

Green Marketing and Cultural Sustainability: Strategies for Building a Sustainable Fashion Brand in a Circular Economy

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Abstract: Nowadays, sustainability has become an increasingly important factor in making purchasing decisions. In this context, it can be noticed that more and more companies are making efforts to adapt their marketing strategy to the circular economy, strategically strengthening their brand image. One of the most difficult aspects to address is the integration of green marketing and cultural sustainability in the luxury fashion sector.

From a methodological perspective, the study employs a mixed approach, combining desk research on specialized literature, with a case study that examines Louis Vuitton's use of traditional Romanian motifs without explicit cultural attribution. Through this approach, the research aims to analyze the impact of such practices on brand reputation, consumer perception and ethical considerations through the lens of green marketing.

In order to answer the question: "How do you create a brand strategy for a circular economy?", this research aims at understanding how cultural aspects can be incorporated into the fashion business in a socially responsible manner, and how brands cultivate sustainable marketing strategies based on respect, openness, and authenticity.

Consequently, the key findings and conclusions of the research, based on the case study, underline how sustainable marketing practices in a luxury fashion industry align with brand awareness and evolving consumer expectations. The main contribution of this research derives from its interdisciplinary perspective that brings together the fields of green marketing, cultural sustainability and consumer behavior, providing valuable insights into ethical branding strategies within a circular economy.

Keywords: green marketing; sustainability; consumer behavior; ethical strategies; market positioning; circular economy; big data.

Introduction

There are so many challenges today when we talk about luxury brands and sustainability that the two terms seem more in opposition than connected. Starting from this premise, recent studies and research show us the opposite, namely that luxury brands are becoming more and more interested

in the concept of sustainability and the process of becoming sustainable, so that these two terms are rather interconnected. Of course, just as a brand builds a niche marketing strategy in relation to its image in the market, it also needs to build a green marketing strategy, adapted to a circular economy. But when we talk about fashion and marketing, the evolution is not limited to these, but we are talking about a performance of modern marketing, which also includes ethical strategy, the use of big data, transparency and cultural adaptation by positioning the brand in front of and in the minds and eyes of the consumer.

Luxury brands like Louis Vuitton, the case study company in this paper, operate in a dynamic and competitive environment, and gaining the competitive advantage of becoming sustainable, green and ecological becomes essential when you want to remain niche, successful and adapted to current and future demand [13]. Starting from the basic research question, "How do you build a sustainable brand strategy in a circular economy?", we consider 3 main directions that trace the research trajectory of the paper, namely:

1. adapting the green marketing strategy to market requirements, as well as to economic, environmental and cultural ones;
2. understanding consumer behavior from the perspective of the offer made by luxury brands in fashion, of the trend and of the ethical strategy;
3. developing cultural databases for intellectual property protection and using big data to streamline the implementation of the brand strategy in terms of image and involvement.

Although seen as companies with competitive advantages, we could say that luxury brands are now at a crossroads, because with the rise of green consumerism, they not only need to maintain their legacy of exclusivity and expertise, but also need to adopt sustainability as a core brand value, with cultural sustainability and green marketing becoming components of the package that any modern brand strategy must include within a circular economy framework. We can say that this evolution is not just a development; it is more an evolution demanded by the increasing emphasis of the global customer base on ethical and green practices. A luxury brand is now expected to be sustainable in all areas, including the way it is manufactured and the way it communicates with its customers.

Indeed, green marketing practices are essential to this change, especially when cultural sustainability is integrated into them. Cultural sustainability focuses on protecting local cultures, customs, values and, most importantly, nationality, but only to the extent that they do not conflict with global environmental requirements. In the case of luxury and fashion brands, such as Louis Vuitton, there is a need to create products that are culturally wearable and presentable, without having a large carbon footprint. By combining cultural knowledge with ecological marketing practices, a solid foundation is established for the development of a sustainable brand, as shoulders, the foundations of a model for the future are laid.

We thus consider research directions that support the sustainable brand strategy within a circular economy, both through the components of transparency, marketing and ethics, and through the education component. When we talk about education regarding the sustainability of a brand, and in this case a luxury fashion brand, we refer to both the company's education and that of consumers. The consumer-company relationship needs to be interconnected so that the result is one adapted to a future market, a market with a positive impact on the environment and with modern evolution perspectives. The implications of modern marketing are becoming increasingly necessary in the construction of a brand strategy based on green marketing and cultural sustainability, in a circular economy [14].

This research paper attempts to understand the avenues luxury brands can take in order to address the issues of sustainability while simultaneously ensuring that opportunities for innovation and culture are available to them. It explains how addressing the issue of cultural sustainability by examining consumer behavior of green consumers allows for green marketing practitioners to build effective strategies to construct new resilient brands. Moreover, the paper identifies the importance of such an approach, which considers ethics, technological advancements and proper marketing communication to build confidence and commitment of consumers in the context of a changing circular economy.

