

Application of Consumer-to-Community-to-Business (C2C2B) Model in Luxury Marketing

Chih-Yung Wang

Fu Jen Catholic University, Taiwan

Email: 164270@mail.fju.edu.tw

Tzong-Ru Lee

National Chuan Hsin University, Taiwan

Email: trlee@dragon.nchu.edu.tw

Yong Shun Lin

Ling Tung University, Taiwan

Email: yongshun10@gmail.com

Zih-Ting Lin

National Yang Ming Chiao Tung University

Email: cheers0717@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

With the rise of social media, consumers have the ability to not only purchase goods but also influence those around them. As a result, luxury businesses are increasingly targeting community influencers through various collaborative approaches to increase brand awareness and sales. This study examines the application of the consumer-to-community-to-business (C2C2B) model in luxury marketing and identifies six critical factors that influence consumer purchasing decisions: "message truthfulness," "message with own ideas," "message completeness," "message accuracy," "related experience with products," and "popularity." Additionally, businesses select community influencers based on five crucial factors: "popularity," "long-term interaction," "number of followers," "frequent interaction," and "familiarity." Our findings suggest that when collaborating with community influencers, companies should carefully consider the content of the information provided by influencers, as well as their popularity and engagement with consumers.

Furthermore, partnering with influencers who have experience using related products can enhance the effectiveness of the collaboration.

Keywords: Consumer-to-community-to-business model, C2C2B model, Community influencer, Opinion leaders, Luxury marketing, Grey relational analysis

INTRODUCTION

In today's consumer landscape, individuals are increasingly willing to spend more on premium indulgences to satisfy their desires and needs (Yeoman & McMahon-Beattie, 2006). This trend is especially evident among middle-class consumers, who are allocating a larger portion of their budget to luxuries that are recognizable, affordable, and embody a high-quality brand image that reflects their personal taste (Silverstein et al., 2008). These new goodies are relatively affordable, recognizable, with good brand image of high quality and highlight the user's taste. With the growth of the internet and social media, the spread of information is more rapid and diverse. The internet and social media have facilitated the spread of information, providing a diverse range of content that can influence consumer purchase decisions in the fashion industry (Gomes et al., 2022). Brands are increasingly drawn to social media influencer marketing as a novel communication channel for reaching and influencing their target customers (Bhattacharya, 2023). Brands are now partnering with bloggers and social media influencers to share their experiences and products on popular social media platforms, such as Instagram and Facebook (Paintsil & Kim, 2022; Wittig et al., 2017). Influencing consumer experiences and brand communities through customer engagement (Lim et al., 2022). Consumer engagement with influencers can influence their attitudes, awareness, perception of credibility, loyalty, purchase intentions, relationships, responses, and trust towards brands (Bastrygina & Lim, 2023). Consequently, social media has become an essential channel for influencing brand perceptions and consumption behavior (Marzocchi et al., 2013).

The emergence of the C2C2B business model, as proposed by Lee and Chien (2018) underscores the significant influence of bloggers and opinion leaders in promoting merchandise, fostering consumer communities, and leveraging social media platforms for effective influence. Through collaborations with companies, these social influencers act as intermediaries, facilitating transactions and conveying brand messages to the community. In response to the dynamic nature of consumer interactions with brands and content creators, companies are compelled to reassess their communication and branding strategies to remain competitive (Munnukka et al., 2015). This study aims to investigate the critical factors associated with social influencers that shape consumer purchasing behavior in the luxury marketing context. By adopting the C2C2B business

model as a conceptual framework, this research aims to identify and examine the key elements that drive the effectiveness of social influencers.

