

Firstly, in traditional marketing customers and their needs are the cores of business. Marketers emphasize on their potential clients' demands, listen to them carefully, summarize information, and thereafter transform received information into final product trying to satisfy as many people as possible. In comparison, the main function of luxury brands is to create dream products and not to address people's problems and satisfy their needs and desires. The primary purpose of luxury brands is to create future dreams, follow long-term interests and promoting emotions such as pleasure, self-recognition etc. [1] Moreover, when marketers follow all consumer requests, luxury brands can lose its aura, prestige, and the perception of product as a dream could be destroyed. It is also worth noting that in case of luxury goods the more demanding the product become, the less its perception as luxury [21].

Secondly, when traditional marketing uses mass distribution to provide consumers with quick access to products, luxury products are highly inaccessible. This inaccessibility was mentioned before in the thesis as "virtual rarity." Marketers make the luxury goods purchase process time consuming, in comparison with traditional marketing. To purchase luxury goods consumer usually spends time to find the store and to be in line for desirable product (as an example to wait in one year line to buy Hermès Birkin Bag). To sum up, time is a key factor that makes luxury product even more desirable [1].

Thirdly, in spite of the fact that relocation of the production is cheaper, luxury products should be produced in a country of origin to keep the history of brand, symbolism, and traditions.

Finally, in comparison with the other products, luxury products are usually customized. Products customization increases not only the price of the product, but also the level of its prestige and uniqueness, furthermore, this way of communication with the consumer creates common experience, which is an essential part of luxury brands nature [21].

4.2.1.2 Price

For better understanding of luxury brands pricing it is advisable to discuss the price paradoxes that contradict to standard pricing procedures in mass market.

- Price elasticity

According to the classic economic theory, relationship of prices and volume of sales is interdependent where small hesitations of prices correspond to small hesitations in sales, but never in significant leaps. However, the rule for the ordinary products cannot be applied to luxury goods, because even small decreases in prices can lead to significant losses in sales. Explanation of the paradox is illustrated by “threshold effect” when a product is below certain price level it stops being perceived as luxury. The effect is primarily determined by consumers psychology, because the perception of price for a “dream” product of the “certain way of life product” is rather psychological then rational. The next important remark about price elasticity of luxury goods refers to the paradox that increase in prices within reasonable limits corresponds with increase in demand. The paradox rests on the fact that demand increases due to increasing number of consumers who believe that higher prices define a product as prestige, unaffordable, and as a source of social status improvement. The given phenomenon is named the Veblen effect determining behavior of the consumers who prefer to buy expensive products rather then cheaper similar substitutes in the market [21]

- Price premium

In traditional marketing there is no necessary connection of a brand with price premium that means the brand does not need to propose expensive products to be a well-known and even a leader in segment (for example Easy Jet is one of the leading brands providing low-cost air services). In case of luxury goods, price is determinant and proof of the brand’s values and the part of a dream it should provide. Prices create distance. Furthermore the price of luxury brand products is frequently 100 per cent higher in comparison with products having similar characteristics and quality.

- Permanent rise of prices

Since the price of luxury goods determines a dream about the product, the price management is aimed at permanent increasing of prices. Prices usually rise due to the creation of additional features and significant values for the products. Luxury brand consumers are ready to pay more, but they should know and understand exactly what they are paying for. In this regard responsibility for the explanation and justification of reasonable prices rise rests with store assistants.

- No sales allowed

In distinction from traditional marketing, where sales are perfect way to attract more consumers and sell out products, in marketing of luxury products prices should permanently rise and not to fall suddenly. However, as far as luxury products are claimed to be timeless, they cannot unexpectedly become outdated and be sold out. Furthermore, sales could possibly destroy the reputation of brand, as well as core values they share with consumers. Even fashion luxury brands, for which sales are paramount, should find a way to sell out products in such a manner as not to harm the brand reputation [10].

4.2.1.3 Placement

Distribution plays the most important role in luxury goods marketing mix, as well as in luxury brands management. It ought to be noted, that in the given section author emphasizes attention primarily towards importance of sales points as the main source of luxury goods distribution. For luxury marketing, likewise in traditional marketing, distribution helps to share brand values with the consumers, nevertheless luxury brands go far beyond in their distribution efforts than other brands. However, in spite of the fact that distribution is the major part of luxury brands marketing mix, it is also the most challenging and problematic one. Problems usually result from luxury brand operations on the international level and difficulties with economic and cultural differences overtaking. In case of luxury, it is crucial to manage the brands and deliver values the same way in different markets to different consumers not to lose the vision of brand and its perception as luxury.

As it was previously mentioned, the main emphasis of the section refers to sales points as a main distribution channel of luxury brands, therefore the following major elements of this kind of distribution were determined during the analyses.

- Types of distribution channels

The luxury brands usually use several forms of distribution channels. They are as follows:

- Own Stores

The most preferable way for luxury brands to distribute their products is to open branded points of sales. The main advantage of the given distribution channel lies in the fact that own store is a place where the main values and nature of the brand directly delivered to the consumers without the competitors around. Besides, the channel reflects the brand image and its level of prestige, as well as it helps to create virtual rarity, the idea that was mentioned earlier in the thesis. Also, own stores are beneficial from economic point of view owing to absence of intermediaries and simplified control system. The store management knows precisely what products are sold faster and better, and this knowledge allows controlling the system of logistics. From consumers standpoint own stores are also more preferable because the given distribution channel fully protects them from counterfeit products [22]

- Selective distribution

The usual example of selective distribution is presence of luxury brands in the department stores or a “shop-inside-shop” concept. The main advantage of this channel is a possibility of brands wide expansion and increasing of brands awareness among non-target consumers. However, from different viewpoints, this distribution channel is less beneficial than own stores [10]. Firstly, from economic standpoint, this channel increases costs linked with retail margins, logistics, additional staff, and management. Second disadvantage is connected with consumers buying behavior. In other words, consumers are guests and clients of a department store, not the brand store; therefore connection between consumers and brand strengthens. The last but not the least disadvantage related to difficulty of controlling the sales points in the department stores and impossibility of checking relationships with consumers and a manner, in which brand values deliver [9].

- Licensing

Finally, it is necessary to analyze the less preferential way of distribution for luxury brands. On one hand, licensing could provide huge margins and wide brand expansion, but on the other hand this type of distribution can destroy the image of brand and its perception as luxury. Accordingly it should be understood by luxury brands management either they want to achieve high revenues or to keep the image of brand. Nevertheless, it is also important to note, that for group of products located in the bottom of luxury pyramid licensing is a perfect way to profit and expand brand awareness. This type of distribution is suitable for such goods as cosmetics, perfumes, home decorations, sunglasses etc. [23]

- Store as communication channel

The next important role of stores as a distribution source is their communicative function. Stores are the main reflection of brands history, heritage, and core values. Moreover, stores are not the only place where products are located and disposed, but also a place, where consumers can experience all range of senses from sound perceptions to the sensations of different smells. Official point of sales is a brands ambassador who, like no other communication channel in luxury marketing, allows consumers to have a common experience with brand, which is a crucial part of luxury brands nature, as well as an important part of luxury brands marketing. In order to make the store a temple for the brand and a place where values are directly delivered to the consumers all factors are integrated into one system of communication. Such factors belonging to the system are as follows:

- Street location (luxury stores are usually located in the most beautiful and famous city streets);

- Frontispiece of building;
- Interior (including design, furniture, décor etc.)
- Factors influencing on senses (music, lighting, smells, colors);
- Store assistants.

Furthermore, one should not forget that stores, as a source of communication, help to stay in touch with consumers and response immediately to changes in their behavior [9]. Besides, it is worth to mention the role of windows in communication process. As long as in traditional marketing windows aim at attracting consumers attention and invite them to make a purchase, windows of luxury brand stores accomplish quite different functions. The main role of windows is to increase awareness of non-target audience about a brand prestige and status, as well as deliver message to the people unfamiliar with this brand about its nature. Also, one of the main functions of windows is based on the function of luxury marketing in a whole - create a distance, and increase the desire of non-target consumers to be a part of the brand privilege world [10].

- Personal relations as a distribution channel

In luxury, relationships between sales persons and consumers are crucial and vital. When clients come to the stores they usually do not know exactly what they want and in this case, personal advises of assistances and understanding of consumers psychology determine future connection of consumers with the brand. Comparing traditional sales, which force the consumers to purchase, sales in luxury stores give attention firstly to the clients and their personalities. That is precisely why sales assistances have to complete training and know how to deliver brand values to the consumers in order to create the feeling of unity and connection. Hence, purchase is not the goal of sales in luxury stores, the main objective is to make the consumers think about the brand, evoke emotions, and, what is more important, to create the desire to own the product. Also, as it was already mentioned, as far as luxury products are expensive, the explanation of price is either the responsibility of sales assistances. Whereas in traditional stores prices are perfectly visible, in luxury stores price labels are hidden or even more sometimes unavailable. In case of such merchandising, personal relations between assistants and consumers are also very important. The main goal of assistant is not only to sound the price for a consumer, but also to show the whole product, its tiniest components and elements, to tell the story about the place and method of production. The process of explanation is aimed at consumer's understanding of all perspectives that make product really luxury and its price formation.

In other words, in comparison with traditional marketing, luxury marketing goal is "…not to sell the product - it is to sell the price" [10, p.193].

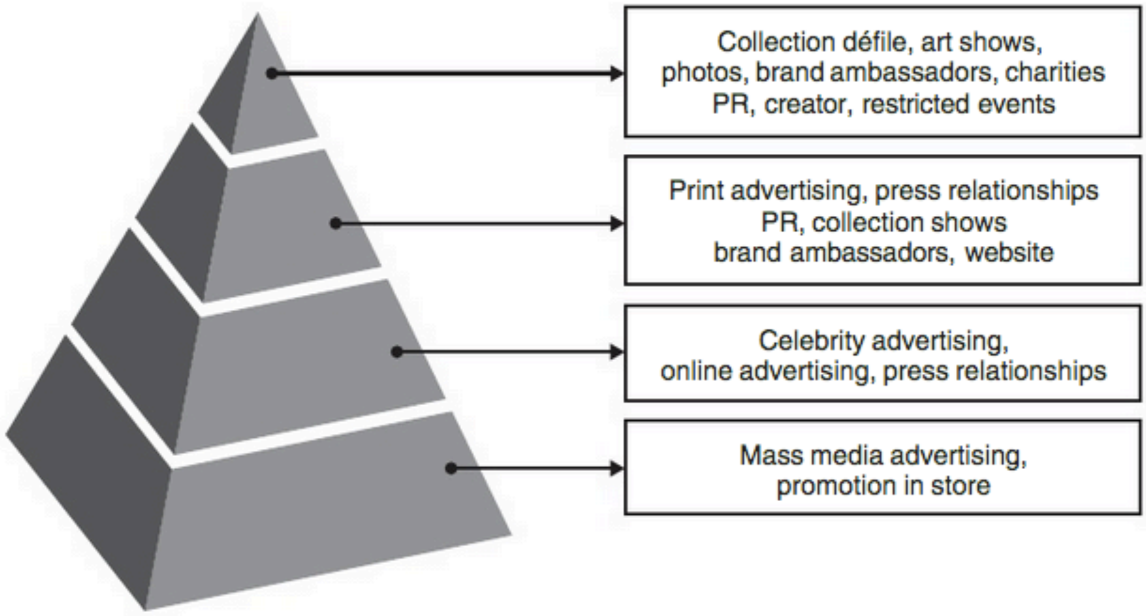
- Internet

The Internet has become an important distribution and communication channel for luxury brands arising many disputes about its necessity and applicability in luxury dimension. As the Internet is one of the new distribution channels its benefits, necessity, and problems will be considered in more details later on in present thesis.

4.2.1.4 Promotion

The role of promotion in marketing of luxury goods is not to sell or advertise, but to communicate. The figure below depicts the most important types of communications in accordance with the level of the brand type in the pyramid.

Figure 6. Layers of Communications



Source: KAPFERER, J.N. Luxury Strategy: Break The Rules of Marketing to Build Luxury Brand, p. 213

In the pyramid above luxury brands are generated on the top layer and it is obvious that the main communication channels at the bottom, where mass brands are located, are completely different. When in traditional marketing advertisement plays the key role in communications with consumers, in luxury marketing the most preferable types of communications are as follows:

- Collection defile;
- Art shows;
- Brand ambassadors;

- Charities;
- PR;
- Creator;
- Restricted events [10].

All types of luxury brands' communications listed above require more focus. That is why they will be analyzed and considered in separate subchapter further in the thesis.

In spite of the fact that according to the figure above, advertising is not most preferable way for luxury brands to communicate with consumers, however it is still widely used in their marketing activities. But in comparison with traditional advertising, advertising of luxury bands has its distinctive features that will be examined further. In contrast to traditional advertising aimed at selling the product, the main goal of luxury brands advertising is to create a dream. Moreover, traditional way of measuring advertising efficiency through comparing sales before and after advertising campaigns is not applicable in this case. As it was already mentioned the main aim of luxury brands advertising is to create a dream, but the process of creation as well as a consumers' decision-making process is quite longstanding. That is precisely why the increase in sales is not immediate but postponed. The next difference of luxury brands advertising is target audience. When traditional brands want to reach only their target group in their advertising efforts, luxury brands go far beyond the target group for the purpose to increase brand awareness. The basic idea here is to increase the amount of people informed about brand rather than increase the amount of people who can really afford it [1].

4.2.2 Approaches to Luxury Brands Marketing Mix: 6 and 8P's of Luxury Brand Marketing

4.2.2.1 "6 P's" Approach

As the rules of traditional marketing are not applicable in marketing of luxury brands, two new concepts of marketing mixes referred directly to the luxury consumers were introduced.

Winsper's research of luxury brands consumers expanded the classic conception of marketing mix to help marketers with deeper understanding of their consumers and the way to communicate with them. According to Winsper's 6 P's of luxury marketing to build long-term and profitable relationships marketers should pay attention on six important spheres:

<u>1. People</u>

Luxury brands should not only rely on their previous success, heritage, and quality of goods, but also to draw attention to training of people in the organization especially those who directly communicate with consumers (ambassadors and store assistances). This resulted from the statement that personal relationships are crucial in luxury dimension. Moreover, in case of luxury brands, such idea as social responsibility prevails. Therefore, marketers should communicate with local communities, nonprofit organizations, and charitable foundations to show the brand involvement into current social problems.

2. Product

According to the Winsper's concept, product plays the most important role in luxury marketing. Having integrated the results of interviews with consumers regarding their attitudes towards preferences of luxury products, the main features were derived. With regard to interview results luxury products should have the following characteristics:

- Quality
- Heritage;
- Price;
- Integrity;
- Rarity;
- Superfluity.

3. Passion

Luxury consumers are usually passionate, and their passion expresses in the desire to get the product that reflects their luxury lifestyle. Winsper emphasized three main groups of passionate consumers, to whom marketers should pay their primary attention:

- Collectors (e.g. car collectors);
- Connoisseurs (people who are true experts in the field of goods they are passion about; associations are usually represented in the form of clubs);
- Communities (e.g. Internet communities).

In reference to the division above, communities have become the more powerful and influential group of passionate consumers. Such representatives of communities as Internet bloggers generate significantly the-word-of-mouth and according to their reviews the brand and its products can either get the fame or lose reputation.

Consequently, marketers should permanently monitor, communicate, and support both on-line and off-line affluent consumers in order to prevent unexpected loss of the brand reputation.

4. Pleasure

Alternatively to traditional goods where their functional characteristics prevail, luxury goods and the process of their purchase and utilization should be connected with emotional component. In this regard, relationships between consumers and products should be based on sensorial perception in variety of forms, from extra services and atmosphere in stores to private event invitations and products customization.

5. Purpose

In spite of the fact that consumption of luxury goods are usually perceived as conspicuous, the connection of emotional part of utilization and the purpose of use should be clear. According to Winsper's opinion it is very difficult to keep the balance between functional and emotional characteristics, however, not only aspects of pleasure, but also practical benefits from the product possession should be explained to the consumers.

6. Price

The last component of Winsper's marketing mix is price. In the context of luxury goods price is the reflection of quality, craftsmanship, status, and prestige; nevertheless, even the wealthiest people got used to spend their money reasonably. In this regard, Winsper notes such new form of possessing the luxury product as fractional ownership that has become very popular over last years. He insists that this form of ownership allows consumers to change faster one luxury product to another without high costs. Therefore, marketers should be aware of the new form of ownership and keep it in mind during the process of price formation [24].

4.2.2.2 "8 P's" Approach

Arora in his turn broaden the classic concept of 4 P's to 8 P's. He explains the proposed concept not as multi-purpose approach, but as one of the best ways to develop the brand potential and build strong relationships with consumers. According to his opinion, broadened concept of marketing mix should contain the following pillars:

1. Performance

Arora understands performance as a tool to create the common experience between brands and consumers in two levels:

- Product level;

This level involves integration process of the products functional and physical characteristics and their ability to meet and satisfy consumer demands. Such components are included as quality, design, craftsmanship, innovations, materials etc.

- Emotional level;

This level represents emotional connection between a consumer and brand as well as consumer expectations and perceptions, which values should delivered by the brand. Arora provides Tiffany&Co. as an example, explaining that the brand is perceived as a symbol of marriage, love, and happy family life.

2. Pedigree

Truly luxury brand should have strong heritage, connected with the founders, creators, or specific symbols that were inseparably associated with the brand throughout its history. This heritage provides aura of mystery around the brand and make consumer not only to have the brand products, but also to become a part of its time-honored history and traditions.

3. Paucity

Objective and subjective rarity and its importance in case of luxury brands were discussed earlier in the thesis. Anyway, Arora provides own understanding of rarity dividing it into three different groups in accordance with the rarity nature.

The first group is attributable to natural rarity and includes such factors as scarcity in materials or scarcity in highly skilled labor when the products require to be handcrafted.

The second group is referred to technical scarcity when the range of products are unique due to innovation processes of production, materials etc.

Finally, the third group includes tactical scarcity when marketer efforts aimed at making the product virtually rare and highly desirable. Such efforts can include limited editions, customized products etc.

