

# ***Maison Margiela Brand Identity Change and the Embodiment of Brand Culture***

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**Abstract:** In recent years, due to the bad global economic environment caused by the epidemic, many companies are on the verge of bankruptcy, but companies engaged in luxury goods have hardly received too much impact, which is a problem worth studying. Most luxury brands design products that are compelling enough for customers to keep spending. Because every luxury brand has its own long history, special brand style and brand long-term concept. This is crucial for the long-term development of luxury brands. But because of the long history of the luxury market, it is difficult to make some new changes to increase the number of consumers beyond loyal customers. Some brands choose traditional methods, do not carry out large-scale marketing, do not add new customers, choose to continue to sell goods to those loyal customers, and some brands choose to cooperate with other brands to increase awareness and expand the consumer base.

**Keywords:** Maison Margiela, luxury brand, culture

## **1. Introduction**

With the economy's steady growth during the recent centuries. Food and warm clothing aren't the only things that people need in life; after they were basically satisfied with the material level, they began to need a higher level of satisfaction, so in the late 17th century, French King Louis XIV and his Finance Minister Jean-Baptiste Colbert established the Gobelins Tapestry Manufacturing Factory (Manufacture des Gobelins). Bringing together the best designers, craftsmen and workers to create unique mirrors, tapestries, porcelain and more. Highly sought after by people who seek higher-level pursuits. The great majority of individuals in today's culture desire to purchase luxury products for a variety of reasons, including "social status pursuit," "self-reward," and "brand identity." Some people choose to purchase luxuries because they believe they are worthwhile investments because they hold their value. Over the years, various luxury brands have been created every year, and most of them have not been successful in the long term. Most of these bankrupt luxury goods have problems with brand marketing. Some of them are unwilling to do publicity, some are unwilling to advertise, some are of poor quality, and some have no brand history. Others who study luxury marketing generally study brand product content. Some people think that the reason why a brand cannot survive for a long time is only because the quality of its products is not good enough. But I think that if a brand wants to survive in the long term, it needs not only good products, but also good products. It is also necessary to increase visibility and users through good publicity and marketing. This article will study some of

the marketing methods used by "Maison Margiela" since its founding to increase visibility through cross-border cooperation and promotion of brand products and derivative product lines, and show how to maintain a high-end brand for a long time.

## **2. Brand Analysis**

### **2.1. Low-Key in design**

The brand positioning set by the founder of Maison Margiela is for a niche audience. Maison Margiela has successfully found a differentiated track with its distinctive personality and niche positioning than traditional luxury fashion brands.

"Maison Martin Margiela" was founded in 1988 by Belgian fashion designer "Maison Martin Margiela". Its pioneering design concepts made waves in the fashion industry at that time. Throughout his career, he neither gave interviews nor made public appearances, embodying the brand's focus on anonymity and collective craftsmanship. [1]After his departure in 2009, the brand was helmed by a Paris-based design team. In 2014, "John Galliano" was appointed as the creative director, and it was officially renamed "Maison Margiela" in 2015. Under the helm of Galliano, Maison Margiela continues the color concept with transformation and deconstruction as its core, in advanced customization, ready-to-wear and accessories. The foundation launches a series of leather goods, fragrances and objects.

Maison Margiela is a pioneering brand that adopts deconstructive design [2]. It has both men's and women's clothing. It is good at blending the concepts of both genders and grafting a sense of art and mystery to conceptualism. The fashions produced by Margiela are always different, and he constantly thinks outside the box. When short styles were popular, he designed long styles; when wide-shouldered clothes were popular, he designed narrow-shouldered clothes. Margiela loves replicating clothes. He collects clothes from all over the world and retains their charm completely. In subsequent fragrance product designs, designers also used replica. Each replica product has a specific label recording the origin and story of the original garment.

As a pioneer of Anti-Fashion, Martin Margiela hopes to break the public's myths about the brand, so it only uses white labels sewn on the four sides as marks for customers to easily remove. Since 1997, their logo has always appeared together with a group of numbers. The brand added a group of numbers to the blank collar label. The different numbers circled represent 12 different product lines. There are main and branch lines of men's and women's clothing, accessories, shoes and some other products.

The original intention of the brand has not been affected by time or the change of designers. The original intention of their product design is "low-key" and has been maintained to this day. Even the decoration of the brand's physical store uses a simple, almost all-white design. This has accumulated a group of loyal customers for them, and customers who like their design style will always support their products.

### **2.2. Cross-Markets cooperation**

Maintaining the continuity of consumers' attention is the most important aspect for a luxury brand. If a brand fails to have fixed customers, it will not have fixed income. However, as the company expands, various expenses (employee wages, store rent) will also increase, so they are maintaining this group of loyal customers. On the basis of users, some changes must be made to attract more new users. Although they are designed to keep a low profile, if they are low-key in their marketing methods, the sales volume of their products will decrease, and the company will make a lot less money.