The personal contribution to the topic of the paper is highlighted both by addressing the themes highlighted in the research gap and by combining the perspective on consumer perception from the point of view of responsibility towards the environment, economy and society. By its nature, the research provides a scientific direction on how a luxury brand like Louis Vuitton can align its marketing strategy with a type of ethics for sustainability and culture alike.

The findings also reinforce the fact that a sustainable brand does not only have in its strategy the reduction of environmental impact, but also the components of cultural promotion, transparency and ethical commitment towards end consumers. Thus, we believe that this perspective is of particular importance when we talk about the circular economy, an economy in which brands are increasingly forced to rethink their promotion strategy, aligning their image with both consumer expectations and the principles of the circular economy.

Guided from the beginning by the key question: "How do you create a brand strategy for a circular economy?", the study is structured in an interdisciplinary way around the elements of ecological marketing, cultural sustainability and consumer behavior, offering a complex and detailed analysis of the case of Louis Vuitton's use of traditional Romanian motifs, without any explicit cultural attribution. In this context, examining the ethical and marketing implications within the circular economy, the research offers a series of strategic recommendations that support the integration of cultural sustainability by luxury brands into the adopted green marketing strategy, strongly supporting green marketing strategies based on respect, openness and authenticity.

Considering the above, we note that this study marks in a structured way the importance of the integration of cultural sustainability in the green marketing strategy, emphasizing the fact that the adoption of an ethical direction regarding the part of culture in branding, increases consumer confidence and strengthens the competitive advantage in the long-term market. Also, in an era where consumers increasingly appreciate transparency among luxury brands and their promotional methods, aligning green marketing principles with inclusion and cultural sensitivity, companies in this sector can not only more easily meet the constantly evolving expectations of consumers, but can also contribute to the development of an industry, in this case fashion, that is more sustainable and responsible. Basically, the study offers a comprehensive perspective on how brands in the luxury fashion industry can successfully incorporate the cultural component into the sphere of sustainability, respecting the promotional directions of modern marketing in favor of maintaining a competitive advantage in the circular economy market.

Research methodology

This research is the result of reviewing the specialized literature combined with the presentation and interpretation of a case study in an analytical, academic and modern manner. It will try to answer the question of how, within the framework of the circular economy, green marketing and cultural sustainability help in the development of sustainable brand strategies in the fashion industry.

The review of literature will use an academic, holistic, and critical perspective to study the available past research, sustainable reports, and industry white papers. The analysis establishes theoretical possibilities, fills research gaps and substantiates the case study design. In fact, the real focus of the critical analysis falls on the marketing orientation involving green marketing principles, sustainable consumer behavior in fashion, ethical brand positioning and the replication of cultural sustainability. Thus, the weak link between cultural sustainability and green marketing strategies in luxury fashion brands is the academic gap.

The case study method, acclaimed for unveiling the depth of complex contemporary problems, was applied in the study of the integration (or lack of it) of cultural sustainability by Louis Vuitton into its green marketing strategy. This case study is important because the business entity operates in the luxury fashion industry and has in recent times sparked a lot of debate concerning issues of cultural appropriation. The analysis is steered by a structured framework that follows:

1. Contextual Analysis – Premises of brand sustainability and its image in the public eye.
2. Cultural Sustainability Assessment – Refers to how the reflection of cultural heritage and ethical marketing practices comes with brand communications.
3. Consumer Perception Analysis – Based on consumer reactions, overtly in media discourse and tacit public feedback, to assess how they reflect on the corporate brand in terms of reputation impact.

Data collection involves secondary sources, including but not limited to sustainability reports, press releases, academic discussions on cultural appropriation, and consumer sentiment analysis extracted from public discourse. Findings from both the literature review and case study will be synthesized to develop a strategic model through which cultural sustainability can be integrated into the practices of green marketing.

The methodology under consideration ensures replicability due to the fact that a structured qualitative research approach will be adopted which requires further explicit account to be taken of well-established techniques of case study analysis and transparent sources of data. The conclusions are drawn directly from the results that highlight the contribution of the study in question.

Cultural Sustainability and Green Marketing – the Study Case of Traditional Designs In Fashion

As sustainability becomes an integral part of modern branding, green marketing has evolved to include not only environmental but also cultural dimensions. Brands are increasingly recognizing that to build lasting connections with consumers, they must adopt ethical practices that respect both natural resources and cultural heritage. This section explores how traditional cultural motifs can be ethically integrated into fashion, focusing on how brands can enhance their green marketing strategies through cultural respect, transparency, and authenticity.

