Craftsmanship vs Industry 4.0: an empirical analysis of the luxury perception of Cartier jewels through advertising
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CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

1.1 Preface

The selling of luxury products finds its roots in the first trading of gems, spices and silk between Europe and the East. Traders used the so-called Silk Route to travel east and to import those products back in Europe. The route became popular when the Chinese decided to expand their previously internal trades: they would trade their silk in exchange for precious stones and metals with the Central Asian tribes, while those latter exchanged goods with the Roman Empire. Thus, the silk trade proved to be a very expensive exchange for the Romans, as it was traded first from China, then across Central Asia up until Europe. Despite this practice being expensive, the silk trade experienced a rise during the Roman Empire, and, for this reason, it is believed to be one of the first proofs of the presence of a luxury market (Som & Blanckaert, 2015)

What makes this good evidence of the specific market of luxury, is that the goods that were traded were not essential to the daily living and, most importantly, they were very expensive to import, but still they were traded regularly to Europe. For this reason, this process is believed to be a good representation for the essence of what luxury is: “a demand for something for which there is no need” (Som & Blanckaert, 2015, p. 34). The silk route declined eventually over the time with new trading relationships taking over across and outside the European continent for many decades up until today.

The market of luxury, on the other hand, is considered to be in continuous and always dynamic growth, and, for this reason, it is characterized by decent availability for its consumers. In addition, the luxury world sells some things that are more expensive than
others, making its products affordable for a selected few. For these reasons, the selling of those specific products cannot be based on traditional market analyses, because there is no limit, nor saturation, of the luxury market. In addition, research underlined how “luxury good” is a good for which demand usually grow more than proportionally as the income of the consumers rises. In general, luxury is about selling consumers a dream; it is somehow aspirational. It is a story that deals with a sense of belonging to a special set of people and, consequently, it is about feeling special; for these reasons, the more those luxury items are unaffordable, the more they are desirable. (Hennigs et al., 2012; Ghosh & Varshney, 2013; Som & Blanckaert, 2015).

The twentieth century is for sure one of the most important periods for the luxury world, as the best-known luxury brands of today were launched and became popular all over the world. In particular, the second half of this century saw such luxury brands as Louis Vuitton, Burberry and Chanel becoming major contributors to the economy. Those brands were meant to be exclusive and elite-addressed, so that all the designers were working for noble people of the society of their time. The present twenty-first century, on the other hand, saw a change in perspective as far as luxury concerns: the luxury market is no longer meant for the elite of the society, but it has become accessible to more and more consumers over time. This change in the trend of the luxury market has to do mainly with the fact that the segment of wealthy people being able to access the luxury world experienced a sharp growth, thanks to several economic, social and political changes of the twenty-first century. In addition, the number of luxury brands existing in the market experienced such an increase in the present environment that the consumers were offered a vast range of different products, to which they could access more easily and even more consciously. Indeed, the previously mentioned phenomena enabled the consumer to feel
more individualistic in their choices concerning the luxury products thus becoming more conscious about their needs and desires.

As far as the structure and the business model for the well-known brands of today, it can be said that the luxury sector has been dominated by family-driven and medium-sized firms for many years. The past two decades, on the other hand, saw the rise of multibrand luxury conglomerates, born from the acquisition of single companies for different reasons; the first being a company trying to gain as much market share or control of the luxury industry as possible, the second being the need for vertical integration on the part of the companies in order to have more control over their own production and marketing processes (Som & Blanckaert, 2015).

When it comes to the marketing of luxury products, literature demonstrated how different approaches have been adopted in selling those specific items, because they are believed to have unique characteristics. As Nia and Zaichkowsky (2000) underlined, luxury products encompass a series of core values which go far beyond the functional value of the specific items and include psychological, social, individual and personal value that are attributed to the product, according to the consumer’s perception. In this perspective, different authors argued how luxury brands play a fundamental role in attracting consumers and seducing them to justify the intangible utility their products have. That is why for many years the marketing of luxury products focused on such variables that have little to do with the product itself and its ability to reply to consumers’ needs and paid particular attention to the creative process behind the product, to its material, tastes, colors and on the value added by the artisanal component when crafting it. However, the market of luxury goods experienced a phase of growth in the last years, and, for this reason, its dynamics changed significantly. Processes of manufacturing
changed in a way that those core values luxury has always been based upon, are now challenged so that the products themselves could be perceived differently by the final consumer.

1.2 Craftsmanship vs Industry 4.0

Luxury goods has existed for centuries, and the artisanal component has always been at the basis of luxury production, as it managed to exalt its highest quality, uniqueness and care in its crafting. Indeed, that of craftsmen has always been an exclusive role in the luxury world as they happened to be skilled artisans that perform their crafts when making luxury goods, always contributing to their excellence in terms of quality and fine making. In addition, their unique performance helped to justify their rarity and, consequently, the higher prices attributed to them, as the contribution artisans’ knowledge makes in determining luxury goods value and price is essential.

However, the market of luxury experienced a phase of growth in the recent years (Amatulli & Guido, 2011), and, for this reason, its dynamics changed significantly leading towards more complex organizational structures on the part of the firms. Indeed, the volumes of production and technological implementation of firms’ value chain led to the so-called Industry 4.0, a phenomenon that is revolutionizing the manufacturing industry introducing smart technologies throughout the whole production process (Di Nardo et al., 2020). The integration of such technological components is believed to face unique challenges in the luxury world, since it has always been characterized by artisanal and craftsmanship components. In this perspective, automatization in the production process could change the perception the final consumers have of the luxury product, as the luxury products’ exclusiveness and finest making, which is connected to handiwork,
could be lost to the eyes of the clientele. Indeed, from the point of view of the consumers of luxury, that of craftsmanship has always represented a synonym of good quality and authenticity of the luxury product and managed to add value to the product itself, so that the price premium of luxury goods is justified by its being exclusive.

However, the luxury market attracts consumers which are more and more expert and pay attention to every detail, especially when purchasing luxury goods. Today’s consumer is believed to have a large quantity of information by hand and to be very conscious and proactive about his needs. This complex persona is more difficult to seduce and attract because he is immersed in a variety of stimuli which he is more conscious about (Som & Blanckaert, 2015). For this reason, the luxury world is facing some challenges trying to integrate their core values with new technologies and understanding which factors represent a source of value for the consumer of today. That is why it is important to understand whether the artisanal component still plays a fundamental role in influencing people perception of luxury goods and whether it is important for the brand to pry about those handcrafting methods of luxury manufacturing when marketing their products; on the other hand, it is important to understand if the use of new digital technologies allows to perceive the luxury brand and its products as more innovative and, thus, more appealing. It is of common knowledge that marketing has always played a fundamental role in driving people’s intention to buy the products through advertising. The luxury consumers buy the products for their symbolic meaning, rather than for their utility, in such a way that promotion is linked to the brand, to its core values, to the components that make the product unique and desirable, rather than on products’ utility. In today’s world, where industrialized processes are in continuous growth and production is implemented day by day with automatization and industrialized processes, questions
arise on whether the role of advertising is that of communicating the benefits of Industry 4.0 or that of maintaining a link with the craftsmanship world and all the value that it represents.

1.3 Research purposes

Taking into consideration the relevance of production and of (brand-product) image for the perception of luxury, the purpose of the present investigation is to analyze the world of luxury and all the dynamics which influence people perception of the luxury world and its products, focusing on the peculiarities of manufacturing processes. To be precise, the research will be particularly focused on investigating the effects on luxury perception and authenticity of a Cartier jewel, through two different advertising stimuli of opposite methods of manufacturing (handcrafting vs digital, specifically 3D printing); in addition, these factors will be taken into considerations for how they are related to the brand experience and how they affect consumer behavior, in terms of purchase intention, Word of Mouth (one’s desire to suggest the product to his acquaintance) and on the efficacy of the advertising itself in conveying a clear and adequate message, which could be representative of the brand Cartier. Hence, the impact of the advertising will be considered to better understand which elements still represent a source of value in defining luxury product to the eyes of today’s consumer.

The present research is meant to evaluate whether the main source of value of luxury products, i.e. craftsmanship and the symbolic meaning it has always had, is still valid to the eyes of the potential consumer and whether it is still representative of the world of luxury, despite the new methods of manufacturing introduced by Industry 4.0. This investigation will be useful to understand whether luxury brand should leverage upon the
artisanal aspects when marketing the manufacturing of their product in order for them to be perceived as more qualitative high, unique and desirable as possible. The ultimate goal is that of understanding the role marketing and advertising could have in the luxury market of today, where handcrafting practices meet industrialized processes of production and new organizational structures inside the firms.

1.4 Research structure

This introductory chapter is followed by the body of the present research, which is articulated in four main parts, each of them with a specific purpose:

- Chapter 2 is meant to present and illustrate the literary review concerning the different subjects on the matter and all the theoretical constructs and their terminology, which will be helpful to understand the research purposes and its objectives.

- Chapter 3 is dedicated to the explanation of the research, its methodology, its research questions. In this perspective, the chapter focuses on the case study which has been taken into consideration for the present research, i.e. Cartier and its long history of jewels making, explaining the main reasons behind this choice. Finally, all the variables and items that have been considered and included into the questionnaire of the survey are outlined in the last section of the chapter. In addition, details concerning the sample of people which participated to the present research are provided in this section.

- Chapter 4 deals with the presentation and analysis of the results of the survey with a specific focus on significant differences among the variables (items) tested in the two groups of people who participated to the questionnaire.
Chapter 5 is meant to discuss the results obtained through the questionnaire and to interpret the outcome and its theoretical and marketing implications. Finally, the section contains the conclusions and the limitations of the present research, as well as the possible outcome of future investigations on the matter.

Lastly, the Annex A contains the main version of the questionnaire which the sample of people undergone. Each participant was randomly presented with just one of the two advertising pictured in the questionnaire and answered the exact same questions for both the versions.

1.4.1 Second chapter summary: The luxury world and its perception

The second chapter is articulated in six sections with the first being an introduction to the subject of the present research: the luxury world and the different methods of manufacturing which will be considered for the present survey. Indeed, the section is meant to introduce the subject of the dissertation and to provide the readers with a general idea of the theoretical background the research is based upon. The definition of the concept of luxury follows in the next section, with a particular focus on the explanation of what luxury is, especially to the eyes of the final consumers. In this perspective, a model of all the aspects that define and determine luxury products and brands is outlined: history, value driven emergence, culture, marketing, endorsements and product integrity are here described as the main pillars behind luxury brand and their goods. The third section is meant at describing the concept of luxury marketing, with a specific focus on the application of the 8P’s paradigm of marketing to the world of luxury. Here, for every variable of the traditional model, a contrastive notion for the luxury world is outlined, so
that the pillars of luxury marketing are identified in the variables of Brand, Positioning, Product, Place, Price, Promotion, Process and Productivity.

In the following section, the chapter deals with the explanation of luxury goods manufacturing, outlining different models of organizational and business structures: the French, the Italian and the American. The section underlines how those three countries happened to be the main protagonists of the luxury world with their famous brands as well as with their approaches to the market of luxury. Then, the section continues with the explanation of different methods of manufacturing: the more traditional one, which implies craftsmanship, and the more recent one, derived from the introduction of industrialized methods of manufacturing in the luxury sector. The first part, dedicated to luxury and craftsmanship, deals with the explanation of handcrafting methods of manufacturing and all the core values that the artisanal component adds to the final product of luxury brands. In addition, a particular focus has been put on the role of craftsmen, whose knowledge and expertise influence people perception of the luxury product and justify luxury goods’ price premium. The second part focuses on the advent of Industry 4.0 phenomenon and its introduction into different production processes of the firms. Industry 4.0 aims to integrate manufacturing processes horizontally, vertically and end-to-end with the final purpose of optimizing firms’ value chain, their production processes and organizational structure. Accordingly, the section focuses on the different impacts Industry 4.0 has on firms’ development outlining three main areas of changing: strategical, technological and management. For this reason, the chapter explains the different areas of implementation of Industry 4.0 in the luxury sector, with a specific focus on Process Knowledge Automation and 3D printing technologies, which have been adopted lately by different luxury brands. Finally, it questions the possibility of
application of industrialized manufacturing processes to a world which based its entire history and reputation on artisanal components and handcrafting methods of manufacturing as a source of value for the products themselves.

The fifth section proposes a luxury value model to understand the potential sources of value on the part of the consumers of luxury. From this point of view, particular attention is given to the concept of luxury perception and to all the source of value which are believed to be crucial in determining luxury value perception. The model proposed identifies Financial, Functional, Individual and Social Value as the main factors that drive potential consumers’ perception of luxury. The section outlines the following factor that is believed to be determinant when it comes to the purchasing of luxury products: the perceived authenticity. The latter is believed to be influenced by brand individuality, consistency ad continuity.

The last section is meant at picturing the potential consumer of luxury products with all the personal and psychological features involved in the picture. Consequently, to capture the complex profile of luxury consumers, the persona of The Nomad is introduced: it is a personality in continuous movement, and, for this reason, it is immersed in a variety of stimuli that determines the complexity of his demand. From this point of view, the last part of the chapter deals with the explanation of the variables of marketing that should be highlighted for the purpose of the present research. Hence, the variable of purchase intention and that of Word of Mouth are outlined and explained to the readers. Those marketing variables will later be included as a source of analysis of potential consumers’ behavior when purchasing luxury products.
1.4.2 Third chapter summary: Research methodology

The third chapter is meant at presenting the methodology adopted for the present research and defining the purpose of the study. In this perspective, the first section is dedicated to the definition of the research purpose, i.e. to test whether the aspect of manufacturing can still influence the luxury and quality perception of a product to the eyes of the potential consumer. For this reason, the two different methods of manufacturing, i.e. handcrafting and industry crafting, have been compared. This enables to outline the two main research questions, which the survey is based upon.

The second section focuses on the explanation of the methodology of the research, with a first section dedicated to the research design and its description. Consequently, the chapter deals with a description of the case study of Cartier, the brand that has been taken into consideration for the present research. In this perspective, reasons behind the choice concerning this specific brand are given to the readers. Consequently, the chapter describes the experiment, which consists of a questionnaire with two stimuli, randomly proposed to the group of participants: an advertising of a Cartier jewel suggesting handcrafting methods applied to the manufacturing of the product, and the other advertising suggesting additive manufacturing as the method behind Cartier’s production. It follows, that two samples of people were created, according to the version of the questionnaire they got access to. Thus, the section focuses on details concerning the advertising generated for academic purposes only and it explains the reason behind the choice concerning the advertising claim in English language.

The last section is meant at presenting the structure of the questionnaire and its items as well as all the variables that have been considered: luxury perception, brand authenticity perception, consumer behavior and socio-demographic information. Finally,
the sample is described in the last section of the chapter, with a particular focus on the number of answers collected, on the genre of the respondents, their annual income and educational background. Lastly, the chosen methodology for the present investigation is outlined: the analysis of answers’ averages in order to underline significant differences among the respondents.

1.4.3 Fourth chapter summary: Research results

The fourth chapter is meant at presenting the results of the survey and analyzing the theoretical constructs presented in the second chapter and outlined in the third one, according to the answers of the two groups that filled out one of the two questionnaires, which differ for the advertising image only, suggesting one method of manufacturing, or the other. The chapter uses a series of charts, one for each variable taken into consideration, to outline the significant results obtained thought the analysis of answers’ averages. The sections are divided as follow: luxury perception results, perceived brand authenticity results and consumer behavior results. The first one deals with the graphical representation of the results obtained when testing the items for luxury perception on the two samples of people, the second does the same as far as perceived authenticity concerns; lastly, the variables of marketing are represented and they include the items of intention to buy, Word of Mouth and efficacy of the advertising which have all been tested in the two groups of people that participated to the questionnaire.

1.4.4 Fifth chapter summary: Discussion and conclusions

The fifth and last chapter is dedicated to the analysis of the results which are graphically represented in the fourth chapter. In this perspective, particular attention has
been paid in comparing the two samples’ perception of the Cartier products, considering that the only difference in the two questionnaires proposed to the respondents was the advertising image suggesting the opposite manufacturing processes (handcrafting vs 3D-printing). After a brief description of the main findings emerged from the case study, the first section is dedicated to the discussion of the survey results, paying particular attention to the significant averages obtained through the analysis of the answers. In this section, the role of craftsmanship in today’s luxury world, especially when it comes to consumers’ perception and intention to buy the product, is discussed. Hence, the chapter deals with the evaluation of the theoretical implications derived from the results of the research, which support many of the theory concerning the world of luxury and the dynamics that represent the core values of luxury products and brands. Consequently, the marketing implications connected with the outcome of the investigation are outlined, highlighting the fundamental role marketing can have in combining the luxury market of today with what the people care about when it comes to the purchasing of luxury.

The last section of the chapter is meant at recognizing the limits of the present research, underlining what could be implemented and improved in the future. The section has the purpose of highlighting how the research could be a starting point for future considerations in the matter, thus improving future investigations to obtain results that are even more relevant in the analysis of the complexity behind the world of luxury.
CHAPTER 2
THE LUXURY WORLD AND ITS PERCEPTION

2.1 Introduction

This chapter aims to provide an overview of the luxury world and to illustrate different kinds of luxury manufacturing, i.e. handcrafted luxury goods and industrial crafted items. In this perspective, research argued that one of the main pillars in the luxury production has always been the craftsmanship skills performed by expert artisans which possess a unique know-how; the expertise and finest making on the part of the craftsmen constitute an essential aspect of luxury that may influence products perception on the part of the final consumer. However, technological advances of the last few years led to a dramatic increase of industrial productivity and, finally, to the rise of new digital industrial technology known as Industry 4.0. The latter started to be introduced in many supply chains with the purpose of improving production performances and maximizing the coordination among the entire supply chain. Industrialized production processes have been introduced lately in luxury production as well to improve manufacturing processes and to maintain a constant quality and design over time. Among the luxury world, jewels crafting represents a good example of the introduction of Industry 4.0 processes in the supply chain. For this reason, the final client may have different perception of luxury and authenticity of the luxury products, according to the different types of product manufacturing.

In general, the purpose of this chapter is to provide the readers with a general idea of the luxury world and its different production processes and to introduce the concepts of luxury perception and its authenticity, on the part of the final consumer. For this reason,
the different crafting methods will be explained and analyzed in application to the luxury world. Marketing variables such as Word of Mouth and purchase intention on the part of the consumer will be explained below to be applied to the research later; indeed, these variables would be considered to understand whether final consumer perception and potential purchase can be influenced, according to different production processes applied to the luxury manufacturing.