4. Persona

According to Arora's opinion the luxury brand persona is the result of the integration of two main brand dimensions. Firstly, the visual identity that allows creating brands image and personality, including such attributes as recognizable logo, colors, unique features, and design. Secondly, advertising that is quintessentially different from mass-brands. Advertising of luxury brands includes strong emotional part, represents the product as unique and exceptional one, and emphasizes on the product outstanding production process.

5. Public figures

Celebrity endorsement has become one of the most effective communication channels of not only luxury brands, but also a part of communication strategy of mass-brands. Asthis form of communication is widely used and no longer the exclusive communication channel of luxury brands; it should have different form to influence on luxury consumers. Luxury brands provide dresses, accessories, cars etc. for special events where celebrities appear, use product placement in movies. The main idea of strategy is not to sell the product with the help of a celebrity, but to make consumers believe that the brand is a part of celebrity's life and reflection of personality.

6. Placement

The importance of placement in luxury brands marketing was considered in details earlier in this thesis. Arora determines in his article the same important factors of luxury placement, which were discussed previously, e.g. location, importance of sales assistances in creation relationships between consumer and brand, in-store atmosphere etc.

7. Public Relations

According to Arora's viewpoint, public relations are a very important part of luxury brands communication strategy, supporting all other types of communications such as advertising or heritage as a source of relations with consumers. He insists that public relations provide dialogue between brand and consumer especially in marketing of luxury fashion brands.

8. Pricing

As it was considered earlier in this thesis, pricing is one of the main processes in marketing of luxury brands. Regarding to Arora's article, the main efforts of price formation of luxury product should be aimed at creation in consumers consciousness perception of price on product much higher than it is in the reality. Also he mentioned that luxury brands couldn't allow sales, instead of that they should provide consumers with more added value such as gifts to the purchase, invitations to exclusive events loyalty programs etc. [25].

4.3 Communication Channels

4.3.1 Specific Communication Channels

As was mentioned in the foregoing subchapter luxury brands' communication or promotion channels are significantly different from traditional marketing communication channels. With regard to this fact during literature analyses the most important and extensively used communication channels for luxury brands were determined. Their main types considered below.

4.3.1.4 Brand ambassadors (celebrity endorsement)

Celebrity endorsement is the most popular luxury brands' promotion channel which importance is explained by celebrities' significant influential power and possibility to reflect the certain way of life luxury brand connected with. The reasons why celebrity endorsement is the key marketing tool of luxury brands include such important aspects as increasing luxury brands' global awareness, opportunity to distinguish luxury brands messages from the competing brands and increasing the level of confidence to the brand. Nevertheless, it should be mentioned that celebrity endorsement of luxury brands include not only participation in media advertising campaigns, but much deeper connection with the brand. There are several specific methods allowing associating celebrity with the luxury brand, including:

- Use of luxury products by celebrities in their everyday life; when photos swim in the publicity people start to believe that the luxury product is truly reflection of celebrity lifestyle;
- Wearing brands' products on the red carpets;
- Celebrities' invitation to create limited edition of products;
- Name product after highly respected celebrity reflecting luxury brand's image and values (e.g. Hermes bag was named after the Princess of Monaco Grace Kelly).

However the celebrity representing the luxury brand cannot be chosen randomly. Celebrity's personality and personal qualities should be matched with values, image and personality of the brand. Moreover, celebrity should be respected in the society and inspire credibility. It is also necessary to admit that the biggest challenge for luxury brands using celebrity endorsement is based on probability that celebrity can harm the image of the brand due to inappropriate behavior, damaged personal image or changed style what automatically will be transferred into luxury brand's image. In addition, wrong implementation of celebrity endorsement strategy could lead to the fact that brand will start associating not with its own image and personality but with celebrity. In this case celebrity should be like ambassador, delivering luxury brand's values to the society and not to overshadowing represented luxury brand [26].

4.3.1.1 Sponsorship

Sponsorship is a specific communication channel widely used in luxury brands marketing practices aimed at providing financial support of art, sports events, various projects etc. Sponsorship has become the essential part of luxury brands' communication strategy due to the range of following reasons. Firstly, connection of the brand with the aspects of social and cultural life provides consumers' favor and positive attitudes as well as increasing brand's loyalty. Secondly, sponsorship allows reaching very specific and even niche market segments, for example yacht lovers, road racers, and tennis players. Since financial support of prestige events is usually gives wide publicity sponsorship is way to obtain public approval and increase credibility to the luxury brand. However, the biggest opportunity that sponsorship provides is brand's specific area of life connection and reflection and as a result luxury brands core values, image and messages become clearer to the consumers (e.g. Ralph Lauren representing image and values of American High Society pays attention to prestigious sports events, that is why the brand was the sponsor of such key events in sports life as Wimbledon, U.S. open as well as American Olympic team in Sochi) [22].

4.3.1.2 Event marketing

Events are important luxury brands' marketing tool aimed primary at creating and increasing brand loyalty. The effectiveness of event marketing determined by the fact that it allows consumers to engage in the life and history of brand, create personal experience and feeling of being privileged and belong to the narrow circle of people. Besides, as well as celebrity endorsement, event marketing makes possible to distinguish luxury brand from competitors [27]. The following types of events are usually take place:

- Pre-sale of the collection, accompanied with event;
- New store opening;
- New collection or product's model presentation;
- Sale of limited editions to top or A-list consumers;
- Invitation to fashion shows [28]

4.3.1.3 Co-branding

Co-branding has become very popular type of luxury brands' promotion over last decade determining luxury brands departure from traditional and core forms of marketing operations. Co-branding can be divided into four groups:

1. Collaborations between luxury brands (Louis Vuitton in collaboration with famous shoe-maker Christian Louboutin and world's the most famous fashion photographer Patrick Demarchelier as a part of Celebrating Monogram campaign);
2. Collaboration between luxury and mass brands (annual capsule collections from luxury designers for H&M);
3. Collaborations between luxury brands and celebrities, as was mentioned above (Liv Tyler for Givenchy);
4. Collaborations between luxury brands and the other types of goods.

Co-branding is perceived as risky due to the fact that it can bring damage effect on luxury brands' image, especially in accordance with the second group represented above, where luxury brands contribute with mass brands. However, co-branding is a great opportunity for luxury brands to expand to new markets and increase awareness [22]. In spite of the fact that co-branding between luxury and mass brands raises a lot of disputes, practice of many luxury brands shows that collaborations could be rather beneficial than unsuccessful. In this regard the following advantages can be determined. Firstly, co-branding allows investigating new younger markets outside luxury brands' habitual environment. Secondly, it becomes possible to make consumers from mass segment familiar with the brand, creating strong desire to purchase brand's products as soon as they can afford it. Thirdly, co-branding provides opportunity to investigate the luxury consumers' market of the other segments and make them aware about the brand. Finally, co-branding is profitable for luxury brands due to high volume of production and low costs [29].

4.3.2 Internet and Social Media Marketing as a New Luxury Marketing Experience

The presence of luxury brands on the Internet seems impossible from the first sight due to the fact that luxury brands are very selective in their distribution and communication channels, strictly control the image of brands' prestige and exclusivity as well as got used to build personal relationships with consumers through sensorial experience. In contrast to that, Internet is perceived more like mass media channel, what arise the biggest challenge for luxury brands in their digital strategies. However, the situation has changed over last years, luxury consumers have become closely connected with digital space and technological innovations, they are highly demanded about quick access to the information they need and require the other deeper form of communications with the brand. That is precisely why luxury brands should move with the times, satisfy consumers' demands and increase the presence on the Internet and social media platforms in the way not to lose their reputation [30].

MacKinsey&Company recent research results show that more than 45% of off-line luxury purchases are made after investigation and search in the digital space. Also, according to the research, luxury consumers are still prefer to make purchases in stores that allow them to have physical and emotional contact with the product. Nevertheless, final decision about the purchase is based on the comparison of different luxury brands, product ranges, characteristics and prices made on-line. To sum up, when the consumers finally reach the store they are very educated about the product, hence through digital marketing activities luxury brands can significantly influence on consumers' buying decisions [31].

Continuing on the topic of the digital strategy's implementation importance it is necessary to underline such phenomena as social media and mobile marketing as significant luxury brands' communication channel. With regard to Google research, 74% of luxury consumers participated in the research use smartphones to get information about luxury products as well as 62% respondents use tablets with the same aim [32]. These numbers prove the necessity of digital strategy's support by multiscreen approach adoption. Multiscreen approach means creation not only web-sites but its mobile versions, integration with the most influential social media platforms as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram etc. and development of smartphones' applications. In this regard, special focus requires mobile platforms as a source of communication with luxury consumers on a daily basis. This type of communication allows responding immediately on changes in consumers' behavior, engaging closer to the consumers and providing unique and personal experience. Even such representative of luxury brands' top league as Rollce-Royce adopted and developed the mobile strategy by creation of application on smartphones and tablets, where owners and admirers of car manufacturer can customize their own model of one of the most prestigious and desirable car in the world. The practice of the leading world's luxury brands shows, that social media and mobile platforms are no longer only mass-brands' communication channels which are worth to be bewared and avoided. Marketing experts insist, that for luxury brands to be successful in the market and to satisfy their sophisticated consumers the choice of digital strategy is not an option but necessity [27].

Social media platforms represent huge opportunities for luxury brands in bilateral interactions with consumers. Besides, from consumers' side, presence of luxury brand in social media and mobile platforms provide closer connection with the brand and creation of the different form of common experience. In spite of the fact, that in the beginning of the subchapter was mentioned, that Internet and social media platforms are perceived as mass distribution and communication channels which are able to destroy luxury brands' reputation, majority of luxury consumers think that luxury brands which are not represented in digital space are loosing touch with them and the level of credibility to these brands significantly decreasing [33]. As the necessity of digital strategy in luxury brands' marketing was considered it is advisable to emphasize further on the opportunities that strategy can bring to luxury brands' development.

Firstly, the brands' presence in the Internet can not only strengthens relationships between the consumers and brand, but also to provide quick brands' expansion and brands' own stores are not presented or the amount are limited. This is strategically important especially to get access to the emerging markets which consumers are the main purchasers of luxury brands' products. It is necessary to mention that about 40% of luxury brands do not have official e-shops. In this regard usage of the Internet not only in advertising purposes but also like distribution channel will provide the growth of sales, especially in the Asian market, which arranges 29% of global luxury spending [28].

Secondly, as was already emphasized, digital space provides great opportunities for luxury brands to communicate closer with consumers and create new form of common experience. In spite of the fact, that the Internet and social media platforms are perceived as mass channels, they could provide really personal and unique interactions with consumers and consequently remind about brand's prestige and exclusivity. This form of relationships could be created through different types of services providing only online, such as product customization, allowing people to get unique and personalized product staying at home [35].

Thirdly, web presence provides great opportunity to watch competitors not just in terms of products ranges and services but also in terms of people attitudes and opinions towards competing brands. This is underestimated source of information allowing developing the brand and finding new ideas about different brands' aspects improvement.

Finally, social media platforms help to determine the most influential leaders of the opinion whose comments and thoughts can either destroy the image of brad or to make it desirable. Such people are able not only to form the opinion of their followers but also to deliver the core values of brand and spread them around, what is essential for marketing of luxury brand. In this regard the Internet and social media became vital source for values expansion that should not be avoided [36].

However, apart from the facts considered above about Internet and social-media platforms great opportunities provided, this type of luxury brands' communicative and distribution channel still remains the most problematic and challenging one. This problematic nature, which causes luxury brands to be apprehensive about digital strategy's implementation, will be discussed hereinafter.

The first and the biggest problem is connected with the fear of luxury brands to lose the aura of prestige and status of exclusivity since the Internet is perceived as mass channel making luxury brands available for wide audience and not only for narrow circle of privileged consumers. The absence of selectivity, which is at stake in luxury marketing, determines uncertainty with whom and how exactly to communicate as well as how to extract the target group of consumers in digital space. Besides, as it was already mentioned, relationships between luxury brands and consumers are based on personal communications and in-store multisensory experience, however the transfer of this experience into virtual space is virtually impossible. This is precisely why the majority of luxury consumers prefer Internet and social media as an informative channel rather than a place where product can be purchased. Physical and emotional connection is still the crucial part of luxury brands' products purchasing process [34].

The second problem concerns the lack of experience and flexibility. Luxury brands encounter difficulties with restructuration of corporate cultures from traditional and rigid to more flexible and open minded, whereas the flexibility is essential feature making the process of digital strategy's adoption successful . In addition, the Internet and social media are usually managed as a separate channel serving just for advertising rather than the integral part of marketing strategy in a whole. Luxury brands' digital strategy should support all areas of marketing activities instead of being isolated. Moreover digital channel should deliver the same brands' core values and heritage, provide the same client services and support, to be a tool for analysis and development. In other words, to perform the same functions as ordinary and habitual luxury communication channels have but in a different way.

The third barrier luxury brands face with in their digital efforts connected more with social media platforms. The power and influence of communities or individuals reviewing luxury products and expressing their opinion should not be underestimated. In this regard the main challenge for luxury brands is based on organization of digital community, engaging people and conducting strong two-side communications remaining the image of exclusivity One more negative aspect of social media for luxury brands is people's freedom of thought and self expression. On one hand the given freedom is fundamental principle attracting individuals to join social media communities, but on the other hand negative comments not always reliable and competent, could destroy the image of luxury brands that has been creating for years. The fear of unfounded criticism, which is able to lead to irreversible damage of brands' image, is the main reason why luxury brands are still avoiding social media platforms in their marketing activity [36].

To sum up all the forgoing reasoning it can be concluded that the Internet and social media as a part of integral marketing strategy can bring the scope of advantages to luxury brands' development. Implementation of multi channel approach and keeping in mind all obstacles listed above can guarantee long term and successful luxury brands' future.

4.4 Luxury Consumers' Behavior

4.4.1 Factors of Influence on Luxury Consumers' Buying Behavior

The luxury consumers' buying behavior and intentions to make a purchase are explained primary by psychological background that was named "bandwagon" effect. "Bandwagon" effect is based on the dependency between increasing demand of luxury products and their increasing consumption due to rising amount of people consuming the same product. The desire to consume identical luxury products connected with number of psychological factors such as: to be associated with the certain group of people, to show social status and wealthy, to reach social acceptance and the other equally important psychological reasons [37]. Hence, luxury consumption can be considered as means for representing belonging to certain social class and tool for social recognition.

Factors influencing on luxury goods consumption can be divided into two main groups:

1. Interpersonal influences

One of subconscious factors influencing on decision about luxury purchase in a greater degree is to impress people and correspond to their expectations about person's belonging to a social group. Social environment and interactions between people within it play a significant role in the luxury consumption's behavior pattern. Consumers tend to get the information from surrounding environment and give preferences towards those luxury products that are in higher extent reflect certain social group's way of life. In other words, luxury brands are purchased in accordance with opinion, favor and recognition of people representing the group.

2. Brands' influences

With regard to the fact that luxury brands in the majority of cases are highly recognizable in the society due to the number of their distinctive features such as logos, colors and symbols they are consumed to accomplish certain number of social functions as well. This type of luxury consumption behavior is typical for consumers in the emerging markets of BRICS countries. In comparison, luxury brands without pronounced distinctive features serve less as a tool of representing social status and social distinction and more as a tool of emotional pleasure. The other factors of brands' influence connected with brand's image and country of origin. In spite of the fact that brand's image and country of origin do not influence on the consumers in which extend as brands distinctive features, the number of consumers who make decision about luxury brands purchase based on brand's image and traditions of country where it was born significantly increasing, especially in the developed markets [38].

Continuing on the topic about factors of influence on luxury consumers' behavior it is necessary to mention the importance of perceptions as a part of buying decision process. Understanding of four main groups of luxury brands' perceptions makes possible to determine the main motives of luxury goods purchases.

The first is financial group of values, regarding directly to price perception of luxury brands as a determinant of their quality, prestige and status. Perceptions about luxury products' high prices increasing the image of brand as more luxurious and as a result influencing on consumer's decision about luxury good purchase. The second group integrates functional values such as quality, usability etc. or in other words all characteristics of products that meet consumers' expectations about luxury goods core functional characteristics. Perception of luxury brands as providers of unique handcrafted products with exceptional quality and long-term use is also important factor of influence on buying decision concerning such consumers who appreciate luxury products not for their ability to show social status but for exclusivity in functional values. The third group refers to individual perceptions or individual's intentions to purchase luxury brand. This group integrates such perceptions as: self-identity or consumers' intention to buy luxury brand which image and values match consumers personality to the maximum extent; hedonic values influencing on the group of consumers who perceive luxury brands as a source of getting emotions and intangible advantages from both the product and purchasing process. It includes in-store purchase within specific brand's atmosphere, sensorial experience etc. The fourth group includes social perceptions that were discussed earlier in the subchapter. In this case luxury brands are perceived as means of showing social status and prestige [39].

4.4.1 Cross-cultural Differences as a Source of Understanding Luxury Consumers' Behavior

Cultural differences remain on of the most important factors in understanding of luxury consumption behavior since social environment and traditions influence significantly on the formation of perceptions about luxury brands and intentions of purchase. In this regard two main cultures of individualism and collectivism should be considered with the aim to clarify luxury consumers behavior patterns, their characteristics as well as cross-cultural attitudes towards luxury brands.

1. Individualism

Individualistic culture is typical for Western countries where consumers are strongly independent in their preferences and tend to express themselves distinctive from others. In accordance with given characteristics consumption of luxury goods considered as hedonistic aims at getting pleasure from possessing the luxury product and experiencing all range of emotions during purchasing process. Besides, consumers of individualistic culture are more demanded about products outstanding quality and functional characteristics as well as about the level of service accompanying purchasing process. On the basis of foregoing factors it can be concluded that the main motive of luxury brands purchase between the consumers of individualistic culture is the desire to express their unique personality and individuality. However, it is important to note that individualistic consumers are highly demanding on the luxury brand's image. That is precisely why plenty of highly recognizable and popular luxury brands lose their grounds in the developed markets, as they are no longer perceived as a tool of self-expression.