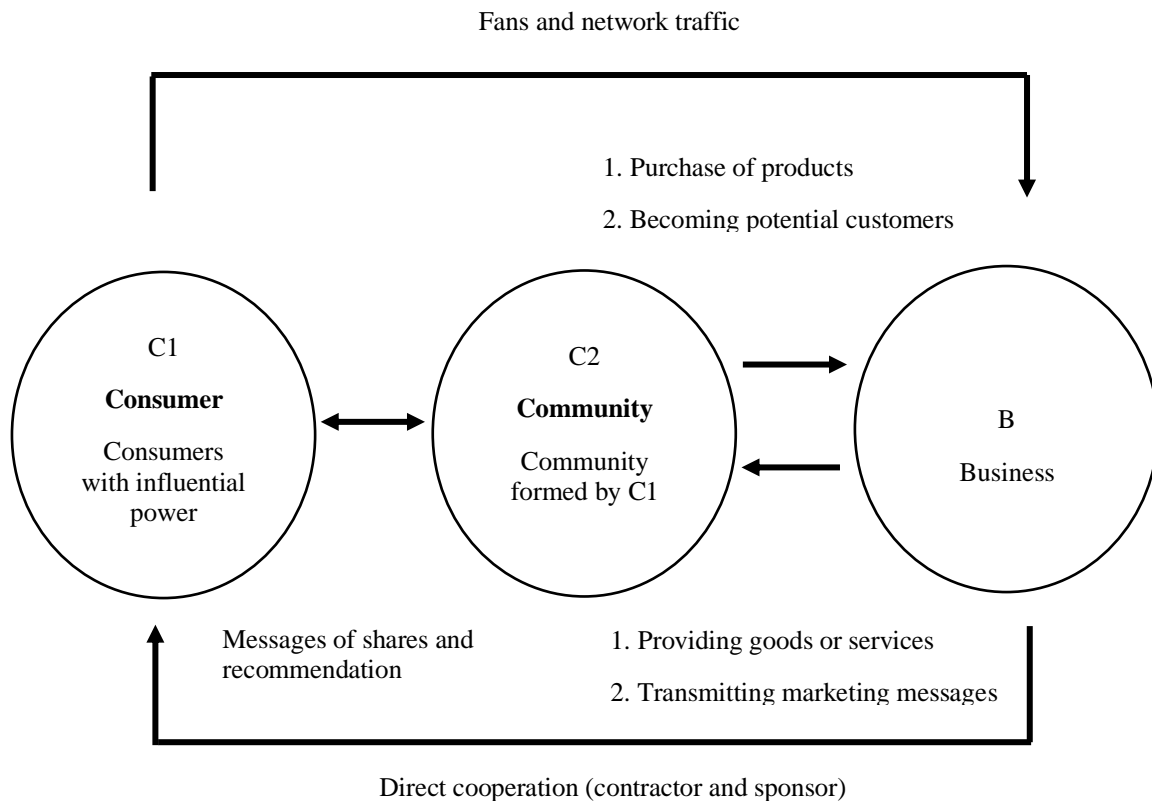
LITERATURE REVIEW

Luxury

Luxury encompasses indulgence, extravagance, and unrestrained consumption (Nueno & Quelch, 1998). It is characterized by features such as light, splendor, and grandeur (Kapferer, 2017). Dubois et al. (2005) emphasize that luxury goods belong to a specific tier of products known for their extravagance, exquisite nature, and high visibility. Phau and Prendergast (2000) highlight the importance of quality in exquisite goods, while Dubois et al. (2005) argue that premium goods not only cater to personal taste but also fulfill sensory needs and provide pleasure. Interestingly, Silverstein et al. (2008) suggest that certain luxury products, while not exorbitantly priced, offer better consumer experiences than their counterparts in the same category. Truong et al. (2009) reveal that consumers perceive luxury brands to possess both prestige and a closer price proximity to mid-range items. In contrast, spending on luxuries is driven by personal sentiments, evoking emotions and aspirations for a better life, while price, functionality, and convenience dominate considerations in the traditional market (Silverstein et al., 2008). Generally, consumers do not feel a strong connection with the pairing of luxury brands and traditional celebrities (Song & Kim, 2020). However, influencers can establish a sense of closeness and maintain their legitimacy as positive role models by conspicuously displaying ethical practices in their luxury consumption and lifestyle (Leban et al., 2021), thereby increasing willingness to purchase luxury goods (Lee & Watkins, 2016).

C2C2B Model (Consumer-to-Community-to-Business)

Lee and Chien (2018) introduced the C2C2B new business model (Figure 1) and emphasized the centrality of the consumer in business. C1 (Consumer) represents an influential individual consumer, while C2 (Community) denotes a community formed by those who follow this influential person. B (Business) signifies a business entity. The C2C2B model leverages the influence of C1 to cultivate a community, C2, thereby amplifying the voice of C1, who subsequently engages in transactions with businesses to enhance their sales performance. The C2C2B model finds extensive applications, such as group buying, where an individual consumer (C1) collaborates with friends or like-minded consumers to form a group (C2), facilitating the procurement of goods or services from a business (B) (Shehory & Kraus, 1996).

Figure 1. *Consumer-to-Community-to-Business (C2C2B) model*

Source: Lee and Chien (2018)

The C2C2B concept demonstrates the ability to enhance transaction volume and velocity for brands by leveraging communities formed by online celebrities and opinion leaders. In the luxury market, the consumption of luxury goods is motivated by personal emotions and the pursuit of elevated enjoyment, as well as high-quality products or services at a reasonable cost (Silverstein et al., 2008). This study posits that the C2C2B model is well-suited for luxury marketing, as it enables collaboration among consumers, businesses, and community influencers to promote products effectively.