Brands can establish respect for cultural integrity and work towards championing inclusion and social responsibility by ensuring that their narratives are interwoven with meaningful interactions that speak to all their stakeholders. This entails collaborating with local communities, providing fair economic compensation to local artisans, and giving due credit to the communities their designs are sourced from. Not only do these practices reduce the potential for their work to stand as a cultural appropriation, but they also strengthen consumer's faith in the brand and improve its reliability and reputation. Furthermore, if the designs are marketed with a more sustainable

approach which is achieved by openly explaining who the artist is and the reason for the design, the brand's reputation in a competitive market is further enhanced.

Using Louis Vuitton's adaptation of a Romanian blouse (i.e.) design without cultural attribution as a case study, we examine how such practices impact brand reputation and align with consumer expectations in a sustainability-conscious market. Cultural appropriation versus cultural appreciation is further investigated considering the importance of ethical sourcing and cooperation with local creators as well as fair representation in the formation of a favorable perception among clients. In addition, this case illustrates the need for luxury companies to incorporate cultural sustainability into their green communication strategies. This is necessary so that they do not only achieve ecological objectives but also respect and celebrate the rich culture that has inspired their creations.

Case Study Overview: the Romanian Blouse Controversy

The rise of globalization has led to greater interest in traditional motifs, often bringing ethical challenges. In 2024, Louis Vuitton's use of a traditional Romanian blouse design without explicit recognition of its origin sparked a response from Romania's Ministry of Culture and raised questions around cultural appropriation and its legitimacy. This case illustrates the need for ethical standards in marketing traditional designs, where brands can incorporate cultural heritage respectfully to align with both green marketing principles and consumer expectations.

Aligning Cultural Recognition with Green Marketing Principles

Authenticity and Brand Integrity in Green Marketing

Authenticity is a cornerstone of green marketing [1]. Brands that acknowledge cultural sources in their marketing create a stronger perception of ethical commitment, enhancing consumer trust. In Louis Vuitton's case, the lack of attribution resulted in negative publicity, which reflects the growing demand for authenticity in the fashion industry's sustainability initiatives [1]. Brands that clearly state cultural origins can strengthen brand identity and increase customer loyalty.

Consumer Perception and Brand Loyalty

Modern consumers increasingly value transparency, with research showing that explicit acknowledgment of cultural origins can increase trust and loyalty [2]. As consumers seek brands that reflect their values, green marketing that incorporates cultural recognition not only satisfies sustainability concerns but also fosters a meaningful connection. The consumer backlash against Louis Vuitton underscores the risk of omitting cultural attribution, particularly among younger, socially aware demographics [2].

Cultural Partnerships for Sustainable Differentiation

Building cultural partnerships allows brands to differentiate themselves while supporting local economies, aligning with circular economy principles of resource sharing and community support [3]. For instance, collaborating with local artisans can help brands use traditional motifs ethically, strengthening their sustainable marketing efforts. Cultural partnerships underscore a brand's commitment to authenticity, enhancing its image as a responsible actor in the global market.

Ethical Strategies for Sustainable Green Marketing in Fashion

The Importance of Explicit Cultural Attribution

Acknowledging cultural origins is vital to protect traditional motifs from exploitation. This recognition forms an essential part of green marketing, aligning brand values with those of socially conscious consumers [3]. By ensuring cultural recognition, brands can maintain ethical standards, contributing positively to both brand reputation and consumer perception.

Developing Cultural Databases for Intellectual Property Protection

A key solution is establishing cultural databases that provide controlled access to traditional motifs, as exemplified in Mexico's and Peru's legal frameworks [5]. Such databases could be implemented in Romania to protect traditional designs, allowing brands like Louis Vuitton to access these motifs responsibly. Controlled access through databases can reduce misuse, supporting ethical practices in line with global green marketing trends.

Cultural Partnerships to Promote Ethical Production

By collaborating with local artisans, brands respect cultural authenticity and contribute to local economies. This approach supports sustainable business practices that align with green marketing strategies and resonate with consumers prioritizing ethical production. Some authors [3] highlight the significance of cultural partnerships, showing that such collaborations reinforce brand authenticity and allow companies to integrate sustainable, ethical practices directly into their operations.

Educating Designers on Cultural Sensitivity

Incorporating cultural sensitivity into designer education is essential for sustainable brand practices. As Todeschini and some authors argue [2], training designers in cultural ethics can prevent unintentional appropriation and help brands position themselves as leaders in cultural and environmental sustainability. Sensitivity training can empower designers to create ethically informed designs that appeal to socially conscious consumers.