2. Collectivism

In comparison with individualistic nature, collectivism is based on close relationships between people in the society and tendency to follow standards and preferences adopted in particular social group. Collectivism prevailing in Eastern countries is characterized by the desire of consumers to identify themselves with the other representatives of social class. As a consequence, luxury goods' consumption has strong psychological basis rather than rational one and the motives of luxury brand's purchase connected primary with social functions [40]. Luxury goods are perceived as means of social recognition, prestige and status seeking. Thereupon it is necessary to underline the role of price which is more important for collectivistic nature than for individualistic. In case of collectivism high price is perceived by consumers as determinant of uniqueness and prestige making the product desirable not in terms its outstanding quality and exceptional functional values but in terms of ability to show consumers belonging to the group of people who can afford the product [41].

However, consumers' behavior and motives to buy luxury brands can also differ even between countries belonging to the one cultural group. Weidmann in his research on cross-cultural perceptions of luxury brands found that such consumers and French and Italian prefer to purchase luxury brands because they feel close connection with image and especially heritage since the majority of world's best-known luxury brands were born and developed either in Italy or in France. That is why the decision about production replacement to low cost countries provides disapproval between Italian and French consumers and influences negatively on the vision of the brand in these countries. On the other hand, Germans who are also the representatives of individualistic culture in their intentions to by luxury brands are based above all on luxury products' high functionality and quality characteristics [42]. Furthermore, Asian countries and cities represent different markets with different consumers' preferences and motives as well. Whereas in the basis of the of Chinese consumers motives lies the desire to show status and wealthy, Hong-Kong consumers are tend to purchase luxury brands for self-satisfaction since they reflect their way of life in higher extent. Consequently, in spite of the fact that Hong-Kong belongs to collectivistic culture, the behavior of luxury brands' consumers is similarly with consumers of Western countries [44].

To sum up all mentioned above about luxury brands' consumers cross-cultural differences it is important to note that marketing strategies of luxury brands should be developed and adopted in accordance with certain country's consumers behavior, hence the understanding of luxury consumers motives of purchase become the essential part of brand's successful market activity.

5. LVMH Case Study

5.1 LVMH Overview

Louis Vuitton-Moët Hennessy (LVMH) is world's leading luxury goods company which portfolio consists over than 70 luxury brands. The group's business activities are divided into six main divisions:

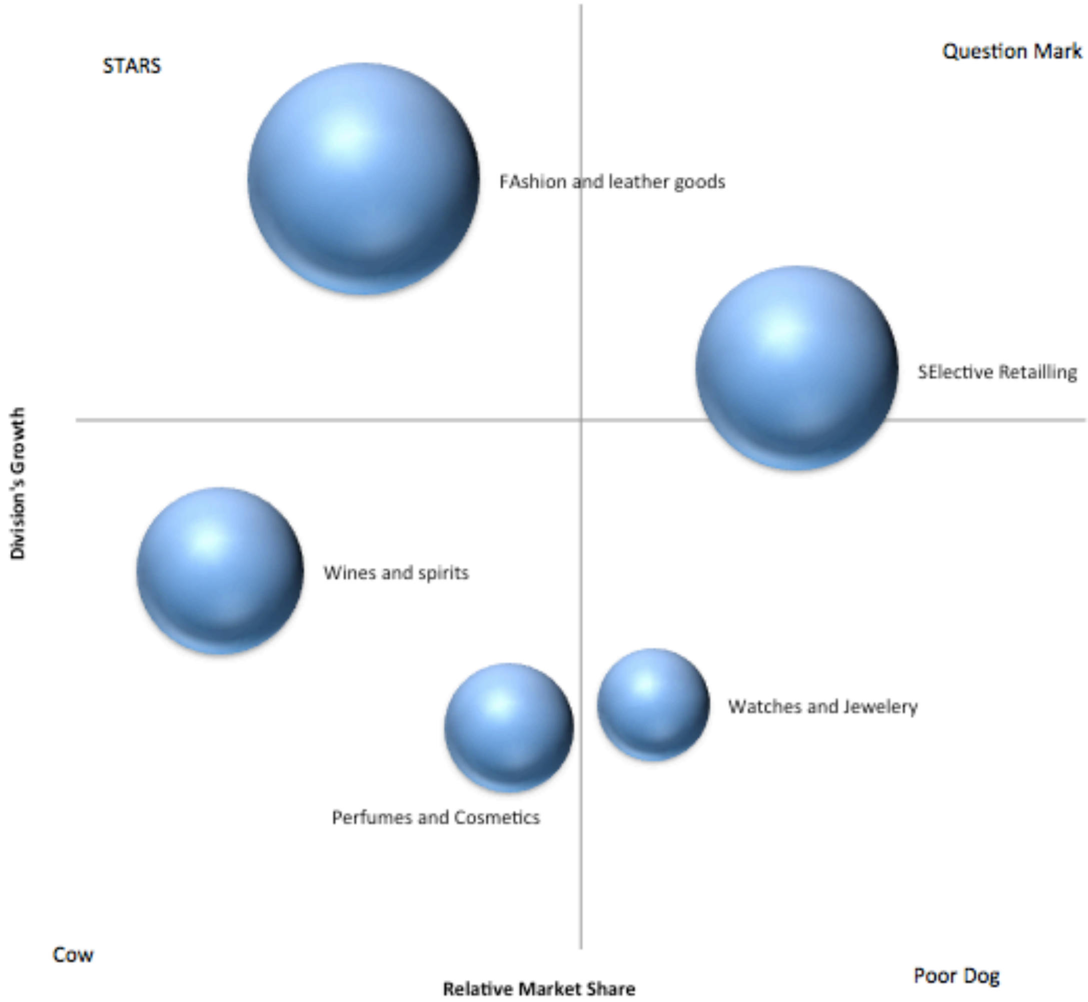
1. Wines & Spirits (Moët & Chandon, Dom Perignon, Veuve Clicquot, Hennessy etc.)
2. Fashion & Leather goods (Louis Vuitton, Fendi, Givenchy, Kenzo, Marc Jacobs etc.)
3. Perfumes & Cosmetics (Christian Dior, Guerlain, Givenchy, Make Up For Ever etc.)
4. Watches & Jewelry (TAG Heuer, Bvlgari, Hublot etc.)
5. Selective Retailing (Sephora, Le Bon Marche)
6. Other activities.

Company's mission involves delivering and expanding the Western "Art of Living" around the globe and continuation to unify traditions and innovations along with elegance and creativity. On the basis of the mission the main company's values are determined which include:

1. Products perfection, based on longstanding traditions of production and craftsmanship. The company aspires not only to provide products with outstanding quality but also to provide excellence in all other attributes supporting brand's image such as exceptional services in the points of sales, store locations, its design and visual displaying of products, welcoming atmosphere.
2. Innovations, including two dimensions. The first is cooperation with the best creative designers with the aim to keep creating new products and the second is technological innovations based on incessant research and development processes.
3. Strengthen the image of the brand by taking care that all information transmitted to consumers through the communication channels does not go counter to the values of the brand and its heritage.
4. Entrepreneurial brilliance, connected with the ability to inspire company's employees. Besides, organizational structure of the company is built in such manner as to manage people teams as effective as possible.
5. Strive to continuous improvement the quality of work in order to be the best company in the market [45].

Since LVMH has diversified types of business activities it is advisably to choose one brand from the portfolio and emphasize the research on it. In order to understand better the position of each division in the company and its success it was decided to construct BCG Matrix for visual representation.

Figure 7. LVMH BCG Matrix



Source: data from financial reports, own elaboration

LVMH BCG Matrix was constructed based on such indicators as company's sales growth from 2008 to 2014 and determination of relative market share by division of LVMH sales of each group of brands in 2014 to the volume of sales of the closest market competitors (Appendix 1). As it seen from the matrix, Stars or the most profitable division in the company is Fashion and Leather goods. In comparison, the most problematic division for the company is Watches and Jewelry, which deserves special attention from the company's management. Thus, it was decided by the author of the thesis to focus on the leading division and in particular on Louis Vuitton brand in the research.

5.2 Louis Vuitton's Marketing Strategy

Since it was decided to choose Louis Vuitton as the object of the research it is necessary to give short description of the brand. Louis Vuitton (LV) is French fashion house established in Paris in 1894 and the most famous for its monogrammed trunks, travel luggage and leather bags. Under the brand name at the moment are also available leather products (wallets, belts, cosmetic bags ets.), ready-to-wear products (clothing), shoes, jewelry, watches, sunglasses, accessories and books. Louis Vuitton's logo or monogram is one of the most recognizable in the world [45].

Brand's marketing strategy can be described as horizontal that means developing a separate marketing strategy for each country where the brand is present, taking into account such economic indicators as level of demand, price sensitivity etc. However, during the process of horizontal marketing strategy development such factor as consumers cross-cultural differences is not considered [46]. Lack of attention from the brand to consumers cultural differences will become an important part of further analysis and possible recommendations.

5.2.1 Product

In a product strategy Louis Vuitton follows the principle of product's absolute quality, achieving exceptional quality even in the finest details. The majority of product lines are handmade in workshops without use of machine production. One more important fact about Louis Vuitton's product strategy is prohibition of licensing. Every stage of production, distribution and sales is under company's control without the contracts of licensing. Besides, all range of Louis Vuitton's products are high end that is why brand does not use trading-down strategy to produce cheaper products in order to expand target market. Moreover, to maintain the image of luxury the production of outlet lines along with presence of brand's boutiques in outlet villages is prohibited. With the aim to create emotional experience with consumers brand goes in to ways: the first is special customization service of products allowing consumers to have their own unique Louis Vuitton's product with initials on it; the second is instead of the products serial number usage such names as Speedy, Neverful, Soho, Broadway etc. are used.

5.2.2 Price

Louis Vuitton's price strategy aimed at prestige pricing by maintaining the image of luxury keep prices on high level. However, prices are held the same in each maker where brand is represented. Fluctuations in prices connected primary with such indicators as exchange rates, custom duties and distribution costs. Since the core of Louis Vuitton's price strategy is to sell the products under the same prices everywhere, sales have never been conducted. Also, price strategy prohibits leaps in prices, thus price changes are visible to the consumers in advertising campaigns and on display windows. Moreover, brand's VIP consumers are warned about price changes in advance. Furthermore, Louis Vuitton as well as the majority of luxury brands does not use psychological pricing and odd prices with the aim not to disorient consumers and provoke credibility to the brand.

5.2.3 Placement

Louis Vuitton in comparison with majority of brands apply strategy of selective distribution selling products only in own boutiques in order to have all processes under control and to keep prices at the same level owing to elimination of intermediate costs. Stores are usually located in the most prestigious and expensive areas in order to attract more consumers and consequently increase profit. It is also necessary to mention that distribution strategy is aimed at reduction of store amounts, turning each of the rest stores into flagship store.

5.2.4 Promotion

Louis Vuitton's promotion strategy emphasized on brand's history and heritage together with innovations. Such communication channels are used in promotion strategy as:

- Advertising in fashion magazines
- Brand ambassadors (celebrities who deliver brand's values to the consumers)
- Event marketing
- Sponsorship ("Louis Vuitton Cup" yachting competition sponsored by Louis Vuitton)
- Commercial video campaigns (Louis Vuitton Journey, Louis Vuitton Art of Travel, Louis Vuitton's Movers etc.) [47].

5.2.5 Social Media Marketing and as a Strategic Communication Channel

In order to maintain the image of innovative company, engage consumers and create new type of experience Louis Vuitton launched its digital marketing strategy about six years ago. Brand's digital strategy is fully adapted to the major marketing strategy and in accordance with Louis Vuitton's digital manager words is the most important component of brand's marketing strategy in a whole [48]. In their marketing activity brand uses such social-media platforms as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Pinterest and YouTube along with smartphone applications, which are primary aimed at collections and fashion shows promotion.

The other part of brand's digital strategy is a content-oriented strategy, which in comparison with social-media platforms is observed on brand's official web site. Louis Vuitton's content oriented strategy emphasize on providing as detailed information as possible about brand, products, services, events etc. However, this type of strategy is strongly connected with social media strategy since everybody who wants to share information can do it from official web site by clicking sharing buttons.

The result of success has become such indicators as 17 659 030 "likes" on Facebook [49], 4 300 000 followers on Instagram [50] and over than one million views of each video on YouTube [51].

5.3 Own Research

5.3.1. Research Design and Data Acquisition

In order to understand consumers' cross-cultural differences and preferences regarding Louis Vuitton communication channels the qualitative research between Russian, Chinese and French consumers was conducted. Qualitative methods of research were applied in order to answer five main research questions:

RQ 1. What are the main differences in cross-cultural perceptions of luxury brands?

RQ 2. What are differences in cross-cultural intentions to purchase LV's products?

RQ 3. What are the most effective LV's marketing communication channels on three markets?

RQ 4. How do the cultural differences of LVMH's consumers influence on the preferences of marketing communication channels?

RQ 5. What are consumers' cross-cultural attitudes towards LV's Internet presence?

The choice of thee different types of consumers explained by the fact that Russian and Chinese are representatives of emerging markets who are main global luxury consumers due to their increasing purchasing parity and as a result their luxury buying behavior has specific features. French consumers were selected as representatives of European individualistic culture with opposite type of buying behavior. French consumers are also considered as the most stylish and sophisticated consumers in the whole Europe. Questionnaires (Appendix 2) were composed of 22 questions and placed on online survey software kwiksurveys.com as well as were distributed in written form between Russian consumers. Questionnaires consist of two parts: the first part includes personal information about the respondents, the second part relates to the research problems and includes questions about respondents' attitudes towards Louis Vuitton's communication channels. Total sample included 92 respondents who are active purchasers of Louis Vuitton's goods, among them 39 Russian, 23 Chinese and 30 French, 35.9% of man and 64.1% of women. The most active age group participated in the research was respondents at the age of under 25 to 34 years; they composed 86.9% of total sample. Respondents at the age of 35 to 55 and above represented just 13.1% of total sample.

In order to answer research questions acquired data was processed through SPSS program out of necessity to conduct gender, country of origin and consumers' preferences towards communication channels cross-tabulations.

The section below represents the main research findings in form of tables followed by the analyses of findings section where all information will be transformed into the results reflecting consumers' preferences towards Louis Vuitton's communication channels specific to the group of consumers of each country.

5.3.2 Descriptive Analyses

Table 1. Cross-cultural comparison of luxury brands perceptions

What is your country of origin?				How do you perceive luxury brands?[a]							Total
				image	prices	status	quality	uniqueness	heritage	reputation	
Russia	What is your gender?	male	Count	5	11	10	6	8	5	4	49
			% of Total	3.4%	7.5%	6.8%	4.1%	5.5%	3.4%	2.7%	33.6%
		female	Count	19	12	20	12	13	5	16	97
			% of Total	13.0%	8.2%	13.7%	8.2%	8.9%	3.4%	11.0%	66.4%
	Total		Count	24	23	30	18	21	10	20	146
			% of Total	16.4%	15.8%	20.5%	12.3%	14.4%	6.8%	13.7%	100.0%
China	What is your gender?	male	Count	3	4	5	3	1		2	18
			% of Total	4.4%	5.9%	7.4%	4.4%	1.5%		2.9%	26.5%
		female	Count	8	11	12	9	5		5	50
			% of Total	11.8%	16.2%	17.6%	13.2%	7.4%		7.4%	73.5%
	Total		Count	11	15	17	12	6		7	68
			% of Total	16.2%	22.1%	25.0%	17.6%	8.8%		10.3%	100.0%
France	What is your gender?	male	Count	5	2	4	8	3	6	7	35
			% of Total	4.9%	2.0%	3.9%	7.8%	2.9%	5.9%	6.9%	34.3%
		female	Count	12	6	5	16	8	12	8	67
			% of Total	11.8%	5.9%	4.9%	15.7%	7.8%	11.8%	7.8%	65.7%
	Total		Count	17	8	9	24	11	18	15	102
			% of Total	16.7%	7.8%	8.8%	23.5%	10.8%	17.6%	14.7%	100.0%

Source: data from questionnaires, own elaboration

The table above displays consumers perceptions towards luxury brands. The table shows that 13.7% of Russian women as well as 17.6% of Chines women perceive luxury brands as a tool to show off their social status. In comparison the majority of French women perceive luxury brands as a providers of high quality products with exceptional characteristics. Concerning men it is observed differences in their perceptions of luxury brands, thus 7.5% of interviewed Russian men's perceptions of luxury brands connected with high prices, 7.4 % of Chinese men as well as the majority of Chinese women mentioned that they perceive luxury brands as providers of certain social status. It should be noted that perceptions of French male are similar with the perceptions of French female, since 7.8 % of men specified in the questionnaire that their perceptions of luxury brand strongly connected with high quality of products and craftsmanship. One important fact should be underlined, since France is the country of origin of many luxury brands sufficient amount of French consumers mentioned that they are perceive luxury brands as those who have heritage, whereas none of interviewed Chinese consumers specify their perception of luxury brands connected with brand's heritage

Table 2. Cross-cultural comparison of consumers' intentions of luxury brands purchase

What is your country of origin?				Why do you purchase luxury products?[a] to show wealth and social status	brand reflects personality	to distinguish yourself from the other	symbolism	trend	quality	rarity	Total
Russia	What is your gender?	male	Count	6	6	8	6	4	9	5	44
			% of Total	4.6%	4.6%	6.2%	4.6%	3.1%	6.9%	3.8%	33.8%
		female	Count	8	18	13	8	14	17	8	86
			% of Total	6.2%	13.8%	10.0%	6.2%	10.8%	13.1%	6.2%	66.2%
	Total		Count	14	24	21	14	18	26	13	130
			% of Total	10.8%	18.5%	16.2%	10.8%	13.8%	20.0%	10.0%	100.0%
China	What is your gender?	male	Count	6	1	2	0	5	3		17
			% of Total	10.3%	1.7%	3.4%	0.0%	8.6%	5.2%		29.3%
		female	Count	10	7	5	2	10	7		41
			% of Total	17.2%	12.1%	8.6%	3.4%	17.2%	12.1%		70.7%
	Total		Count	16	8	7	2	15	10		58
			% of Total	27.6%	13.8%	12.1%	3.4%	25.9%	17.2%		100.0%
France	What is your gender?	male	Count	2	6	5	4	2	8	2	29
			% of Total	2.1%	6.3%	5.2%	4.2%	2.1%	8.3%	2.1%	30.2%
		female	Count	7	12	8	11	5	17	7	67
			% of Total	7.3%	12.5%	8.3%	11.5%	5.2%	17.7%	7.3%	69.8%
	Total		Count	9	18	13	15	7	25	9	96
			% of Total	9.4%	18.8%	13.5%	15.6%	7.3%	26.0%	9.4%	100.0%

Source: data from questionnaires, own elaboration

The table above represents the results of cross-cultural comparison in intentions to purchase luxury brands. Intentions to make luxury purchase of the majority of Russian male consumers (6.8%) are similar with the intentions of French consumers (male-8.3%; female-17.7%) and based on the desire to buy high quality products. In accordance with responses of Russian women their intentions to purchase luxury brand primary connected with the fact that chosen brand reflects their personality in greater extent. Motives to make luxury purchase of Chinese consumers are significantly different from Russian and French; 17.2% of female and 10.3% of male respondents answered that they purchase luxury products to show their wealth and social status. In addition, 17.2% of Chinese women specify in the questionnaire that their motives to purchase luxury brands connected with the desire to follow the trend adopted in a particular social group.