2.2 The concept of luxury

The concept of luxury has many definitions: different authors argued that the concept itself is so context specific that can vary according to the single person’s perception of luxury. Not only individual perception, but also the country, culture and period of time consumers are immersed in, can change the perception of what luxury is (Dubois and Czellar, 2002; Dubois et al., 2001; Ghosh and Varshney, 2013). In general, Ghosh and Varshney (2013) defined luxury as “something related to indulging in self-pleasure and something which is not necessary” (Ghosh and Varshney, 2013, p.1). In this perspective, different studies underlined how luxury should be linked to the subjective perception of beauty and high-quality lifestyle, whereas other authors defined the concept in opposition to what is necessary (Berry, 1994). Luxury has also been identified as a means of prestige because of the unique features and performances implied in the making of these distinguishable products. Indeed, prestige has a lot to do with the evaluation of the higher status of people or objects and with the positive perception of future results derived from the final purchase of luxury (Dubois & Czellar, 2002).

The concept of luxury and the quality of being prestigious can be applied to different product or service categories. As far as product concerns, the main features that an item
should have in order to be judged as prestigious is a unique know-how and an overall high quality of the production. As far as services concerns, the prestigiousness is pretty much connected with the good success and accomplishments derived from the use of service itself.

Traditionally luxury was meant as something exclusive which only the “happy-few” (Ghosh & Varshney, 2013, p.2) can have access to. However, with the growth of luxury industry, the concept of mass-luxury became popular and many designers, especially those well-known American brands such as Calvin Klein and Ralph Lauren, experienced a main growth by promoting a luxury world that can be accessible for more people, not only for a restricted elite few. In this perspective, the traditional concept of luxury and its being exclusive interferes with the phenomenon of mass-luxury; the apparent paradox is explained by dividing the luxury industry in different segments: (1) true luxury, (2) traditional luxury, (3) modern luxury living and (4) life’s little luxuries. True luxury is for the “ultra-rich” who has no money constraint and are looking for exclusive goods such as fast cars, jets, haute couture, etc.; on the other hands, fragrances, fashion and jewelry are included in the following category of traditional luxury. Modern luxury living includes all those products offering status and appeal, as for example travels, luxury experiences and services of different kinds. Finally, life’s little luxuries are defined as those products and services which have been developed for the mass market; this category can include affordable dresses or shoes, but also body care products (Perez, 2008).

Luxury is pretty much about the brand (Som and Blanckaert, 2015); even though there are many definitions of luxury, the definitions for luxury brands are few. Most of the studies hesitate to differentiate between luxury products and the broader concept of luxury, but research identified luxury brands as those that have a high status which gives
their producers the opportunity to charge premium prices (Beverland, 2004; Jackson & Haid, 2002). These brands have an attractiveness that goes far beyond the function of the items sold; it is indeed the use and the ownership of luxury items that leads the final client towards the perception of a higher status (Moore & Birtwistle, 2005). Another approach to the categorization of luxury brands is proposed by Beverland (2004) in his six-components model defining what a luxury brand is (see Figure 1).

Figure 1: Proposed components of a luxury brand

According to this model, one of the key themes that defines a luxury brand is *product integrity*, which includes different variables such as the quality, credibility and the attention to details while making luxury items. *Value-driven emergence*, on the other hand, has more to do with the targeting of the luxury market and with the deliberate association withing luxury brand and famous people, so that the perceived value of the
products sold is maximized. In this perspective, history plays a fundamental role in defining a luxury brand because, according to Beverland (2004), the latter should maintain a strong link with its past, its funding stories and famous policies because they are fundamental elements that represents brands’ nature and integrity. In addition, all the stories are integrated into a culture, which represents a bridge between the past and the present. The culture the brand is immerged in ensures the maintenance of specific styles, which make the brand distinguishable, while contributing to add new ideas that influence the brand itself. The variable of marketing then defines what a luxury brand is, as it helps to identify its consumers and to gain major awareness concerning its products and higher-quality services. In this perspective, marketing has not to be seen as a group of programs that help selling products which are needed or required by the clientele, but it must be considered as general philosophy or strategy which contributes to define the luxury brand as a whole. Finally, when it comes to endorsement, the luxury brand is generally built up on promotional activities that help the brand to gain widespread social approval and awareness (Beverland, 2004).

The French businessman Bernard Arnault, owner of the LVMH group, confirmed the previously explained model by defining luxury brands as those brands that can be “timeless, modern, fast-growing and highly profitable” (Som and Blanckaert, 2015, p.31) at the same time. The main reason behind the importance of those variables is because buyers in the segment of luxury are interested not only in the product itself, but in the core values, emotional, artistic appeal as well as unique design of the brand promoted by brands’ marketing and history. As it can be deduced by the complexity of the previously mentioned characteristics, very few brands manage to balance all the variables influencing the luxury world and its products; those who manage to do so are considered
as star brands, as they survive and succeed in the complex market of luxury (Som and Blanckaert, 2015).

2.3 Luxury Marketing

As previously underlined, marketing plays a fundamental role in promoting luxury products. Traditionally, it is implied to communicate to consumers specific values concerning a product, or more generally, a brand or a company. As Kotler (1994, p.6) stated, “Marketing is a social and managerial process by which individuals and groups obtain what they need and want through creating offering and exchanging products of value with other.” This process has always been considered as a combination of factors which can significantly influence the delivery of value, and, for this reason, it has been defined as “marketing mix”. The definition and articulation of the basic components of marketing mix has become perhaps one of the most crucial concepts in marketing studies; indeed, the model of marketing mix was thought as set of 4 basic components, named the “Four P’s”, that represented anything a company could do to influence the demand of its product (Ahuja, 2016; McCarthy, 1960; Kotler, 1994).

The traditional “Four P’s” model was developed by McCarthy in the late 20th century, and it was composed by the variables of Product, Price, Promotion and Place. According to the “Four P’s” paradigms, the marketing management should be customer-centered, so that companies should attempt to produce products that are desired by consumers for their attractive price, using promotion to communicate the advantages behind the purchase and making them available at a place the consumers chose. It is indeed the customer perception that needs to be influenced and driven towards the choice of a final product. Despite this paradigm representing the basic knowledge of marketing, the evolution the
markets, and the world in general, has experienced over nearly four decades led to the necessity of adapting McCarthy’s model to the 21st century. In this perspective, marketing mix has been seen as a flexible concept, whose variables could change and be modified, given the market and its customers’ requirements. The new change in perspective led to a different customer relationship management: not only the marketing activities should be thought to influence the customers’ purchase intentions, but they should be designed to effectuate advantageous exchanges for both parties. The emphasis on the valuable exchange transaction between customers and company led marketing management to focus not only on products as valuable items of exchange, but also on other resources such as time, energy and feelings. (Ahuja, 2016; McCarthy, 1960; Yudelson, 1999).

As previously hinted, a first change in perspective over the 21st century is represented by the different attitude in the customer relationship management; indeed, the complete satisfaction of the customer started to be considered as the appropriate driving force for a successful organization, not only in terms of needs’ completion, but of pleasure and delight (Kotler, 1972; Yudelson, 1999). Over the years, several writers tried to enhance the “Four P’s” model by adding different items that are believed to be critical to marketing management. This led to the creation of the Extended Marketing Mix model, which added three elements to the original model. According to the Extended model, all companies should focus on having the right People in the right position, because they are part of the customer experience; these factors which can play pivotal role in the marketing management, should be considered as a Process that includes creativity, discipline and structures which are in continuous evolution. Finally, Programs variable is thought to address all the consumer-directed activities, which should always be integrated and renewed for their whole to be greater than the sum of their parts and for them to help the
firm accomplishing multiple objectives (Ahuja, 2016). Later on, the Eight P was added to the Extended model: *Performance*, which captures the sphere of possible outcome of all marketing actions, both with their financial and non-financial implications and measures all the consequences that go beyond the company itself, i.e. social responsibility, legal and ethical implications, etc. The Eight P’s model is meant for each variable to be considered in relation with the others and it is still believed to be very much applicable to the markets of today. Indeed, the latter reflects the evolution of marketing, without changing the basic idea behind the original structure (Ahuja, 2016; Yudelson, 1999).

Despite all the variables which can influence marketing sales, different approaches have been considered when marketing luxury goods because they are believed to face unique paths. Even with luxury brands’ trends in market being studied and analyzed over the years, different approaches have been used for marketing and monitoring luxury items (Beverland, 2004; Vigneron & Johnson, 2004). Indeed, luxury brands display one of the highest levels of prestigiousness and they encompass different values, both psychological and physical; for example, using or showing a particular branded object off, can bring esteem to its owner. For this reason, the main factors that distinguish luxury items from nonluxury ones, are believed to be the psychological benefits connected with the purchase and use of those products. (Nia & Zaichkowsky, 2000; Vigneron & Johnson, 1999). However, these benefits are not the sole reason that explain luxury products high perception and esteem on the part of the consumers: both personal, functional and financial variables should be considered when marketing luxury brands (Wiedmann et al., 2009; Wong & Zaichkowsky, 1999).
For this reason, Wiedmann, Hennigs and Siebels (2007) elaborated a four-dimensional model which can explain the variables that influence luxury marketing: financial, functional, individual and social reasons. While the financial element concerns pure monetary aspects, as for example the price and the money the customer is willing to pay to obtain such luxury products, the functional aspect is represented by the main benefits, as for example the usability, uniqueness, quality and durability of the product itself. The individual dimension deals with the consumers’ orientation towards luxury items and, for this reason, it is based on individuals’ materialism, hedonism and self-perceived identity (Sheth et al., 1991; Vigneron & Johnson, 1999). The social aspect, on the other hand, considers the perceived utility that individuals could acquire while using items which are recognized as valuable within their social group(s), thus focusing on the conspicuousness or the prestige value that can significantly influence purchase intention. Those four items are believed to operate independently from one another, but they also interact with each other and can have different degrees of influence on customers’ final perception of the luxury product. For example, the objective price of luxury items functions as a definition for the financial value dimension, but it can also influence other variables, such as the perceived prestige and the social benefits connected with it (Hennigs et al., 2012; Wiedmann et al., 2007).

The problematic concerning the main factors influencing customers’ purchase of luxury brands has been addressed by different authors who suggested that luxury marketing depends mainly on creators of the luxury items, who manage to seduce the clientele with continuous processes of innovation and with their own creativity. The creative process in the luxury marketing is indeed considered as essential: marketing generally helps sellers to understand the consumers’ needs by analyzing their buying
attitudes and consequently allowing companies to make predictions about people’s future needs. However, that is not the case for luxury items, since the marketing of luxury is manly based on anticipating and suggesting needs people aren’t already aware of. In actuality, the world of luxury marketing is believed to be dominated by emotions and for this reason its analysis should take different variables into consideration (Som and Blanckaert, 2015). For example, it has been underlined that sometimes there is a difficulty in defining and recognizing the functionality aspect of luxury goods, because those latter are mainly considered as having intangible, or even non-existent, utility. For this reason, it is reasonable to argue that the desirability of luxury brands and products in general goes far beyond their functional value.

Even though the world of luxury challenges the classic principles of marketing, attempts have been done in trying to adapt the 8P’s marketing model to the luxury world. Indeed, for every variable there is a contrasting notion for the luxury world, which considers the fact that the marketing of luxury should generally deals with dynamics that go far beyond the product. Indeed, they include brand’s history, the creative process behind its luxury goods, the materials, tastes, color, decorations; they encompass brands and products’ innovation, creation and the overweighting of reason through the seduction of its consumers, in order to drive their needs (Ghosh and Varshney, 2013; Moore & Birtwistle, 2005; Som & Blanckaert, 2015).

2.3.1 Brand

As previously underlined, the consumer of the luxury industry is pretty much aware of the brand, of its history and of how it has been structured and, for this reason, brand itself is considered as an important variable in luxury products’ marketing. All products which
are sold under the name of a specific brand, despite their own category of use, share the same core values and are representative of the brand itself. Thus, to take into consideration this variable is vital for marketing because it creates specific aspiration for the consumer about the products related to the brand. It is indeed not a matter of functionality of items that leads consumers’ choices towards one product over the other one, but of how the luxury brand manage to translate the essence of the product, its heritage and history, and make people desire it and buy it (Dubois and Paternault, 1995; Som & Blanckaert, 2015). To quote Dubois and Paternault (1995, p. 71), “more than other products, luxury items are bought for what they mean, beyond what they are”.

2.3.2 Positioning

As previously stated, desire for luxury products has little to do with their utility or functionality and for this reason any other luxury brand is not aiming at substituting one of its competitors. If someone desires a Ferrari, this desire is not connected with the fact that this someone is not satisfied with any other car brand, which has the same utility (Som & Blanckaert, 2015). Consumers choose their luxury product following their functional and emotional perception of the brands themselves. The way consumers perceive the different brands is pretty much connected with the way brands managed to be identified, and thus positioned, in people’s mind, when compared to their competitors. Indeed, each brand communicates its own point of view, style, identity and approach and luxury shoppers identify, according to their own idea of the brand, which one best reflects their way of living and seeing life.
2.3.3 Product

Products are usually created to reply to relevant consumer needs and to specific market trends. Indeed, when these two variables have been identified and analyzed, the product is produced in a way that its features can be standardized and mass-produced, thus allowing economies of scale and the reduction of the costs (Som & Blanckaert, 2015). On the contrary, luxury items are meant to be personalized to customers’ preferences and tastes and for this reason are not usually meant to be produced massively. Luxury marketing, in this perspective, is meant to communicate with consumers about uniqueness of their item and of the brand, thus implementing its authority and attractiveness.

2.3.4 Place

As previously explained, the variable of place must be considered in marketing, when the distribution strategy is to be defined. The main idea behind an effective distribution strategy of basic goods, is that they must be available as soon as possible for as many people as possible. Conversely, in the luxury world exclusivity and inaccessibility are important features of the product; as Som and Blanckaert (2015, p.95) underlined, “the greater the inaccessibility, the greater the desire”. Creating expectations and desire of the luxury product is indeed part of the whole process of selling the item itself. For this reason, the place should be ideally located in specific stores where the brand manages to find its best expression and it is able to communicate its own value to its buyers.

2.3.5 Price

Pricing strategy usually depends on the demand of the market: when a product is created, it is usually launched at a fair price and eventually traded-up later; indeed, when
the segment of the market is competitive enough, the price is usually incentivized so that the demand is increased or at least maintained. Usually, when it comes to the standard market, when the price is lower, or falls, the demand is higher. Contrary of what is expected, luxury market analyses demonstrated that the higher the actual price, when compared to the perceived one, the higher the value for the consumer. This is the reason why in the luxury industry first the product is created, then the price is set; such variables as higher quality of the product, fancy packaging and higher distribution margins all contribute to the final definition of price for a luxury product (Nia & Zaichkowsky, 2000; Som & Blanckaert, 2015). This way, companies find themselves selling fewer products, with higher prices. It is important to underline that a higher price for luxury products is believed to be an essential feature of the items themselves: the higher price helps to maintain the basic attributes of rarity and exclusivity of the product. Indeed, many case studies underlined how the combination of luxury world and mass production could cause a damage to the brand value: if the luxury goods become affordable for too many people, the value of the product is lost and the higher price is not justified anymore. Indeed, the scarcity variable of luxury goods should be perceived and maintained for the brand to be successful. This way, the perceived exclusivity of the luxury product is preserved, and the margins are higher than the ones of standard goods (Dubois and Czellar, 2002; Dubois and Duquesne, 1993)

2.3.6 Promotion

It is known that advertising is created by combining a range of emotional and rational messages to be conveyed to the clients. In the luxury world, the rational reasons are completely left behind. For this reason, the advertising should be carefully selected,
implying only those channels and images that respect and exalt the brand image. What can work, or actually works, for a specific brand, will probably not for others. In this perspective, promotion should be linked to the very essence of the brand, so that the value perceived is maximized. It is important to underline that promotion in the luxury world is not meant to rationally justify the reason behind a product purchase, because it is only a matter of what the final consumer perceives as valuable, no matter its functionality or utility (Som & Blanckaert, 2015).

2.3.7 Process

Contrary to conventional attitudes of following standardized processes to create success, the luxury world processes are uncertain. No one can predict whether the launch of a luxury product would be successful, given the fact that many launches are failures. The creation of a luxury product has indeed to be considered as a continuous process on the part of the creator, who constantly studies and visits the market and the world in general, to find what fits the brand best. For this reason, creators should be as focused on the present moment as possible: not only should they catch the actual “mood”, but they should sense and think “in advance”, for them to be able to predict what will attract the consumers over the next years. Indeed, the logic of luxury world is dominated by “offering” forces, more that of “demanding” ones (Som & Blanckaert, 2015).

2.3.8 Productivity

It is almost impossible to predict and control productivity in the luxury marketing, because the market trends have a unique course of their own; indeed, traditional market
analyses do not apply to luxury marketing because no direct and unique explanation can be attributed to customers’ attitude towards luxury goods.

Productivity in the luxury world depends pretty much on finding the right talent: when the right creators, designer, craftsmen and sellers are to be found, then demand and, consequently, productivity will rise. In this perspective, a good approach to control and measure productivity is to produce items with regular intervals (Preiholt and Hågg, 2006; Som & Blanckaert, 2015). This way, on one hand the sales of products do not undergo a massive productive process and the luxury brand can maintain its own image and reputation; on the other hand, the total sale of products for the brand is large and consistent over time. Another solution could be that of maintaining consumer perception high, so that they constantly perceive the exclusivity of the goods sold by the brands (Beverland, 2004). That is why people who works in the luxury world should be expert in their own branch but also in marketing: not only designers are marketers, but creative directors and sellers are as well. It is easy indeed for a brand to lose its status or symbol, if the idea behind the brand is not confirmed by all the parties and communicated to the final clientele (Dubois & Czellar, 2002). For this reason, it is important that all the processes which led to the creation of luxury are explained and emphasized when marketing the product, since they contribute to create the final value of the item itself.

2.4 Luxury goods manufacturing

Luxury goods production has existed for centuries even though the well-known brands of today are only 100-200 years old. The production of such luxury brands as Louis Vuitton, Cartier or Versace, started as small family-owned businesses which were managed by a single person or by a limited number of people and were mainly focused
on finding the highest-quality materials and designs for its goods. However, changing in the market soon led all companies to face the necessity to change their organizational and productive structures, moving towards greater flexibility and modularity of the production processes. Thus, radical market changes, increasing technological complexity, as well as the expansion of the luxury market itself, led brands to react and adapt.

When it comes to luxury production, three main protagonists are involved: France, Italy and the United States. All those countries played such an important role in the luxury industry, that each of their organizational procedures and production transformation represent a model.

- The French opted for a model called the “Umbrella Holding”, where several autonomous organizations work independently under the name of a unique brand (Som & Blanckaert, 2015). Entrepreneurs in the sector changed their attitude: from being designers, to develop industries in the world of luxury. This way different brands managed to find a balance between the values luxury promotes (know-how, craftsmanship, precious materials, etc.) and the market needs (economies of scale, focus on costs, etc.). To be part of a luxury conglomerate, “groupes de luxe” in French, can be beneficial on the part of the single company who manages to survive under the name of a well-known brand, but at the same time it can be difficult because the organizational entities need to stay abreast to stakeholders and various production processes.