Community Influencers

The influence of "market experts" and "opinion leaders" among consumers has been widely recognized (Rogers et al., 2014). Their opinions play a crucial role in shaping consumer purchasing decisions and influencing marketing strategies (Engel et al., 1969; Flynn et al., 1996). These influential individuals actively seek product information and share their opinions to influence the attitudes and behaviors of others (Venkatraman, 1989). Opinion leaders are referred to as "influencers," "hubs" (Goldenberg et al., 2009; Watts et al., 2007) and "micro-celebrities" (Khamis et al., 2017), who connect with their followers through social media platforms (Hsu et al.,

2013). In this study, influential consumers are defined as "community influencers," encompassing opinion leaders, experts, celebrities, micro-celebrities, early adopters of products, product enthusiasts, and other micro-influencers within online communities (Lin et al., 2018).

Word-of-mouth recommendations within a community are more influential when there is a strong social connection between the message source and the receiver (Brown & Reingen, 1987). Word-of-mouth strengthens the bandwagon effect, thereby driving purchase intentions (Nadroo et al., 2024). The homogeneity of demographic variables also has a significant impact on consumer decisions (Gilly et al., 1998). The credibility of the communicator significantly affects consumers' purchase intentions (Goldsmith et al., 2000; Hsu et al., 2013; Lu et al., 2014; Ohanian, 1990). However Zhu and Tan (2007) demonstrated that for high-involvement products, bloggers with low expertise and high advertising intent can have negative effects.

The model of collaboration between enterprises and opinion leaders shares similarities with the traditional "celebrity endorsement" model (Kamins & Gupta, 1994). The consistency and appropriate association between the product and the community influencer are vital factors in generating consumer purchase intent (Choi & Rifon, 2012; Khamis et al., 2017). The qualities of influencer can enhance brand engagement, credibility, and brand assets (Teresa Borges-Tiago et al., 2023). These considerations are important for companies when selecting partners (Erdogan et al., 2001; Lin et al., 2018).

Related Dimensions of Community Influencers

In order to capture the contextual aspects of consumers being recommended products by community influencers and address businesses' considerations in selecting suitable collaborators, this study has incorporated the following dimensions of community influencers:

■ Community influencers credibility

The credibility of the information source plays a crucial role in shaping consumer attitudes and behaviours (Goldsmith et al., 2000). Credibility can be assessed based on factors such as reliability, honesty, dependability, sincerity, trustworthiness (Ohanian, 1990), and even controversy (Erdogan et al., 2001). Therefore, in this study, measures such as reliability, honesty, sincerity, controversy, and endorsement experience are employed to assess credibility. Influencer credibility affects people's attitudes toward the influencer, thereby influencing their attitudes toward endorsed products and even purchase intentions (Ooi et al., 2023).

■ Community influencers professionalism

The professionalism of community influencers is evaluated based on their

expertise, knowledge, and experience in the field (Erdogan et al., 2001; Goldsmith et al., 2000; Lin et al., 2018; Ohanian, 1990). Consequently, measures such as expert status, extensive knowledge, and experience are employed in this study to assess the professionalism of community influencers.

■ **Community influencers attraction**

The physical attractiveness of individuals is often the initial impression made on consumers and serves as a fundamental consideration for companies when selecting endorsers (Bertrandias & Goldsmith, 2006; Kapferer, 2017; Lin et al., 2018; SanMiguel & Sádaba, 2018). Hence, in this study, the dimension related to appearance is classified as attractiveness, fashion, beauty, elegance, and sensuality (Ohanian, 1990).

■ **Community influencers image**

Celebrities serve as powerful symbols, effectively conveying the symbolism of their image to the products they endorse through recommendations and endorsements (Choi & Rifon, 2012). Silverstein et al. (2008) argued that the modern luxury consumer values taste and experiential value. Therefore, in this study, the image dimension comprises elements such as passion, rationality, perceptibility, frugality, extravagance, youth, and maturity (Choi & Rifon, 2012; Kang, 2010).

■ **Community influencer popularity**

To reach a larger audience, companies should collaborate with opinion leaders who possess a substantial number of followers (Erdogan et al., 2001; Lin et al., 2018; Uzunoğlu & Misci Kip, 2014). Hence, the number of followers is considered as an important factor in this study.

■ **Community influencers and consumers' social connection**

The influence of a message on consumer decisions is heightened when there is a strong social connection between the message source and the receiver (Brown & Reingen, 1987). A social connection is characterized by a close relationship between the community influencer and the consumer, involving frequent interaction and long-term engagement (Zhu et al., 2016).