The following group of tables shows how different dimension of Louis Vuitton' brand, influence on consumers decision-making process.

Table 3. The influence of LV brand on consumers' decision-making process

What is your country of origin?				brand					Total
				strongly desagree	desagree	neutral	agree	strongly agree	
Russia	What is your gender?	male	Count	0	0	5	8	2	15
			% of Total	0.0%	0.0%	12.8%	20.5%	5.1%	38.5%
		female	Count	1	2	4	12	5	24
			% of Total	2.6%	5.1%	10.3%	30.8%	12.8%	61.5%
	Total		Count	1	2	9	20	7	39
			% of Total	2.6%	5.1%	23.1%	51.3%	17.9%	100.0%
China	What is your gender?	male	Count		1	2	3	2	8
			% of Total		4.3%	8.7%	13.0%	8.7%	34.8%
		female	Count		1	4	5	5	15
			% of Total		4.3%	17.4%	21.7%	21.7%	65.2%
	Total		Count		2	6	8	7	23
			% of Total		8.7%	26.1%	34.8%	30.4%	100.0%
France	What is your gender?	male	Count		6	2	1	1	10
			% of Total		20.0%	6.7%	3.3%	3.3%	33.3%
		female	Count		5	7	6	2	20
			% of Total		16.7%	23.3%	20.0%	6.7%	66.7%
	Total		Count		11	9	7	3	30
			% of Total		36.7%	30.0%	23.3%	10.0%	100.0%
Total	What is your gender?	male	Count	0	7	9	12	5	33
			% of Total	0.0%	7.6%	9.8%	13.0%	5.4%	35.9%
		female	Count	1	8	15	23	12	59
			% of Total	1.1%	8.7%	16.3%	25.0%	13.0%	64.1%
	Total		Count	1	15	24	35	17	92
			% of Total	1.1%	16.3%	26.1%	38.0%	18.5%	100.0%

Source: data from questionnaires, own elaboration

As it seen from the table the power of brand influences with greater extent on Russian (20.5%-male; 30.8%-female) and Chinese consumers (21.7%-female; 13%-male). In case of French consumers the name of brand does not influence on their decision to make Louis Vuitton's purchase. The majority of interviewed French women (23.3%) answered that brand does not influence on them during decision-making process. Moreover, 20% of French male disagree with the fact that the name Louis Vuitton can somehow influence on their decision to make a purchase.

The table 4 represented below shows how high prices of Louis Vuitton's products influence on consumers' decision-making process. In general, the majority of interviewed Russian and French consumers either disagree or neutral to the statement that high prices of Louis Vuitton's goods affect their buying decision. Strong influence of high prices as determining factor to make Louis Vuitton's purchase is observed just between Chinese consumers, where both genders are agree that high prices of goods can convince them to make a purchase (17.4%-male, 17.4%-female).

Table 4. The influence of LV's high prices on consumers' decision-making process

What is your country of origin?				price: strongly disagree	price: disagree	price: neutral	price: agree	price: strongly agree	Total
Russia	What is your gender?	male	Count	2	5	5	2	1	15
			% of Total	5.1%	12.8%	12.8%	5.1%	2.6%	38.5%
		female	Count	6	8	4	4	2	24
			% of Total	15.4%	20.5%	10.3%	10.3%	5.1%	61.5%
	Total		Count	8	13	9	6	3	39
			% of Total	20.5%	33.3%	23.1%	15.4%	7.7%	100.0%
China	What is your gender?	male	Count		0	2	4	2	8
			% of Total		0.0%	8.7%	17.4%	8.7%	34.8%
		female	Count		3	5	3	4	15
			% of Total		13.0%	21.7%	13.0%	17.4%	65.2%
	Total		Count		3	7	7	6	23
			% of Total		13.0%	30.4%	30.4%	26.1%	100.0%
France	What is your gender?	male	Count	0	4	5	1		10
			% of Total	0.0%	13.3%	16.7%	3.3%		33.3%
		female	Count	1	8	7	4		20
			% of Total	3.3%	26.7%	23.3%	13.3%		66.7%
	Total		Count	1	12	12	5		30
			% of Total	3.3%	40.0%	40.0%	16.7%		100.0%
Total	What is your gender?	male	Count	2	9	12	7	3	33
			% of Total	2.2%	9.8%	13.0%	7.6%	3.3%	35.9%
		female	Count	7	19	16	11	6	59
			% of Total	7.6%	20.7%	17.4%	12.0%	6.5%	64.1%
	Total		Count	9	28	28	18	9	92
			% of Total	9.8%	30.4%	30.4%	19.6%	9.8%	100.0%

Source: data from questionnaires, own elaboration

The table below represents the results of the influence of Louis Vuitton's high quality products on consumers' decision-making process.

Table 5. The influence of LV's high quality on consumers' decision-making process

What is your country of origin?				quality				Total
				disagree	neutral	agree	strongly agree	
Russia	What is your gender?	male	Count	1	3	9	2	15
			% of Total	2.6%	7.7%	23.1%	5.1%	38.5%
		female	Count	0	2	13	9	24
			% of Total	0.0%	5.1%	33.3%	23.1%	61.5%
	Total		Count	1	5	22	11	39
			% of Total	2.6%	12.8%	56.4%	28.2%	100.0%
China	What is your gender?	male	Count	1	3	3	1	8
			% of Total	4.3%	13.0%	13.0%	4.3%	34.8%
		female	Count	6	4	3	2	15
			% of Total	26.1%	17.4%	13.0%	8.7%	65.2%
	Total		Count	7	7	6	3	23
			% of Total	30.4%	30.4%	26.1%	13.0%	100.0%
France	What is your gender?	male	Count		0	2	8	10
			% of Total		0.0%	6.7%	26.7%	33.3%
		female	Count		2	11	7	20
			% of Total		6.7%	36.7%	23.3%	66.7%
	Total		Count		2	13	15	30
			% of Total		6.7%	43.3%	50.0%	100.0%
Total	What is your gender?	male	Count	2	6	14	11	33
			% of Total	2.2%	6.5%	15,2%	12.0%	35.9%
		female	Count	6	8	27	18	59
			% of Total	6.5%	8.7%	29.3%	19.6%	64,1%
	Total		Count	8	14	41	29	92
			% of Total	8.7%	15.2%	44.6%	31.5%	100.0%

Source: data from questionnaires, own elaboration

It is obvious from the fifth table that the consumers of Russian and French markets again have similar attitudes, in this case towards quality in the decision-making process. The majority of Russian (male-23.1%, female-33.1%) and French (male-26.7%, female-36.7%) agree with the statement that they prefer to buy Louis Vuitton's products due to their exceptional quality. In this regard it should be noted that Chinese male consumers (13%) are in cohesion with Russian and French consumers since they purchase Louis Vuitton's products because of the quality characteristics. Chinese women (26.1%) in their turn disagree with the statement that high quality of products can somehow influence on their decision-making process concerning Louis Vuitton products.

Table 6. The influence of LV's in-store services and atmosphere on consumers' decision-making process

What is your country of origin?				in-store services and atmosphere				Total
				disagree	neutral	argee	strogngly agree	
Russia	What is your gender?	male	Count	3	5	3	4	15
			% of Total	7.7%	12.8%	7.7%	10.3%	38.5%
		female	Count	3	7	9	5	24
			% of Total	7.7%	17.9%	23.1%	12.8%	61.5%
	Total		Count	6	12	12	9	39
			% of Total	15.4%	30.8%	30.8%	23.1%	100.0%
China	What is your gender?	male	Count	0	3	4	1	8
			% of Total	0.0%	13.0%	17.4%	4.3%	34.8%
		female	Count	2	3	7	3	15
			% of Total	8.7%	13.0%	30.4%	13.0%	65.2%
	Total		Count	2	6	11	4	23
			% of Total	8.7%	26.1%	47.8%	17.4%	100.0%
France	What is your gender?	male	Count	2	3	3	2	10
			% of Total	6.7%	10.0%	10.0%	6.7%	33.3%
		female	Count	2	6	8	4	20
			% of Total	6.7%	20.0%	26.7%	13.3%	66.7%
	Total		Count	4	9	11	6	30
			% of Total	13.3%	30.0%	36.7%	20.0%	100.0%
Total	What is your gender?	male	Count	5	11	10	7	33
			% of Total	5.4%	12.0%	10.9%	7.6%	35.9%
		female	Count	7	16	24	12	59
			% of Total	7.6%	17.4%	26.1%	13.0%	64.1%
	Total		Count	12	27	34	19	92
			% of Total	13.0%	29.3%	37.0%	20.7%	100.0%

Source: data from questionnaires, own elaboration

As it was analyzed in literature review section in-store services and atmosphere play a significant role in consumers' intentions to make a purchase. The table 6 verifies theory in case of French consumers (26.7-female, 10%-male) as well as Chinese consumers (30.4%-female, 17.4%-male) and Russian female consumers (23.1%) whose decisions towards Louis Vuitton's products purchase influenced by the desire to have sensorial experience in the points of sales. Neutral attitudes towards in-store services and atmosphere as a tool to influence on decision-making process are observed just in case of Russian male consumers.

Table 7. The influence of LV's rarity on consumers' decision-making process

What is your country of origin?				rarity					Total
				strongly disagree	disagree	neutral	agree	strongly agree	
Russia	What is your gender?	male	Count	2	4	7	2	0	15
			% of Total	5,1%	10,3%	17,9%	5,1%	0,0%	38,5%
		female	Count	1	8	11	2	2	24
			% of Total	2.6%	20,5%	28,2%	5,1%	5,1%	61,5%
	Total		Count	3	12	18	4	2	39
			% of Total	7,7%	30,8%	46,2%	10,3%	5,1%	100,0%
China	What is your gender?	male	Count		2	3	3		8
			% of Total		8,7%	13,0%	13,0%		34.8%
		female	Count		5	8	2		15
			% of Total		21,7%	34,8%	8,7%		65,2%
	Total		Count		7	11	5		23
			% of Total		30,4%	47,8%	21,7%		100,0%
France	What is your gender?	male	Count	3	1	3	3		10
			% of Total	10,0%	3,3%	10,0%	10,0%		33,3%
		female	Count	1	4	4	11		20
			% of Total	3,3%	13,3%	13,3%	36,7%		66,7%
	Total		Count	4	5	7	14		30
			% of Total	13,3%	16,7%	23,3%	46,7%		100,0%
Total	What is your gender?	male	Count	5	7	13	8	0	33
			% of Total	5,4%	7,6%	14,1%	8,7%	0,0%	35,9%
		female	Count	2	17	23	15	2	59
			% of Total	2,2%	18,5%	25,0%	16,3%	2,2%	64,1%
	Total		Count	7	24	36	23	2	92
			% of Total	7.6%	26,1%	39,1%	25,0%	2,2%	100,0%

Source: data from questionnaires, own elaboration

The concept of rarity either objective or virtual that was discussed previously in subchapter 4.1.1 does not influence on Chinese and Russian consumers decision-making process in greater extent. However, in case of French consumers there is another tendency showing that the majority of women (36.7%) tend to buy Louis Vuitton's products due to their rarity and uniqueness. Very interesting distribution of answers is observed between French men, where 10% disagree that rarity influence on their decision to make a purchase, 10% are neutral to the given statement and 10% agree that Louis Vuitton's products rarity could influence on their buying decision. Possible reasons to such answers' distribution will be analyzed later in discussion section.

Table 8. The influence of LV's design on consumers' decision-making process

What is your country of origin?				design				Total
				disagree	neutral	agree	strongly agree	
Russia	What is your gender?	male	Count	1	5	7	2	15
			% of Total	2.6%	12.8%	17.9%	5.1%	38.5%
		female	Count	2	2	12	8	24
			% of Total	5.1%	5.1%	30.8%	20.5%	61.5%
	Total		Count	3	7	19	10	39
			% of Total	7.7%	17.9%	48.7%	25.6%	100.0%
China	What is your gender?	male	Count	1	3	4		8
			% of Total	4.3%	13.0%	17.4%		34.8%
		female	Count	2	6	7		15
			% of Total	8.7%	26.1%	30.4%		65.2%
	Total		Count	3	9	11		23
			% of Total	13.0%	39.1%	47.8%		100.0%
France	What is your gender?	male	Count		3	3	4	10
			% of Total		10.3%	10.3%	13.8%	34.5%
		female	Count		4	10	5	19
			% of Total		13.8%	34.5%	17.2%	65.5%
	Total		Count		7	13	9	29
			% of Total		24.1%	44.8%	31.0%	100.0%
Total	What is your gender?	male	Count	2	11	14	6	33
			% of Total	2.2%	12.1%	15.4%	6.6%	36.3%
		female	Count	4	12	29	13	58
			% of Total	4.4%	13.2%	31.9%	14.3%	63.7%
	Total		Count	6	23	43	19	91
			% of Total	6.6%	25.3%	47.3%	20.9%	100.0%

Source: data from questionnaires , own elaboration

The table above represents cross-cultural comparison of consumers towards the influence of Louis Vuitton's products design on buying decision. As it seen from the table three groups of respondents agree that the unique design of products is one of the factors to make a purchase. (Russian-48.7%, Chinese-47.8%, French-47.3% for both genders).

The table down below reflects the results of Louis Vuitton's brand's prestige influencing on consumers decision-making process. The majority of Russian (51.3%) and Chinese consumers (34.8%) agree that prestige of brand affects them during buying process. In comparison, representatives of French market (43.3%) disagree with the statement that prestige of Louis Vuitton's brand can force them to make a purchase.

Table 9. The influence of LV's brand's prestige on consumers' decision-making process

What is your country of origin?				prestige: strongly disagree	disagree	neutral	agree	strongly agree	11,00	Total
Russia	What is your gender?	male	Count	1	0	2	7	5		15
Russia	What is your gender?	male	% of Total	2.6%	0.0%	5.1%	17.9%	12.8%		38.5%
Russia	What is your gender?	female	Count	1	2	3	13	5		24
Russia	What is your gender?	female	% of Total	2.6%	5.1%	7.7%	33.3%	12.8%		61.5%
Russia	Total		Count	2	2	5	20	10		39
Russia	Total		% of Total	5.1%	5.1%	12.8%	51.3%	25.6%		100.0%
China	What is your gender?	male	Count		0	3	2	3		8
China	What is your gender?	male	% of Total		0.0%	13.0%	8.7%	13.0%		34.8%
China	What is your gender?	female	Count		1	4	5	5		15
China	What is your gender?	female	% of Total		4.3%	17.4%	21.7%	21.7%		65.2%
China	Total		Count		1	7	7	8		23
China	Total		% of Total		4.3%	30.4%	30.4%	34.8%		100.0%
France	What is your gender?	male	Count	0	5	2	3		0	10
France	What is your gender?	male	% of Total	0.0%	16.7%	6.7%	10.0%		0.0%	33.3%
France	What is your gender?	female	Count	4	8	3	4		1	20
France	What is your gender?	female	% of Total	13.3%	26.7%	10.0%	13.3%		3.3%	66.7%
France	Total		Count	4	13	5	7		1	30
France	Total		% of Total	13.3%	43.3%	16.7%	23.3%		3.3%	100.0%
Total	What is your gender?	male	Count	1	5	7	12	8	0	33
Total	What is your gender?	male	% of Total	1.1%	5.4%	7.6%	13.0%	8.7%	0.0%	35.9%
Total	What is your gender?	female	Count	5	11	10	22	10	1	59
Total	What is your gender?	female	% of Total	5.4%	12.0%	10.9%	23.9%	10.9%	1.1%	64.1%
Total	Total		Count	6	16	17	34	18	1	92
Total	Total		% of Total	6.5%	17.4%	18.5%	37.0%	19.6%	1.1%	100.0%

Source: data from questionnaires, own elaboration

Table 10. The influence of LV's range of products on consumers' decision-making process

What is your country of origin?				range of product lines: disagree	neutral	agree	strongly agree	Total
Russia	What is your gender?	male	Count	1	8	5	1	15
Russia	What is your gender?	male	% of Total	2.6%	20.5%	12.8%	2.6%	38.5%
Russia	What is your gender?	female	Count	2	10	7	5	24
Russia	What is your gender?	female	% of Total	5.1%	25.6%	17.9%	12.8%	61.5%
Russia	Total		Count	3	18	12	6	39
Russia	Total		% of Total	7.7%	46.2%	30.8%	15.4%	100.0%
China	What is your gender?	male	Count	2	5	1		8
China	What is your gender?	male	% of Total	8.7%	21.7%	4.3%		34.8%
China	What is your gender?	female	Count	1	10	4		15
China	What is your gender?	female	% of Total	4.3%	43.5%	17.4%		65.2%
China	Total		Count	3	15	5		23
China	Total		% of Total	13,0%	65.2%	21.7%		100.0%
France	What is your gender?	male	Count	1	1	5	3	10
France	What is your gender?	male	% of Total	3.3%	3.3%	16.7%	10.0%	33.3%
France	What is your gender?	female	Count	0	12	8	0	20
France	What is your gender?	female	% of Total	0.0%	40.0%	26.7%	0,0%	66.7%
France	Total		Count	1	13	13	3	30
France	Total		% of Total	3.3%	43.3%	43.3%	10.0%	100.0%
Total	What is your gender?	male	Count	4	14	11	4	33
Total	What is your gender?	male	% of Total	4.3%	15.2%	12.0%	4.3%	35.9%
Total	What is your gender?	female	Count	3	32	19	5	59
Total	What is your gender?	female	% of Total	3.3%	34.8%	20.7%	5.4%	64.1%
Total	Total		Count	7	46	30	9	92
Total	Total		% of Total	7.6%	50.0%	32.6%	9.8%	100.0%

Source: data from questionnaires, own elaboration

The table 10 describes how range of Louis Vuitton's products can influence consumers during their decision process. Obtained results show that range of products lines does not influence significantly on Russian consumers (46.2%), Chinese consumers (65.2%) and French female consumers (40%) who specify in the questionnaire that their attitudes towards Louis Vuitton's range of product lines are neutral. Variety of different products can affect just French male consumers (16.7%) who agree that wide products range convince them to purchase Louis Vuitton goods.