- Italy is a country with a long history in terms of successful luxury production and entrepreneurship. Middle-sized businesses have always been at the center of the Italian model, thus influencing Italian luxury economy and creating its peculiar model. The distinctive aspect behind the Italian model is the survival of industrial
districts distributed all over the country (Som & Blanckaert, 2015); these districts were constituted of small entities which cooperate with each other and manage to create a widespread distribution network, thus laying the foundation of today’s small- and medium-sized businesses. Indeed, the Italian luxury industry emerged as an ensemble of flexible and stable networks, all included in local or regional industrial communities. This organizational model gave the Italian luxury companies the possibility to maintain all the benefits related to small size businesses: flexibility, adaptability and speed of reaction to possible market changes. In this model, the family-business setting has been preserved as owners tended to focus on long-term goals with the perspective of passing the ownership of the company down to future generations within the family. The contribution of the younger generation was fundamental because they usually had higher educational levels and had the ability to help their companies evolve into more complex organizational structures.

- The American model is focused on creating a “virtual organization”, where the level of activities outsourced is very significant, while a minimum number of activities is kept-in-house. Those activities then are usually regulated by random contracts, which do not foresee long-term trustworthy relationships or partnerships between various companies. This is one of the main reasons behind the struggle French or Italian luxury brands are facing in expanding their business in America (Som & Blanckaert, 2015). It is indeed a market full of promises, but it requires the investment of many resources, effort and time, as America lacks many systems and standards required to produce luxury as it is meant to be crafted in Italy or France.
2.4.1 Luxury and craftsmanship

Luxury goods have been produced for centuries, as the royals and aristocratic people all around the world never failed at spending their fortunes on handmade clothes or objects. When it comes to handiwork, it is important to underline that a product can be defined as “artisanal” when all its characteristics of highest quality, uniqueness and care in the production process are emphasized. Indeed, all artisanal products are made by skilled craftsmen implying the finest materials and the highest skills, thus making the final product so special and unique. In this perspective, it is important to highlight how different studies revealed that terms that were mainly associated with the concept of craftsmanship are “handcrafted” and “artisan made”; the term “hand-made”, on the other hand, does not imply the application of premium-quality crafts skills to the product (Bhaduri & Stanforth, 2017).

Craftsmen always played an important role as they perform their crafts with excellent handiwork, pursuing beauty and perfection in each of their products. Their contribution in determining the highest quality of luxury products has always been fundamental. In addition, the entire luxury storytelling is focused on craftsmanship, its uniqueness, exclusivity and rarity. Craftsmen were traditionally required to perform their skills excellently while contributing to brands’ exclusivity and finest excellence. This is the reason why that between artisans and luxury brands, has always been a long-term commitment and investment on the part of the firm; indeed, it takes time and effort to acquire the crafts skills because a good craftsman is an artist who acquires his knowledge by observing, studying, trying and experimenting his know-how while adapting his knowledge to new models or tastes. In addition, crafts skills have always been so unique
and valuable that they contribute to justify the exclusivity and the higher price of luxury products (Amatulli & Guido, 2011; Kapferer, 2014; Som & Blanckaert, 2015).

However, the dynamics of the market challenged the role of the craftsman lately: the luxury industry experienced a phase of growth and increase during the period from 1995 to 2007; indeed, in the years between 1995 and 1999 the luxury industry had its biggest boom so that its Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) picked at 11%, then the production consolidated itself and the CAGR settled at 8% between the years 2004 and 2007 (Amatulli & Guido, 2011). In this perspective, the growth of the market led to a scarcity in terms of available crafts, when compared to the production numbers both the economies of scale and scope were demanding. As previously stated, the luxury world has changed its dynamics and most of the time small family businesses were left aside to give space to luxury conglomerates that sell their product worldwide and operate on a global scale. In this perspective, the craftsman is not expected to pay attention exclusively to his creative process anymore; to deal with the complexity of today’s luxury industry, the artisans need to find a balance between being creative, artistic and open to take risks on one hand, and being strategic, realistic and attached to facts and figures on the other. This process of balancing is very strategic and difficult to achieve and sometimes its complexity led to the outsourcing of a few production processes on the part of some luxury conglomerates. The outsourcing could be positive on one hand when the brand needs to deal with phenomenal growth of the market and, consequently, of the demand for luxury goods; however, as previously explained, consumers are sensitive to brands’ history, to their DNAs and tend to be very careful in purchasing only those products that meet the highest quality standards in terms of production, design and materials.
The business of luxury has become global lately and, for this reason, it attracts consumers which are more and more expert, digitally savvy and want everything at hand. Therefore, luxury industry is seeking for craftsmen who adjust their talent to the market’s needs, without losing their deep-rooted knowledge. In a world which is in continuous changing, flexibility of skill sets will always be needed in order to develop a flourishing luxury industry (Som & Blanckaert, 2015). In this perspective, different studies underlined how craftsmanship may be preserved in today’s luxury production because it could be a possible key for a brilliant future of many enterprises, as it contributes to exalt the tradition of handiwork and its quality, making products and brands more competitive on the market. Scholars identified this process as a knowledge-based economy, where skills and know-how constitute the primary source of value and craftsmen abilities represent the reason behind wealth of the luxury industry. Knowledge-based economy is becoming more and more important lately as it can support strategic corporate decisions while strengthening companies’ competitiveness at the same time. Indeed, the core values of craftsmanship appear to be very similar, if not the same, as the ones of luxury: high quality, beauty, care, research, excellence, timeliness; thus, this practice can only reinforce the perceived value of final products and brands, confirming their exclusivity to the eyes of the consumers. It is indeed part of a process which consists in the client perceiving the highest quality and manufacture of the luxury brand, thus willing to pay a premium price for its products. The more the product is perceived as exclusive, the more the people are willing to pay for them; in this perspective, this unique product can be generated only by those people, i.e. craftsmen, who possess specific and personal skills and knowledge (Bhaduri & Stanforth, 2017; Campana et al., 2016; Manfredi Latilla et. al., 2018).
2.4.2 Luxury and Industry 4.0

In the recent years, the complexity of markets and of demand on the part of the clientele led to the necessity of modifying manufacturing by introducing flexible, rapid and precise production processes at the same time. Digital technologies emerged as a natural evolution of existing knowledge, but also as a response to a new economic and productive context which required more flexibility and efficiency on the part of the firms. For this reason, the production and manufacturing processes are undergoing a phenomenon of digitalization which led to a new era of industrial revolution, called Industry 4.0 (Almada-Lobo, 2015; Bettiol et al., 2017). The term Industry 4.0 has been adopted in 2012 to explain the idea of revolutionizing the manufacturing industry by strengthening the shape of cyber-physical systems (CPS) and that of smart technologies. Di Nardo, Forino and Murino (2020, p.20) defined Industry 4.0 as “a new concept of manufacturing, involving the industrial automation and integrating new production technologies, in order to improve work conditions and to increase productivity and quality.” In addition, it has been underlined how this new paradigm has improved communication between humans and machines throughout a networked environment made of automation technologies such as CPS, Internet of Things (IoT) and cloud computing. In this perspective, recent literature demonstrated how this technological revolution allowed many industries to grow and reach great results such as implementing their efficiency and productivity, as well as their ability to respond to markets’ changes and requests. In essence, Industry 4.0 aims to integrate manufacturing processes horizontally throughout the supply chain, vertically, in collecting and sharing more data and information, and end-to-end with digital support to the firms with the purpose of maximizing their efficiency and the customization of products (Berman, 2012; Bettiol et al., 2017). Such efficient production
performances are possible thanks to specific technologies, robotics, addictive manufacturing and laser cutting which were lately introduced in the industry manufacturing. On the other hand, such technologies as IoT, Big data or Cloud computing turned out to be very useful when it comes to analyzing customers’ needs and requests (Porter & Heppelmann, 2014; Yeo et al., 2017). Indeed, Industry 4.0 supports not only human work in the production phase, in logistics and data sharing, but in Business manager and customization as well.

Technology happens to be at the basis of each process, thus characterizing Industry 4.0 as a “technology-driven paradigm” that contributes to change the manufacturing industry from cost-efficient mass production into mass customization of a large variety of products. Customization is at the basis of the Industry 4.0, as the use of new technologies enables the firms to better understand customers’ needs and to reply to their desires quicker. Indeed, this new system involves the consumer in the entire production process, thus changing the traditional buyer-seller relationship, in favor of a customer-centric business system. (Bettiol et al., 2017; Di Nardo et al., 2020; Li et al., 2019).

Research in this field demonstrated that Industry 4.0 is not exclusively a change in the technological field, but also a strategical and organizational asset (Di Nardo et. al, 2020). On the part of the firms, moving towards this technological implementation can be challenging, as they need to invest in terms of resources and time, in order to better understand the new possibilities Industry 4.0 can bring. In this perspective, Bettiol, Capestro and Di Maria (2017) studied motivations behind adoption or non-adoption of new technologies on the part of Italian manufacturing firms; they underlined specific barriers, success factors and key opportunities, as well as critical challenges in the paradigm of Industry 4.0. For example, on the part of the Italian manufacturing firms, the
main motivations behind the non-adoption of new technologies are seen to be the lack of knowledge or information concerning how to introduce this new paradigm in an already culturally driven production model. As far as firms implementing their production processes with Industry 4.0 paradigm, data demonstrated how new technologies allowed the firms to improve customers’ experience with their brands and to better understand their desires in order to create ad-hoc products. It is indeed the improvement in customer relationships and the implementing of services that led small and medium firms to implement their production processes.

When it comes to the impacts Industry 4.0 has on firms’ development, scholars identified three main areas of changing: strategy, technology and skills and management impacts.

- As far as strategical impact concerns, firms need to understand which technology can improve their business performance, maximizing their success though the Industry 4.0 support. The definition of a clear strategy, with new benefits and objectives of the digital changings, is necessary for the transformation of a company; in addiction, such variables as time, procedure, budget, risks, etc. need to be taken into account for the transformation to occur as smoothly as possible. A good working team in each department appears to be fundamental in order to establish a successful Industry 4.0 model; the management, on the other hand, needs to establish a secure base for the flourishment of the new technological model, ensuring the development of a culture of change and a good action plan to be followed (Biegler et al., 2018; Müller, 2019).

- The technological impact concerns the measurement of variables such efficiency, effectiveness and process of the Industry 4.0. It is indeed fundamental for the firms to understand the relevance and efficacy of different technologies, with the purpose of
applying only those changings that are useful and fruitful for the specific business or for the single company’s needs. Researchers underlined how this could be done by adopting small technological projects which require very limited amounts of investment and whose efficacy could be evaluated step by step, thus limiting the risks (Zangiacomi et al., 2018).

- Being the most complex variable and the least predictable, the impact on skills and management is believed to be the most difficult to analyze. When the productive and organizational context varies, all the actors involved need to change their attitude, as well as the way they interact with each other (Di Nardo et al., 2020). While some firms could opt for total replacement of the workers with machines or technological systems based on algorithms, the others could decide in favor of technology as a support for skilled workers (Hirsch-Kreinsen, 2016).

Even though the technological integration of firms happens to be a decision on the part of the management, all the people involved in the production processes should be prepared for the changing. In this perspective, all the impacts of Industry 4.0 should be considered when dealing with changes and implementations on the part of the firms; the successful firm, which manages to integrate technology into its own production process and manufacturing, is the one that did not take those variables for granted and produced a structured plan where different subjects participate actively in the change.

When it comes to luxury, the integration of such technological and manufacturing changes led by Industry 4.0 should be considered and analyzed carefully. As previously underlined, artisanal and handcrafted components have always been at the basis of luxury, thus characterizing the quality of products and justifying their price premium. However, that of luxury should not be categorized as a sector where technological push and
processes cannot be implied to obtain valuable results. Indeed, as Freire (2014, p. 2669) stated “tradition and innovation are not contradictory but complementary” in the luxury manufacturing. According to different research in the field, the mix between handcrafted and industrial is essential in the world of luxury, because they complement each other in goods manufacturing. Innovation in the world of luxury consists in bringing new methods, techniques but also new elements to the traditional processes of manufacturing. The imposition of a right balance between tradition and innovation could only be a favorable aspect of luxury to strengthen products authenticity and quality by combining long-established handcrafting knowledge with avant-garde methods and technologies. In this perspective, technology can constitute a positive impact both on the tangible level (process optimization, time to market, quality checks) and on the core value of craftsmanship itself thus promoting new manufacturing methods (Freire, 2014).

For these reasons, some organizations in the world of luxury started to apply different technological tools to their manufacturing in order to give the clientele a product of maximum quality and to reduce the cost and maximize productivity at the same time. This does not mean that every firm should opt for a complete atomization of the production process, especially because the luxury industry requires such complex manufacturing that even the highest technological implementations sometimes require the final touch of skilled and trained craftsmen to complete the process (Campana et al., 2016; Rocha et al., 2018). Bertola and Teunissen (2018) underlined how a “smart factory” should allow people, machine and objects to communicate and share information constantly, relying on a digital infrastructure that contributes to have major control on the entire production process. In addition, customers’ need for authenticity and uniqueness on one side, and the fundamental necessity of the companies of controlling efficiency, quality and costs can
result in a hybrid model. The latter would be based on smart production processes and on big data analyses to optimize production, mixed with final “touches” of artisanal and crafted processes. In this perspective, scholars underlined how, in the luxury world, this hybrid model mixes human expertise and knowledge in craftsmanship with sets of devices and technologies that can only augment final product performance.

The core value of Industry 4.0 in the luxury industry is represented by Process Knowledge Automation (Grieco et al., 2017), i.e. machine and objects inside the manufacturing process communicating with each other because they are introduced into the Internet of Things. The latter enables non-human parties to have technical capabilities to communicate their own status, thus becoming more controllable in their own production and transforming process. The transition into a “smart industry” is not easy and for this reason many firms opted for integrating their traditional model with some innovation that can simplify their performance. An example of this integration is made by Bottega Veneta’s Decision Support System (DSS) which was designed to help the firm in the process of decision making for what concerns organization of different activities of their supply chain; DSS implies such technological tools that enable Bottega Veneta to control external suppliers, internal production job-shops and local subcontractors (Grieco et al., 2017). DDS reports of each production order are indeed fundamental as they analyze the resources implied in the plan, the different strategies used in the production process and the final capability of the plan to be completed within the due date.

In addition, different luxury brands such as Tiffany or Cartier (Il Sole 24 Ore, 2014) started to introduce 3D printing in their production processes. This practice can be best defined as “an automated additive manufacturing process that builds a product by depositing material into successive layers until it is complete” (Vanderploeg et al., 2017,
The term “additive manufacturing” is indeed used as a synonym for 3D printing, to distinguish this practice from the traditional subtractive and formative manufacturing ones (Wirth & Thiesse, 2014). According to McCormick et al. (2019), 3D printing can revolutionize the traditional supply chain by reducing the steps to produce the final item and the waste created when manufacturing it. In addition, by implementing luxury manufacturing with 3D printing, the production process results in a more standardized and controlled making, which contributes to maintain a constant quality of the final brand over time.

Despite Industry 4.0 being a good source of implementation in production and organization of the entire chain, the world of luxury has always found its roots in craftsmanship and handcrafting. Indeed, as previously explained, from the point of view of the final clientele craftsmanship happened to be a synonym of good quality, authenticity and of luxury itself for many years. For these reasons, luxury brands are facing difficulties in implementing their production chain with new technologies that are designed to make production effective but can, in some ways, reduce the perceived value on the part of the final client.

### 2.5 A luxury value model

Following a global understanding of the luxury world and its variables, all relevant potential sources of value on the part of the consumer should be explained and integrated in one single model. In this perspective, research underlined how motives behind luxury brands consumption are not simply connected to social aspects, status or to the will of impressing people, but they depend also on functional and individual utilities of the luxury product itself (Wiedmann et al., 2007). Luxury brands respond to different
functional and psychological needs (Vigneron and Johnson, 1999) and their ability is to communicate exclusivity, history, high quality and brand identity to their potential customers. In this perspective, the construct of customers’ perceived value is understood as “a consumer’s overall assessment of the utility of a product based on perceptions of what is received and what is given” (Zeithaml, 1988, p.14).

2.5.1 Luxury perception

The consumption of luxury goods involves buying a product that represents both the consumer in his individuality and the reference group he is part of. For this reason, luxury good consumption is socially and personally oriented at the same time; referring to a personal variable to be included in the conceptual framework of luxury consumption, researchers assume that different sets of consumers would have different perceptions of the value of the same brand, according to their own judgment, experience, situational conditions (e.g. economic, societal and political factors) and personal motives (Vigneron and Johnson, 1999; Wiedmann et al., 2007).

Drawing on existing literature on luxury analyses, different authors proposed a four-dimension framework (see Figure 2) to explain different motives behind luxury perception on the part of the consumer. Firstly, the consumer of luxury is usually driven by his own perception in terms of conspicuousness and prestige, later identified as social value. According to different studies, people who buy luxury products are influenced by their reference group when consuming prestige items. In this perspective, it has been underlined that conspicuous consumption of products has a significant effect in influencing luxury value perception. Thus, consumers of luxury are usually influenced by the extent to which a product is visible or noticeable by a social group or by society in
general (Leibenstein, 1950; Vigneron and Johnson, 1999; Wiedmann et al., 2007). As previously explained, the luxury consumer sees the prestigious items as means to display wealth, power or status and perceives the products’ prices as evidence that demonstrate higher quality and prestige. Indeed, prices are considered as indicators of exclusivity and for this reason people avoid too popular brands, while seeking for items that fulfill their need for uniqueness (Corneo and Jeanne, 1997; Vigneron & Johnson, 1999). Leibenstein (1950, p.199) named this perceived unique value on the part of the consumer as the “snob effect”, because it categorizes luxury consumers as people who are sensitive to mass consumption of prestige products. Indeed, while a perceived limited number of products guides the consumers towards the choice of a brand, the mass-popularization of items makes the latter less desirable (Pantzalis, 1995). Indeed, luxury value perception is influenced by product prices, i.e. the financial value of products, because people tend to perceive the higher prices of items as synonyms of their good quality. In this perspective, the perceived quality influences consumer when they manage to “value the perceived utility acquired from a prestige brand to suggest superior product characteristics and performance” (Vigneron and Johnson, 1999, p.10). In this perspective, consumers’ own judgment becomes fundamental in perceiving the higher quality in luxury products when compared to non-luxury ones (Vigneron and Johnson, 2004).