■ **Community influencer message quality**

The quality of the message plays a significant role in influencing the recipient's willingness to make a purchase (Kang, 2010; Meng & Wei, 2015). In this study, we define message quality to include factors such as completeness, truthfulness, accuracy, originality, immediacy, consistency, and clarity of promotional messages.

■ **Consistency between community influencers and consumers**

Homogeneity refers to the degree of similarity between two individuals. (Brown & Reingen, 1987). A higher level of homogeneity between the message source and recipient enhances its persuasive impact (Choi & Rifon, 2012; Meng & Wei, 2015). In this study, factors such as age, gender, occupation, preferences, interests, and lifestyles

are utilized to assess the similarities between consumers and opinion leaders.

■ **Community influencers and brand adaptability**

The influence of an endorser's image on consumers is heightened when it aligns with the image of the recommended brand or product. The adaptability of community influencers to the brand is assessed based on their consistency, relevance, and appropriateness with respect to the brand image (Choi & Rifon, 2012; Erdogan et al., 2001; Kamins & Gupta, 1994; Till & Busler, 2000).

METHODOLOGY

Participants

This study seeks to examine the key factors through which community influencers influence consumers' purchase intentions in the context of luxury marketing, as well as the criteria guiding business operators' selection of community influencers. The sample for this study was divided into two groups: consumers and companies. Consumer questionnaires were distributed through social media platforms, namely Facebook and the Professional Technology Temple (PTT), which is Taiwan's largest online bulletin board system. To ensure the credibility of the survey, input was also sought from business professionals with industry experience and foresight for the corporate section. A total of 578 valid questionnaires were collected from consumers, while 100 valid questionnaires were collected from businesses.

Questionnaire Question Items

The questionnaire utilized in this study was developed based on a comprehensive review of relevant literature, incorporating nine dimensions identified through the review process. Grey relational analysis was employed to determine the key factors that influence consumers' willingness to purchase in the context of luxury marketing through community influencers, as well as the critical factors considered by companies when selecting their partners. Additionally, a comparative analysis was conducted to examine the differences between consumers and companies. The questionnaire consisted of 44 items measured on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from "very unimportant" to "very important." Participants were instructed to indicate their level of agreement or importance on a scale of 1 to 5. Higher scores reflected a greater degree of importance assigned to the influencing factors presented in the questionnaire, while lower scores indicated the opposite.

Grey Relational Analysis

In this study, data analytics are conducted using grey relational analysis (GRA). GRA, initially proposed by Julong (1989), serves as an "impact measurement" model

that assesses the degree of association between factors by analyzing the similarities or dissimilarities of trends among the factors. The primary objective of GRA is to determine the grey relational ranking, which helps in identifying the strengths and weaknesses of the factors and facilitates decision-making by ranking them accordingly. GRA involves the following three steps:

■ Obtain the grey relational coefficient.

The grey relational coefficient (γ) is:

$$\gamma[\mathbf{x}_0(\mathbf{k}), \mathbf{x}_i(\mathbf{k})] = \gamma_{0i}(\mathbf{k}) = \frac{\Delta_{\min} + \zeta \Delta_{\max}}{\Delta_{0i}(\mathbf{k}) + \zeta \Delta_{\max}} \quad \text{Eq. (1)}$$

$$i = 1 \dots m; k = 1 \dots n$$

$\mathbf{x}_0(k)$: The reference value for question k ; $\mathbf{x}_i(k)$: The comparative value for question k of sample i .

$\Delta_{0i}(k) = \|\mathbf{x}_0(k) - \mathbf{x}_i(k)\|$: The absolute value of the difference between $\mathbf{x}_0(k)$ and $\mathbf{x}_i(k)$ is the difference sequence.

Min difference:

$$\Delta_{\min} = \forall_{j \in i} \min. \forall_k \min. \|\mathbf{x}_0(k) - \mathbf{x}_j(k)\| \quad \text{Eq. (2)}$$

Max difference:

$$\Delta_{\max} = \forall_{j \in i} \max. \forall_k \max. \|\mathbf{x}_0(k) - \mathbf{x}_j(k)\| \quad \text{Eq. (3)}$$

ζ : distinguishing coefficient, $\zeta \in [0, 1]$. The ζ value is associated with the resolution of the grey relational coefficient without prejudice to the order of the grey relational degree, it is taken as 0.5 in this study.