Table 11. The influence of experience with the brand on consumers' decision-making process

What is your country of origin?				experience					Total
				disagree	neutral	agree	strongly agree	99,00	
Russia	What is your gender?	male	Count	4	7	4	0		15
			% of Total	10.3%	17.9%	10.3%	0.0%		38.5%
		female	Count	3	14	6	1		24
			% of Total	7.7%	35.9%	15.4%	2.6%		61.5%
	Total		Count	7	21	10	1		39
			% of Total	17.9%	53.8%	25.6%	2.6%		100.0%
China	What is your gender?	male	Count	1	6	1			8
			% of Total	4.3%	26.1%	4.3%			34.8%
		female	Count	1	10	4			15
			% of Total	4.3%	43.5%	17.4%			65.2%
	Total		Count	2	16	5			23
			% of Total	8.7%	69.6%	21.7%			100.0%
France	What is your gender?	male	Count	1	3	5	0	1	10
			% of Total	3.3%	10.0%	16.7%	0.0%	3.3%	33.3%
		female	Count	5	4	5	6	0	20
			% of Total	16.7%	13.3%	16.7%	20.0%	0.0%	66.7%
	Total		Count	6	7	10	6	1	30
			% of Total	20.0%	23.3%	33.3%	20.0%	3.3%	100.0%
Total	What is your gender?	male	Count	6	16	10	0	1	33
			% of Total	6.5%	17.4%	10.9%	0.0%	1.1%	35.9%
		female	Count	9	28	15	7	0	59
			% of Total	9.8%	30.4%	16.3%	7.6%	0.0%	64.1%
	Total		Count	15	44	25	7	1	92
			% of Total	16.3%	47.8%	27.2%	7.6%	1.1%	100.0%

Source: data from questionnaires, own elaboration

Quite an interesting factor of influence on consumers' decision-making process in terms of luxury brands' marketing is creation of common experience between consumers and the brand. Table 11 shows how the desire to have something in common can force consumers to purchase Louis Vuitton's products. Greater part of Russian (53.8%) as well as Chinese respondents (69.6%) of both genders noted that creation of common experience does not affect them to buy Louis Vuitton's products. In comparison with Chinese and Russian respondents, representatives of French market (33%) agree that common experience with the brand can significantly force them to make a purchase.

Table 12. The influence of social status providing by the brand on consumers' decision-making process

What is your country of origin?				social status: strongly disagree	disagree	neutral	agree	strongly agree	Total
Russia	What is your gender?	male	Count	1	0	2	6	6	15
			% of Total	2.6%	0.0%	5.1%	15.4%	15.4%	38.5%
		female	Count	0	3	4	12	5	24
			% of Total	0.0%	7.7%	10.3%	30.8%	12.8%	61.5%
	Total		Count	1	3	6	18	11	39
			% of Total	2.6%	7.7%	15.4%	46.2%	28.2%	100.0%
China	What is your gender?	male	Count		1	2	3	2	8
			% of Total		4.3%	8.7%	13.0%	8.7%	34.8%
		female	Count		0	3	6	6	15
			% of Total		0.0%	13.0%	26.1%	26.1%	65.2%
	Total		Count		1	5	9	8	23
			% of Total		4.3%	21.7%	39.1%	34.8%	100.0%
France	What is your gender?	male	Count	3	4	2	1		10
			% of Total	10.0%	13.3%	6.7%	3.3%		33.3%
		female	Count	6	7	2	5		20
			% of Total	20.0%	23.3%	6.7%	16.7%		66.7%
	Total		Count	9	11	4	6		30
			% of Total	30.0%	36.7%	13.3%	20.0%		100.0%
Total	What is your gender?	male	Count	4	5	6	10	8	33
			% of Total	4.3%	5.4%	6.5%	10.9%	8.7%	35.9%
		female	Count	6	10	9	23	11	59
			% of Total	6.5%	10.9%	9.8%	25.0%	12.0%	64.1%
	Total		Count	10	15	15	33	19	92
			% of Total	10.9%	16.3%	16.3%	35.9%	20.7%	100.0%

Source: data from questionnaires, own elaboration

Social status and belonging to the certain group that possession of Louis Vuitton products provides significantly influence on the representatives of emerging markets. Chinese (39.1%) and Russian (46.2%) consumers tend to purchase Louis Vuitton's goods to show certain position in the society as well as level of income. On the other hand, the majority of French consumers either disagree (36.7%) or strongly disagree (30%) with the statement that desire to denote social status and wealthy could somehow affect them during decision-making process.

The group of tables below shows consumers attitudes towards Louis Vuitton's communication channels as well as cross-cultural differences in their preferences.

Table 13. Preferential sources of information about LV

What is your country of origin?				Where do you get information about LV?[a] store	internet10	TV	outdoor advertising	fashion magazines	friends/family/colleagues	social media (Twitter, Facebook, Instagram)	Total
Russia	What is your gender?	male	Count	9	5	0	1	5	11	4	35
			% of Total	6.7%	3.7%	0.0%	0.7%	3.7%	8.2%	3.0%	26.1%
		female	Count	20	16	5	3	21	19	15	99
			% of Total	14.9%	11.9%	3.7%	2.2%	15.7%	14.2%	11.2%	73.9%
	Total		Count	29	21	5	4	26	30	19	134
			% of Total	21.6%	15.7%	3.7%	3.0%	19.4%	22.4%	14.2%	100.0%
China	What is your gender?	male	Count	5	5		0	2	6	4	22
			% of Total	6.8%	6.8%		0.0%	2.7%	8.1%	5.4%	29.7%
		female	Count	7	10		6	9	12	8	52
			% of Total	9.5%	13.5%		8.1%	12.2%	16.2%	10.8%	70.3%
	Total		Count	12	15		6	11	18	12	74
			% of Total	16.2%	20.3%		8.1%	14.9%	24.3%	16.2%	100.0%
France	What is your gender?	male	Count	8	3	3	5	3	6	3	31
			% of Total	7.8%	2.9%	2.9%	4.9%	2.9%	5.9%	2.9%	30.4%
		female	Count	13	9	4	7	14	13	11	71
			% of Total	12.7%	8.8%	3.9%	6.9%	13.7%	12.7%	10.8%	69.6%
	Total		Count	21	12	7	12	17	19	14	102
			% of Total	20.6%	11.8%	6.9%	11.8%	16.7%	18.6%	13.7%	100.0%

Source: data from questionnaires, own elaboration

The given table allows determining the most effective communication channels that Louis Vuitton applies in the marketing strategy. Therefore, Russian male consumers (8.5%) prefer to get information about LV products from surrounding environment, such as family, friends and colleagues, in contrast Russian women prefer to get information from different kind of sources as fashion magazines, in stores and from environment as well. In case of Chinese consumers it observed unity in preferences towards communication channels, thus the majority of Chinese respondents (24.3%) tend to get the information about Louis Vuitton from family, friends and colleagues. However, it is necessary to mention that significant amount of interviewed Chinese women (13.5%) and men (6.8%) also use Internet to get the necessary information about the brand. French men (7.8%) got used to find requested information directly in Louis Vuitton's stores, in comparison French women use many communications channels identical with Russian women, such as fashion magazines, stores and surrounding environment.

Table 14. Consumers' attitudes towards stores as LV's communication channel

What is your country of origin?				in-store atmosphere: disagree	neutral	agree	strongly agree	Total
Russia	What is your gender?	male	Count	0	3	4	8	15
			% of Total	0.0%	7.7%	10.3%	20.5%	38.5%
		female	Count	2	7	8	7	24
			% of Total	5.1%	17.9%	20.5%	17.9%	61.5%
	Total		Count	2	10	12	15	39
			% of Total	5.1%	25.6%	30.8%	38.5%	100.0%
China	What is your gender?	male	Count	2	4	2	0	8
			% of Total	8.7%	17.4%	8.7%	0.0%	34.8%
		female	Count	0	8	4	3	15
			% of Total	0.0%	34.8%	17.4%	13.0%	65.2%
	Total		Count	2	12	6	3	23
			% of Total	8.7%	52.2%	26.1%	13.0%	100.0%
France	What is your gender?	male	Count	0	3	7	0	10
			% of Total	0.0%	10.0%	23.3%	0.0%	33.3%
		female	Count	2	3	10	5	20
			% of Total	6.7%	10.0%	33.3%	16.7%	66.7%
	Total		Count	2	6	17	5	30
			% of Total	6.7%	20.0%	56.7%	16.7%	100.0%
Total	What is your gender?	male	Count	2	10	13	8	33
			% of Total	2.2%	10.9%	14.1%	8.7%	35.9%
		female	Count	4	18	22	15	59
			% of Total	4.3%	19.6%	23.9%	16.3%	64.1%
	Total		Count	6	28	35	23	92
			% of Total	6.5%	30.4%	38.0%	25.0%	100.0%

Source: data from questionnaires, own elaboration

The results provided in the table above show that store as LV's communication channel is one of the most important sources of information about the brand in French and Russian markets. The majority of Russian (38.5%) and French (56.7%) consumers specify in the questionnaires that in their opinion store is the most attractive Louis Vuitton's communication channel. In case of Chinese consumers (52.2%) it is observed neutral attitude to the given channel.

Speaking about stores it is important to note windows as communication channel of luxury brands. In the table 15 placed below represented the results of consumers' attitudes towards stores' windows cross-tabulation. This table shows that the given LV's communication channel is very attractive just for Russian female consumers (38.5%), in the context of the other consumers of different countries of origins and genders the attitudes of respondents towards windows as a source to get additional information about Louis Vuitton are neutral.

Table 15. Consumers' attitudes towards shop windows as LV's communication channel

What is your country of origin?				shop windows: disagree	neutral	agree	strongly agree	Total
Russia	What is your gender?	male	Count	1	9	4	1	15
			% of Total	2.6%	23.1%	10.3%	2.6%	38.5%
		female	Count	2	4	15	3	24
			% of Total	5.1%	10.3%	38.5%	7.7%	61.5%
	Total		Count	3	13	19	4	39
			% of Total	7.7%	33.3%	48.7%	10.3%	100.0%
China	What is your gender?	male	Count	1	7	0	0	8
			% of Total	4.3%	30.4%	0.0%	0.0%	34.8%
		female	Count	3	5	5	2	15
			% of Total	13.0%	21.7%	21.7%	8.7%	65.2%
	Total		Count	4	12	5	2	23
			% of Total	17.4%	52.2%	21.7%	8.7%	100.0%
France	What is your gender?	male	Count	2	6	2	0	10
			% of Total	6.7%	20.0%	6.7%	0.0%	33.3%
		female	Count	2	9	7	2	20
			% of Total	6.7%	30.0%	23.3%	6.7%	66.7%
	Total		Count	4	15	9	2	30
			% of Total	13.3%	50.0%	30.0%	6.7%	100.0%
Total	What is your gender?	male	Count	4	22	6	1	33
			% of Total	4.3%	23.9%	6.5%	1.1%	35.9%
		female	Count	7	18	27	7	59
			% of Total	7.6%	19.6%	29.3%	7.6%	64.1%
	Total		Count	11	40	33	8	92
			% of Total	12.0%	43.5%	35.9%	8.7%	100.0%

Source: data from questionnaires, own elaboration

Table 16. Consumers' attitudes towards web site as LV's communication channel

What is your country of origin?				brand's web site: strongly disagree	disagree	neutral	agree	strongly agree	Total
Russia	What is your gender?	male	Count	3	5	6	0	1	15
			% of Total	7.7%	12.8%	15.4%	0.0%	2.6%	38.5%
		female	Count	1	6	4	9	4	24
			% of Total	2.6%	15.4%	10.3%	23.1%	10.3%	61.5%
	Total		Count	4	11	10	9	5	39
			% of Total	10.3%	28.2%	25.6%	23.1%	12.8%	100.0%
China	What is your gender?	male	Count		3	0	5	0	8
			% of Total		13.0%	0.0%	21.7%	0.0%	34.8%
		female	Count		5	3	2	5	15
			% of Total		21.7%	13.0%	8.7%	21.7%	65.2%
	Total		Count		8	3	7	5	23
			% of Total		34.8%	13.0%	30.4%	21.7%	100.0%
France	What is your gender?	male	Count	1	2	4	3	0	10
			% of Total	3.3%	6.7%	13.3%	10.0%	0.0%	33.3%
		female	Count	4	7	4	4	1	20
			% of Total	13.3%	23.3%	13.3%	13.3%	3.3%	66.7%
	Total		Count	5	9	8	7	1	30
			% of Total	16.7%	30.0%	26.7%	23.3%	3.3%	100.0%
Total	What is your gender?	male	Count	4	10	10	8	1	33
			% of Total	4.3%	10.9%	10.9%	8.7%	1.1%	35.9%
		female	Count	5	18	11	15	10	59
			% of Total	5.4%	19.6%	12.0%	16.3%	10.9%	64.1%
	Total		Count	9	28	21	23	11	92
			% of Total	9.8%	30.4%	22.8%	25.0%	12.0%	100.0%

Source: data from questionnaires, own elaboration

Internet is one of the most problematic communication channels for luxury brand this is precisely why it was necessary to make gender and country of origin cross-tabulation of consumers attitudes to the given communication channel. The table 16 presents the results of cross-tabulation showing differences in consumers' views. Russian female consumers (23.1%) agree that Louis Vuitton's web site is attractive communication channel whereas the majority of male consumers (15.4%) are neutral to the statement that Louis Vuitton web site can somehow attract their attention. Quite the opposite situation can be observed in the French market where consumers of both genders (30%) disagree that Louis Vuitton web site is attractive communication channel. Finally, Chinese consumers attitudes' towards brand's web site are very loyal, since the majority (30.4%) agreed with the fact that in their opinion Louis Vuitton's is attractive way to communicate with the brand.

Table 17. Consumers' attitudes towards social-media platforms as LV's communication channel

What is your country of origin?				brand's page on social media platforms (Twitter, facebook etc)					Total
				strongly disagree	disagree	neutral	agree	strongly agree	
Russia	What is your gender?	male	Count	3	6	4	2	0	15
			% of Total	7.7%	15.4%	10.3%	5.1%	0.0%	38.5%
		female	Count	2	7	2	11	2	24
			% of Total	5.1%	17.9%	5.1%	28.2%	5.1%	61.5%
	Total		Count	5	13	6	13	2	39
			% of Total	12.8%	33.3%	15.4%	33.3%	5.1%	100.0%
China	What is your gender?	male	Count		1	3	3	1	8
			% of Total		4.3%	13.0%	13.0%	4.3%	34.8%
		female	Count		1	4	6	4	15
			% of Total		4.3%	17.4%	26.1%	17.4%	65.2%
	Total		Count		2	7	9	5	23
			% of Total		8.7%	30.4%	39.1%	21.7%	100.0%
France	What is your gender?	male	Count	1	2	4	2	1	10
			% of Total	3.3%	6.7%	13.3%	6.7%	3.3%	33.3%
		female	Count	0	5	7	4	4	20
			% of Total	0.0%	16.7%	23.3%	13.3%	13.3%	66.7%
	Total		Count	1	7	11	6	5	30
			% of Total	3.3%	23.3%	36.7%	20.0%	16.7%	100.0%
Total	What is your gender?	male	Count	4	9	11	7	2	33
			% of Total	4.3%	9.8%	12.0%	7.6%	2.2%	35.9%
		female	Count	2	13	13	21	10	59
			% of Total	2.2%	14.1%	14.1%	22.8%	10.9%	64.1%
	Total		Count	6	22	24	28	12	92
			% of Total	6.5%	23.9%	26.1%	30.4%	13.0%	100.0%

Source: data from questionnaires, own elaboration

Continuing on the topic of the Internet it is also advisable to investigate consumers' attitudes towards social media platforms as communication channel. In this case situation identical to previously described regarding attitudes towards Louis Vuitton's web site. The majority of Russian women (28.2%) use social media platforms to communicate with the brand, in contrast male consumers (15.4%) disagree that the given Louis Vuitton's communication channel is attractive to them. French consumers (36.7%) are neutral regarding social media platforms as a communication channel, while Chinese consumers

(39.1%) agree to the statement that social media platforms are attractive communication channel according to their opinion.

Table 18. Consumers' attitudes towards commercial campaigns as LV's communication channel

What is your country of origin?				commercial campaignes (video version)					Total
				storngly disagree	disagree	neutral	agree	strongly agree	
Russia	What is your gender?	male	Count		3	10	1	1	15
			% of Total		7.7%	25.6%	2.6%	2.6%	38.5%
		female	Count		3	2	17	2	24
			% of Total		7.7%	5.1%	43.6%	5.1%	61.5%
	Total		Count		6	12	18	3	39
			% of Total		15.4%	30.8%	46.2%	7.7%	100.0%
China	What is your gender?	male	Count		3	4	1	0	8
			% of Total		13.0%	17.4%	4.3%	0.0%	34.8%
		female	Count		3	4	7	1	15
			% of Total		13.0%	17.4%	30.4%	4.3%	65.2%
	Total		Count		6	8	8	1	23
			% of Total		26.1%	34.8%	34.8%	4.3%	100.0%
France	What is your gender?	male	Count	1	1	7	1	0	10
			% of Total	3.3%	3.3%	23.3%	3.3%	0.0%	33.3%
		female	Count	2	2	3	6	7	20
			% of Total	6.7%	6.7%	10.0%	20.0%	23.3%	66.7%
	Total		Count	3	3	10	7	7	30
			% of Total	10.0%	10.0%	33.3%	23.3%	23.3%	100.0%
Total	What is your gender?	male	Count	1	7	21	3	1	33
			% of Total	1.1%	7.6%	22.8%	3.3%	1.1%	35.9%
		female	Count	2	8	9	30	10	59
			% of Total	2.2%	8.7%	9.8%	32.6%	10.9%	64.1%
	Total		Count	3	15	30	33	11	92
			% of Total	3.3%	16.3%	32.6%	35.9%	12.0%	100.0%

Source: data from questionnaires, own elaboration

Commercial videos or mini films produced by Louis Vuitton are attractive and preferential sources to get information about the brand for female consumers of three countries as it is seen from the table 18 (Russia-43.6%, China-30.4%, France-23.3%). In case of male consumers the unity of opinions is observed as well. Male respondents of three countries specified in the questionnaires that their attitudes towards Louis Vuitton's video campaigns are neutral and as s result the given communication channel is not attractive and preferential for them (Russia-25.6%, China-17.4%, France-23.3%).