Luxury perception depends also on individual value, i.e. customers’ personal characteristics as hedonism, materialism and self-identity values. Hedonism finds his roots in noncognitive and unconscious motifs driving consumers’ perception of luxury. Different studies indeed demonstrated how luxury goods are those goods that have an emotional value that provides the consumers with subjective intangible benefits; people who buy luxury are usually interested and influenced by their own thoughts and feelings.
when purchasing items of high quality. For this reason, consumers may perceive the utility acquired from the purchase of a luxury brand as a direct consequence of their own arouse of feelings and pleasure. Research discussing consumers feelings related to the purchase of luxury goods, identified emotions such as sensory pleasure, aesthetic beauty or excitement to be related to people’s consumption (Vigneron & Johnson, 1999; Wiedmann et al., 2007). In addition, consumers perceive as luxury those brands that help them feeling distinguishable while expressing their own identity. Indeed, the process of construction of oneself appears to be very influential on the part of the consumer (Holt, 1995; Vigneron and Johnson, 1999): people are looking for products to exalt their own identity with specific references to a lifestyle they want to conform to, thus driving their purchase intentions towards specific luxury products rather than others.

Finally, luxury value perception is influenced by the *functional dimension* of luxury items; this latter refers to those variables such as quality uniqueness, durability and usability of the product. The more the items are timeless, distinguishable and of good quality, the more they can be categorized as luxury goods (Wiedmann et al., 2007). That of good-quality manufacturing is for sure one of the main variables people rely on when it comes to luxury perception and for this reason, the functional dimension of luxury guides the clientele towards the purchase of more authentic brands.
2.5.2 Luxury perceived authenticity

In consumer research, authenticity has been described as a fundamental concept when it comes to the purchasing of luxury. Indeed, research shows that consumers judge products or services as more or less authentic according to their perception (Beverland, 2005; Kadirov, 2010). Indeed, different studies argued that that of authenticity is not a quality of the object itself, but rather it represents an evaluation on the part of the consumer (Beverland, 2005; Grayson and Martinec, 2004). Other research argued that authenticity is a characteristic that belongs to the objects and that those objects, which are the outcome of modern trends and mass productions, are the anti-thesis of authenticity. Finally, it has been underlined how authenticity could be directly connected to consumers’ experience of a brand or object; the experience of the brand is indeed a means by which consumers transcend their primary role and start to participate actively to their experience (Kadirov, 2010).
In this perspective, the extent to which a brand is perceived as authentic or inauthentic is difficult to measure, because it belongs to a complex social phenomenon where consumers have an active role. According to researchers in the field of luxury authenticity, a brand is more likely to be perceived as authentic when it has a “(…) commitment to traditions, a passion for craft and production excellence and the public disavowal of the role of modern industrial attributes and commercial motivations” (Beverland, 2005, p.1020). However, authenticity relates to personal evaluations of the brand and its items and, for this reason, it is argued that there are many ways by which authenticity can be perceived by the consumers. Different dimensions such as individuality, consistency and continuity on the part of the brands happen to be influential when it comes to consumers’ authenticity perception. In particular, the model of brand authenticity (see Figure 3) takes into consideration the variable of individuality, by which the brand fulfills its promises, that of consistency, that measures brand behavior in maintaining its promises for every single touchpoint. Finally, the variable of brand continuity expresses the ability of the brand of remaining stable over time, so that the brand’s promise reflects its past behaviors (Beverland, 2005; Napoli et al., 2013; Safeer et al., 2021; Schallehn et al., 2014). Hence, it can be deduced that perceived brand authenticity depends on brands’ attributes as well as on brand’s promises and behavior.
Brand authenticity has been seen by different research as a means to confirm brand credibility and gain trust on the part of the consumers (Beverland, 2005; Pine & Gilmore, 2008; Schallehn et al., 2014). When consumers have trust in a brand, they believe it to have good intentions in fulfilling its promises and to act in the best interest of its clientele. In this perspective, consumers who trust a brand will not only continue to purchase its products and services but will be willing to pay higher prices for the authentic brand. Indeed, research demonstrated how consumer’s perception of authenticity in specific products is positively correlated to their willingness to pay a premium price for those items. It is indeed the favorable perception of a brand that increases its value and authenticity, so that consumers are accepting higher prices for authentic items (Fritz et al., 2017; Napoli et al., 2013; Minor and LeBoeuf, 2011; Safeer et al., 2021; Schallehn et al., 2014).

2.6 Who buys luxury brands?

The consumption of luxury goods and its marketing cannot be completely understood without prior analyses of the consumers of luxury and their characteristics. According to
researchers in the field, the main variables which must be taken into account when trying to understand who buys luxury brands are income, culture, cohort perception and self-consciousness.

The positive and direct association within income and consumption of luxury has already been demonstrated empirically by Dubois and Duquesne (1993), who underlined that only those consumers who have more money, can afford luxury goods. Thus, it can be argued that income is generally positively correlated to luxury consumption (Ghosh & Varshney, 2013). As far as culture concerns, it is a variable which can influence many aspects of people’s life, their attitude towards luxury as well. While in some cultures the consumption of luxury is supported, or even encouraged, others tend to stem the world of luxury, thus influencing somehow the purchase intentions. The exact impact of culture on consumers of luxury goods is difficult to understand, but studies suggested that in order to better understand their behavior towards luxury, such variables as socio-demographic and cultural aspects of life should be considered. Indeed, they could contribute to a deeper understanding of all the norms and expectations the cultural environment has when it comes to the purchase of luxury goods (Dubois et al., 2001).

Research demonstrated how personal features and psychological dynamics may influence the consumers when buying luxury; cohort perception, for example, is seen as playing an important role in consumption. To be precise, a cohort group usually encloses all people born during the same period of time, who are expected to face similar external events or stimuli during their early adulthood. Those events of life may influence cohort groups perception of luxury as well as their purchase intentions. For example, it has been argued that what a generation considers as luxury, can turn into a necessity for the next cohort group. Thus, it can be argued that cohort general perception is then related to single
people perception and their consumption of luxury goods (Berry, 1994; Ghosh & Varshney, 2013; Hauck & Stanforth, 2007).

Finally, different types of self-consciousness should be considered when trying to define and understand luxury consumers; indeed, consumers’ interpersonal and personal effects may influence the final consumption of luxury products and brand. The concept of self-consciousness has been adopted to categorize different responses to social influence on the part of the consumers and to underline that buying motivations and purchase intentions may be different, according to the type of self-consciousness people have; while private self-conscious people are more concerned about their own judgment, publicly self-conscious people are more influenced by others’ opinion, especially when it comes to the group they identify themselves with. For this reason, consumers’ self-consciousness is related to their approach to the luxury world and to their attitude towards it (Vigneron and Johnson, 1999). In this perspective, the buying attitude of publicly self-conscious individuals has been analyzed: being those individuals particularly worried about the impression they make on the social group they are part of, they are expected to use different strategies to gain society approval. Indeed, they are more concerned about their appearance, more compliant with standards in society and, consequently, they are more inclined to buy luxury products as a means of social acceptance. While using luxury goods as symbols for themselves and for their reference group, people desire responses which positively influence and reinforce their interactions as well as their self-perception. For this reason, these consumers’ first luxury purchase motifs are very much connected with the satisfaction of symbolic meanings, more than with the satisfaction of their needs. The symbolic motivation behind luxury goods is mainly connected with what the items stands for: their brand, their history and their specific utility. For this reason, the publicly
self-conscious consumer is usually looking for luxury products that stand out but are also accepted and admired by others (Bushman, 1993; Dubois and Duquesne, 1993; Ghosh & Varshney, 2013; Nia & Zaichkowsky, 2000). Privately self-conscious people, on the other hand, are more concerned about pleasure when buying luxury goods, because they tend to satisfy their own hedonist motivations (Ghosh & Varshney, 2013). In this perspective, if the purchase intentions are primarily influenced by pleasure, then the privately self-conscious consumer will be interested in such variables as quality or aesthetics of the product, rather than on its price or derived evaluation on the part of his social group.

To capture the complexity behind luxury consumers’ profile, Som and Blanckaert (2015) introduced the idea of The Nomad, which clearly explains the consumers of today’s world. According to the authors, the world of today is in continuous movement and so are the people living in it; the concept of the nomad gives the idea of how people are in continuous changing, in a continuous process of evolution and they can virtually be in different places at the same time. For this reason, they are becoming more and more demanding as consumers, as they travel the world more frequently, they are immersed in different realities, they know more and more cultures, images and objects and are looking for products that make them feel good. The nomad uses technology that provides him with a large quantity of information, he’s always connected and has everything close at hand: he buys quickly, he can have products delivered and for this reason he wants everything immediately.

From the point of view of the luxury marketing, the nomad is difficult to seduce and convince because he sees everything, he compares different stimuli and he knows what he wants. According to Som and Blanckaert (2015, p. 101) “In this world where
everything goes too fast, in which everything gets diluted, lost, where everything is public, everything is publicized, nomads are attracted to safe-haven products, natural products, signed products, tailor-made products just for them. (…) The fortunate paradox is that a nomadic lifestyle is compatible with all sorts of creativity that bring more comfort, more beauty.’

Nomads are in need of mobile, seductive, displayed and even eternal luxury goods whose quality is perfect and whose innovation is to be found in fabrics, as well as in their touch or in the history of the brand itself. He is looking for those luxury goods that are, and continue to be, unnecessary and scarce at the same time, thus becoming more desirable on the part of the consumer. The clientele of the luxury world pays attention to the brand’s personality, to its core value that should distinguish the luxury brand and make it consistent, yet innovative at the same time. The nomad is sensitive to who the brand associates itself with: public figures are in fact a means to attract the consumers and influence their purchase intention; he can be attracted by publicity as well, which should keep the aspirations of the clientele high and communicate the core values of the brand. The nomad is also value-conscious, and, for this reason, he is more sensitive than the consumer of the past; it is indeed important for the brand to adopt a pricing strategy which reflects both the higher quality of the luxury product and a fair amount of price premium the clientele is willing to pay at the same time. Finally, the nomad is very sensitive to products’ performance (Som & Blanckaert, 2015) and to their details that should be a synonym of excellence; when those products become an equivalent for creativity, timeless quality, attention to each detail and expert craftsmanship on the part of the artisans, then the luxury goods sell themselves.
The figure of the nomad represents a good example of all the antecedents and the dynamics influencing customers’ intention to buy luxury goods and underlines how complex the profile of the luxury client could be.

2.6.1 Purchase intention

In studying different dynamics influencing customers’ intention to buy a product, American Marketing Association (Phang et al., 2016) defined purchase intention as “the decision plan to purchase a particular brand, product or service created through decision making process”. As previously hinted, this purchase process can be influenced by different values which belongs to the personal and social sphere of customers’ life. According to the model (see Figure 4) presented by Phang et al. (2016), purchase intention is mainly correlated to the variable of Luxury Brand Perception, which is rather personal than objective. The luxury value could be indeed based on different sets of perceptions that come from different point of views on the matter. As a matter of fact, the model suggests the presence of some personal dynamics on the part of the consumers, which can influence their intention to buy luxury products; those dynamics belong to symbolic and sensory fulfilment, linked to a trait of vanity, which has a significant outcome in this field. According to Netemeyer et al. (1995) the trait of vanity is positively correlated with self-perception, physical appearance and social status; this is the reason why Phang et al. presented a model which includes two more variables influencing intention to buy: physical vanity, as consumers’ intention to buy is related to their desire of enhancing their physical attractiveness, and achievement vanity, which is “an excessive concern for, and/or a positive (and perhaps inflated) view of, one’s personal achievement” (Netemeyer et al., 1995, p. 612).
Finally, social influence has been identified as one of the factors influencing customers’ intention to buy luxury goods; social influence is performed by a reference group that usually encompasses family, friends, work associates, community and other. Their influence is indeed seen as fundamental when it comes to purchasing luxury products, both when it comes to social acceptance and in driving others’ opinion towards some specific brands rather than other ones.

Figure 4: Model of Purchase Intention

Source: Phang et al. (2016).

2.6.2 Word of Mouth

As previously hinted, other people’s influence and opinion is considered as important when it comes to the purchase of luxury products. This phenomenon is referred to as Word of mouth which “deals with the process of transferring information from one person to other through oral communication” (Lo, 2012, p.188). The Word of mouth phenomenon is highly considered in marketing studies as it has gained importance in decision making on the part of the final consumer. In this perspective, Lo (2012) underlined a higher possibility for a consumer to purchase the product suggested by a positive word of mouth.
For these reasons, in present days marketing actions take into consideration the phenomenon of Word of mouth by analyzing the possible outcomes of people’s perception of a product; indeed, it has been seen as a powerful tool that drives people’s intention to buy a product and their perception of the product itself.

Hence, all those variables will be later taken into account with the purpose of answering the questions of the present research.
CHAPTER 3
RESEARCH METODOLOGY

3.1 Research purpose

The present study represents a first attempt to explore whether consumers perception towards luxury products is different, according to their methods of manufacturing, handcrafting or 3D printing, and whether this perception effects consumer behavior. In particular, the study focuses on two specific advertising which were presented randomly to a group of people, coming from different backgrounds and age cohorts. The advertising was built underlying two different aspects of luxury manufacturing: handcrafting, on one hand, and 3D printing on the other. The choice is due to the relevance manufacturing processes are believed to have on luxury perception and final purchase on the part of the consumer.

To reach the research purposes, different variables have been considered, such as luxury perception, perceived brand authenticity, general perception of the brand the advertising was referring to, as well as potential recommendation of the brand and willingness to buy the advertised product. As already explained, the manufacturing aspect has always been fundamental in defining the quality of luxury products as well as the perception of luxury itself. However, it is important to underline how production processes have changed in recent years, thanks to the evolution of technology and to the advent of the so-called “Industry 4.0”. This new technological paradigm represents the new frontier of production which combines manufacturing with new technologies such as additive manufacturing, IoT and others, to create a cyber space for the production processes and make the industry structures more efficient and well-organized. Lately, the
Industry 4.0 allowed many industries to grow and to be efficient and flexible, according to market changes (Bettiol et al., 2022).

The present research focuses on investigating whether this new production processes may change the perception of luxury products and brands on the part of the final consumer. It takes into consideration the fundamental role handcrafting has always played in the definition and perception of a product as luxury; for this reason, the purpose is to investigate whether this perception can change, according to the different manufacturing processes suggested by the advertising of a luxury brand, answering to the following research questions.

**RQ1: Could the advertising of different manufacturing processes, i.e. handcrafting and digital manufacturing, influence luxury perception and brand authenticity on the part of the consumer?**

**RQ2: Could the two different production methods (handcrafting vs digital manufacturing) play a different role in affecting the consumer behavior?**

### 3.2 Methodology
#### 3.2.1 Research design

To reach the research purposes and answering the research questions, a two-steps research design has been selected. Firstly, the case study has been chosen to identify and assess the perception of the two manufacturing strategies (Handcrafting vs Industry 4.0) on the part of the potential consumer. From this point of view, the case study selected was that of Cartier, which is a luxury company that in the last years has started its digital
production. Then, an online survey data collection was conducted using SurveyMonkey, to examine the effects of the advertising of two manufacturing methods on consumer perception of luxury, brands and products’ authenticity and their behavior in terms of intention to buy and Word of Mouth. To do so, the present research used a questionnaire, which the participants to the survey could access through a URL link. The latter was distributed via different channels, using Facebook, Instagram and WhatsApp to reach a wider audience. Once the participants accessed the link, they were asked to answer to the questions according to their specific point of view and their own perception of the visual stimuli proposed.

3.2.2 Cartier

The brand Cartier is one of the most prestigious brands in the luxury industry and it has been considered number one in jewelry making (Som & Blanckaert, 2015). The brand started to sell its excellences in 1847, gaining the appellation of “king in jewelry and watchmaking” (Som & Blanckaert, 2015, p. 124). From then on, Cartier is evolved into a more complex Maison, with a pioneer attitude and a free spirit that enable the brand to push its boundaries (Cartier, 2022). The brand pays particular attention to the making of its jewels and is very loyal to its history and vision. According to its website, Cartier tries to reach excellence in each of its products “through the design, the most precious materials and the Cartier vision” (Cartier, 2022). Initially, jewelry was made in pure craftsmanship and it was sold to the most noble clientele; the business was such a success that nothing could prevent Cartier from evolving into the brand it is today. Different initiatives applied to Cartier’s production processes demonstrated how the brand was a pioneer in the Industry 4.0 applied to jewelry making: in 2014, Cartier was already
introducing additive manufacturing and 3D printing in its supply chain by buying such machinery from Veneto, Italy (Il Sole 24 Ore, 2014). From then on, Cartier experienced high growth in the jewelry industry by using new technologies to implement its supply chain, with Richemont Group (the global luxury group owning Cartier) gross sales reaching almost US$14B in 2019. Despite introducing these new crafting and printing techniques, Cartier has always affirmed its desire of being unique by selling products which could be immediately attributed to its brand for quality, manufacturing and style. For this reason, it made its implementation relevant by working with new metals, such as platinum, in 3D printing. Research underlined how the large companies in jewelry world find it difficult to become leaders in innovation, but Cartier managed to implement its manufacturing chain, driving towards Industry 4.0 and maintaining its own style and history (Goulding, 2020).

Today, Cartier website openly presents its supply chain as Industry 4.0 implemented; indeed, the brand clearly states the adoption of the so-called MACH 4.0 project, which aims at designing the “manufacturing of the future” (Cartier, 2022). The project enables Cartier to constantly test and improve its manufacturing supply chain with industrial and technological innovations that optimize production processes and people’s skills. The project has been applied to Cartier entire supply chain: it is indeed clear from the website itself that not only 3D printings had been introduced to produce jewelry, but different initiatives involved watchmaking as well. Cartier’s new initiatives led the brand towards its affirmation on the global business scene as well: it expands its production from France, its home country, to UK, U.S.A, Russia and China, both selling new products and categories and expanding in its own market sector (Goulding, 2020).
The choice concerning the specific brand Cartier was made with the purpose of referring to the image of a well-known brand that most of the people were familiar with in their daily life and experience and because the brand uses the two different manufacturing methods to produce its jewels. Indeed, Cartier was chosen as it proved to adhere to new crafting methods, which were added to its supply chain. At the same time, the brand based its production processes on handcrafting and craftsmanship for many years and for this reason it seemed interesting to test the variables of the present research on this specific brand.

As previously underlined, different research about luxury industry and consumption demonstrated how craftsmanship always represented a key element in influencing and defining quality and handiwork perception on the part of the final consumer. Indeed, they argued how the artisanal component, especially in jewels making, may be fundamental even in today’s industrialized world, because it could help to determine the product exclusivity and fine making and influence the consumer perception and willingness to pay a price premium for these products. (Campana et al., 2016; Bhaduri & Stanforth, 2017; Manfredi Latilla et. al., 2018). Despite these relevant findings, luxury brands as Cartier are investing in new digital technologies in both business and production processes. For this reason, the research has been conducted to test whether, through advertising, a different manufacturing processes in jewels crafting may influence the consumers’ perception of the luxury products.