Green Marketing as a Vehicle for Cultural and Environmental Sustainability

Louis Vuitton's use of the Romanian blouse without cultural acknowledgment exemplifies the complexities of integrating traditional designs ethically. As consumer expectations shift towards sustainability and transparency, brands are pressed to adopt green marketing strategies that respect both environmental and cultural resources. By acknowledging traditional origins, partnering with local artisans, and promoting transparency, brands can align their values with those of their customers. Through these efforts, green marketing becomes not just an environmental initiative but a commitment to cultural sustainability, reinforcing brand loyalty and enhancing reputation in a global, circular economy.

Results and discussion

The results of this work mark the main directions highlighted based on the research, both by reviewing the specialized literature and by approaching the case study. The main elements that define the results answer the basic question: How do you build a sustainable brand strategy in a circular economy? and they combine the concepts of: cultural respect, transparency and authenticity.

An important role in shaping the results is also played by the keywords, which were established to highlight the extensive research nature of the selected theme. Thus, we consider terms such as: green marketing; sustainability; consumer behavior; ethical strategies; market positioning; circular economy; marketing trend; big data.

From the point of view of green marketing, the results stand out by highlighting the need for brands to adapt to a new type of marketing, namely green marketing, a component of ecological marketing. The cultural component is also part of modern marketing, an aspect that must be considered when we talk about adapting to the market as a response both to market demand and to the present and future expectations of consumers.

In terms of sustainability, the results include a wide range of premises, the main directions being given by: sustainability is part of modern branding; green marketing is a result of promoting sustainability; sustainable trees are increasingly being chosen by consumers. To support these directions, we discuss the idea of sustainability education from both the consumer and the company point of view. In the case of the Louis Vuitton brand, education regarding the adaptation of a luxury product to a specific market such as Romania, through its realization from the point of view of traditional design, signals the point of fusion of modern marketing with the cultural and sustainable part.

When we talk about consumer behavior, we are undoubtedly talking about the relationship between market novelty and market adaptation, an aspect that highlights the business strategy of brands, in our case the marketing strategy of a luxury brand. In the case of Louis Vuitton, the creation of a blouse with Romanian motifs, without a cultural attribution, represented an exclamation mark for the Romanian Ministry of Culture. The integration of a cultural part in addition to the sustainable one, represents the creation of a complete modern marketing strategy.

Given the current situation, it is important to mention the ethical strategies that brands consider when choosing to develop both their communication and orientation. As more and more companies go green or aim to adopt a sustainable style of production or sales, the focus is increasingly on their ethical practices. As experts say, it is important to understand the consequences of our design practices, especially how current design, production and commercial practices affect unsustainable consumption patterns [9].

The market positioning and competitive advantage of luxury brands such as Louis Vuitton shows us that sustainability has become a core concept for them, especially in the context of the circular economy. In this sense, in order to respect ethical practices, but also to avoid greenwashing, luxury brands are making efforts to maintain their niche in a dynamic, constantly changing market [10].

Starting from the idea of ecological marketing and cultural sustainability: strategies for building a sustainable fashion brand in a circular economy - we note that the Louis Vuitton brand has included in its modern marketing strategy a commitment that includes the conservation of natural resources and the positive impact on society on the long term. Practices such as: reducing gas emissions, limiting global warming or reducing the carbon footprint are important points on the brand's agenda [11]. Thus, in a circular economy, the fashion industry is forced to perform and adapt its production practices, adapting processes to the 3Rs: recycle, reduce, reuse [12].

Regarding the luxury fashion industry and the concept of sustainability, the 2 concepts, although they seem relatively different, tend to be increasingly interconnected despite the challenges [13], as more and more research shows and as it emerges from annual sustainability reports.

In terms of marketing trends, we highlight the key aspect, namely the trend. In this case, we refer to an approach between fast fashion and luxury fashion, which, although they have different business and communication strategies, different consumers with different expectations, have in common the trend by adapting the design to the demands and expectations of the market. Although fashion as a whole is defined by design, marketing has a major impact on its promotion, in this way green marketing is also adapted to sustainable fashion, sustainability being more than a trend, being an objective for a future vision. Thus, in the case of Louis Vuitton, its adaptation to the trend, either a design or a marketing one, has always been noted through its strategy of highlighting luxury products.

In order to support the strategic production, sales and marketing efforts of a luxury company, big data is increasingly a preferred alternative to aligning the company's culture with the circular economy. In this way, the company's sustainability efforts are also supported, in relation to integration into environmental standards and norms, market level and demand, as well as consumer needs and desires.

Green Marketing Strategies and Consumer Behavior

These results have proved that the green marketing strategies through environmental promotion benefits contribute to the formation of consumer perceptions and behaviors. People have found that companies implementing green marketing activities, with green raw material waste management, will leave a significant impact on customer loyalty and brand value [4]. Consumers increasingly give preference to those brands that align with sustainability values, particularly those brands that show transparency by communicating their strong environmental commitment and authenticity in their marketing communication [1]. Green marketing strategies positively influence purchase intentions, especially the environmental benefits of products when explicitly communicated [6].