Table 19. Consumers' attitudes towards magazines as LV's communication channel

What is your country of origin?				magazines: strongly disagree	disagree	neutral	agree	strongly agree	Total
Russia	What is your gender?	male	Count	1	4	5	5	0	15
			% of Total	2.6%	10.3%	12.8%	12.8%	0.0%	38.5%
		female	Count	0	2	0	15	7	24
			% of Total	0.0%	5.1%	0.0%	38.5%	17.9%	61.5%
	Total		Count	1	6	5	20	7	39
			% of Total	2.6%	15.4%	12.8%	51.3%	17.9%	100.0%
China	What is your gender?	male	Count		1	4	3	0	8
			% of Total		4.3%	17.4%	13.0%	0.0%	34.8%
		female	Count		0	2	7	6	15
			% of Total		0.0%	8.7%	30.4%	26.1%	65.2%
	Total		Count		1	6	10	6	23
			% of Total		4.3%	26.1%	43.5%	26.1%	100.0%
France	What is your gender?	male	Count		2	2	5	1	10
			% of Total		6.7%	6.7%	16.7%	3.3%	33.3%
		female	Count		1	4	9	6	20
			% of Total		3.3%	13.3%	30.0%	20.0%	66.7%
	Total		Count		3	6	14	7	30
			% of Total		10.0%	20.0%	46.7%	23.3%	100.0%
Total	What is your gender?	male	Count	1	7	11	13	1	33
			% of Total	1.1%	7.6%	12.0%	14.1%	1.1%	35.9%
		female	Count	0	3	6	31	19	59
			% of Total	0.0%	3.3%	6.5%	33.7%	20.7%	64.1%
	Total		Count	1	10	17	44	20	92
			% of Total	1.1%	10.9%	18.5%	47.8%	21.7%	100.0%

Source: data from questionnaires, own elaboration

The table above represents the results of cross-tabulation regarding the most traditional of communication channels. Here is observed the same situation as in case of videos as one of communication channels. Louis Vuitton advertising in the magazines is significantly important source to communicate with the brand for women of three countries (Russia-48.5%, China-30.4%, France-30%). However, in this case is also observed that French male (16.7%) are also prefer to get information about the brand by reading magazines. Chinese male consumers (17.4%) are neutral towards advertising in the magazines. Interesting distribution of answers is observed in case of Russian male consumers where 12.8% are neutral to the magazines as Louis Vuitton communication channel and 12.8% agree that they get information about the brand through printed advertising. The percentage of male who disagree that magazines are not attractive communication channels is negligible.

The following table shows the results of consumers' attitudes towards applications on digital devices as Louis Vuitton's communication channel cross-tabulation.

Table 20. Consumers' attitudes towards applications on digital devices as LV's communication channel

What is your country of origin?				applications on digital devices: strongly disagree	disagree	neutral	agree	strongly agree	Total
Russia	What is your gender?	male	Count	3	5	6	1		15
			% of Total	7.7%	12.8%	15.4%	2.6%		38.5%
		female	Count	3	9	7	5		24
			% of Total	7.7%	23.1%	17.9%	12.8%		61.5%
	Total		Count	6	14	13	6		39
			% of Total	15.4%	35.9%	33.3%	15.4%		100.0%
China	What is your gender?	male	Count		1	3	4	0	8
			% of Total		4.3%	13.0%	17.4%	0,0%	34.8%
		female	Count		3	6	5	1	15
			% of Total		13.0%	26.1%	21.7%	4.3%	65.2%
	Total		Count		4	9	9	1	23
			% of Total		17.4%	39.1%	39.1%	4.3%	100.0%
France	What is your gender?	male	Count	1	5	2	1	1	10
			% of Total	3.3%	16.7%	6.7%	3.3%	3.3%	33.3%
		female	Count	0	4	11	4	1	20
			% of Total	0.0%	13.3%	36.7%	13.3%	3.3%	66.7%
	Total		Count	1	9	13	5	2	30
			% of Total	3.3%	30.0%	43.3%	16.7%	6.7%	100.0%
Total	What is your gender?	male	Count	4	11	11	6	1	33
			% of Total	4.3%	12.0%	12.0%	6.5%	1.1%	35.9%
		female	Count	3	16	24	14	2	59
			% of Total	3.3%	17.4%	26.1%	15.2%	2.2%	64.1%
	Total		Count	7	27	35	20	3	92
			% of Total	7.6%	29.3%	38.0%	21.7%	3.3%	100.0%

Source: data from questionnaires, own elaboration

Applications on digital devices are not the most effective way to communicate with Russian and French consumers, since the majority of Russian (35.9%) as well as French (43.3%) consumers either disagree or neutral to the statement that they use different applications to communicate with Louis Vuitton and get requested information. Completely different situation is observed in Chinese market, where the majority of respondents (39.1%) admit, that they use applications to communicate with the brand.

Table 21 reflects consumers' attitudes towards outdoor advertising as one of Louis Vuitton's communication channels. Here is seen the unity of opinions as well since in average Russian (33.3%), Chinese (39.1%) and French (43.3%) consumers specified that this way to communicate with the brand and get information is not very attractive and preferential.

Table 21. Consumers' attitudes towards outdoors advertising as LV's communication channel

What is your country of origin?				outdoor advertising					Total
				strongly disagree	disagree	neutral	agree	strongly agree	
Russia	What is your gender?	male	Count	4	4	7	0		15
			% of Total	10.3%	10.3%	17.9%	0.0%		38.5%
		female	Count	4	12	7	1		24
			% of Total	10.3%	30.8%	17.9%	2.6%		61.5%
	Total		Count	8	16	14	1		39
			% of Total	20.5%	41.0%	35.9%	2.6%		100.0%
China	What is your gender?	male	Count	0	6	2	0		8
			% of Total	0.0%	26.1%	8.7%	0.0%		34.8%
		female	Count	2	3	4	6		15
			% of Total	8.7%	13.0%	17.4%	26.1%		65.2%
	Total		Count	2	9	6	6		23
			% of Total	8.7%	39.1%	26.1%	26.1%		100.0%
France	What is your gender?	male	Count		2	5	3	0	10
			% of Total		6.7%	16.7%	10.0%	0.0%	33.3%
		female	Count		2	9	8	1	20
			% of Total		6.7%	30.0%	26.7%	3.3%	66.7%
	Total		Count		4	14	11	1	30
			% of Total		13.3%	46.7%	36.7%	3.3%	100.0%
Total	What is your gender?	male	Count	4	12	14	3	0	33
			% of Total	4.3%	13.0%	15.2%	3.3%	0.0%	35.9%
		female	Count	6	17	20	15	1	59
			% of Total	6.5%	18.5%	21.7%	16.3%	1.1%	64.1%
	Total		Count	10	29	34	18	1	92
			% of Total	10.9%	31.5%	37.0%	19.6%	1.1%	100.0%

Source: data from questionnaires, own elaboration

Table 22. Gender-country of origin cross-tabulation towards on-line space usage

What is your country of origin?				Do you use online space to communicate with Louis Vuitton?		Total
				yes	no	
Russia	What is your gender?	male	Count	3	12	15
			% of Total	7.7%	30.8%	38.5%
		female	Count	16	8	24
			% of Total	41.0%	20.5%	61.5%
	Total		Count	19	20	39
			% of Total	48.7%	51.3%	100.0%
China	What is your gender?	male	Count	5	3	8
			% of Total	21.7%	13.0%	34.8%
		female	Count	10	5	15
			% of Total	43.5%	21.7%	65.2%
	Total		Count	15	8	23
			% of Total	65.2%	34.8%	100.0%
France	What is your gender?	male	Count	2	8	10
			% of Total	6.7%	26.7%	33.3%
		female	Count	9	11	20
			% of Total	30.0%	36.7%	66.7%
	Total		Count	11	19	30
			% of Total	36.7%	63.3%	100.0%
Total	What is your gender?	male	Count	10	23	33
			% of Total	10.9%	25.0%	35.9%
		female	Count	35	24	59
			% of Total	38.0%	26.1%	64.1%
	Total		Count	45	47	92
			% of Total	48.9%	51.1%	100.0%

Source: data from questionnaires, own elaboration

In the table above represented the results of cross-tabulation towards consumers' attitudes to use online space to communicate with Louis Vuitton. Russian female consumers (41%) actively use online space to communicate with the brand as well as Chinese consumers (65.2%). In contrast, Russian male consumers (30.8%) and French consumers (63.3%) do not use online space as communication channel.

Table 23. Age-gender cross-tabulation towards on-line space usage

What ia your age?				Do you use online space to communicate with Louis Vuitton? yes	no	Total
under 25	What is your gender?	male	Count	7	4	11
			% of Total	18.9%	10.8%	29.7%
		female	Count	18	8	26
			% of Total	48.6%	21.6%	70.3%
	Total		Count	25	12	37
			% of Total	67.6%	32.4%	100.0%
25-34	What is your gender?	male	Count	3	13	16
			% of Total	7.0%	30.2%	37.2%
		female	Count	16	11	27
			% of Total	37.2%	25.6%	62.8%
	Total		Count	19	24	43
			% of Total	44.2%	55.8%	100.0%
35-40	What is your gender?	male	Count	0	4	4
			% of Total	0.0%	44.4%	44.4%
		female	Count	1	4	5
			% of Total	11.1%	44.4%	55.6%
	Total		Count	1	8	9
			% of Total	11.1%	88.9%	100.0%
41-45	What is your gender?	male	Count		2	2
			% of Total		100.0%	100.0%
	Total		Count		2	2
			% of Total		100.0%	100.0%
46-55	What is your gender?	female	Count		1	1
			% of Total		100.0%	100.0%
	Total		Count		1	1
			% of Total		100.0%	100.0%
Total	What is your gender?	male	Count	10	23	33
			% of Total	10.9%	25.0%	35.9%
		female	Count	35	24	59
			% of Total	38.0%	26.1%	64.1%
	Total		Count	45	47	92
			% of Total	48.9%	51.1%	100.0%

Source: data from questionnaires, own elaboration

In order to understand better the portrait of consumers, who use online space to communicate with Louis Vuitton, it seems necessary to make another cross-tabulation based on such indicators as gender and age. As it seen from the table above both genders at the age under 25 are active users of on-line space (67.6%). With increase of age the activity of using the online space to communicate with Louis Vuitton is reduced therefore the majority of women aged 25-34 are still using the Internet (37.2%) for communications, while men in the same age group are no longer users (30.2%). Since the sample of respondents at the age above 35 years is very small (13.1%) 100% of respondents in the given age group specified that they do not use online space to communicate with the brand.

Table 24. Consumers' motivation to use online space

				Why do you use online space?[a]			
What is your country of origin?				To get additonal information about the brand and products	To research before purchase in-store	To purchase directly online	Total
Russia	What is your gender?	male	Count	1	3		4
			% of Total	3.4%	10.3%		13.8%
		female	Count	13	12		25
			% of Total	44.8%	41.4%		86.2%
	Total		Count	14	15		29
			% of Total	48.3%	51.7%		100.0%
China	What is your gender?	male	Count	4	3	3	10
			% of Total	13.3%	10.0%	10.0%	33.3%
		female	Count	3	8	9	20
			% of Total	10.0%	26.7%	30.0%	66.7%
	Total		Count	7	11	12	30
			% of Total	23.3%	36.7%	40.0%	100.0%
France	What is your gender?	male	Count	1	2		3
			% of Total	6.3%	12.5%		18.8%
		female	Count	7	6		13
			% of Total	43.8%	37.5%		81.3%
	Total		Count	8	8		16
			% of Total	50.0%	50.0%		100.0%

Source: data from questionnaires, own elaboration

Table 24 represents the main motives of consumers' to communicate with Louis Vuitton through online space (brand's web site). Russian women (44.8%) as well as French women (43.8%) use online space to get additional information about the brand and its products. Russian (10.3%) and French (12.5%) male consumers in their turn use online space to research before purchase in store. Surprisingly, none of Russian or French consumers do not use online space to make a direct purchase, whereas Chinese consumers do it in particular with this purpose, since the majority of Chinese respondents noticed that they use online space to make purchase (40%).

Table 25. Consumers' reasons to communicate with LV online

What is your country of origin?				Why do you follow LV pages online?[a]					
				This provides you more information about the brand	This keeps you in touch with new products and events	This helps to create a common experience with the brand	This makes you to follow the trend	This helps to communicate with the other followers of the brand	Total
Russia	What is your gender?	male	Count	1	3	0	1	0	5
			% of Total	1.9%	5.7%	0.0%	1.9%	0.0%	9.4%
		female	Count	13	15	8	9	3	48
			% of Total	24.5%	28.3%	15.1%	17.0%	5.7%	90.6%
	Total		Count	14	18	8	10	3	53
			% of Total	26.4%	34.0%	15.1%	18.9%	5.7%	100.0%
China	What is your gender?	male	Count	4	4	1	4	2	15
			% of Total	9.1%	9.1%	2.3%	9.1%	4.5%	34.1%
		female	Count	8	8	3	5	5	29
			% of Total	18.2%	18.2%	6.8%	11.4%	11.4%	65.9%
	Total		Count	12	12	4	9	7	44
			% of Total	27.3%	27.3%	9.1%	20.5%	15.9%	100.0%
France	What is your gender?	male	Count	1	2	1	1	0	5
			% of Total	3.7%	7.4%	3.7%	3.7%	0.0%	18.5%
		female	Count	6	6	6	3	1	22
			% of Total	22.2%	22.2%	22.2%	11.1%	3.7%	81.5%
	Total		Count	7	8	7	4	1	27
			% of Total	25.9%	29.6%	25.9%	14.8%	3.7%	100.0%

Source: data from questionnaires, own elaboration

Table 25 shows reasons to follow Louis Vuitton's pages online of those consumers who use online space to communicate with the brand. The motives of Russian consumers (28.3%) to follow the pages connected with desire to keep in touch with Louis Vuitton's new products and events. Chinese consumers also use online space with the same purpose (23.7%) along with it they also use digital space because it provides them more information about the brand. The motives of French consumers are similar to the motives of Russian and Chinese consumers, however they also use online space in relation to create the common experience with the brand.

The following group of tables represents consumers' attitudes towards Louis Vuitton's online presence. Table 26 placed down below shows that all groups of interviewed respondents agree with the fact that online presence maximizes brand's visibility. (Russia-65.2%, China-46.7%, France-40.8%)

Table 26. Consumers' attitudes towards LV's online presence

What is your country of origin?				brand's page on social media platforms (Twitter, facebook etc)					Total
				strongly disagree	disagree	neutral	agree	strongly agree	
Russia	What is your gender?	male	Count	3	6	4	2	0	15
			% of Total	7.7%	15.4%	10.3%	5.1%	0.0%	38.5%
		female	Count	2	7	2	11	2	24
			% of Total	5.1%	17.9%	5.1%	28.2%	5.1%	61.5%
	Total		Count	5	13	6	13	2	39
			% of Total	12.8%	33.3%	15.4%	33.3%	5.1%	100.0%
China	What is your gender?	male	Count		1	3	3	1	8
			% of Total		4.3%	13.0%	13.0%	4.3%	34.8%
		female	Count		1	4	6	4	15
			% of Total		4.3%	17.4%	26.1%	17.4%	65.2%
	Total		Count		2	7	9	5	23
			% of Total		8.7%	30.4%	39.1%	21.7%	100.0%
France	What is your gender?	male	Count	1	2	4	2	1	10
			% of Total	3.3%	6.7%	13.3%	6.7%	3.3%	33.3%
		female	Count	0	5	7	4	4	20
			% of Total	0.0%	16.7%	23.3%	13.3%	13.3%	66.7%
	Total		Count	1	7	11	6	5	30
			% of Total	3.3%	23.3%	36.7%	20.0%	16.7%	100.0%
Total	What is your gender?	male	Count	4	9	11	7	2	33
			% of Total	4.3%	9.8%	12.0%	7.6%	2.2%	35.9%
		female	Count	2	13	13	21	10	59
			% of Total	2.2%	14.1%	14.1%	22.8%	10.9%	64.1%
	Total		Count	6	22	24	28	12	92
			% of Total	6.5%	23.9%	26.1%	30.4%	13.0%	100.0%

Source: data from questionnaires, own elaboration

Table 27. Consumers' attitudes towards LV's online presence

What is your country of origin?				It decreases the perception of brand as a luxury				Total
				strongly disagree	disagree	neutral	agree	
Russia	What is your gender?	male	Count	0	2	4	0	6
			% of Total	0.0%	8.7%	17.4%	0.0%	26.1%
		female	Count	4	6	5	2	17
			% of Total	17.4%	26.1%	21.7%	8.7%	73.9%
	Total		Count	4	8	9	2	23
			% of Total	17.4%	34.8%	39.1%	8.7%	100.0%
China	What is your gender?	male	Count	2	1	2		5
			% of Total	13.3%	6.7%	13.3%		33.3%
		female	Count	5	2	3		10
			% of Total	33.3%	13.3%	20.0%		66.7%
	Total		Count	7	3	5		15
			% of Total	46.7%	20.0%	33.3%		100.0%
France	What is your gender?	male	Count	0	0	1	1	2
			% of Total	0.0%	0.0%	9.1%	9.1%	18.2%
		female	Count	1	2	1	5	9
			% of Total	9.1%	18.2%	9.1%	45.5%	81.8%
	Total		Count	1	2	2	6	11
			% of Total	9.1%	18.2%	18.2%	54.5%	100.0%
Total	What is your gender?	male	Count	2	3	7	1	13
			% of Total	4.1%	6.1%	14.3%	2.0%	26.5%
		female	Count	10	10	9	7	36
			% of Total	20.4%	20.4%	18.4%	14.3%	73.5%
	Total		Count	12	13	16	8	49
			% of Total	24.5%	26.5%	32.7%	16.3%	100.0%

Source: data from questionnaires, own elaboration

As it seen from table 27 Russian consumers either disagree (34.8%) with the statement that Internet presence decreases the perception of Louis Vuitton as luxury brand or neutral to it (39.1%). In comparison, the majority of interviewed Chinese respondents strongly disagree with the statement that online presence can somehow damage the image of the brand (46.7%). Interesting results were obtained in the French market where overwhelming majority of consumers agree that online presence decreases the perception of brand as luxury (54.5%).