3.2.3 The Experiment

The experiment, developed to answer to the research questions based on two stimuli, consists in two versions of a Cartier’s jewel advertising (see Annex A), which was
generated for academic purposes only. In particular, the two stimuli recreated a Cartier advertising of a luxury ring. In the background, the two versions of the advertising are suggesting different processes of manufacturing: the first one is portraying artisan’s hands making the ring, the second one is portraying technician’s hands, working on specific computerized design programs with the purpose of making the ring through additive manufacturing. Both the advertising present the same claim “Luxury as you have never seen it”, to stress the relevance of manufacturing processes. In creating both the stimuli, attention has been paid to balance the visual differences in the advertising with the purpose of picturing similar characteristics for both the stimuli. Indeed, both versions of the advertising show hands working on the making of the ring, both pictures represent the manufacturing of the same ring, attributed to the same luxury brand, i.e. Cartier.

3.2.3.1 The advertising claim in English

As already hinted, with the purpose of testing the effect of advertising for the specific brand Cartier, the two stimuli presented the same advertising claim in English, i.e. “Luxury as you have never seen it”. The claim was created in English language with the purpose of enhancing a global appeal to the advertising, so that the latter could give a more international and qualitative high image of the brand Cartier. The choice for an English advertising to be presented to a non-native English-speaking public is purely strategical. Indeed, the claim is rather easy to understand, even for non-proficient English language speakers, and it conveys a very general and abstract message.

Research suggested that English language is often implied in advertising despite the mother tongue of the final public, most for its symbolism than for its informative functions. As far as the association with multinational brands concerns, English language
is usually implied as the public is expected to focus his attention on the positive perception of English language use, rather than on the content of the advertising message itself. Indeed, it has been demonstrated how the use of English language for international brand have given brands themselves an advantage in building their “global brand image”, which adds a higher level of status to the product and the brand itself (Micu & Coulter, 2010; Vettorel, 2013).

In addition, the claim has been created with the purpose of drawing the potential consumer attention towards the advertised images: the one suggesting the Cartier jewel was handcrafted and the other, suggesting the ring was digitally crafted. By giving this general message, which is open to interpretation, the potential consumer is expected to reflect on the entire message conveyed by the advertising, rather than on the meaning of the claim only. Indeed, the two stimuli were generated with the purpose of testing whether the perception of the advertising for the specific luxury brand was equally high, being the suggested manufacturing the only difference between the two.

Kelly-Holmes (2005) argued that English has always been implied in international advertising, despite the country of origin of the public the advertising is addressed to. In this case, the advertising in English language has been used to address an Italian-speaking public of different genres and age cohorts. However, the choice for the brand fell on Cartier, which surely belongs to a multilingual and international culture, as it is well-known and largely distributed all over the world. For this reason, for the present research it seemed reasonable and legitimate to opt for a claim in English language in order for the advertising to result as truthful and believable as possible.

Different authors argued that the general tendency in using English for the advertising of products is not motivated by any desire to create associations with English-speaking
countries, but to convey the public a sense of cosmopolitanism or a sense of “coolness” (Kelly-Holmes, 2005, p. 73) associated with the UK and USA popular culture. Indeed, Baumgardner (2008) argued that English language has often detached from its primary function of communicative medium, to become a more general representation of ideals and sometimes stereotypes. In this perspective, Cheshire and Moser (1994) underlined how English may be implied in commercial advertising even with the purpose of “neutralizing” cultural differences among the public to convey a sense of unity and to avoid having to choose one’s language over the other. This process has been defined by Kelly-Holmes (2005) as the “international lingua franca fetish”, which describe the tendency in using English in advertising those brand that opted for an international strategy. In this perspective, English can be considered as a “nonnational language” (Piller, 2003), because it can be a useful alternative to convey messages to a diversified public, despite their country or culture of origin. Not only English language could help in conveying a sense of internationalization on the part of the brand, but it can help in overcoming differences among the public and to increase the quality perception of the advertised brand. Those are the main reasons behind English language adoption in the present research for the advertising Cartier jewels, taking also into account that Cartier itself has adopted a global selling approach for its products.

3.2.3.2 The questionnaire and the items

The survey analysis has been based on a structured questionnaire articulated in 68 questions, which were divided in 6 different sections. The data have been collected during June 2022. The first part presented different questions concerning luxury perception and was divided into 10 items. In the second section, one of the two advertising stimuli, i.e.
handcrafted or industry crafted Cartier jewels, was then randomly generated for the single person to be questioned; then respondents were required to answer 26 questions which investigated perceived brand authenticity. The fourth section contained other 6 items concerning brand authenticity, with a particular focus on the general and common perception of the brand Cartier on the part of the public. After the assessing of these two main constructs, that are luxury perception and brand authenticity, the following section presented 9 items investigating consumer behavior, in terms of purchase intention, Word of Mouth and advertising appreciation. The final section contained socio-demographic information for the public to be grouped and analyzed.

It is important to underline that both the versions of the questionnaire presented the same questions, with the only difference being the picture of the advertising, suggesting handcrafting production or digital crafting processes for the Cartier jewels. The rating scale, implied in the questionnaire to measure the level of agreement or disagreement with the proposed items, was a 5-point Likert scale (from 1 = strongly disagree, in Italian: per niente d’accordo, to 5= strongly agree, in Italian: completamente d’accordo.). In the socio-demographic section, two open-handed questions are present: that concerning the age of the participants and a section for open comments.

Hereafter, the different variables and their items will be illustrated in detail. It is important to underline that all items were selected from multidimensional scales of different authors and were translated from their original English version into Italians, for the questionnaire to be completely intelligible on the part of the Italian-speaking public.

The first section is related to variables that tested luxury perception, through the multidimensional scale of Hennigs et al. (2015) which tested (1) financial value, (2) functional value and (3) social value, (4) individual luxury value perception and (5)
luxury consumption behavior. For the present research, the following dimensions have been considered: the functional value, with specific items testing the consistent quality of the brand, their good workmanship and their ability to last for a long time. The social value, which presented four items testing the ability of Cartier of helping people feeling acceptable, their ability to improve the image of the luxury consumers, so that they can make a good impression on other people and obtain social approval. Finally, individual luxury value perception has been considered with items that verified whether luxury consumers feel relaxed and good when using luxury products; in addition, they tested whether consumers feel happy and pleased about using luxury brands.

The second section focuses on the variable of Perceived Brand Authenticity (PBA), and it is based on Morhart et.al (2015) PBA scale which analyses (1) continuity, (2) credibility, (3) integrity and (4) symbolism. For the present research, 12 items have been considered: as far as continuity concerns, the items were focused on understanding whether Cartier is perceived as a brand that has history and can survive trends, because of his timeless design and narration. For credibility, the items were meant to test whether Cartier was perceived as trustworthy and capable of accomplishing its value promise.

It follows the integrity variable, whose items were meant to understand people’s perception of Cartier in terms of its ability to give back to its consumers and its moral principles, which comprehend its being caring over its consumers. Finally, for symbolism variable, the items considered were used to understand whether Cartier is considered as a brand that add meaning and value to people’s lives and whether it reflects moral principles that people care about, helping them to connect themselves with what is important.

The following section tested the same variable of Perceived brand authenticity (PBA) through the multidimensional scale conceptualized by Napoli et al. (2013). The scale is
composed by the different dimensions of (1) *reliability*, (2) *intention* and (3) *brand credibility*. The present research focused on the variable of *reliability*, selecting some items meant to understand whether quality is central to Cartier to the eyes of the potential consumer and whether the brand appears to be using only the highest quality materials in its manufacturing processes. In addition, the items were used to understand whether Cartier is perceived as being manufactured following high quality standards, using artisan skills and customized manufacturing processes. As far as *intention* variable concerns, the items were selected to test whether the brand is perceived as intentioned to maintain certain quality and long-lasting standard. Finally, for the parameter of *brand credibility* the items selected were used to understand if Cartier was perceived as a brand that has a mark of distinction which is a synonym of quality and it can maintain its connection with the past and with its history, celebrating them every today. In addition, the items were used to understand whether the public perceived Cartier as a brand with a timeless design that remains true to its values and does not compromise upon values it does not believe in.

The fourth section was based upon the *brand authenticity scale*, developed, described and tested by Schallehn et. al. (2014) in their literature. The scale is composed by different items, which were added to the survey with the purpose of understanding if Cartier’s philosophy, ideas, identity and attitude are clear to the eyes of the potential consumer, with a particular focus on understanding whether the brand’s image appears coherent and well structured.

The fifth section was aimed at testing *consumer behavior* and was meant to understand the consumer potential action towards the purchase of the brand. The first three variables were selected from Safeer et. al. (2021) studies and were chosen to understand *purchase*
intention and price premium. Indeed, they were selected for the present survey to understand the potential intention of buying the Cartier product advertised and people’s willingness to pay a price premium for the advertised products. Consequently, three items meant at testing Word Of Mouth (WOM) phenomenon were added to this section of the questionnaire to test potential consumers’ willingness to suggest the brand Cartier to their family and friends. Finally, the last variables were added to understand the efficacy of the advertising: the items had the purpose of understanding whether the advertising appeared clear to the eyes of the participants and consistent with Cartier’s image, so that its core values are celebrated.

The last section presents all socio-demographic questions, which were added to have a general picture of the public involved in the study. To be precise, the public was asked to fill-in information about their age, gender: male or female (in Italian: maschio/femmina), annual income: within 20,000 €, between 20,000 and 50,000 €, within 50,000 and 100,000 €, more than 100,000 €; finally, they were asked about their highest level of education: elementary school diploma, middle school diploma, high school diploma, degree or post-graduate/PhD (in Italian: licenza elementare, licenza media, diploma scuola superiore, laurea, master-post laurea/dottorato). Finally, a section with open-ended answer was added to give the public the possibility to write comments on the present research (in Italian: lascia un commento sulla ricerca, se lo desideri).

As it can be deduced by the outlined variables of the questionnaire implied for the present research, all the items included in the questions were translated from their original version in English, to Italian with the purpose of making the questionnaire as clear as possible for the participants. Provided the research has been conducted in Italy, the sample of people tested was expected to speak Italian as their mother tongue; thus, the translation
is meant at making the questionnaire as clear as possible, for the answers to be truthful and representative of people’s evaluation and perception.

3.2.4 The sample

The empirical analysis was conducted over the Italian-speaking public coming from different backgrounds and age cohorts using a questionnaire including all the previously explained variables. To be precise, 182 complete questionnaires were collected, 91 answers for each of the two versions of the questionnaire proposed to the public. Among the 91 respondents, which were presented the craftsmanship version of the advertising, 28.40% are men and 71.60% are women (see Figure 5). The Industry 4.0 advertising, on the other hand, was filled-in by a group of 18.50% of men and a 81.50% of women (see Figure 6). As far as the age of the respondents concern, the average age for the craftsmanship questionnaire is 34.79, while the Industry 4.0 survey involved a public that has an average age of 38.79.

Figure 5: Craftsmanship advertising: Genre of the respondents

Notes: N = 91
The questionnaire was sent to the respondents through a link which generated a random access to one version (i.e. the advertising suggesting craftsmanship as a method to craft Cartier jewels) or the other one (i.e. the advertising suggesting Industry 4.0 methods to produce the Cartier jewel). The questionnaire was sent through different channels to reach as many respondents as possible: Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp or directly to potential participants, which were also asked to spread the questionnaire among their acquaintance.

Among the respondents of the craftsmanship questionnaire, 27,80% earn an annual income that counts within 20.000 €, while 54,40% of the people have an annual income that ranges between 20.000 € and 50.000 €; 13,30% of the participants earn between 50.000 € and 100.000 € annually, while 4,40% earn more than 100.000 € (see Figure 7). As far as the advertising suggesting industrialized production processes for the Cartier jewels, 23,60% of the participants earn within 20.000 € per year, while a 43,80 % has an annual income that ranges between 20.000 and 50.000 €; 28,10% of the people earn
between 50.000 and 100.000€ annually, while 4,50% earn more than 100.000 every year (see Figure 7).

Figure 7: Annual income of the respondents

Notes: N HQ = 91; N 3DQ = 91.

The public came from different educational background (see Figure 8) as well: 8,50% and 3,30% of the public got a secondary school diploma, while 42,60% and 47,80% got a high school diploma; 43,60% and 43,50% of the participants got a degree, while 5,30% and 5,40% graduated from a master or a PhD program.
3.3 Analysis methodology

Once all the replies from the participants have been collected, the data have been analyzed for the research questions to be answered. To be specific, the replies from the handcrafting questionnaire and from the Industry 4.0 questionnaire have been compared, and would be explained in the following chapter, to understand whether the public perception of the brand Cartier and its jewels is different, according to the suggested method of manufacturing on the part of the advertising stimuli.

The chosen methodology consists in an analysis of answers’ averages; to be precise the answers’ averages of the two questionnaires will be analyzed to understand the differences in perception between the two stimuli. To do so, an independent variable that considers one group, i.e. the people presented with the craftsmanship advertising stimulus, and the other group, i.e. the participants presented with the Industry 4.0 manufacturing stimulus, will be taken into account. Consequently, the two groups’
answers will be tested on dependent variables such as luxury perception, perceived brand authenticity (PBA) and marketing variables on consumer behavior and perception: purchase intention, perceived price premium, Word of Mouth and efficacy of the advertising.
CHAPTER 4
RESEARCH RESULTS

4.1 Research results

This chapter aims at listing all the results emerging from the analysis of the data collected with the survey which, specially, dealt with the analysis of two groups of respondents (sample): the group of people which undergone the questionnaire presenting handcrafting methods applied to a Cartier jewel’s manufacturing (from now on referred to as “Handcrafting Questionnaire” or “HQ”); the other which undergone the questionnaire suggesting 3D printing methods applied to the jewel’s manufacturing (from now on referred to as “3D printing Questionnaire” or “3DQ”). The major statistically significant differences, concerning all the variables included in the questionnaire, will be presented and highlighted in the following pages.

4.2 Luxury perception results

As far as luxury perception concerns, the following Figures 9, 10 and 11 present all the results concerning the three dimensions linked to the theoretical construct, that are functional value, social value and individual value. Specifically, Figure 9 illustrates the results of comparison between handcrafting vs 3D printing manufacturing, with respect to the functional value dimension. In this perspective, it is evident from the graph below that no significant differences have been found between the two samples. Indeed, the average of people which undergone the Handcrafting Questionnaire and the average for 3D Printing Questionnaire are almost the same: 3.61 and 3.64. Hence, the two groups can
be considered similar from the point of view of the functional value connected with the use of luxury products.

Figure 9: Luxury perception - Functional value

In Figure 10, the averages related to the specific dimension of social value are illustrated. As well as for the previous case, related to the functional value of luxury perception, the averages concerning the Handcrafting Questionnaire (3.04) and the 3D printing Questionnaire (2.87) present no significant differences. For this reason, it can be deduced that the groups have similar attitudes and perceptions when it comes to the social value that could be put on luxury products.
Figure 10: *Luxury perception - Social value*

![Bar chart showing luxury perception - Social value](image)

Notes: N HQ = 91; N 3DQ = 91.

Figure 11 presents all the averages related to the luxury perception dimension of individual value. Both the averages for Handcrafting Questionnaire (3.30) as well as that for 3D printing Questionnaire (3.25) are quite similar. Hence, as for the other dimensions mentioned above, no significant difference is to be found between the two samples as they can be considered to have similar attitudes towards the individual value people can place on luxury products.

Figure 11: *Luxury perception - Individual value*

![Bar chart showing luxury perception - Individual value](image)

Notes: N HQ = 91; N 3DQ = 91.
4.3 Perceived brand authenticity results

The second group of results, which the present research focuses on, concerns the perceived brand authenticity (PBA) on the part of the consumer. This construct, as that of luxury perception, is a multidimensional construct and, for this reason, the analysis of the different items concerning PBA is represented in the following Figures (12-19). To be precise, in Figure 12 the results for the averages concerning the dimension of continuity of the brand are illustrated. In this perspective, it must be underlined that no significant differences have been found between the two samples: the answers for the Handcrafting Questionnaire resulted in an average of 4.11, while that for 3D printing Questionnaire is 4.06. Hence, the two groups happened to have a similar perception when it comes to continuity of the brand Cartier, both with handcrafting and industry crafting manufacturing advertised.

Figure 12: Perceived Brand Authenticity - Continuity

It follows the dimension of credibility, graphically represented in Figure 13. As well as for the previous variables, the values for the two averages are practically the same: the
sample which undergone the questionnaire suggesting handcrafting methods resulted in an average of 3.33, while the answers of the people which participated to the 3D printing Questionnaire produced an average of 3.29. From these results, it can be deduced that both the advertising conveyed a similar sense of credibility of the brand Cartier, despite the differences in the suggested production methods.

Figure 13: *Perceived Brand Authenticity - Credibility*

![Graph showing perceived brand authenticity for handcrafting (HQ) and 3D printing (3DQ) with averages 3.33 and 3.29 respectively.]

Notes: N HQ = 91; N 3DQ = 91.

The dimension of integrity produced the results pictured in Figure 14. No significant differences have been found between the two samples: the Handcrafting Questionnaire results in an average of 3.27, while the 3D printing one in an average of 3.15. Hence, it can be argued that both the samples had a similar perception concerning Cartier’s integrity, which is perceived in the same way as the brand continuity and credibility.
Figure 15 illustrates the dimension of symbolism. It is clear from the graphic that the two groups produced different results as far as symbolism concerns: the answers of the sample which undergone the Handcrafting Questionnaire produced an average of 2.70, which is significantly higher than that obtained from the 3D printing Questionnaire (2.18). This result underlines how the variable of symbolism connected to the brand is perceived as higher when handcrafting methods are advertised as applied to the Cartier jewel’s manufacturing.
Figure 15: *Perceived Brand Authenticity - Symbolism*

![Bar chart showing perceived brand authenticity for Handcrafting Questionnaire (HQ) and 3D printing Questionnaire (3DQ)].

