

Balancing Familiarity and Exclusivity: The Impact of Anthropomorphism on Luxury Brand Perceptions

Mayuko Nishii
Aoyama Gakuin University

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Abstract

This study explored how anthropomorphic design elements impact consumer perceptions of and behaviors toward luxury brands. Anthropomorphism creates warmth and familiarity; however, luxury brands rely exclusively on maintaining a premium image. Two studies examined the paradox of balancing these factors. Study 1 found that highly anthropomorphized products were more familiar but less luxurious and were suited to second-line brands. Conversely, less anthropomorphized designs enhanced perceptions of luxury, aligning with first-line brands. Study 2 demonstrated that lower anthropomorphism led to higher purchase intentions and evaluations for both brand lines, emphasizing consumers' expectations of sophistication. These results suggested that luxury brands should carefully calibrate and selectively use anthropomorphic features to attract diverse audiences while preserving the luxury appeal in core lines. These findings offer insights for strategic design and branding in the luxury market.

Keywords: luxury, suitability, anthropomorphism

Track: Product and Brand Management