Table 28. Consumers' attitudes towards LV's online presence

What is your country of origin?				It is innovative, modern: strongly disagree	disagree	neutral	agree	Total
Russia	What is your gender?	male	Count	0	2	4	0	6
			% of Total	0.0%	8.7%	17.4%	0.0%	26.1%
		female	Count	2	4	5	6	17
			% of Total	8.7%	17.4%	21.7%	26.1%	73.9%
	Total		Count	2	6	9	6	23
			% of Total	8.7%	26.1%	39.1%	26.1%	100.0%
China	What is your gender?	male	Count			3	2	5
			% of Total			20.0%	13.3%	33.3%
		female	Count			9	1	10
			% of Total			60.0%	6.7%	66.7%
	Total		Count			12	3	15
			% of Total			80.0%	20.0%	100.0%
France	What is your gender?	male	Count		0	1	1	2
			% of Total		0.0%	9.1%	9.1%	18.2%
		female	Count		5	1	3	9
			% of Total		45.5%	9.1%	27.3%	81.8%
	Total		Count		5	2	4	11
			% of Total		45.5%	18.2%	36.4%	100.0%
Total	What is your gender?	male	Count	0	2	8	3	13
			% of Total	0.0%	4.1%	16.3%	6.1%	26.5%
		female	Count	2	9	15	10	36
			% of Total	4.1%	18.4%	30.6%	20.4%	73.5%
	Total		Count	2	11	23	13	49
			% of Total	4.1%	22.4%	46.9%	26.5%	100.0%

Source: data from questionnaires, own elaboration

Chinese consumers (80%) as well as Russian (17.4%) and French (9.1%) male consumers are neutral to the statement that Internet presence is innovative Louis Vuitton's communication channel. Nevertheless, Russian female consumers (26.1%) agree that Internet presence in innovation for Louis Vuitton, in distinction with French women (45.5%) who disagree that Internet presence either innovative or modern.

Table 29. Consumers' attitudes towards LV's online presence

What is your country of origin?				It makes you want to buy more: strongly disagree	disagree	neutral	agree	strongly agree	Total
Russia	What is your gender?	male	Count	1	0	2	2	1	6
			% of Total	4.3%	0.0%	8.7%	8.7%	4.3%	26.1%
		female	Count	1	1	1	12	2	17
			% of Total	4.3%	4.3%	4.3%	52.2%	8.7%	73.9%
	Total		Count	2	1	3	14	3	23
			% of Total	8.7%	4.3%	13.0%	60.9%	13.0%	100.0%
China	What is your gender?	male	Count			0	4	1	5
			% of Total			0.0%	26.7%	6.7%	33.3%
		female	Count			3	4	3	10
			% of Total			20.0%	26.7%	20.0%	66.7%
	Total		Count			3	8	4	15
			% of Total			20.0%	53.3%	26.7%	100.0%
France	What is your gender?	male	Count		0	1	1	0	2
			% of Total		0.0%	9.1%	9.1%	0.0%	18.2%
		female	Count		2	1	4	2	9
			% of Total		18.2%	9.1%	36.4%	18.2%	81.8%
	Total		Count		2	2	5	2	11
			% of Total		18.2%	18.2%	45.5%	18.2%	100.0%
Total	What is your gender?	male	Count	1	0	3	7	2	13
			% of Total	2.0%	0.0%	6.1%	14.3%	4.1%	26.5%
		female	Count	1	3	5	20	7	36
			% of Total	2.0%	6.1%	10.2%	40.8%	14.3%	73.5%
	Total		Count	2	3	8	27	9	49
			% of Total	4.1%	6.1%	16.3%	55.1%	18.4%	100.0%

Source: data from questionnaires, own elaboration

Table 30. Consumers' attitudes towards LV's online presence

What is your country of origin?				It makes you want to know more: disagree	neutral	agree	strongly agree	Total
Russia	What is your gender?	male	Count	0	3	2	1	6
			% of Total	0.0%	13.0%	8.7%	4.3%	26.1%
		female	Count	2	3	9	3	17
			% of Total	8.7%	13.0%	39.1%	13.0%	73.9%
	Total		Count	2	6	11	4	23
			% of Total	8.7%	26.1%	47.8%	17.4%	100.0%
China	What is your gender?	male	Count	0	1	3	1	5
			% of Total	0.0%	6.7%	20.0%	6.7%	33.3%
		female	Count	1	2	4	3	10
			% of Total	6.7%	13.3%	26.7%	20.0%	66.7%
	Total		Count	1	3	7	4	15
			% of Total	6.7%	20.0%	46.7%	26.7%	100.0%
France	What is your gender?	male	Count	1	0	1	0	2
			% of Total	9.1%	0.0%	9.1%	0.0%	18.2%
		female	Count	0	4	3	2	9
			% of Total	0.0%	36.4%	27.3%	18.2%	81.8%
	Total		Count	1	4	4	2	11
			% of Total	9.1%	36.4%	36.4%	18.2%	100.0%
Total	What is your gender?	male	Count	1	4	6	2	13
			% of Total	2.0%	8.2%	12.2%	4.1%	26.5%
		female	Count	3	9	16	8	36
			% of Total	6.1%	18.4%	32.7%	16.3%	73.5%
	Total		Count	4	13	22	10	49
			% of Total	8.2%	26.5%	44.9%	20.4%	100.0%

Source: data from questionnaires, own elaboration

Tables 29 and 30 represent consumers attitudes towards two statements based on presumption that Louis Vuitton's online presence makes them want to know and buy more. The majority of consumers of three markets agree with the statement that online presence makes them want to buy more (Russia-60.9%, China-53.3%, France-45.5%,) as well as with the statement that online presence makes them to know more (Russia-47.8%, China-46.7%, France-36.4%)

Table 31. Consumers' attitudes towards LV's online presence

What is your country of origin?				The brand starts perceiving as a mass market					Total
				strongly disagree	disagree	neutral	agree	strongly agree	
Russia	What is your gender?	male	Count	1	1	3	0	1	6
			% of Total	4.3%	4.3%	13.0%	0.0%	4.3%	26.1%
		female	Count	7	4	5	1	0	17
			% of Total	30.4%	17.4%	21.7%	4.3%	0.0%	73.9%
	Total		Count	8	5	8	1	1	23
			% of Total	34.8%	21.7%	34.8%	4.3%	4.3%	100.0%
China	What is your gender?	male	Count	2	3	0			5
			% of Total	13.3%	20.0%	0.0%			33.3%
		female	Count	2	3	5			10
			% of Total	13.3%	20.0%	33.3%			66.7%
	Total		Count	4	6	5			15
			% of Total	26.7%	40.0%	33.3%			100.0%
France	What is your gender?	male	Count	0	0	1	6	0	7
			% of Total	0.0%	0.0%	6.3%	37.5%	0.0%	43.8%
		female	Count	1	2	1	3	2	9
			% of Total	6.3%	12.5%	6.3%	18.8%	12.5%	56.3%
	Total		Count	1	2	2	9	2	16
			% of Total	6.3%	12.5%	12.5%	56.3%	12.5%	100.0%
Total	What is your gender?	male	Count	3	4	4	6	1	18
			% of Total	5.6%	7.4%	7.4%	11.1%	1.9%	33.3%
		female	Count	10	9	11	4	2	36
			% of Total	18.5%	16.7%	20.4%	7.4%	3.7%	66.7%
	Total		Count	13	13	15	10	3	54
			% of Total	24.1%	24.1%	27.8%	18.5%	5.6%	100.0%

Source: data from questionnaires, own elaboration

In general Russian (34.8%) and Chinese (40%) respondents do not agree with the statement that online presence possibly can damage Louis Vuitton's image and change consumers perception from luxury to mass-market. However 56.3% of interviewed French respondents even those who communicate with Louis Vuitton through online space agree that perception about the brand may change.

Table 32. Consumers' attitudes towards LV's online presence

What is your country of origin?				It is a new experience in communications with brand					Total
				strongly disagree	disagree	neutral	agree	strongly agree	
Russia	What is your gender?	male	Count	0	0	5	0	0	5
			% of Total	0,0%	0,0%	22,7%	0,0%	0,0%	22,7%
		female	Count	1	4	7	4	1	17
			% of Total	4.5%	18.2%	31.8%	18.2%	4.5%	77.3%
	Total		Count	1	4	12	4	1	22
			% of Total	4.5%	18.2%	54.5%	18.2%	4.5%	100.0%
China	What is your gender?	male	Count		1	3	1	0	5
			% of Total		6.7%	20.0%	6.7%	0.0%	33.3%
		female	Count		2	5	2	1	10
			% of Total		13.3%	33.3%	13.3%	6.7%	66.7%
	Total		Count		3	8	3	1	15
			% of Total		20.0%	53.3%	20.0%	6.7%	100.0%
France	What is your gender?	male	Count	0	0	1	1	0	2
			% of Total	0.0%	0.0%	9.1%	9.1%	0.0%	18.2%
		female	Count	2	2	0	2	3	9
			% of Total	18.2%	18.2%	0.0%	18.2%	27.3%	81.8%
	Total		Count	2	2	1	3	3	11
			% of Total	18.2%	18.2%	9.1%	27.3%	27.3%	100.0%
Total	What is your gender?	male	Count	0	1	9	2	0	12
			% of Total	0,0%	2.1%	18,8%	4.2%	0.0%	25.0%
		female	Count	3	8	12	8	5	36
			% of Total	6.3%	16.7%	25.0%	16.7%	10.4%	75.0%
	Total		Count	3	9	21	10	5	48
			% of Total	6.3%	18.8%	43.8%	20.8%	10.4%	100.0%

Source: data from questionnaires, own elaboration

As it seen from table 32 Russian (54.5%) and Chinese (53.3%) consumers are neutral to the statement that online presence is a possibility to create new experience in communications with Louis Vuitton. In comparison 27.3% of interviewed French consumers who communicate with the brand via online agree that this is a good chance to create new experience in relationships with the brand.

It is important to note that the tables that were analyzed in foregoing subchapter provide only the information needed to answer the research questions. Appendix 3 represents tables showing more information and variables influencing on cross-cultural differences in consumers behavior.

5.3.3 Analyses of Research Findings

Descriptive analyses showed that cross-cultural perceptions of luxury brands as well as preferential communication channels and attitudes towards Internet as communication channel are significantly different. However, along with these differences similarities were also identified that will be described primarily.

Conducted research of Louis Vuitton's consumers of three different markets showed that concerning luxury brands' perceptions and intentions to purchase Louis Vuitton's products (Research Question 1,2) the greatest similarities observed among Russian and Chinese consumers. These representatives of emerging markets due to their specific luxury buying behavior and cultural influence perceive luxury brands as a tool do demonstrate social status and wealthy. For these reasons during decision-making process about Louis Vuitton's products purchase significant influence on the consumers have such factors as brand's awareness, name and brand's prestige. Since Chinese and Russian Louis Vuitton's consumers' behavior aimed at social status demonstration important role in their decision-making process also play in-store services and atmosphere of luxury. This type of behavior can be explained by the prevailing social stereotypes and the desire not to lose the face in the eyes of the people belonging to a particular social group. The important distinctive features between two groups of Louis Vuitton's consumers appear in their attitudes towards products' quality and prices. In this regard, according to conducted research, Russian consumers are more demanding to the quality of products than Chinese consumers. Considering high prices, the majority of interviewed Chinese consumers indicated strong connection between high prices as determining factor influencing on decision about Louis Vuitton's products' purchase, since possession of expensive brand's products is one of the ways of social status demonstration. However, in case of Russian Louis Vuitton's consumers high price of products does not influence on the decision about the purchase.

On the other hand, Louis Vuitton's consumers of French market represent opposite type of consumer behavior. According to the research results, French consumers perceive luxury brands as those who provide high quality products with exceptional characteristics. Interesting finding with respect to French consumers became the fact that on their decision towards Louis Vuitton's products purchase influence brand's heritage. Since Louis Vuitton's country of origin is France it is very important to French consumers not only to purchase product with outstanding quality but also to become a part of brand's great history. On the basis of previous factor influencing on French consumers decision-making process it is important to note one more feature distinguishing French consumers from Russian and Chinese. The majority of French Louis Vuitton's consumers mentioned that creation of common experience with the brand, which implies trust and emotional connection significantly influence on their purchase decision. Finally, the last factor influencing on French consumers decision-making process towards Louis Vuitton's products purchase is rarity. Rarity of products as influencing factor towards purchase connected with individualistic nature of French consumers allowing purchasing unique product distinguishing them from the other and reflecting their personality in the higher extent.

Conducted research showed that in general, consumers of three countries prefer to get information about the brand from such sources of information as stores, magazines and surrounding environment (friends, family, colleagues). In case of Chinese consumers it is important to underline the significant role of the Internet as communication channel with the brand (Research Question 3). However, in spite of the fact that three groups of consumers have similarities in preferential sources of information about the brand their attitudes towards each type of communication channels remain different. Moreover, the research also reflects not only cross-cultural differences in preferences towards Louis Vuitton's communication channels but also differences between genders' preferences. The research findings show that the perception of communication channels on average equally between Chinese men and women. Intersexual differences are observed in most of the French and Russian markets where women are more susceptible to a variety of Louis Vuitton's communication channels than men.

Relevant differences were found in cross-cultural preferences towards Louis Vuitton's communication channels (Research Question 4). While French Louis Vuitton's consumers prefer traditional communication channels such as stores, magazines and videos, Russian consumers added that along with traditional channels they also prefer such Louis Vuitton's communication channels as web site and social-media platforms. It is important to note, that overwhelming majority of interviewed Russian female consumers mentioned store windows as the most attractive Louis Vuitton's communication channel. Managers of Louis Vuitton who are in charge for developing and adopting multinational strategies should take this fact in consideration. Research findings showed, that in comparison with Russian and French consumers, Chinese Louis Vuitton's consumers prefer opposite type of communication channels including all kinds of brand presence in online space such as web site, social media platforms, online videos and applications on digital devices. Interesting result of the study was the fact that the respondents of three countries concurred that outdoor advertising is less preferential Louis Vuitton's communication channel.

However, the most interesting and relevant differences are observed between consumers' attitudes towards Louis Vuitton's online presence. Research findings represent that Louis Vuitton's Internet presence affect differently on the consumers of three selected markets (Research Question 5).

According to conducted research, Louis Vuitton's consumers of Chinese market are the most active users of online space who use the Internet not only as an information channel but also for making online purchases. The results also showed that among the three groups of surveyed consumers only Chinese use the Internet for the purpose of shopping. Furthermore, Chinese Louis Vuitton's consumers are the one from group from three interviewed groups of consumers who use all kinds of Louis Vuitton's online presence from web site to applications on devices.

In comparison with Chinese consumers, overwhelming majority of interviewed French consumers does not use the Internet as a channel to communicate with the brand. Even the small amount of French Louis Vuitton's consumers who use the Internet for the purpose of communication considered that an active presence of LV in the online space can harm the image of the brand due to the fact that it may lose its status and start perceiving as a mass market.

Russian Louis Vuitton's consumers in their attitudes towards the Internet are located between the Chinese and French consumers. Research has shown that in the case of Russian consumers observed great influence of gender identity on the choice of the Internet as a communication channel. In accordance with the research findings, Russian women are the most active users of Internet in comparison with Russian male consumers. Russian female Louis Vuitton's consumers use Internet as additional source of information about the brand, besides they do not agree with the issue that the Internet presence can somehow damage the image of the brand.

However, during the analysis common features were found between Louis Vuitton's consumers' attitudes towards brand's Internet presence. Similarity appeared in the fact that for all groups of consumers the Internet perceived as a means of increasing brand awareness and means of stimulating the desire to learn more about the brand and subsequently purchase its products. Finally, the research findings show strong dependency between age of the consumers and frequency of the Internet usage for communication purposes in the three selected markets.

6. Conclusion

Understanding of consumers' cross-cultural differences is a key factor for the development and implementation of successful international marketing strategy. The study findings confirm that cross-cultural differences of consumers significantly influence on the perceptions of luxury brands along with intentions to buy luxury products and preferences in communication channels. Study results sustain the theory of luxury consumers' behavior explaining that differences are based on individualistic or collectivistic nature of the consumers. Furthermore, differences between consumers of luxury products are observed not only between consumers of different cultural environments, but also inside represented culture.

Conducted studies of Louis Vuitton consumers of French, Russian, and Chinese markets show that along with similarities found between consumers behavior based on internationalization of Louis Vuitton marketing campaigns strong differences were also found.

Russian and Chinese consumers of Louis Vuitton goods in accordance with their collectivistic culture tend to purchase brand products with the purpose of social status and high level of prosperity demonstration. This is precisely why surrounding environment has become the most important source of information on the brand in given markets. In comparison, French consumers as representatives of individualistic culture presupposing independence and desire of standing out, tend to buy Louis Vuitton products because of their uniqueness, rarity, and exceptional quality. The study findings also showed the influence of cross-cultural differences affecting the choice in favor of Louis Vuitton communication channels. French consumers building their preferences upon the heritage of the brand and its history prefer traditional communication channels. In contrast, Chinese consumers give their preferences to modern and advanced communication channels. Remarkable findings showed Russian consumers who are at an intermediate stage composing their preferences from the mix of traditional and modern Louis Vuitton communication channels.