Notes: N HQ = 91; N 3DQ = 91. *** p. < .001

Figure 16 highlights the variable of quality commitment. As well as in the previous case, a significant difference has been found between the two groups of respondents, which respectively took part to the Handcrafting Questionnaire (3.95) and the 3D printing Questionnaire (3.35). Hence, it can be argued that the group that undergone the questionnaire suggesting handcrafting methods applied to the manufacturing of the Cartier jewel had a higher perception of the brand’s quality commitment, when compared to the group which was presented the 3D printing advertising. The higher results for the Handcrafting Questionnaire highlighted how brands’ quality commitment perception on the part of the consumers is positively correlated to handcrafting methods of jewels’ manufacturing.
The following representation, i.e. Figure 17, graphically explains the dimension of heritage. As it is evident from the graph, the group which answered the Handcrafting Questionnaire resulted in a higher average (3.89) when compared to the 3D printing one (3.42). As well as in the results concerning quality commitment dimension of perceived brand authenticity, this is highly significant as it demonstrates how participants who were presented the advertising suggesting craftsmanship methods when making the Cartier’s jewel had a higher perception of the brand heritage and of its history. Hence, the dimension of heritage could be positively correlated to craftsmanship practices in the luxury world.
Similar results are to be found in Figure 18, where the dimension of sincerity is represented. As it can be seen, the average for the Handcrafting Questionnaire is higher (3.48) than that one resulted from the 3D printing Questionnaire (3.09). Hence, the dimension of brand sincerity is positively correlated to handcrafting production methods and led to a higher perception of the authenticity of the brand on the part of the potential consumer. On the contrary, the sample that undergone the 3D printing Questionnaire had a lower perception of Cartier’s sincerity.
The dimension of philosophy, linked to the brand authenticity, turned out to be positively correlated to handcrafting methods of manufacturing as well. Figure 19 highlights how the group of respondents for the Handcrafting Questionnaire resulted in a higher average (3.60) when compared to the 3D printing Questionnaire (3.31) for this specific dimension. It is evident how brand’s philosophy could be positively perceived when craftsmanship methods are suggested for jewels’ productions. Hence, Cartier philosophy has been perceived more clearly by those people who have seen the handcrafting advertising, while those who have seen the 3D printing one, fatigued to perceive the brand’s philosophy.
4.4 Consumer behavior results

When it comes to consumer behavior, which is directly connected with the advertising perception on the part of the two groups of people interviewed through the questionnaires, Figure 20 portrays the averages for consumers’ intention to buy, where a significant difference among the two samples is to be found. Indeed, the average is clearly higher for the Handcrafting Questionnaire (2.94) when compared to the 3D printing one (2.24). These results enable to underline how the potential consumer are more eager to buy Cartier’s product when the advertising marketing the brand is suggesting handcrafting methods for the jewel to be manufactured. Hence, it can be deduced that craftsmanship in jewels manufacturing positively influences consumers’ desire and intention to buy the product.
The Figure 21 is meant to represent the variable of Word of Mouth. The results of the two samples are interesting because, as well as for the variable of intention to buy, the average for the group participating to the Handcrafting Questionnaire is significantly higher (2.98) when compared to the 3D printing Questionnaire (2.46). This result underlines how the phenomenon of Word of Mouth is positively correlated to the perception of the “traditional” brand, especially when the latter is suggesting craftsmanship being used to manufacture its jewel. On the contrary, those people who participated to the 3D printing Questionnaire are less eager to suggest their friends and family the Cartier’s jewel.
Finally, Figure 22 represents the efficacy of the advertising and its perception on the part of the consumer. As it can be seen, the difference between the two samples is significant: while the average for the group answering the Handcrafting Questionnaire is 3.38, that for 3D Questionnaire is 2.77, meaning the first advertising had a more positive perception on the part of the final public. It can be deduced that the suggested handcrafting method connected to jewel manufacturing in the advertising has been perceived as truthful and agreeable on the part of the potential consumer. On the other hand, the advertising suggesting 3D printing methods applied to the jewel’s manufacturing seemed to be less effective in conveying the message to the sample of people answering the questionnaire.
Figure 22: Efficacy of the advertising

Notes: N HQ = 91; N 3DQ = 91. *** p. <. 001
5.1 Discussion

The present research focuses on the analysis of two different manufacturing processes, specifically handcrafting vs digital manufacturing, applied to the luxury products, in this case jewels, to assess the effects that they could have on consumer behavior. In this regard, the case study of Cartier, one of the most prestigious brands producing luxury products, such as jewels, with both manufacturing methods, has been taken into consideration. In this sense, the choice for this brand was strategic, as Cartier is well known all around the world and has a great history in jewels’ making. In addition, Cartier has always declared its desire to pay particular attention to details so that all its jewels can directly be attributed the brand, thus celebrating its history, finest making, attention to details and confirming its credibility as a brand.

As openly stated by Cartier itself, the brand was a pioneer in the adoption of new technologies inside its firm, so that it integrated new production methods in its value chain, using 3D printing technologies and cutting-edge production systems to manufacture its jewels and watches. This enabled the brand to grow and develop constantly, always paying attention to celebrate its past and origins and, at the same time, improving its production and organizational strategies. According to Forbes (2022) the brand was included in the lists of the top 100 World’s Most Valuable Brands.

It is evident from the results of the survey, that all the participants were aware of the brand, of its history and high reputation as a jewels’ producer. Indeed, the data previously analyzed demonstrated how the two groups of participants shared a common knowledge
and perception of Cartier, which was later influenced, according to the advertising they envisioned. For this reason, this chapter aims at discussing the data presented in the previous one, with the purpose of understanding whether the luxury perception of Cartier jewels changed on the part of the final consumer, according to different methods of manufacturing, handcrafting or digital crafting, suggested through advertising. The analysis will be useful to understand if the manufacturing process is still a fundamental aspect in the world of luxury.

For this reason, the focus has been put on the different perception of the luxury brand Cartier and its jewels on the part of two samples of people, being presented with two advertising that differ from each other exclusively for the method of jewel’s manufacturing suggested. It is important to underline that the first set of variables which has been tested was that of luxury perception and the functional, social and individual value connected with the use of luxury products. The two samples of people interviewed though the questionnaires were asked to answer these questions without prior acknowledgment of the Cartier advertising. The aim was to understand the general perception of the public towards the luxury world, its products and consumption. The results for the three variables tested underlined how the public had a similar perception regarding the functional, social and individual value attributed to luxury world and products and specifically to Cartier. This result is important to underline because it demonstrates how the two samples started from a common perception and a shared idea of the luxury world, both in terms of functionality that luxury products can have in their lives, and for the social and individual value they attribute to those specific products. This could be explained by the fact that luxury products are believed to have both tangible and intangible utility (Moore & Birtwistle, 2005) and for this reason the functional value that
each client is attributing to luxury has almost anything to do with the use of the product per se, but is pretty much connected with the brands’ history, materials, products and reputation. As far as individual and social value concerns, it is evident from the similar results in the data that people which undergone the study have a similar idea of luxury, despite them being of different age cohorts and cultural backgrounds.

Then, the analysis focused on the assessment of luxury by referring to the construct of perceived brand authenticity, for which the two samples were tested after being presented the two advertising, specifically handcrafting or 3D printing, as a method of Cartier jewels’ manufacturing. As far as the dimension of continuity of the brand, linked to its perceived authenticity, the two samples demonstrated to have a similar perception of Cartier’s history and of its path over time, despite the different methods of manufacturing. Hence, it can be argued that the perception of continuity on the part of the brand is not influenced by the different methods of manufacturing suggested by the advertising. As Cartier is one of the most famous brands all over the world, it is reasonable to assume that the general reputation of the brand and its history is well known to the public, which seems have a general idea of Cartier that could be difficult to overcome with one single advertising. That could be argued for the variable of brand’s perceived credibility, since both the samples demonstrated to have similar perception when it comes to trustworthiness and honesty on the part of Cartier. It is reasonable to assume that despite the differences in the suggested manufacturing methods, the general idea that the public had of Cartier before undergoing the questionnaire derived from previous experiences and became such of common knowledge that it would have been difficult to change their perception with one single advertising. These results confirm the theory of Dubois and Paternault (1995) about the essence of luxury products, which goes far beyond their
functional value and is straightly connected to the brand’s history, its core value and what it represents for its consumers. The same could be argued for the variable of brand’s integrity, which is connected to Cartier’s moral principles and to its capability of giving back to its consumers. The perception of such variables related to the specific brand did not change significantly, despite the two questionnaires. Hence, previous experiences of the well-known brand could have played a fundamental role in influencing people’s perception.

On the contrary, when it comes to the variable of symbolism, which is connected to the meaning the brand Cartier could add to people lives, it is evident that the sample which undergone the questionnaire suggesting handcrafting methods of jewels’ manufacturing had a higher perception of the brand. It is reasonable to assume that the suggested idea of handcrafted jewels produced by Cartier could have a positive influence in people’s perception of the symbolic benefits the products could add to their lives. A similar difference in perception on the part of the two samples is even more evident when it comes to the variable of quality commitment: people which undergone the handcrafting questionnaire had a higher perception of quality commitment on the part of Cartier, when compared to the sample which were presented the 3D printing method of jewels’ manufacturing. Hence, it can be argued that the perceived final quality of the luxury product is still connected to the concept of craftsmanship and these results would confirm many of the theory underlining how handcrafting methods of manufacturing are still a pillar of the luxury world, at least from the point of view of the final client.

The same can be argued for the variable of heritage, connected to the perceived brand authenticity as well. It is indeed evident that the sample of people which undergone the handcrafting advertising are more eager to perceive Cartier’s heritage, its sense of
tradition and a its specific connection to the past which is celebrated in its timeless design. As far as sincerity concerns, the attitude is similar among the two groups, since it is evident how Cartier’s principles and values are perceived as higher when craftsmanship is suggested through advertising of the luxury products. Finally, the same attitude is evident in the variable of brand’s philosophy, which is celebrated and confirmed by the higher value craftsmanship add to the perception of the brand Cartier, when compared to the digital manufacturing.

When it comes to consumer behavior, it can be argued that the group which envisioned the handcrafting advertising is more positively influenced in their potential intention to buy the Cartier’s product, when compared to the group which was presented the advertising suggesting 3D printing as the manufacturing method for the same jewel. This result confirms the theories of many experts such as Bhaduri and Stanforth (2017) and Campana et al. (2016), who underlined that the key aspect in the luxury world consists in craftsmen skills which generate unique and high-quality products; the more those products are perceived as exclusive, the more the people are willing to buy them, and they are eager to pay a price premium as well. The same can be argued for the phenomenon of Word of mouth, where the two samples demonstrated to have different potential attitudes: indeed, the people which envisioned the handcrafting advertising would be more eager to suggest the products to their families and friends. Finally, the efficacy of the advertising was tested and the group of people which have seen the handcrafting advertising, believed the latter to be more effective, when compared to the other group. It follows that the image portraying hands at work while making Cartier’s jewels reached the public in a more positive way, when compared to the image of computerized tools printing the jewel.
5.2 Conclusions

To conclude, it can be argued that craftsmanship still represents a source of value in the luxury world, which can influence luxury perception and brand authenticity on the part of the final consumer. In addition, the hypothesis that handcrafting methods of manufacturing can influence people’s intention of buying luxury products and their desire to pay a price premium for them is supported. Despite the Industry 4.0 phenomenon becoming more and more popular in the different area of manufacturing, it is evident how the role of artisanal skills in jewels making continues to be fundamental for the final consumer. On the other hand, industrialized methods of manufacturing seem to have a different effect on the designated group of potential consumers, as they end up having a different perception of the final product advertised. In this perspective, it is significant to underline how the sample of people which envisioned the advertising promoting industrial 3D printing as the method of manufacturing of the Cartier jewel, demonstrated to have a lower perception in terms of quality and authenticity of the product and of the brand in general. Finally, they were less eager to pay a price premium to buy the jewel and to recommend the product to their friends and family, when compared to people that viewed the handcrafting advertising. The results suggested that the advertising itself was perceived more positively when handcrafting methods of manufacturing were involved, underlining how craftsmanship still represents a precious source of value when marketing luxury products.

The results of the present research can be considered as a precious source for understanding the different dynamics that affect the purchasing of luxury products as they confirm previous theories concerning the role of artisanal skills and fine making in driving consumers’ perception and their intention to buy (Amatulli & Guido, 2011; Kapferer,
2014; Som & Blanckaert, 2015). As underlined by the previously mentioned authors, the core values which belong to the world of craftsmanship are in some way very similar, if not the same, to the ones of luxury and, for this reason, handcrafting methods of manufacturing can only be positively correlated to consumers’ evaluation of a luxury product and of the brand it belongs to. Hence, it can be argued that the theories concerning the fundamental role of craftsmanship in shaping people’s perception of the luxury world and of the authenticity of high-quality products, are still confirmed in today’s industrialized world. In addition, it can be argued how advertising campaigns appear to be useful tools to influence people perception of luxury goods and their intention to buy from specific brands, provided they are able to convey the products’ quality and finest making. Indeed, the data confirmed Beverland’s (2005) theories concerning brand perceived authenticity and they underline how people’s perception of high-quality and authentic products in the world of luxury are still correlated to the method of manufacturing the brand manages to adopt and communicate to its public.

On the other hand, the results confirmed Schallehn et al. (2014) theoretical model as well, by highlighting how people’s perception of a luxury brand, such as Cartier, is strongly linked to the brand’s history and to its past behaviors. For example, no significant differences are to be found among the two samples of people when it comes to the variables of credibility and continuity of the brand. Hence, it can be deduced that the positive perception of Cartier is based on long-lasting experiences and common knowledge about the history and the reputation of one of the most famous luxury brands around the world.

As far as new digital methods of manufacturing concerns, results show how the consumers struggle to detach from the values of craftsmanship and handiwork and to
perceive the industrialized product as qualitative high as the handcrafted one. For this reason, it can be deduced that Freire (2014) theory suggesting a complementary role of tradition and innovation in the luxury products’ manufacturing should be supported. Indeed, Campana et al. (2016) and Rocha et al. (2018) proposed a hybrid model that could be a possible solution for craftsmanship core values to meet with Industry 4.0; this way, technological implementation could be combined with final touches of artisanal skills that add value to the luxury product and influence consumers’ perception positively.

On the contrary, it is evident how some aspects of luxury perception are not strongly influenced by the methods of manufacturing applied to the product’s making: results show how, despite the different images in the two advertising, Cartier managed to be perceived equally credible and trustworthy. As previously underlined, this could be connected to the long history of jewel making behind the brand. In the same way, data showed how Cartier did not manage to result equally sincere and qualitative committed in the eyes of the two samples of people. Hence, those last variables are believed to be influenced by the method of manufacturing suggested by the different advertising. Being those variables of quality commitment, history and heritage, as well as brand’s philosophy, believed to be at the basis of a higher quality perception of the luxury products, it is reasonable to assume that data explain the different attitude towards potential purchase as well (Bhaduri & Stanforth, 2017; Campana et al., 2016; Manfredi Latilla et. al., 2018). Indeed, it is evident from the analysis of the present research how the people which observed the handcrafting advertising were more eager to pay for the products and perceived the advertising more positively, when compared to the other sample of people. Data confirmed Som and Blanckaert’s (2015) theories concerning the importance of conveying the most accurate message to exalt the desired image of the
brand. For this reason, the present research supports the research stream about the fact that advertising in the luxury world should be linked to the very essence of the brand, i.e. its history and core values.

5.2.1 Theoretical implications

Once all the variables have been explained and understood, it is important to underline the theoretical implications behind the results of the present research. The results underline how the perceived brand authenticity is influenced by the methods of manufacturing suggested through the advertising; in particular, the perception of Cartier’s symbolism is different in the two sample of people and these results confirm the theory of Dubois and Paternault (1995) which underlines how all the products sold under the same brand name share a symbolic identity that justifies their prices and quality over time. Hence, it is reasonable to argue that being attributed to the brand Cartier, the jewel was automatically connected to the core values the brand is expected to have, based on shared knowledge of the famous luxury producer, i.e. the finest handmaking, use of high-quality and precious materials, as well as exclusiveness of the product sold. All those characteristics seem to find a more positive outcome in people’s perception, when handcrafting methods of manufacturing are involved. This could be explained by the fact that craftsmanship itself shares the same principles and core values Cartier is expected to be based upon and this could only increase potential clients’ final perception of the luxury products promoted.

The same explanation could be given to the concept of quality commitment, for which it is evident that craftsmanship plays a fundamental role. This outcome is important to highlight because it demonstrates how, despite the spreading of digital industrialized
methods of manufacturing in many, if not all, production sectors, individual perception of luxury is still influenced and tied to the importance of artisanal components as a source of value for luxury products. For this reason, it is reasonable to argue that despite the need for production optimization and improvement in the manufacturing and organizational processes, the world of luxury seems to be still anchored to the artisanal components in consumers’ perception. In this perspective, the previously mentioned hybrid model which mixes human knowledge and technology-driven devices that can augment craftsmen performance when making the luxury product, appears to be a reasonable solution. However, as underlined by Bettiol et al. (2017), many firms are still struggling in implementing their manufacturing processes with new technologies because this sharp change represents an obstacle both on the part of the firm, which sometimes lacks technological competence, and on the part of the clientele, which pays particular attention to the luxury product and to all those aspects which can determine their desire to pay a price premium for the products.

When it comes to consumer behavior, results show how the intention to buy luxury products is still positively influenced by the artisanal method of manufacturing suggested by the advertising of the jewel. For this reason, it can be argued that craftsmanship components still play a positive role in justifying luxury products price premium. This theory confirms Som & Blanckaert’s (2015) claim about how consumer tend to be very careful in purchasing those products that meet the highest quality standards when it comes to production, design and materials implied. Indeed, it can be argued that that of craftsmanship is a key to attract people’s attention and to confirm the brand credibility and its quality commitment over time. It is not without reason that the potential clientele evaluated the advertising more positively when handcrafting methods of manufacturing
were added in the picture; indeed, they contributed to confirm brand’s history, heritage, quality commitment over time in the eyes of the potential consumers. When it comes to the theoretical evaluation of the present results, it is important to underline that technological implementation on the part of the firm does not mine the quality of the product itself; on the contrary, as argued by Bertola and Teunissen (2018), a “smart factory” allows people, machine and objects to communicate and share information constantly and efficiently, so that all the stages of the production chain can rely on digital infrastructures and have major control over the entire process. However, it is the potential consumer perception that is challenged: the symbolic meaning behind luxury products makes the latter non comparable to other products as the desirability for luxury goes far beyond the object itself and include the essence of the brand, its history and heritage, as well as its ability to convey a sense of exclusiveness and social acceptance for the final consumer.

5.2.2 Marketing implications

Considering all the previous claims, it is interesting to understand how the marketing of luxury products can derive a substantial benefit from the results of the present research. First, it is important to underline the power advertising has had in shaping people perception of the final product and of its quality and authenticity. Indeed, it is interesting to consider how a single change in the advertising, i.e. the image in the background of the picture suggesting two different way of manufacturing the Cartier jewel, had influenced the two samples’ perception of luxury as well as their potential intention to buy the product. For this reason, it is reasonable to claim that the advertising in the world of luxury should not be created with the purpose of justifying customers’ purchase, but it
should be a perfect mix of emotional and rational messages that constitute a source of value for the consumer himself. As underlined by Dubois and Paternault (1995), the key to sell goods in the luxury world is still confirmed to go far beyond the functional value the goods themselves have; it is a matter of the essence of the product, its symbolic meaning and the heritage and history of the brand the marketing should still focus on. In this perspective, the advertising should be used to convey the luxury brands’ attention to details, high quality and quality commitment so that all these aspects, which are usually connected to the concept of craftsmanship only, could be preserved and conveyed in today’s industrialized world.