■ Find the grey relational value

Once the grey relational coefficient is determined, the grey relational value can be found according to the following formula:

$$\Gamma(\mathbf{x}_0, \mathbf{x}_i) = \Gamma_{0i} = \sum_{k=1}^n \beta_k \gamma(\mathbf{x}_0(\mathbf{k}), \mathbf{x}_i(\mathbf{k})) \quad i = 1 \dots m \quad \text{Eq. (4)}$$

Where, β_k represents the weighted value of each factor, however, the average of the grey relational coefficients is usually taken for the calculation of the grey relations, so $\beta_k = \frac{1}{n}$. The grey relational value is:

$$\Gamma(x_0, x_i) = \Gamma_{0i} = \frac{1}{n} \sum_{k=1}^n \gamma(x_0(k), x_i(k)) \quad i = 1 \dots m \quad \text{Eq. (5)}$$

■ Grey relational ranking

The grey relational degree serves as a measure of the association level between two sequences, where a higher ranking indicates a more influential key factor. To analyze the grey relations of each comparative sequence with the same reference sequence, they are sorted based on their magnitudes. Where $\Gamma(x_0, x_i) \geq \Gamma(x_0, x_j)$, it indicates that the degree of association between x_i to x_0 is greater than that between x_j to x_0 , and the order of association can be expressed as $x_i > x_j$. Since there may be multiple factors to analyze, this study selects three to six factors for the overall questions, ensuring that the number of critical factors does not exceed half of all the questions.

DISCUSSION

Consumer Questionnaire Analysis

The consumer questionnaires were distributed on popular social media platforms including Facebook and PTT (Taiwan's largest online forum). A total of 606 questionnaires were collected from general consumers, out of which 578 valid responses were considered after removing incomplete ones. Most respondents were students and office workers. To examine the key factors influencing consumers' purchase intentions in luxury marketing through community influencers, the analysis was conducted on a subset of 441 samples who reported having purchased luxury goods based on recommendations from community influencers.

Table 1 presents the results of the grey relational analysis (GRA), while the grey relation levels are visualized by lines in Figure 2. The dispersion of the grey relation levels on the lines is divided into 12 groups. The first group corresponds to the factor "Product information provided by community influencers is true". The second group includes factors such as "Product information provided by the community influencers has their own ideas", "Community influencers have relevant product experience", "Product information provided by the community influencer is complete", "Product information provided by community influencers is accurate ($\Gamma=0.80746$)", and the minimum factor "Community influencers are good". In the GRA analysis, three to six key factors were identified, and the number of critical factors did not exceed half of all the questions. Hence, we consider the above-mentioned six items as our factors.

Table 1. *GRA of All Questions in the Consumer Questionnaire*

Question item	Grey Relational Value	Grey Relational Group	Key Factor
X7.2 Product information provided by community influencers is true (Community influencer message quality)	0.85656	1	O*
X7.4 Product information provided by the community influencers has their own ideas (Community influencer message quality)	0.82624		O
X2.3 Community influencers have relevant product experience (Community influencers professionalism)	0.81810		O
X7.1 Product information provided by the community influencer is complete (Community influencer message quality)	0.81259	2	O
X7.3 Product information provided by community influencers is accurate (Community influencer message quality)	0.80746		O
X5.3 Community influencers are good (Community influencer popularity)	0.79894		O
X2.4 The community influencers are the user of the new luxury (Community influencers professionalism)	0.78846		X**
X7.6 Product information provided by the community influencers is consistent (Community influencer message quality)	0.74321	3	X
X1.2 Community influencers are honest (Community influencers credibility)	0.70799		X
X5.2 Community influencers are familiar to me (Community influencer popularity)	0.70776		X
X7.7 The message provided by the community influencers has a clear promotional message (Community influencer message quality)	0.70580	4	X
X4.2 The image of community influencers is rational	0.69947		X

Question item	Grey Relational Value	Grey Relational Group	Key Factor
X2.2 Community influencers have extensive knowledge of new luxury (Community influencers professionalism)	0.69736		X
X7.5 Product information provided by community influencers is instant (Community influencer message quality)	0.69705		X
X1.1 Community influencers are reliable (Community influencers credibility)	0.69359		X
X1.3 Community influencers are sincere (Community influencers credibility)	0.68092		X
X1.4 Community influencers are controversial (Community influencers credibility)	0.67835	5	X
X1.5 Community influencers have rich recommendation experience in the past (Community influencers credibility)	0.67820		X
X9.3 Community influencer image and brand image are appropriate (Community influencers and brand adaptability)	0.65843	6	X
X2.1 Community influencers are experts in new luxury (Community influencers professionalism)	0.65362		X
X3.2 The appearance of community influencers is fashionable (Community influencers attraction)	0.63748		X
X8.5 Community influencers have similar products like me (Consistency between community influencers and consumers)	0.63140		X
X9.2 Community influencer image is related to brand image (Community influencers and brand adaptability)	0.62740	7	X
X5.1 Community influencers are followed by many people (Community influencer popularity)	0.62443		X
X4.1 The image of community influencers is passionate (Community influencers image)	0.62390		X