The most ambiguous results were obtained in reference to Louis Vuitton digital strategy. In this regard preferences for this type of communication channel are influenced not only by cultural differences, but also by belonging to a certain age group of consumers and sexual identity (in the case of the Russian market). The study showed Chinese consumers are the most active users of the virtual space using it not only as a means of communication, but also as a way for purchasing Louis Vuitton products. Russian consumers do not demonstrate such activity using digital space; likewise, the attitude of French consumers towards Louis Vuitton digital presence can be described as negative. Another significant study finding that unifies Russian and French consumers of Louis Vuitton products was the preference of in-store multisensory experience as a tool of products purchase.

Proceeding from the foregoing findings we can jump to conclusion that wishing of getting success Louis Vuitton management has to take into consideration consumers cross-cultural differences in perceptions and intentions to purchase. Adoption of communication channels for specific cultural characteristics should not crop up only in the three countries under present analysis, but also for specific cultural features of each market where the brand is represented.

7. Recommendations

In spite of the fact that conducted study features explanatory character, several recommendations can be given to the Company to get better success in marketing strategy in three markets under analysis.

Firstly, as store environment plays significant importance in creation of emotional relations with the consumers it is recommended to employ differences in cross-cultural perceptions of luxury in stores atmosphere. Atmosphere and service in Louis Vuitton stores in China and Russia should be aimed at emphasizing on what status in society can ensure the possession of the products. On the contrary, the atmosphere in French boutiques should emphasize the exceptionality and uniqueness of products along with their exceptional quality and craftsmanship. In this regard it is important to note the importance of staff in creating of in-store atmosphere as a large number of Russian and Chinese consumers purchase Louis Vuitton products abroad. Staff should be trained to understand the cross-cultural differences of consumers and provide for the brand attributes, which are extremely interesting to them.

Secondly, since for Russian and Chinese consumers, due to their collectivistic nature, it is acceptable to identify themselves with other members of the society, it is recommended to employ more Russian and Chinese celebrities in marketing campaigns to increase credibility to the brand, provoke similarity, and distinguish the brand from the others

Thirdly, it is recommended to enhance digital presence in the Chinese market with the possibility of further integration with the national social-media platforms. As Chinese consumers are the most active users of digital space the whole content should be translated in the national language.

Fourthly, it is not recommended to develop digital presence extensively in the French market since it could damage the brand image in given market. Instead, it is recommended to focus on developing of the traditional communication channels, such as advertising in magazines and video campaigns.

Finally, the brand management should take into consideration tendency of Russian women to pay great attention to window dressing. More attractive and sophisticated windows dressing could possibly increase the number of Russian consumers.

8. Limitations

The major limitation of present study stems from its narrow nature and absence of tested relationships with other variables. The conducted study focuses mainly on the influence of such factor as country of origin on consumer perceptions of luxury brands, intentions to purchase, and preferences towards communication channels. Further studies can deepen the scope of researches and test the influence of such factors as age, level of income, and education on consumer cross-cultural differences in perceptions, intentions, and choice of preferential communication channels. The second limitation of this study is based on size of the sample, which should be increased in future.

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Appendix 1 – Data for BCG Matrix construction

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Appendix 1. Data for BCG Matrix construction

Division	LVMH sales by Division 2014 (mln. €)	Closest market competitor	Competitor's sales by Division 2014 (mln. €)	LVMH relative market share	LVMH Division revenue growth 2008-2014 (mln. €)
Wines and Spirits	3.494	Boizel Chanoine	3.484	1.003	34%
Fashion and Leather Goods	30.866	PPR	10.038	3.075	65%
Perfumes and Cosmetics	3.368	P&G	19.507	0.173	20%
Watches and Jewelry	2.720	Richemont Group	9.154	0.297	15%
Selective Retailing	9.511	Galeries Lafayette	4.588	2.073	50%

Source: data from annual financial reports, own elaboration

Appendix 2. Questionnaire

1. What is your gender?

1. male
2. female

2. What is your age?

1. under 25
2. 25-34
3. 35-40
4. 41-45
5. 46-55
6. over 55

3. Please, indicate your country of origin

1. Russia
2. France
3. China

4. Select, please, your marital status

1. Single
2. Married
3. Divorced
4. Widowed

5. What is your highest level of education?

1. Completed high school (no diploma)
2. High school graduate
3. Completed college (no degree)
4. Associate or technical degree
5. Bachelor's degree
6. Master's degree
7. PhD.
8. Other advanced degree

6. Which category better describes your household level of income?

1. Less 25.000$
2. 26.000-34.000$
3. 35.000-49.000$
4. 50.000-74.000$
5. 75.000-90.000$
6. Over 90.000$

7. How many luxury purchases do you usually make during year?

1. One
2. Two
3. Three-five
4. Over five

8. How do you perceive luxury brands? (Multiple-choice question)

1. Reputation
2. Provider of social status
3. Brand's values and culture
4. High quality of products and craftsmanship
5. High prices of products
6. Uniqueness of products

9. Why do you purchase luxury brands' products? (Multiple-choice question)

1. To show wealth and social status
2. Quality of products
3. Following the trends
4. Brand reflects personality
5. To distinguish yourself from the other
6. Rarity of products
7. Symbolism

10. Where do you usually get information about Louis Vuitton?

1. In store
2. Fashion magazines
3. Friends/Family/Colleagues
4. Internet
5. Social Media (Instagram, Facebook, Twitter etc.)
6. Outdoor advertising

11. What impacts your decision towards Louis Vuitton goods' purchase?

	Strongly disagree	**Disagree**	**Neutral**	**Agree**	**Strongly agree**
1. Brand					
2. Price					
3. Quality					
4. In-store services and atmosphere					
5. Design					
6. Rarity of products					
7. Prestige					
8. Experience with Brand					
9. Range of product lines					
10. Providing social status					

12. Where do you prefer to buy Louis Vuitton goods? (Multiple-choice question)

1. Brand boutiques in home country
2. Brand boutiques abroad while travelling
3. Brand web site

13. What Louis Vuitton communication channels are more attractive according to your opinion?

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
1. In-store atmosphere					
2. Shop windows					
3. Brand's web site					
4. Commercial campaigns (video version)					
5. Brand' s page on social media (Facebook, Instagram etc.)					
6. Applications on digital devices					
7. Magazines					
8. Outdoor advertising					

14. What is your personal attitude towards celebrities in Louis Vuitton's advertising campaigns? (Multiple-choice question)

1. They give you certain emotional connection with the brand
2. They increase credibility to the brand
3. They provoke familiarity with the celebrity
4. They help to distinguish the brand from the others
5. They help to integrate with the core values of the brand
6. You disregard celebrities in Louis Vuitton advertising

15. Do you use on-line space to communicate with Louis Vuitton?

1. Yes
2. No

16. Why do you use online environment? (Multiple-choice question)

1. To get additional information about brand and products
2. To research before purchase in-store
3. To make a purchase directly on-line

17. What kind of digital devices do you use more often to research on-line? (Multiple-choice question)

1. Computer
2. Smartphones
3. Tablets

18. Why do you follow Louis Vuitton's pages on-line?

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
1. This provides you more information about the brand					
2. This keeps you in touch with new products and events					
3. This helps to create a common experience with the brand					
4. 4. This makes you to follow the trend					
5. This helps to communicate with the other followers of the brand					

19. What kind of digital updates are more interesting to you? (Multiple-choice question)

1. Information
2. Pictures
3. Events
4. Videos
5. Current news
6. Press releases

20. What do you feel about Louis Vuitton’s presence on social media?

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
1. It maximizes brand’s visibility					
2. It decreases the perception of brand as a luxury					
3. 3. It is innovative, modern					
4. It makes you want to buy more					
5. It makes you want to know more					
6. The brand starts perceiving as a mass market					
7. It is a new experience in communications with brand					

21. Is your motivation of buying Louis Vuitton's products changed after viewing its pages in the Internet?

1. Increased
2. Decreased
3. Do not feel any difference

22. What do you expect from Louis Vuitton’s future use of digital media? (Multiple-choice question)

1. More information about social aspects, awareness, ethics, art
2. More information about collections, possible collaborations
3. Interactions will be more personal
4. Additional services will be provided
5. Integration with national’s social networks
6. The presence will be decreased

Appendix 3. Additional tables to descriptive analyses

Table1. The number of respondents participated in the research

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	male	33	35.9	35.9	35.9
	female	59	64.1	64.1	100.0
	Total	92	100.0	100.0	

Source: data from questionnaires, own elaboration

Table 2. Age of respondents participated in the research

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	under 25	37	40.2	40.2	40.2
	25-34	43	46.7	46.7	87.0
	35-40	9	9.8	9.8	96.7
	41-45	2	2.2	2.2	98.9
	46-55	1	1.1	1.1	100.0
	Total	92	100.0	100.0	

Source: data from questionnaires, own elaboration

Table 3. Country of origin of respondents participated in the research

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Russia	39	42.4	42.4	42.4
	China	23	25.0	25.0	67.4
	France	30	32.6	32.6	100.0
	Total	92	100.0	100.0	

Source: data from questionnaires, own elaboration

Table 4. The number of luxury purchases made by respondents participated in the research

What is your country of origin?				How many luxury purchases do you usually make during a year?					Total
				one	two	three-five	over five	5,00	
Russia	What is your gender?	male	Count	2	3	6	4		15
			% of Total	5.1%	7.7%	15.4%	10.3%		38.5%
		female	Count	6	3	10	5		24
			% of Total	15.4%	7.7%	25.6%	12.8%		61.5%
	Total		Count	8	6	16	9		39
			% of Total	20.5%	15.4%	41.0%	23.1%		100.0%
China	What is your gender?	male	Count	0	3	3	1	0	7
			% of Total	0.0%	13.0%	13.0%	4.3%	0,0%	30.4%
		female	Count	1	3	6	4	1	15
			% of Total	4.3%	13.0%	26.1%	17.4%	4.3%	65.2%
		4,00	Count	0	0	1	0	0	1
			% of Total	0.0%	0.0%	4.3%	0.0%	0.0%	4.3%
	Total		Count	1	6	10	5	1	23
			% of Total	4.3%	26.1%	43.5%	21.7%	4.3%	100.0%
France	What is your gender?	male	Count	1	2	4	3		10
			% of Total	3.3%	6.7%	13.3%	10.0%		33.3%
		female	Count	4	3	6	7		20
			% of Total	13.3%	10.0%	20.0%	23.3%		66.7%
	Total		Count	5	5	10	10		30
			% of Total	16.7%	16.7%	33.3%	33.3%		100.0%
Total	What is your gender?	male	Count	3	8	13	8	0	32
			% of Total	3.3%	8.7%	14.1%	8.7%	0.0%	34.8%
		female	Count	11	9	22	16	1	59
			% of Total	12.0%	9.8%	23.9%	17.4%	1.1%	64.1%
		4,00	Count	0	0	1	0	0	1
			% of Total	0.0%	0.0%	1.1%	0.0%	0.0%	1.1%
	Total		Count	14	17	36	24	1	92
			% of Total	15.2%	18.5%	39.1%	26.1%	1,1%	100.0%

Source: data from questionnaires, own elaboration

Table 5. Place of LV goods purchase of respondents participated in the research

What is your country of origin?				Where do you usually purchase LV goods?[a]			Total
				brand boutique in home-country	brand boutique whie traveling	brand web-site	
Russia	What is your gender?	male	Count	10	11		21
			% of Total	17,5%	19.3%		36.8%
		female	Count	15	21		36
			% of Total	26.3%	36.8%		63.2%
	Total		Count	25	32		57
			% of Total	43,9%	56.1%		100.0%
China	What is your gender?	male	Count	2	7	3	12
			% of Total	6.7%	23.3%	10.0%	40.0%
		female	Count	3	6	9	18
			% of Total	10.0%	20.0%	30.0%	60.0%
	Total		Count	5	13	12	30
			% of Total	16.7%	43.3%	40.0%	100.0%
France	What is your gender?	male	Count	10	2		12
			% of Total	28.6%	5.7%		34.3%
		female	Count	20	3		23
			% of Total	57.1%	8.6%		65.7%
	Total		Count	30	5		35
			% of Total	85.7%	14.3%		100.0%

Source: data from questionnaires, own elaboration

Table 6. Consumers attitudes towards celebrities in LV commercials

				Consumers attitude towards celebrities[a]						
What is your country of origin?				They give you certsin emotional connection with the brand	They provoke familiarity with the celebrity	They help to integrate with the core values of the brand	They increase credibility to the brand	They help to distinguish the brand from the others	You disregard celebrities in Louis Vuittin advertising	Total
Russia	What is your gender?	male	Count	1	2	1	5	7	4	20
			% of Total	1.1%	2.3%	1.1%	5.7%	8.0%	4.6%	23.0%
		female	Count	11	13	9	14	18	2	67
			% of Total	12.6%	14.9%	10.3%	16.1%	20.7%	2.3%	77.0%
	Total		Count	12	15	10	19	25	6	87
			% of Total	13.8%	17.2%	11.5%	21.8%	28.7%	6.9%	100.0%
China	What is your gender?	male	Count	1	2	2	4	5		14
			% of Total	2.2%	4.3%	4.3%	8.7%	10.9%		30.4%
		female	Count	3	9	4	7	9		32
			% of Total	6.5%	19.6%	8.7%	15.2%	19.6%		69.6%
	Total		Count	4	11	6	11	14		46
			% of Total	8.7%	23.9%	13.0%	23.9%	30.4%		100.0%
France	What is your gender?	male	Count	2	1	6	7	8	2	26
			% of Total	2.4%	1.2%	7.2%	8.4%	9.6%	2.4%	31.3%
		female	Count	16	7	11	5	15	3	57
			% of Total	19.3%	8.4%	13.3%	6.0%	18.1%	3.6%	68.7%
	Total		Count	18	8	17	12	23	5	83
			% of Total	21.7%	9.6%	20.5%	14.5%	27.7%	6.0%	100.0%

Source: data from questionnaires, own elaboration

Table 7. Preferential devices to communicate with the brand in digital space

				What kind of devices do you use?[a]			
What is your country of origin?				computer	smartphone	tablet	Total
Russia	What is your gender?	male	Count	2	4	3	9
			% of Total	4.2%	8.3%	6.3%	18.8%
		female	Count	12	12	15	39
			% of Total	25.0%	25.0%	31.3%	81.3%
	Total		Count	14	16	18	48
			% of Total	29.2%	33.3%	37.5%	100.0%
China	What is your gender?	male	Count	4	4	2	10
			% of Total	13.8%	13.8%	6.9%	34.5%
		female	Count	5	6	8	19
			% of Total	17.2%	20.7%	27.6%	65.5%
	Total		Count	9	10	10	29
			% of Total	31.0%	34.5%	34.5%	100.0%
France	What is your gender?	male	Count	1	1	2	4
			% of Total	4.2%	4.2%	8.3%	16.7%
		female	Count	6	9	5	20
			% of Total	25.0%	37.5%	20.8%	83.3%
	Total		Count	7	10	7	24
			% of Total	29.2%	41.7%	29.2%	100.0%

Source: data from questionnaires, own elaboration

Table 8. The influence of brand's presence in the Internet on purchase decision

What is your country of origin?				Is your motivation of buying Louis Vuitton's products changed after viewing its pages in the Internet?		Total
				increased	do not feel any difference	
Russia	What is your gender?	male	Count	1	5	6
			% of Total	4.3%	21.7%	26.1%
		female	Count	11	6	17
			% of Total	47.8%	26.1%	73.9%
	Total		Count	12	11	23
			% of Total	52.2%	47.8%	100.0%
China	What is your gender?	male	Count	4	1	5
			% of Total	26.7%	6.7%	33.3%
		female	Count	6	4	10
			% of Total	40.0%	26.7%	66.7%
	Total		Count	10	5	15
			% of Total	66.7%	33.3%	100.0%
France	What is your gender?	male	Count	1	1	2
			% of Total	9.1%	9.1%	18.2%
		female	Count	5	4	9
			% of Total	45.5%	36.4%	81.8%
	Total		Count	6	5	11
			% of Total	54.5%	45.5%	100.0%
Total	What is your gender?	male	Count	6	7	13
			% of Total	12.2%	14.3%	26.5%
		female	Count	22	14	36
			% of Total	44.9%	28.6%	73.5%
	Total		Count	28	21	49
			% of Total	57.1%	42.9%	100.0%

Source: data from questionnaires, own elaboration

Table 9. Expectations about LV's online presence in the future

What is your country of origin?				What do you expect from LV future online[a]						Total
				The presence will be decreased	Integration with national's social networks	Additional services will be provided	Interactions will be more personal	More information about collections, possible collaborations	More information about social aspects, awareness, ethics, art	
Russia	What is your gender?	male	Count	0	0	1	2	2	2	7
			% of Total	0.0%	0.0%	1.9%	3.8%	3.8%	3.8%	13.5%
		female	Count	2	4	12	9	11	7	45
			% of Total	3.8%	7.7%	23.1%	17.3%	21.2%	13.5%	86.5%
	Total		Count	2	4	13	11	13	9	52
			% of Total	3.8%	7.7%	25.0%	21.2%	25.0%	17.3%	100.0%
China	What is your gender?	male	Count		2	4	1	1	2	10
			% of Total		5.3%	10.5%	2.6%	2.6%	5.3%	26.3%
		female	Count		7	7	5	3	6	28
			% of Total		18.4%	18.4%	13.2%	7.9%	15.8%	73.7%
	Total		Count		9	11	6	4	8	38
			% of Total		23.7%	28.9%	15.8%	10.5%	21.1%	100.0%
France	What is your gender?	male	Count	1	0	2	1	0	1	5
			% of Total	3.6%	0.0%	7.1%	3.6%	0.0%	3.6%	17.9%
		female	Count	3	3	5	5	4	3	23
			% of Total	10.7%	10.7%	17.9%	17.9%	14.3%	10.7%	82.1%
	Total		Count	4	3	7	6	4	4	28
			% of Total	14.3%	10.7%	25.0%	21.4%	14.3%	14.3%	100.0%

Source: data from questionnaires, own elaboration