The hybrid model that combines industrialized processes with final “touches” of artisanal components (Bertola and Teunissen, 2018) appears to be a winning choice in this perspective, provided the marketing can convey the right message to the final client. As the results of the present research demonstrate, the world of luxury is deeply connected to symbolism behind the brand and to personal and social utilities attributed to the luxury product itself. In the present research, no changings in brand’s name, in jewel’s materials or shape has been applied to the two Cartier advertising created for academic purpose only; the only difference was the method of manufacturing suggested by the images in the background. However, this change in the image selected for the advertising managed to convey a deeper sense of brand’s symbolism, quality commitment, heritage, sincerity and philosophy when handcrafting methods of manufacturing were suggested to the public.

It is also interesting to note that advertising drove potential consumer behavior and purchase intention, which were again positively correlated to artisanal methods applied to the jewel manufacturing; thus, luxury brands should pay more attention in
communicating the artisanal aspects of their products. Indeed, it is reasonable to deduce that for the brands to be successful in today’s complex luxury marketing, craftsmanship activities should have a preponderant role when marketing luxury products.

However, this does not mean that industrialization and Industry 4.0 should not be implemented in the process of manufacturing, but the final touches and application of craftsmen skills should always be present and, most of all, advertised by the brands. Advertising should focus on those variables that even today manage to create a source of value for the potential client, i.e. heritage, history, attention to the details, the use of the finest materials and, of course, craftsmanship itself. From this point of view, marketing in the luxury world should always consider its potential consumer to be as more similar to *The Nomad* as possible. The nomad (Som & Blanckaert, 2015) is very complex and difficult to seduce because he pays great attention to all those variables that make the product desirable and unique, so that he is eager to pay a price premium to have it. As the results showed, the price premium could be justified by underlining products’ performance, its being a synonym of excellence and expert craftsmanship on the part of the brand though advertising in different channels. When it comes to advertising, it is evident that what can really work for a specific brand, will probably not for others; however, the present research is a good starting point to claim that even those brand which already managed to establish a long-lasting reputation and are well known by most of the people all around the world, should pay attention to the great influence advertising can have on people’s perception and intention to buy the product. Indeed, despite Cartier’s reputation being positively associated to the luxury world and its core values, the advertising that has been created for the present research managed to influence people’s luxury perception in a way that was significantly relevant for the analysis of the luxury
market. That is why advertising should continuously focus on those positive aspects that make the brand trustworthy and credible, but also committed to high quality standards, so that exclusiveness of the product proposed is always confirmed by the brand’s marketing communication.

5.3 Research limitation and future research

Despite the positive and useful contribution that the research gave in understanding the dynamics influencing consumers’ perception of luxury and brands’ authenticity, it is evident that there are some limitations to the present investigation. Firstly, when formulating the research aims, the focus has been put on the three variables of luxury perception, brand’s authenticity and consumer behavior. However, it is evident from literature that the world of luxury is influenced by different and complex dynamics that are both individual and collective, objective and subjective, concrete and symbolic. For this reason, a broader set of variables could be included to better understand whether the concept of craftsmanship is fundamental and decisive in defining luxury products perception.

The same could be said for the sample size, as that of the present research is confined to the limited number of people who accessed the questionnaire and to their acquaintance. Indeed, the sample consists of 182 participants with an average age of 34,79 for the craftsmanship questionnaire, and 38,79 for the Industry 4.0 questionnaire, which is a limited number to draw general conclusions upon. In addition, it is important to underline how the present research is based on answers of an Italian-speaking public only and it is, in some way, culturally influenced by the concept Italian people have of luxury.
It is of common knowledge that Italian culture and perception, especially for what concerns the luxury world, is strongly connected to the concept of Made in Italy, based on a peculiar middle-size business model companies that tend to preserve the artisanal components in their entire production process. Hence, craftsmanship on the part of the Italian public could be even more important as a source of value, when compared to people coming from other countries and cultures. Provided different research argued that luxury perception is also culturally driven, it would be interesting to broaden the horizon of the present research and to draw specific conclusions concerning different markets and samples of people coming from different cultural backgrounds. This would enable brands to better understand cultural perception of luxury and to strategically set marketing responses, according to consumers’ behavior and to the core values they seem to be more influenced by.
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**DICTIONARIES**


https://www.ldoceonline.com/.

https://www.macmillandictionary.com/.
Introduzione:

Ciao, sono Camilla e sono una studentessa del Dipartimento di Lingue dell’Università di Padova che sta conducendo una ricerca sul marketing dei beni di lusso per la mia tesi di laurea magistrale in marketing esperienziale.
Nello specifico, sto cercando di indagare gli effetti che uno specifico messaggio pubblicitario di un prodotto di lusso può avere sul comportamento del consumatore.
La compilazione del questionario non richiederà più di 5 minuti.
La tua partecipazione sarebbe davvero utile per la mia ricerca!
Il questionario rimarrà anonimo e le poche informazioni sociodemografiche che ti verranno richieste, verranno analizzate solo in maniera aggregata.
Grazie in anticipo per il tuo aiuto e la tua partecipazione.

Camilla
*1. Considera i brand di lusso, soprattutto nel settore dei gioielli, e indica, su una scala da 1 (= per niente d’accordo) a 5 (= completamente d’accordo), quanto ti trovi d’accordo con le seguenti affermazioni:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1. Per niente d’accordo</th>
<th>2.</th>
<th>3.</th>
<th>4.</th>
<th>5. Totalmente d’accordo</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I brand di lusso hanno una qualità costante nel tempo</td>
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<tr>
<td>I brand di lusso hanno una fattura di ottima qualità</td>
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<tr>
<td>I brand di lusso durano nel tempo</td>
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<tr>
<td>I brand di lusso aiutano a sentirsi accettati nella società</td>
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<tr>
<td>I brand di lusso migliorano la percezione che gli altri possono</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>avere di una persona</td>
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<tr>
<td>I brand di lusso permettono di far fare una bella figura con le altre persone</td>
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<tr>
<td>I brand di lusso aiutano a sentirsi socialmente accettato</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>I brand di lusso permettono di sentirsi a proprio agio quando vengono usati</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>I brand di lusso fanno sentire bene chi li usa</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Leggere con attenzione:

Presta qualche minuto di attenzione osservando bene la pubblicità sottostante (immagine, messaggio pubblicitario, gioielli e brand) e, tenendola ben in mente, rispondi nella maniera più spontanea alle domande che ti verranno poste nelle pagine successive, tenendo conto che non esistono risposte giuste o sbagliate, ma solo risposte che rispecchiano il tuo personale giudizio.
*2. Considerando la pubblicità Cartier, indica su una scala da 1 (= per niente d’accordo) a 5 (= completamente d’accordo) quanto ti trovi d’accordo con le seguenti affermazioni:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cartier è un brand con una storia</th>
<th>1. Per niente d’accordo</th>
<th>2.</th>
<th>3.</th>
<th>4.</th>
<th>5. Totalmente d’accordo</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cartier è un brand senza tempo</td>
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<td>Cartier è un brand che sopravvive alle mode</td>
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<td>Cartier è un brand che non delude mai</td>
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<td>Cartier è un brand che mantiene le</td>
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<td>proprie promesse</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cartier è un brand che ripaga i propri clienti</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cartier è un brand con principi morali</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cartier è un brand che ci tiene ai propri clienti</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cartier è un brand che aggiunge valore alla vita delle persone</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cartier è un brand che riflette valori importanti, ai quali le persone tengono</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Cartier è un brand che connette le persone con sé stesse

Cartier è un brand che connette le persone con ciò che è davvero importante

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1. Per niente d’accordo</th>
<th>2.</th>
<th>3.</th>
<th>4.</th>
<th>5. Completamente d’accordo</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>La qualità è centrale per questo brand</td>
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<tr>
<td>Questo brand utilizza solo i</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Nella produzione dei propri gioielli, vengono rispettati gli standard più rigorosi. Abilità individuali e processi di produzione personalizzati vengono mantenuti nella produzione dei propri gioielli. I gioielli vengono realizzati da un esperto che presta attenzione ai dettagli ed è
coinvolto nell’intero processo produttivo

L’azienda si impegna a mantenere standard qualitativi di lunga durata

Il brand è un marchio distintivo rappresentativo di prodotti di qualità

Il brand ha una forte connessione con il passato, che viene mantenuto e celebrato anche oggi

Il brand trasmette un
<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>forte senso di</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>tradizione</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Il brand è</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>costruito e si</td>
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<tr>
<td>basa su</td>
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<tr>
<td>tradizioni di</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>lunga durata</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Il brand riflette</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>un design</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>senza tempo</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Il brand rimane</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>fedele ai valori</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>che ha</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>abbracciato</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Il brand si</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>rifiuta di</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>trovare dei</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>compromessi</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>riguardo ai</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>valori su cui si</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fonda</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Il brand rimane</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ancorato sui</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>suoi principi</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Rimanendo concentrato sul messaggio pubblicitario visto in precedenza, indica su una scala da 1 (=per niente d'accordo) a 5 (= completamente d'accordo), quanto ti trovi d'accordo con le seguenti affermazioni:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1. Per niente d'accordo</th>
<th>2.</th>
<th>3.</th>
<th>4.</th>
<th>5. Totalmente d'accordo</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cartier possiede una filosofia chiara che fa da guida alle promesse del brand</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cartier sa esattamente cosa rappresenta e non promette niente che potrebbe contraddire la propria essenza</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Considerando la propria promessa, Cartier non fa finta di essere qualcos’altro

Considerando la propria promessa, Cartier mostra sicurezza in sé stesso

Cartier non altera la propria filosofia per seguire i trend di mercato

Il detto “va dove soffia il vento” non si addice a Cartier
*5. Continuando a pensare al brand Cartier e alla pubblicità vista in precedenza, indica, infine, su una scala da 1 (=per niente d’accordo) a 5 (= completamente d’accordo), quanto ti trovi d’accordo con le seguenti affermazioni:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1.Per niente d’accordo</th>
<th>2.</th>
<th>3.</th>
<th>4.</th>
<th>5.Totalmente d’accordo</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Se avessi la possibilità di comprare un gioiello, comprerei Cartier</td>
<td></td>
<td>2.</td>
<td>3.</td>
<td>4.</td>
<td>5.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sarei disposto a pagare un prezzo più alto per acquistare un gioiello Cartier</td>
<td></td>
<td>2.</td>
<td>3.</td>
<td>4.</td>
<td>5.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sono disposto a pagare un prezzo maggiore per Cartier rispetto ad altri brand di lusso</td>
<td></td>
<td>2.</td>
<td>3.</td>
<td>4.</td>
<td>5.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consiglierei caldamente ad altre persone di acquistare gioielli di questo brand</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consiglierei caldamente i gioielli di questo brand ai miei amici</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consiglierei caldamente i gioielli di questo brand ai miei parenti</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ho colto in pieno il significato della pubblicità vista in precedenza</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>La pubblicità vista in precedenza è adeguata al brand Cartier</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
La pubblicità vista in precedenza riflette i valori di lusso trasmessi da Cartier
Dati socio-anagrafici

6. Età

7. Sesso

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Maschio</th>
<th>Femmina</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

8. Reddito familiare

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Entro 20.000 euro</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tra 20.000 e 50.000 euro</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tra 50.000 e 100.000 euro</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oltre 100.000 euro</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

9. Titolo di studio

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Licenza elementare</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Licenza media</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diploma scuola superiore</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Laurea</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Master post-laurea/Dottorato</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

10. Lascia un commento sulla ricerca, se lo desideri

...
RIASSUNTO

Lo scopo della presente ricerca è quello di analizzare il mondo del lusso e, in particolare, le diverse dinamiche che possono influenzare la percezione del lusso e dei suoi prodotti da parte del cliente finale. In particolare, la ricerca si focalizza sull’analisi di quei fattori che sono determinanti nell’influenzare la percezione del potenziale cliente di prodotti di lusso al giorno d’oggi. Per questo, la ricerca si serve di un questionario contenente due versioni di una stessa pubblicità attribuita al famoso brand Cartier e creata per il solo scopo accademico; il suddetto questionario è stato sottoposto ad un gruppo di parlanti italiani allo scopo di testare diverse variabili: la percezione del lusso, l’autenticità del brand e del prodotto, per come viene percepita dal consumatore e le variabili di marketing che riguardano l’intenzione all’acquisto, il passaparola e l’efficacia della pubblicità agli occhi del consumatore. Il questionario è stato sottoposto al pubblico in maniera casuale, proponendo talora una versione della pubblicità, talora l’altra. Le due pubblicità differivano l’una dall’altra per la sola immagine sullo sfondo, che suggeriva diversi metodi di realizzazione per un anello di Cartier. La prima versione della pubblicità suggeriva al consumatore che il gioiello Cartier fosse fatto a mano da un artigiano intento a manipolare la materia prima allo scopo di realizzare il gioiello Cartier; la seconda versione suggeriva all’intervistato l’applicazione di nuovi metodi di produzione volti alla realizzazione del gioiello, ovvero la stampa 3D e la manifattura additiva, tipica dell’Industria 4.0.

La tesi prevede la stesura di diversi capitoli allo scopo di spiegare le dinamiche che influenzano l’acquisto dei prodotti di lusso e capire quali siano gli aspetti fondamentali e determinanti agli occhi del potenziale cliente; inoltre, si pone l’obiettivo di delineare la
ricerca sul campo e i risultati ottenuti da questa. Il fine ultimo è quello di capire se la componente artigianale, da sempre un aspetto fondamentale e complementare al concetto del lusso, rappresenti ancora oggi una fonte di valore aggiuntivo agli occhi del potenziale cliente. Per questa ragione, le variabili incluse nelle due versioni del questionario testano principalmente i concetti precedentemente menzionati: la percezione del lusso da parte del potenziale cliente, la percezione dell’autenticità del gioiello e del brand Cartier e il comportamento di acquisto degli intervistati.

A questo proposito, la ricerca si articola in cinque capitoli: il primo capitolo spiega le origini del mercato del lusso, facendo anche riferimento all’evoluzione del suddetto mercato sia dal punto di vista della domanda, che dell’offerta. Il secondo capitolo spiega la rassegna letteraria relativa ai diversi costrutti teorici presi in considerazione ai fini obiettivi della ricerca e definisce la terminologia utilizzata per l’analisi di questa. La terza parte approfondisce gli scopi dello studio, la metodologia di ricerca utilizzata e definisce le variabili inserite e testate dal questionario; inoltre, il capitolo definisce il campione oggetto di analisi della presente ricerca. Il capitolo quattro è dedicato alla presentazione dei risultati ottenuti dall’analisi delle variabili (costrutti) che sono stati inseriti nel questionario somministrato al pubblico partecipante, ponendo particolare attenzione ai risultati significativi dal punto di vista statistico. La quinta e ultima parte è dedicata alla discussione ed interpretazione dei risultati ottenuti, con il conseguente sviluppo di implicazioni teoriche e di marketing derivate dalla presente ricerca. Il capitolo, infine, si dedica a descrivere quelli che sono i limiti della ricerca in oggetto che si propone come un punto di partenza per nuove ricerche di mercato. Nell’Appendice, infine, è riportato il questionario somministrato ai partecipanti all’indagine che costituiscono il campione della ricerca quantitativa.
Il primo capitolo della tesi comincia con una prefazione il cui obiettivo è descrivere il contesto in cui si colloca la presente ricerca. In particolare, viene descritta l’evoluzione del mercato del lusso, a partire dai suoi primi accenni durante l’Impero Romano, fino all’evoluzione del complesso mercato che vede protagonisti i grandi brand di oggi come Louis Vuitton, Burberry, Chanel e Cartier. In questo contesto viene definito che cosa si intende per lusso, riferendosi alla domanda di mercato di un oggetto e/o un servizio che non è considerato un bene di prima necessità. Inoltre, viene sottolineato come non sia possibile applicare le tradizionali analisi di mercato a quello del lusso perché quest’ultimo non conosce saturazione o limite dal punto di vista della domanda. Il capitolo, inoltre, si focalizza sulla componente artigianale della produzione di oggetti di lusso, sottolineando come questa costituisca la base per una percezione positiva del prodotto da parte del cliente. Tuttavia, si sottolinea come i processi di industrializzazione costituiscano ormai la base di qualsiasi catena del valore e come la tecnologia sia stata inserita gradualmente ormai in tutti i settori. Per questo, ci si domanda se la componente artigianale possa essere del tutto esclusa dai processi di produzione dei prodotti di lusso o se questa rappresenti ancora un fattore determinante nell’influenzare la percezione della qualità e dell’autenticità del prodotto e del brand agli occhi del consumatore finale. A questo punto il capitolo sottolinea lo scopo della ricerca, ovvero quello di testare se la principale fonte di valore agli occhi del cliente sia ancora la componente artigianale dei prodotti di lusso e il ruolo che può avere la pubblicità nel mercato industrializzato di oggi. Infine, si procede con il sintetizzare la struttura della ricerca ed il contenuto dei vari capitoli che seguiranno.