Factors that determine the success of green marketing are:

1. Cultural sensitivity: The ethical integration of cultural standards in green marketing, as with the Romanian Louis Vuitton blouse, proves the point on how necessary it is to consider where a culture comes from at building brand integrity [3].
2. Transparency and trust: Customers require upfront cultivation of the company's cultural and environmental roots within its product- related marketing to build trust leading to loyalty [2].
3. Green Individual Sentiments: Consumer attitudes toward environmental issues have a major bearing on how they perceive green marketing efforts and assess whether they would prefer to use the product of a sustainable brand [4].

Lifetime of ecological marketing strategies

The viability of green marketing strategies lies in how well they harmonize with the precepts of the circular economy. To be successful, strategies need to incorporate life-cycle thinking and foster the promotion of reuse and recycling plus efficient resource use. For example, the partnership with local artisans may shape authenticity and decrease environmental impact [3]. Moreover, the integration of consumer feedback through big data analytics makes these strategies more adaptable and sustainable due to emergent consumer demands [7].

Challenges and Mitigation Strategies

Green marketing still has to grapple with, notably, allegations of greenwashing and exploiting traditional knowledge. These, too, dilute consumer faith in the brand, and thus, the emphasis on the need for ethical marketing practice. Which can be formulated into creating cultural databases

and entering into collaboration agreements with the local communities to influence the possible risks, as evidenced in the IP systems of Peru and Mexico (WIPO, 2023).

The Role of Innovation

Green marketing innovation can provide the company with a competitive advantage. Firms integrating cutting-edge technologies and sustainable production processes can clearly position themselves in the market as different from the rest [4]. They merge into new trends such as recycled products and support for wind power, which are very appealing to environmentally sensitive consumers. Thus, there is an enhanced brand loyalty factor.

Insights from Big Data Usage and Analysis

The incorporation of the use and analysis of big data by these companies into their green marketing strategies can be much more effective. It allows companies to:

- Assess and manage sustainable supply chain risks which include environmental as well as operational disruptions [7].
- Enhance consumer engagement by delivering personalized marketing campaigns in agreement with the specific preference of each individual on sustainability issues [4].
- Optimize resource allocation for the cost-effective implementation of green marketing initiatives [7].

Impact on Brand Positioning

Green marketing strategies would do very much more to improve brand positioning by ensuring that business operations are in line with consumer values. Just the practice of marketing ethics, transparency, and initiatives toward sustainability make the brand a responsible leader in the market. This is not only the proper alignment to regulations; because of its involvement in the long-term growth of the company, it also becomes a preferable factor for an increasing segment of the population that cares about the environment [1,4].

The "**new textile economy**" highlights the strategic importance of design in the development of a circular textile industry, where products are designed to have a long life, the possibility of reuse and a reduced ecological footprint.

For instance, brands that are highly known to the consumer are investing in innovative marketing campaigns that highlight their commitments to sustainability. The creation of high-quality clothing products, together with the development of new business models, can significantly contribute to changing the perception of clothes - they become sustainable products, not simple disposable items. Producing sustainable fashion - on the one hand - and consuming sustainable fashion, on the other - is a system problem.

Sustainability has an educational component and is a manifestation of access to other financial and informational resources. Political economy, psychology, sociology, and anthropology are also considered to have established the theoretical foundations of the current understanding of consumer behavior. Due to the complexity and varied nature of the acts and processes that define consumer behavior, people's reactions in economic terms cannot be reduced to simple repetitive actions; they reflect an accumulated life experience. In this sense, simply observing and quantifying consumer actions is not enough. It is also necessary to explore the psychophysiological processes underlying these actions and explain the interdependencies between them.

In this way, consumers can start to see clothing as a long-term investment and a reusable resource, which supports the principles of the circular economy in fashion. When we talk about a

circular economy, we must reach 2 essential points and combine the marketing part and the economic part. Thus, unfortunately we see that the economic side has a rather important impact on the decisions of fashion consumers and consumers in general.

An important impact on the circular economy from an economic as well as a strategic point of view is clearly that represented by the purchasing power of the buyer, which obviously differs according to social class. Given that the manifestation of consumer behavior takes place in the market, its study has become a fundamental component of marketing, helping to understand and anticipate the preferences and motivations of buyers.

Green marketing strategies can be defined as initiatives through which companies can integrate sustainable and green practices into their promotion, production and sales activities. Thus, the aim is to attract environmentally conscious customers on the one hand and, on the other hand, to contribute to the protection of the planet.