Question item	Grey Relational Value	Grey Relational Group	Key Factor
X9.1 The image of the community influencers is consistent with the brand image (Community influencers and brand adaptability)	0.61801		X
X3.4 Community influencers are elegant in appearance (Community influencers attraction)	0.59721		X
X3.1 The appearance of community influencers is attractive (Community influencers attraction)	0.59472		X
X8.6 Community influencers have similar interests to me (Consistency between community influencers and consumers)	0.59114	8	X
X6.3 Community influencers and consumers have long-term interactions (Community influencers and consumers' social connection)	0.58024		X
X4.7 The image of community influencers is mature (Community influencers image)	0.57707		X
X6.2 Community influencers interact with me (Community influencers and consumers' social connection)	0.56463		X
X3.3 The handsome/beautiful appearance of community influencers (Community influencers attraction)	0.56101	9	X
X8.7 Community influencers have a similar life style to me (Consistency between community influencers and consumers)	0.55642		X
X4.3 The image of community influencers is perceptual (Community influencers image)	0.54555		X
X4.6 The image of community influencers is young (Community influencers image)	0.54359		X
X8.1 The age of community influencers is similar to mine (Consistency between community influencers and consumers)	0.54180	10	X
X8.2 The gender of the community influencers matches mine (Consistency between community influencers and consumers)	0.53625		X

Question item	Grey Relational Value	Grey Relational Group	Key Factor
X4.4 The image of community influencers is frugal (Community influencers image)	0.51689		X
X3.5 The appearance of community influencers is sexy (Community influencers attraction)	0.49841		X
X6.1 Community influencers have a close relationship with me (Community influencers and consumers' social connection)	0.48619	11	X
X4.5 The image of community influencers is extravagant (Community influencers image)	0.48046		X
X8.4 The education level of community influencers is similar to mine (Consistency between community influencers and consumers)	0.47552		X
X8.3 The career of a community influencer is similar to mine (Consistency between community influencers and consumers)	0.44049	12	X

* O: means the question is a key factor affecting consumers; **X: denotes a non-key factor. In parentheses is denoted the item's dimension.

Figure 2 Line graph of GRA of all questions in the consumer questionnaire



Corporate Questionnaire Analysis

The corporate questionnaire was specifically designed to gather insights from professionals in the corporate sector. Out of the 100 valid questionnaires received, most companies represented were involved in the apparel and wearable, leather and bag accessories, and electronic devices industries. Sixty-nine respondents reported having previous experience working with community influencers. Furthermore, over half of the respondents agreed that partnering with community influencers could positively impact their business turnover, attract new customers, and increase brand awareness. Additionally, 90% of the respondents expressed their intention to continue collaborating with community influencers in the future.

Table 2 presents the results of the grey relational analysis (GRA), while the grey relation levels are depicted using lines in Figure 3. The dispersion of the grey relation levels on the lines is divided into 12 groups. The first group consists of the factor "Community influencers are good". The second group includes factors such as "Community influencers and consumers have long-term interactions", "Community influencers are followed by many people", and "Community influencers are familiar to consumers". These five factors were identified as key factors in this study.

Table 2 *GRA of All Questions in the Corporate Questionnaire*

Question item	Grey Relational Value	Grey Relational Group	Key Factor
X5.3 Community influencers make consumers feel good (Community influencer popularity)	0.85024	1	O*
X6.3 Community influencers and consumers have long-term interactions (Community influencers and consumers' social connection)	0.82705		O
X5.1 Community influencers are followed by many people (Community influencer popularity)	0.82609	2	O
X5.2 Community influencers are familiar to consumers (Community influencer popularity)	0.82367		O
X6.2 Community influencers and consumers often interact (Community influencers and consumers' social connection)	0.79821	3	O
X9.1 The image of the community influencers is consistent with the brand image (Community influencers and brand adaptability)	0.79406		X**
X9.3 Community influencer image and brand image are appropriate (Community influencers and brand adaptability)	0.79227	4	X
X7.2 Product information provided to consumers is true (Community influencer message quality)	0.78986		X
X1.4 Community influencers are controversial (Community influencers credibility)	0.77585		X
X1.2 Community influencers are honest (Community influencers credibility)	0.76522	5	X
X9.2 Community influencer image is related to brand image (Community influencers and brand adaptability)	0.75604		X