Il secondo capitolo è dedicato alla presentazione della rassegna letteraria relativa ai diversi studi e costrutti teorici utili a comprendere la ricerca appieno. La prima sezione
del capitolo è dedicata ad introdurre il tema trattato dalla tesi, specificando come l’obiettivo principale sia quello di fornire al lettore tutte le informazioni necessarie per comprendere il mondo del lusso e i processi di produzione connessi a quest’ultimo. Inoltre, viene spiegato che verranno affrontati i diversi costrutti teorici poi applicati alla ricerca sperimentale: la percezione del lusso, dell’autenticità e le diverse variabili di marketing quali l’intenzione all’acquisto e il passaparola. Di conseguenza, il capitolo si dedica alla descrizione del concetto di lusso, considerato come qualcosa di non necessario e strettamente connesso al concetto di soddisfazione personale da parte dell’acquirente. Inoltre, secondo gli studi in questo campo, il lusso è da sempre definito come un mezzo che attribuisce prestigio a colui che ne usufruisce. In quest’ottica, si sottolinea come un importante elemento che conferisce ai prodotti di lusso il loro prestigio è da sempre la manifattura di alta qualità e l’inconfondibile competenza degli artigiani nel realizzare tali prodotti. A tal proposito, si ricorda al lettore come un aspetto fondamentale del mondo del lusso sia la presenza dei brand, che risultano essere particolarmente attraenti per la loro storia e lo status che rappresentano. Per questo, viene proposto un modello che sintetizza tutte le dinamiche che determinano un brand di lusso: l’integrità del prodotto, che comprende la qualità, la credibilità e l’attenzione ai dettagli durante la realizzazione dello stesso; l’importanza dettata dal valore, che è collegato all’associazione deliberata dei brand di lusso a persone famose, in modo che il valore del prodotto venduto sia massimizzato; d’altro canto, si sottolinea il ruolo della storia, come componente fondamentale nel valorizzare il brand, la sua natura e integrità. Inoltre, si sottolinea come la componente della cultura sia fondamentale affinché il brand possa mantenere un collegamento tra il proprio presente e il proprio passato, creando il suo stile rappresentativo e distintivo. Infine, la variabile del marketing aiuta a definire che cosa
rappresenta il brand e contribuisce alla vendita dei prodotti di lusso attraverso la comunicazione dei valori di cui il brand si fa portatore. Infine, secondo il suddetto modello, ciò che determina un brand di lusso è l’approvazione da parte del pubblico. Il capitolo si articola poi in una descrizione del marketing del lusso, prestando particolare attenzione al modello delle 4P, sviluppato da McCarthy allo scopo di definire quali siano i pilastri su cui si fonda il marketing. Questo modello rappresenta un punto di partenza per lo sviluppo di varie teorie che puntano ad ampliare le variabili che risultano determinanti per il marketing a seconda della complessità del mercato. In questo contesto, il capitolo applica il modello ampliato delle 8P a quello che è il mondo del lusso, sottolineando come per ognuna delle variabili prese in considerazione, è possibile trovare una nozione contrastante per il mondo del lusso. Per questo, le otto variabili relative al mondo del lusso sono: Brand, Posizionamento, Prodotto, Luogo, Prezzo, Promozione, Processo e Produzione. In seguito, si approfondisce il tema della produzione dei prodotti di lusso, prestando particolare attenzione all’evoluzione dei modelli di business delle aziende che operano in questo campo. Infatti, da un’iniziale impostazione d’impresa medio-piccola e prevalentemente familiare, si è passati a modelli organizzativi modulabili e flessibili, soprattutto per quanto riguarda i processi produttivi. Da questo punto di vista, il capitolo approfondisce la componente artigianale inserita nei processi di produzione dei beni di lusso, sottolineando come essa rappresenti un aspetto determinante in questo campo. Infatti, quello tra l’artigiano e il lusso sembra essere un impegno reciproco e a lungo termine, dato che l’intera narrazione di ciò che il lusso è, e rappresenta, si basa sugli stessi valori che caratterizzano l’artigianalità: esclusività, eccellenza, competenza, qualità, attenzione per la materia prima e per i particolari. Tuttavia, diversi studiosi hanno sottolineato come, in seguito ad una sua crescita esponenziale, le dinamiche del mercato
del lusso siano cambiate ultimamente, mettendo quindi alla prova i pilastri su cui la produzione del lusso si fonda. Infatti, in un mercato che lascia sempre più spazio a processi di produzione industriali e a sistemi di organizzazione automatici, la componente artigianale nella produzione del lusso viene messa alla prova. In quest’ottica, si parla della così detta Industria 4.0, che viene definita come un nuovo concetto di produzione che integra l’automazione nei processi di produzione, allo scopo di migliorare le prestazioni dell’azienda e aumentare la produttività. In quest’ottica si sottolinea come i processi di automazione abbiano migliorato le prestazioni di molte aziende, contribuendo alla loro crescita in termini economici e di mercato. Infatti, il principale scopo dell’Industria 4.0 è perseguire l’efficienza produttiva e permettere alle aziende di rispondere in maniera flessibile ai cambiamenti di mercato e alle richieste di clienti sempre più esigenti. Queste prestazioni efficienti sono rese possibili dall’introduzione di tecnologie robotiche, dalla manifattura additiva e da incisioni e tagli laser, come anche dall’introduzione di software all’avanguardia che permettono la comunicazione tra macchine e persone all’interno dell’azienda. Le ricerche in questo campo dimostrano come i cambiamenti apportati dall’Industria 4.0 non siano soltanto tecnologici e manifatturieri, ma anche strategici e organizzativi: infatti, l’integrazione tecnologica aiuterebbe l’azienda a massimizzare la propria performance attraverso un’attenta analisi delle tempistiche di produzione, del budget e dei rischi a cui l’azienda va incontro. Inoltre, tramite l’integrazione tecnologica, si riuscirebbe a capire l’efficacia e l’efficienza delle aziende, che sarebbero in grado di comprendere meglio le tendenze di mercato sia dal punto di pista della domanda, che dal punto di vista dell’offerta. Nel mondo del lusso, l’Industria 4.0 ha fatto il suo ingresso negli ultimi anni, proprio per la difficoltà che le aziende possono riscontrare nell’integrare la tecnologia nei processi di produzione del lusso. Tuttavia, molti studiosi sostengono che
l’innovazione e la tradizione possono essere integrate in un modello che prevede l’utilizzo di processi automatizzati e componenti artigianali. A questo proposito, si sottolinea come l’industrializzazione dei processi produttivi permetterebbe di mantenere una qualità costante nella produzione dei beni di lusso; per questo motivo, molti brand di lusso come Cartier o Tiffany, hanno iniziato ad utilizzare la manifattura additiva per produrre i propri gioielli, allo scopo di creare componenti dal design impeccabile e rispettoso dei più alti standard in termini di qualità e realizzazione. Il capitolo poi sottolinea come l’integrazione di processi industriali nel mondo del lusso non sia così semplice per la maggior parte delle industrie del lusso, che si trovano a dover affrontare il problema della percezione del lusso e dell’autenticità dei prodotti da parte della clientela. L’ultima sezione del capitolo si dedica a teorizzare un modello che delinea il valore del lusso. Come detto, i brand di lusso rispondono a bisogni funzionali e psicologici e, per questo, la loro abilità nel comunicare esclusività, storia, alta qualità e identità da parte del brand è fondamentale. In quest’ottica si considera come la percezione del valore del lusso sia determinata da diversi fattori quali, principalmente, il valore finanziario, funzionale, individuale e sociale da parte del cliente finale. Per questo motivo, quando si promuovono i beni di lusso, è necessario considerare tutti gli aspetti che riguardano il valore percepito dal cliente finale, prestando particolare attenzione al fatto che il valore percepito dal cliente finale, prestando particolare attenzione al fatto che il valore funzionale che sta alla base della tradizionale intenzione d’acquisto, nel mondo del lusso perde la sua importanza centrale. Di conseguenza, viene delineato un modello che riguarda il costrutto dell’autenticità del lusso percepita da parte del cliente, sottolineando che gli elementi fondamentali da considerare nel delineare tale costrutto sono l’individualità del brand, la sua continuità e la sua coerenza del tempo. L’autenticità del brand è un aspetto importante che va a confermare la credibilità del brand, che riesce a guadagnarsi la fiducia da parte
della clientela: una percezione favorevole del brand in questo senso andrebbe a giustificare il valore del brand stesso e il sovrapprezzo dei suoi prodotti di lusso. L’ultima sezione del capitolo si dedica a delineare il profilo del potenziale cliente del brand, con una particolare attenzione ad un modello proposto in letteratura, che definisce il potenziale cliente del mondo del lusso tramite la figura del Nomade. Quest’ultimo è una personalità estremamente complessa, immersa in stimoli sempre nuovi e differenti, capace di spostarsi liberamente nel mondo, sviluppando così una domanda sempre più complessa e consapevole. Il Nomade, infatti, è molto difficile da sedurre attraverso le tecniche di marketing, perché è una figura capace di confrontare gli stimoli e di fare scelte più o meno consapevoli. Secondo questo modello, il Nomade è immerso in un mondo così pubblicizzato, dove tutto è pubblico e il tempo scorre veloce, che sviluppa una particolare attrazione per prodotti naturali, fatti a mano, che rappresentano un porto sicuro per il loro valore unico e inestimabile. Per ultime, vengono considerate le variabili teoriche di marketing riguardanti l’intenzione all’acquisto e il passaparola. L’intenzione all’acquisto nel mondo del lusso è considerata come direttamente collegata alla variabile della percezione del brand e a tutte quelle dinamiche che appartengono alla sfera sensoriale, simbolica e personale del potenziale cliente. Infine, per quanto riguarda la variabile del passaparola, negli studi di marketing si sottolinea come sia fondamentale favorire un passaparola positivo; il passaparola, infatti, è considerato come un potente strumento per poter influenzare l’acquisto da parte di altri nuovi potenziali clienti.

Il terzo capitolo si dedica a delineare la presente ricerca sul campo, sottolineando per prima cosa lo scopo della stessa. In particolare, si sottolinea come la ricerca su cui questa tesi si basa abbia lo scopo di indagare gli effetti che la produzione industriale e l’Industria 4.0 possono avere sulla percezione del cliente finale. Per questo, si delineano le due
principali domande di ricerca: può la promozione di opposti processi di produzione del lusso, in particolare l’artigianalità e la manifattura industriale, influenzare la percezione del lusso e dell’autenticità da parte del cliente finale? I due diversi metodi di produzione (artigianale o digitale) possono giocare un ruolo diverso nell’influenzare il comportamento del consumatore?

Di seguito poi viene delineata la metodologia relativa all’esperimento, con una sezione specifica che descrive in che modo è stata condotta la ricerca. In particolare, viene spiegato che il questionario su cui si basa la ricerca è stato condotto tramite la piattaforma SurveyMonkey, a cui i partecipanti accedevano attraverso un link diffuso grazie ai principali canali di comunicazione. Il capitolo spiega inoltre come la scelta del brand sia ricaduta su Cartier al fine di utilizzare un brand conosciuto dai più e, allo stesso tempo, di testare la percezione da parte del potenziale cliente di un brand che ha una lunga storia e un’alta reputazione nel mondo del lusso. Si sottolinea anche come il brand abbia apertamente abbracciato i valori dell’Industria 4.0, introducendo la manifattura additiva nella produzione dei propri gioielli a partire dal 2014. Di conseguenza, viene spiegata la struttura dell’esperimento, in cui sono state utilizzate due pubblicità (input) create per i soli scopi accademici e attribuite al brand Cartier. I due input differivano l’uno dall’altro esclusivamente per l’immagine sullo sfondo, che suggeriva diversi metodi di manifattura per il prodotto di Cartier. L’una suggeriva che il prodotto, un anello, venisse realizzato a mano da un artigiano, l’altra che questo venisse realizzato tramite manifattura additiva e design computerizzati. Nel costruire gli input, si sottolinea anche la volontà di inserire un claim pubblicitario in lingua inglese, allo scopo di conferire un’immagine globale del brand, che si addice molto a Cartier. Inoltre, il claim trasmette un messaggio estremamente generico e aperto a possibili interpretazioni, così che l’attenzione del
potenziale cliente non sia distolta dalla pubblicità e dalle immagini utilizzate. Per ultimo, si delineano tutte le variabili che sono state considerate per la presente ricerca e inserite in un questionario, volto a testare la percezione della pubblicità creata. Il questionario si divide in sei sezioni, che testano rispettivamente la percezione del lusso da parte del cliente, la percezione dell’autenticità del brand e le variabili di marketing che comprendono l’intenzione di acquisto, il passaparola e l’efficacia della pubblicità stessa. Infine, il capitolo delinea le caratteristiche del campione d’indagine: 182 parlanti di lingua italiana, con diversi retroterra culturali e appartenenti a diverse fasce d’età. Ai partecipanti in questione è stato dato accesso al questionario tramite un link, che proponeva casualmente la versione del questionario contenente la pubblicità con metodi artigianali di realizzazione del gioiello oppure l’altra versione, che suggeriva metodi digitali di produzione. Ai partecipanti veniva chiesto di esprimere le proprie opinioni riguardanti la percezione del brand, essendo stati sottoposti solo ad uno dei due input e non essendo consapevoli dell’esistenza dell’altro. Infine, il questionario raccoglieva alcune informazioni sociodemografiche, che sono state rappresentate nel capitolo terzo in maniera aggregata, al solo scopo di fare delle stime rappresentative riguardo la media d’età dei partecipanti, il loro reddito e la loro formazione scolastica.

Il capitolo quarto si occupa della presentazione dei risultati ottenuti dalle risposte alle due versioni del questionario per quanto riguarda le tre macro-variabili considerate: la percezione del lusso, la percezione dell’autenticità e le variabili di marketing. In particolare, ci si focalizza su una rappresentazione grafica di quelle che sono le differenze tra i due campioni di partecipanti e sui risultati significativamente rilevanti, ottenuti dall’analisi delle medie delle risposte. I risultati rilevanti che sono stati ottenuti riguardano le variabili del simbolismo del brand, l’impegno nel mantenere una qualità,
l’eredità di Cartier, la sua sincerità e la sua filosofia. Infatti, per tutte queste variabili la percezione da parte del potenziale cliente è significativamente maggiore per i partecipanti al questionario che suggeriva la componentente artigianale nella manifattura del gioiello. Lo stesso viene sottolineato per tutte le variabili di marketing: l’intenzione all’acquisto, il passaparola e l’efficacia della pubblicità. In questo caso si sottolinea come il comportamento del consumatore sia ancora positivamente influenzato dalla componente artigianale della manifattura.

Il quinto e ultimo capitolo delinea la discussione dei risultati, con un iniziale descrizione del caso studio che è stato scelto per la presente ricerca, ovvero il brand Cartier. Di seguito, si sottolinea come la scelta sia stata sensata al fine della ricerca, in quanto il pubblico ha dimostrato di conoscere il brand, riconoscendo la sua storia e la sua reputazione; inoltre, si ricorda come la scelta del brand Cartier sia stata ottimale perché il brand stesso è stato in grado di integrare ai propri processi di produzione nuove tecnologie additive appartenenti all’Industria 4.0. Per questo, vengono analizzati i risultati dell’indagine, constatando come la componentante artigianale sia ancora fondamentale agli occhi del cliente finale, nonostante negli ultimi anni il fenomeno dell’Industria 4.0 abbia coinvolto praticamente tutti i settori produttivi. Si sottolinea dunque come i risultati siano rilevanti nel comprendere cioè che ancora rappresenta una fonte di valore agli occhi del cliente finale che acquista prodotti di lusso. Il capitolo sottolinea che la prima parte del questionario, dedicata alla variabile della percezione del lusso, non ha dato differenze significative in termini di risultati, sottolineando come i due gruppì di partecipanti stessero rispondendo alle domande senza aver visionato la pubblicità input. Questo risultato è dunque interessante perché dimostra che entrambi i gruppi partivano da un’idea condivisa e simile di quello che è il brand Cartier e della sua posizione all’interno del
mondo del lusso, confermando la reputazione di lunga durata che il brand si è creato. Il secondo gruppo di risultati, riguardante l’autenticità del prodotto e del brand, ha dato risultati significativamente positivi, dimostrando come il valore del brand di lusso vada oltre l’effettiva capacità di rispondere ad un bisogno, ma comprende anche tutta la dimensione simbolica di cui esso è rappresentativo: la sua storia, la sua integrità e tutto ciò che rappresenta per i suoi clienti. Inoltre, si sottolinea come l’impegno nel mantenere standard qualitativi di un certo livello sia più evidente per tutti i partecipanti al questionario contenente l’input di manifattura artigianale, confermando come quest’ultima costituisca un pilastro nel mondo del lusso e come questa celebi l’eredità del brand, il suo design senza tempo e il suo patrimonio. Infine, per quanto riguarda il comportamento dei consumatori, vengono confermate le teorie che constatano come gli artigiani siano in grado di generare prodotti unici e senza tempo, che giustificano il prezzo maggiorato dei prodotti di lusso agli occhi del cliente finale. Nelle conclusioni, si confermano delle risposte positive a quelle che sono le domande della presente ricerca, sottolineando come la componente artigianale sia ancora fondamentale agli occhi del cliente. Le implicazioni teoriche di questi risultati riguardano l’importanza di definire l’identità del brand secondo dei valori fondamentali che giustifichino il prezzo dei propri prodotti di lusso e la loro qualità nel tempo. Inoltre, viene confermato come una delle maggiori difficoltà riscontrate dalle aziende nel mondo del lusso sia quella di implementare le proprie catene del valore con processi automatizzati, per mancanza di conoscenze in materia e per paura che la percezione da parte del cliente sull’autenticità e l’unicità dei prodotti cambi in maniera negativa. Inoltre, vengono confermate le teorie riguardati il comportamento del consumatore, sottolineando come il consumatore del lusso sia particolarmente attento a tutte quelle caratteristiche distintive ed esclusive del
prodotto di lusso, che rendono quest’ultimo riconoscibile e riconosciuto. Per quanto riguarda le implicazioni di marketing, viene confermata l’idea che le pubblicità nel mondo del lusso non debbano essere create con l’intento di giustificare l’acquisto agli occhi del consumatore, ma deve invece contenere un perfetto mix di messaggi emozionali e razionali che costituiscono la principale risorsa di valore agli occhi del cliente. Per questo, il marketing deve essere utilizzato per focalizzarsi su ciò che rende il brand distinguibile e valevole: l’attenzione ai dettagli e agli standard di qualità molto alti. In questo senso, si propone un modello ibrido che cerca di combinare i nuovi valori dell’Industria 4.0 con i classici valori della produzione artigianale. In questo senso, i brand potrebbero combinare l’industria additiva con la partecipazione di artigiani esperti, al fine di mantenere il più possibile il valore aggiunto, dato dalla componente artigianale nel lusso.

Infine, vengo delineate quelli che sono i limiti della presente ricerca e i possibili punti di partenza per future ricerche in questo ambito. Innanzitutto, si ricorda come per la presente ricerca siano state prese in considerazione solo tre macro-variaibili e si sottolinea come il mondo del lusso sia talmente complesso e articolato in componenti individuali e collettive, oggettive e soggettive, concrete e simboliche, che risulta un po’ riduttivo basare un’analisi di mercato su tre componenti, seppure estremamente significative. Per questa ragione, un set di variabili più ampie potrebbe essere utile al fine di comprendere meglio quelle che sono le dinamiche di un mercato così complesso. Inoltre, per quanto riguarda le risposte ricevute per il presente questionario, si sottolinea come il numero di partecipanti sia limitato per poter trarre delle conclusioni generiche sulla questione; inoltre, è fondamentale tenere presente che la componente culturale e linguistica gioca un ruolo fondamentale in questa ricerca. Infatti, è importante ricordare come i partecipanti siano tutti parlanti di lingua italiana, presumibilmente influenzati culturalmente in quella
che è la loro percezione del lusso. Non a caso, la cultura italiana è da sempre molto legata al concetto di Made in Italy e, per questo, particolarmente attenta alla componente artigianale dei processi di produzione, caratteristica delle piccole-medie imprese del mondo del lusso italiano. Per questo, sarebbe interessante espandere la ricerca considerando campioni derivanti da retroterra culturali diversi, così da poter trarre differenti conclusioni sull’andamento del mercato, a seconda del tipo di consumatore che si sta prendendo in considerazione. Questo, permetterebbe ai brand di comprendere in maniera più profonda la percezione del lusso da parte delle diverse culture e di impostare strategicamente le proprie risposte di marketing, a seconda dei valori fondamentali che sembrano essere più influenti agli occhi del consumatore.