Among the essential ecological marketing strategies, we mention some relevant ones:

- Ecological products and packaging - which is achieved by developing products from sustainable, biodegradable or recyclable materials; we will also encounter the use of minimalist or reusable packaging to reduce the resulting waste as well as a clear communication on the packaging about the sustainable practices used by the manufacturer as a marketing strategy.
- Ecological certifications - Obtaining certifications such as "EcoLabel", "Fair Trade" or "Carbon Neutral" to validate in this way sustainable initiatives to promote these certifications in marketing campaigns to thus increase credibility among consumers.
- Educational campaigns - which have the role of informing consumers about the impact of their decisions to purchase a range of products on the environment; an important step is to educate consumers in this regard, by developing guides or educational materials that promote healthy habits, oriented towards sustainable consumption.
- Green content marketing – by publishing articles, videos or podcasts highlighting the importance of protecting the environment; these materials produced and distributed to consumers must contain authentic stories about the efforts of the company/companies to reduce the carbon footprint of the production process of consumer goods.
- Involvement in the community - will be achieved by organizing ecologically themed events, such as tree planting campaigns or cleaning of natural areas; partnerships with non-governmental organizations that promote sustainability also play an important role.
- Transparency and accountability – can be achieved by publishing sustainability reports for consumers of goods, highlighting ecological goals and achievements.
- Rewarding the sustainable behavior of customers – by offering discounts or benefits for customers who choose ecological options (eg: returning the packaging of the products/goods purchased). Thus, the creation of a loyalty system for consumers that supports sustainable products is encouraged.
- Creating an ecological brand identity – by adopting a brand image that reflects sustainable values; thus, manufacturers must maintain an authentic and honest tone in green communication to avoid greenwashing (the practice of falsely claiming that a company is green).

All these strategies will help to attract responsible consumers and will automatically help to reduce the impact on the environment and create a competitive advantage in the market.

The key themes that underpinned the discussion scene, in line with the objectives of the paper, are defined by:

1. Developing a marketing strategy for a fashion brand, based on green marketing and cultural sustainability. In this sense, the key question of the paper emerged: "How do you build a sustainable brand strategy in a circular economy?"

2. Aligning brand recognition with green marketing principles, consumer perception and brand loyalty: this direction shaped the discussion on the factors that determine success in green marketing, such as cultural sensitivity [3], transparency and trust [2] and green individual sentiments [4], but also emphasizing the lifespan of a green marketing strategy, in line with the challenges of the modern world, such as: innovation, big data usage and intellectual property protection. Thus, it was highlighted that consumer loyalty towards a brand is closely related to their perception of the authenticity, notoriety and sustainability of a brand.

3. The importance of education for sustainability, both from the point of view of brand strategies and from the point of view of consumer behavior. This aspect was marked by the interconnection of the concept of luxury fashion with that of sustainability, 2 terms that although seem contradictory, are becoming increasingly integrated from the point of view of responsibility towards the environment, economy, society and culture.

Louis Vuitton – Ethical, Legal and Economic Gaps

The case of Louis Vuitton's use of the Romanian blouse motif without appropriate citation highlighted three major gaps in the key areas of ethical responsibility, legal protection and economic impact.

Ethical concerns

- Lack of recognition of the cultural source: Louis Vuitton has not recognized Romania as the country of origin of the design, which raises doubts about the company's responsibility to respect cultural heritage¹.
- Distortion of cultural meaning: The blouse is a garment with deeply symbolic meaning. When adapted to haute couture without cultural context, the meaning can be changed or diluted².
- Exclusion of local artisans: Ethical sourcing generally involves working with local artisans³. In this case, the Romanian artisans were neither consulted nor paid.

Legal issues

- Lack of copyright protection for traditional designs: Romanian law does not explicitly protect folk designs and allows their commercial use without consequences⁴.

¹ Kassam: "Louis Vuitton accused of cultural appropriation of Romanian blouse"; Dumitrescu , "Romanian Ministry of Culture asks Louis Vuitton to acknowledge inspiration for traditional Sibiu blouse pattern."

² Kassam: "Louis Vuitton accused of cultural appropriation of Romanian blouse"; Dumitrescu , "Romanian Ministry of Culture asks Louis Vuitton to acknowledge inspiration for traditional Sibiu blouse pattern."

³ Perry et al., "Ethics in Fashion."

⁴ World Intellectual Property Organization, "Law no. 8 of 14 March 1996 on Copyright and Related Rights (amended by Law no. 329/2006), Romania".

- Weak enforcement of intellectual property rights: International intellectual property frameworks do not clearly protect collective cultural expressions, making it difficult for communities to defend their heritage⁵.

Economic concerns

- Changes in the market for traditional artisans: Big brands dominate global markets and make it difficult for local artisans to compete.
- Financial disadvantages for artisans: Artisans do not receive any compensation when their creations are used by major brands.