The best way to sell products is to increase brand exposure. However, the number of customer groups who buy luxury goods is almost fixed. How can they compete with other larger luxury goods

with longer brand history and greater reputation (eg: Louis Vuitton, Chanel...)? They have made a very successful marketing tool - cross-border cooperation. [3]They collaborated with mobile phone brand giant Samsung to launch a folding screen mobile phone "Galaxy Z Flip 4 Special Edition". This mobile phone has a high exposure in the world because Samsung is one of the most famous mobile phone brands in the world. [4]The mobile phones they launch every year attract the attention of the world because Samsung has about 22.5% market share in the mobile phone market, occupying the world. It ranks first in mobile phone sales and has almost the greatest influence in the mobile phone market. And this is a limited edition customized mobile phone, which must attract customers with high spending power. If it is an ordinary mobile phone, it cannot accurately target the consumer group. This cross-border cooperation has attracted a group of hidden customers with high spending power from the mobile phone market to Maison Margiela. And through Samsung's high-exposure advertising, it can increase Maison Margiela's brand awareness and attract customers from the mobile phone market. In this cooperation with the mobile phone giant "Samsung", Maison Margiela's design team added some design elements while retaining Maison Margiela's traditional brand design to attract young consumer groups. And every element of the fuselage from the inside to the outside fully demonstrates Maison Margiela's pioneering aesthetics and design, conveying the attitude and concept of breaking conventions, deconstructing and reshaping tradition. In this way, the brand's design style is still maintained in cross-border cooperation, which is consistent with the first point of "low-key in design".

### **2.3. Extend the product line, expand the audience, social media popularity**

As a high-end custom fashion brand, if it only has a single clothing production line, it will not be enough to stand out among second-tier luxury brands, and it will be even more difficult for its sales to increase significantly. Maison Margiela needs to find a special point to expand their brand influence. They chose a very special point - developing brand derivative lines. They have developed a variety of new products over the decades, including jewelry, bags, shoes, and more. [5]Among the most successful products are the fragrance product line (untitled) launched in 2010, and the replica fragrance series launched in 2012. Although this series is a derivative line, it maintains the same concept as the main line - simplicity, and each perfume has no bottle cap. In the replica fragrance series, the bottle of each perfume will be marked with the raw materials, origin and period of the perfume. This makes them stand out among a range of luxury goods. Although the quality of their perfumes is not as high as that of professional perfume brands, they often promote it on the Internet and insist on holding "pop-up events" in offline stores. Moreover, due to the special concept of their brand, it has caused a wave of enthusiasm on the Internet, making people. Many young people have also paid attention to this brand, adding many consumer groups.

Although their brand is a luxury product, their perfumes are relatively affordable, and people in the middle class can afford to buy them. They attract customers through affordable perfumes. After customers like this brand, they will buy their main line products and some other branch products. .

From the middle to late 19th century, fashion magazines became popular (Bazaar-1867, Vogue-1892). But in the past ten years, with the advent of the Internet era, online stores and social media accounts of various brands will become more popular. Maison Margiela uses a unique method. Other luxury brands only hold offline activities or online sales, and the activities that attract attention are single. But Maison Margiela uses both. They often hold offline pop-up events, including 7 offline pop-up event stores around the world with the top sunglasses brand Gentle Monster. Online, they will find various influential bloggers or celebrities to post photos and event information on social media to increase brand awareness and attract more customers.

### 3. Conclusion

Martin Margiela, the founder of Maison Margiela, is very rich in creative ideas. His special creative ideas have produced many leading trend items, which has created the foundation for the brand's appeal. The company's design team added innovative changes while retaining their unique brand concept. Their unique design of the brand logo attracts many new customers who value the uniqueness of the brand. Designs that maintain the same style for a long time can make more and more people recognize the luxury brand "Maison Margiela" as they get older, so others can know that users of "Maison Margiela" use high-quality luxury goods, which can satisfy the vanity of customers. Maison Margiela's positioning standards for customers are very accurate. This is the most important point. This not only maintains customer loyalty, but also increases the number of new customers. Their cooperation with different brands, including some clothing co-branding and mobile phone co-branding, has also attracted the love of many young people on social media, and their audience has also increased due to the various products of the brand extension line. As long as a luxury brand has a sufficient number of customers, they can keep the brand operating and surviving through the money these customers use to purchase their branded goods every year. People's desire to buy luxury goods is because the light emitted by luxury goods can show their taste and wealth. When a luxury product has enough popularity and everyone understands the brand, it can satisfy customers' vanity and allow more people to have the desire to buy.

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