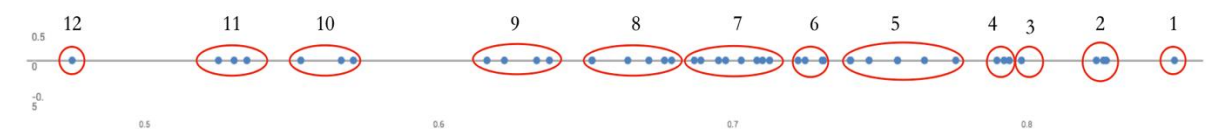
Question item	Grey Relational Value	Grey Relational Group	Key Factor
X7.1 Product information provided to consumers is complete (Community influencer message quality)	0.75604		X
X7.3 Product information provided to consumers is accurate (Community influencer message quality)	0.74638		X
X3.2 The appearance of community influencers is fashionable (Community influencers attraction)	0.74010		X
X7.6 When working with multiple community influencers, the product information provided to consumers is consistent (Community influencer message quality)	0.73996		X
X7.7 Provide consumers with clear promotional messages (Community influencer message quality)	0.73092		X
X1.3 Community influencers are sincere (Community influencers credibility)	0.73043	6	X
X1.1 Community influencers are credible (Community influencers credibility)	0.72464		X
X7.4 Product information provided to consumers has the ideas of community influencers (Community influencer message quality)	0.72222		X
X3.4 Community influencers are elegant in appearance (Community influencers attraction)	0.71256		X
X4.1 The image of community influencers is passionate (Community influencers image)	0.71014		X
X8.5 Community influencers and target consumers have similar preferences (Consistency between community influencers and consumers)	0.70821	7	X
X3.1 The appearance of community influencers is attractive (Community influencers attraction)	0.70290		X
X2.2 Community influencers have extensive knowledge of new products (Community influencers professionalism)	0.69758		X
X8.6 Community influencers and target consumers have similar interests (Consistency	0.69517		X

Question item	Grey Relational Value	Grey Relational Group	Key Factor
between community influencers and consumers)			
X2.3 Community influencers have relevant product experience (Community influencers professionalism)	0.68916		X
X2.1 Community influencers are experts in this new luxury (Community influencers professionalism)	0.68696		X
X6.1 Community influencers have a close relationship with consumers (Community influencers and consumers' social connection)	0.67923		X
X8.1 The age of the community influencer is similar to the target consumer (Consistency between community influencers and consumers)	0.67681		X
X1.5 The past recommendation experience of community influencers is rich(Community influencers credibility)	0.67150		X
X2.4 Community influencers are the user of the new luxury (Community influencers professionalism)	0.66432	8	X
X7.5 Product information provided to consumers is instant (Community influencer message quality)	0.65217		X
X8.7 Community influencers and target consumers have similar lifestyles (Consistency between community influencers and consumers)	0.65217		X
X3.3 Community influencers look handsome/beautiful (Community influencers attraction)	0.63768		X
X4.3 The image of community influencers is perceptual (Community influencers image)	0.63333		X
X4.2 The image of community influencers is rational (Community influencers image)	0.62236	9	X
X8.2 The gender of the community influencers is consistent with the target consumer (Consistency between community influencers and consumers)	0.61643		X
X4.6 The image of community influencers is young (Community influencers image)	0.57101	10	X

Question item	Grey Relational Value	Grey Relational Group	Key Factor
X4.7 The image of community influencers is mature (Community influencers image)	0.56687		X
X8.3 Community influencers have similar occupations to target consumers (Consistency between community influencers and consumers)	0.55314		X
X4.5 The image of community influencers is luxurious (Community influencers image)	0.53478		X
X3.5 The appearance of community influencers is sexy (Community influencers attraction)	0.53043	11	X
X8.4 The educational level of the community influencers is similar to the target consumer (Consistency between community influencers and consumers)	0.52512		X
X4.4 The image of community influencers is frugal (Community influencers image)	0.47536	12	X

* O: means the question is a key factor affecting consumers; **X: denotes a non-key factor. In parentheses is denoted the dimension of the item.

Figure 3. Line Graph of GRA of All Question Items in the Corporate Questionnaire



Discussion of Consumer and Corporate Questionnaire Results

The discrepancies in the key factors valued by consumers and companies in the application of the C2C2B model to luxury marketing are presented in Table 3. Among the critical factors that are important to both consumers and businesses, "X5.3 Community influencers make consumers feel good" is the only factor shared by both parties.

Consumers primarily focus on the personal enjoyment and pleasure that luxury items can provide. The more attractive and positive the appearance and behaviour of a community influencer, the more likely they are to be recommended for luxury products. Selecting likable community influencers to avoid negative marketing outcomes is a crucial factor that significantly influences a company's decision on whom to collaborate

with.