Closing legal gaps in cultural protection

Louis Vuitton's case has highlighted the gaps in legal protection of traditional cultural expressions. The lack of clear intellectual property rights for collective heritage has allowed international brands to commercially exploit their creations without fear of legal consequences. Countries such as Mexico and Peru have developed stronger protection mechanisms, but effective measures have yet to be implemented in Romania and many other countries.

Conclusions

This research highlights the importance of environmental marketing practices in establishing sustainable brands within the concept of circular economy which is a disruptive concept. Findings show that transparency, cultural empathy, and creativity are elements that significantly contribute to consumer trust and loyalty. Economic ethics that stem from the best marketing spirit, which reconstruct culture and geography, are also deemed necessary for effective green marketing activities.

The main objective of this research was to analyze the concrete way in which, within the circular economy, green marketing and, equally, cultural sustainability can contribute to the development of sustainable brand strategies in the current fashion industry.

Thus, through the case study conducted on the use by Louis Vuitton of traditional Romanian motifs without explicit cultural attribution, we highlighted the importance of recognizing cultural heritage in green marketing strategies. Thus, we aimed to emphasize the impact that green marketing strategies have on the positioning of a brand in the context of the circular economy in the fashion industry.

The main objective of the research was to identify effective strategies through which a fashion brand can build a sustainable identity and align consumer perception with the principles of green marketing.

The increasing amount of data and the analytics embedded in the firms provide additional layers of adaptability and effectiveness to green marketing efforts, facilitating up to the minute consumer and risk information. The achievement of the marketplace and international indicators for development will be facilitated by providing businesses with strategic benefits to achieve development in the context of global economy with circular economy ideas and best practices.

In conclusion, green marketing should not be regarded as just another buzz but as a core initiative in the process of developing the market. If companies can formulate their philosophy around the concept of longevity, they will be well positioned to build strong and resilient brands

⁵ World Intellectual Property Organization, "Intellectual property, traditional knowledge and traditional cultural expressions/folklore. A guide for societies in transition".

that will thrive in the circular economy from which economic and environmental benefits will be derived for generations to come.

As per the economics model which considers waste generation minimization and resources optimization, consumer's purchasing power in the circular economy can be defined as the ability to affect the gross demand and gross supply for the sustainable goods and services.

Circular economy has the following relevant characteristics influencing the consumer's purchasing power:

1. Focus on durable and sustainable products - higher expense on durable goods would increase profits over time, thereby discouraging wasteful practices in consumption and enabling consumers to save more in the long run.
2. Changing the perception of ownership – sharing, renting or reusing such equipment as cars are models of the economy that the circular one fosters. There is hence a shift in the purchasing power, as one does not buy a good, but rather pays for the use of a service, which broadens the scope of what can be purchased.
3. Access to refurbished or recycled products - with an increase in demand for second hand, refurbished and other products that are made out of recycled materials, consumers can purchase such goods as low cost sustainable alternatives.
4. Environmental impact is brought to notice - consumers make a decision to purchase from companies which practice sustainability, and this action forces companies to invest in circular models to meet market requirements.
5. What concerns the role of purchasing power and influence on the market with respect to the formation of the circular economy, such kind of company's transformation to sustainable forecast is said to be largely prompted by customer demand for sustainable products. If there is a bigger market for such items, business will invent new goods. As the cycle progresses, it will encourage investment in circular technologies. Those who are centered in circular units will help in decreasing waste and preserving raw materials.

We can conclude that their purchasing power stimulates the development of an ecosystem that supports the circular economy. Purchasing locally made products from recycled or reused materials supports small businesses and reduces your carbon footprint.

The purchasing power of consumers in the circular economy plays an essential role in the transition to a sustainable economic model. Choosing products and services that respect circular principles can profoundly influence business behavior and public policy, accelerating systemic change. The play of green marketing strategies in creating sustainable brands in a circular economy involves an integrated approach that links sustainability values with business objectives. These strategies play a crucial role in building a strong, responsible, and attractive brand for modern consumers interested in the long-term impact of the products and services they choose.

The adoption of ethical marketing practices, transparency and sustainability initiatives are more than trends; they are essential requirements for brands that want to differentiate themselves as responsible market leaders. These principles build consumer trust, support innovation and provide a competitive advantage, strengthening long-term success. Innovation in green marketing is not just a trend, but a necessity to achieve a sustainable competitive advantage. Brands that invest in green practices and green technologies become market leaders, gaining consumer trust and ensuring their long-term relevance [15].

Marketing ethics, transparency and sustainability initiatives are not just trends; they represent a fundamental change in the way producers of goods and services operate. Companies

that adopt these healthy and sustainable principles are better positioned to grow and dominate the relevant market in a world where consumers prioritize responsibility and authenticity. Thus, we can consider that these practices are the basic elements of trust, innovation and resilience – key attributes for success in the modern market.

According to the present study, based on both literature review and case study analysis, the sustainable growth of a fashion line in the context of a circular economy requires the adoption of ecological marketing strategies based on and rooted in cultural values. The case of traditional Romanian symbols used by Louis Vuitton without due credit demonstrates the consequences that such neglect can cause to a brand – in this case, the lack of respect for authenticity, with implications for the ethical strategy. This demonstrates to us that the transition from traditional marketing strategies to sustainable marketing approaches is about more than ideology and concern for the environment, but also a sense of responsibility and protecting cultural identity in an ethical way.

The results of the analysis highlighted that integrating cultural sustainability into green marketing has multiple benefits, on the one hand it improves the ethical perception of brands and, on the other hand, it contributes in a concrete way to strengthening consumer loyalty. Therefore, the results of the analysis demonstrated that green marketing strategies, such as the use of ecological packaging, obtaining sustainable certifications, involvement in educational campaigns and transparency in reporting environmental impact, contribute significantly to increasing consumer awareness and loyalty towards brands.

Additionally, the study highlighted the importance of sustainability education in influencing consumer behavior, suggesting that a successful strategy is not always limited to promoting ecological products, but automatically includes an educational component aimed at subtly changing perceptions and consumption habits.

Through the study conducted, we highlighted the fact that the omission of attribution of cultural elements can have a negative impact on the actual image of the brand, especially among consumers who are aware of ethics and equally of sustainability.

On the other hand, an element that can be essential is that of developing a collaboration with local artisans and explicit recognition of cultural sources that can represent an effective strategy for differentiation in the market and strengthening the authenticity of the brand.

The research also highlighted a pressing need to develop a significant cultural database for the protection of intellectual property of traditional motifs, as well as sustainable partnerships between brands and local communities. These measures could ensure the ethical use of cultural heritage, while aligning green marketing practices with the principles of the circular economy.

The research objective was achieved by identifying and analyzing the main green marketing strategies applicable to the fashion industry, in correlation with consumer perceptions and circular economy trends. The study highlighted how these strategies influence brand positioning and demonstrated that the success of a sustainable brand depends on the authenticity of the message conveyed, transparency in reporting environmental impact and the ability to educate and actively involve consumers.

We note that this paper acknowledges certain limitations in relation to previously published studies. Since we are talking about concepts such as green marketing, big data, cultural sustainability, terms that in terms of communication are part of modern marketing, these topics are currently discussed in a relatively limited framework. Even though, the concepts of green marketing, consumer behavior and marketing positioning are widely discussed in the literature, in

relation to the present paper, these relationships are treated less and leave room for discussions and results based on research carried out and in progress.

In a market increasingly focused on social responsibility and transparent business practices, fashion companies that visibly acknowledge cultural origins and collaborate with local artisans gain both increased credibility and a distinct competitive advantage with consumers and society at large. From what has been discussed, we thus highlight that ethical and transparent integration of cultural elements, community involvement in creation, and strategic use of big data to discern consumer preferences can strengthen trust and loyalty among buyers. Likewise, educating designers and customers, ensuring transparent communication, and pursuing cultural partnerships emerge as key pillars of long-term brand success, placing ethics and sustainability at the heart of the business vision. Therefore, green marketing functions as a solid method for protecting natural resources, supporting cultural values, and ensuring differentiation in an ever-evolving circular economy.

This research makes an important contribution by offering an interdisciplinary perspective on the connection between green marketing and cultural sustainability, highlighting how luxury brands can integrate cultural aspects in an ethical and responsible manner. The critical analysis of current practices in the fashion industry allowed the identification of gaps in the application of cultural sustainability principles and highlighted the importance of transparent and inclusive strategies.

By proposing concrete solutions on a currently deficient basis, such as the development of databases for the protection of traditional motifs and the promotion of partnerships between brands and local communities, the study contributes to the enrichment of the specialized literature. These solutions provide an applicable framework for the development of authentic green marketing, capable of responding to both the requirements of ecological sustainability and those of cultural equity.

The own contribution of this research consists in highlighting the connection between green marketing strategy and consumers' perception of the value of a brand. By integrating factors such as consumer psychology, political economy and sociology, the paper provided an interdisciplinary perspective on sustainability in fashion.

We also proposed an integrated approach that combines both economic and educational strategies to strengthen the impact of green marketing in the industry. Thus, the conclusions obtained can be used as a basis for developing personalized strategies to support fashion brands in the transition to sustainable and responsible business models.

In conclusion, the research objective was achieved by highlighting the link between cultural sustainability and green marketing strategies. The study provided a clear perspective on the impact that the recognition of cultural heritage has on the reputation of brands in the fashion industry, highlighting the importance of an ethical and transparent approach in sustainable marketing.

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