Key factors that are important to consumers but not to businesses include: "X7.2 Product information provided by community influencers is true," "X7.4 Product information provided by the community influencers has their own ideas," "X7.1 Product information provided by the community influencer is complete," and "X7.3 Product information provided by community influencers is accurate." As luxury goods tend to be more expensive, consumers may rely on information shared by community influencers to make informed purchase decisions. Community influencers express their thoughts and recommendations, which consumers are more inclined to act upon. Therefore, companies should be cautious about the messages conveyed by community influencers to consumers to avoid situations where consumers perceive the information as inaccurate, incomplete, or formulaic, which may deter them from making a purchase. "X2.3 Community influencers have relevant product experience" is one of the factors that significantly influences consumer purchasing decisions. A community influencer with relevant experience demonstrates knowledge and professionalism about the recommended luxury products, offering compelling purchasing advice based on real-world examples to sway consumer decisions.

Key factors that are important to businesses but not to consumers include: "X6.3 Community influencers and consumers have long-term interactions," "X6.2 Community influencers and consumers often interact," "X5.1 Community influencers are followed by many people," and "X5.2 Community influencers are familiar to consumers." This suggests that companies prefer to collaborate with community influencers who have established and frequent interactions with consumers to ensure that their followers are genuine fans. Companies consider this as a crucial factor that makes consumers more susceptible to making purchases based on community influencers' recommendations. Partnering with community influencers who have a large following and are generally familiar to consumers is a direct indication that enterprises aim to maximize their exposure to customers and extend their brand messages to a broader audience.

Table 3 *Comparison of Critical Factors in the Overall Question Items*

Rank	Consumer	Business
1	X7.2 Product information provided by community influencers is true	X5.3 Community influencers make consumers feel good
2	X7.4 Product information provided by the community influencers has their own ideas	X6.3 Community influencers and consumers have long-term interactions
3	X2.3 Community influencers have relevant product experience	X5.1 Community influencers are followed by many people
4	X7.1 Product information provided by the community influencer is complete	X5.2 Community influencers are familiar to consumers
5	X7.3 Product information provided by community influencers is accurate	X6.2 Community influencers and consumers often interact
6	X5.3 Community influencers are good	

CONCLUSION

This study contributes to understanding the impact of community influencers on luxury item sales and corporate partnerships from the perspectives of consumers and businesses. It employs the C2C2B model to analyze how community influencers influence consumer purchasing decisions and how businesses can collaborate with influencers to achieve favorable marketing outcomes.

The findings of this study contribute to the literature by highlighting the importance of personal characteristics and attributes of community influencers in shaping consumer purchasing decisions. Moreover, it underscores the importance of aligning the influencer's image with the brand to ensure effective marketing communication.

This study suggests practical implications for businesses aiming to collaborate with community influencers. It emphasizes the importance of selecting influencers based on factors such as honesty, reliability, and relevance to the target audience. Moreover, it recommends strategies for companies to encourage influencers to share comprehensive brand information and to align their messaging with consumer preferences, thereby enhancing the effectiveness of influencer partnerships.

One limitation of this study is that it focuses primarily on the perspectives of consumers and businesses, potentially overlooking other stakeholders' viewpoints. Additionally, the study may not account for all possible factors influencing consumer

purchasing decisions and the effectiveness of corporate partnerships with community influencers.

Future research could explore the perspectives of other stakeholders, such as community influencers and regulatory bodies, to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the dynamics of influencer marketing. Additionally, further investigation could delve into the long-term effects of such partnerships on brand equity and consumer loyalty.

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Dr. Chih-Yung Wang (Corresponding author) is an Associate Professor at the department of Finance and International Business at Fu Jen Catholic University. He received his Ph.D. degree and MBA degree from the Department of Business Administration at National Sun-Yat-Sen University. His areas of interest include Fintech, Corporate governance, Financial Analysis, and Sports Management.

Prof. Tzong-Ru (Jiun-Shen) Lee is a professor at the Department of Marketing, National Chung Hsing University, Taiwan R.O.C. His research interests include sustainability, carbon business model, supply chain, agriculture innovation, internet marketing and e-commerce, logistics, technology and innovation, etc.. He serves as the International Committee General Convener of CIBED, a Fullbright Visiting Professor to the USA, a Fellow of IAAS, an international adviser for Small Businesses of EBRD, and a conference lecturer of Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC). He has published 6 books and around 200 articles in domestic and international journals. He is also the editor-in-chief of IJAITG.

Dr. Yong-Shun Lin is an Associate Professor in the Department of International Business at Ling Tung University, Taiwan. He holds a Ph.D. in Industrial Education and Technology from National Changhua University of Education. His research interests primarily focus on vocational and technical education, human resource management, innovation management, education and training, and statistics.

Ms. Zih-Ting Lin holds a Master's degree from the Institute of Business and Management at National Yang Ming Chiao Tung University.