This is the Author's Accepted Manuscript for Bethan Alexander and Luis Ortega Contreras (2016) "Inter-industry creative collaborations incorporating luxury fashion brands", Journal of Fashion Marketing and Management, Vol. 20 Issue 3 pp. 254 - 275 published by Emerald Insight and available from: http://dx.doi.org/10.1108/JFMM-09-2015-0075

Abstract

Purpose

This paper conceives the concept of inter-industry creative collaboration; a unique kind of cooperation between business partners from diverse industries. It investigates the motivations that encourage their creation and identifies a method to evaluate consumers' attitudes towards this kind of partnership. The study analyses consumer-based brand equity and links them to inter-industry creative collaborations within the luxury fashion industry.

Design/methodology/approach

Research was conducted using a comparative case design, which was qualitative in nature. Four cases were selected purposively. The data was obtained using semi-structured interviews with industry informants and consumer focus groups. Transcripts were thematically analysed according to common categories identified in the literature to enable cross-case conclusions to be drawn.

Findings

The research proposes the existence of a direct relationship between the consumer-based brand equity effects and consumers' attitudes towards inter-industry creative collaborations. This research not only proves the existence of the stated relationship but also generates a theoretical framework that specifically analyses inter-industry creative collaboration involving luxury fashion brands.

Research limitations/implications

The usage of convenience sampling limited consumer participants to individuals who considered themselves luxury fashion consumers. In addition, the findings are limited to London, UK and cannot be generalised outside the examined cases. That said, the research provides a useful starting point for further empirical research to test the validity and reliability of the model outside of the stated cases.

Practical implications

The proposed theoretical framework serves as a practical guide for luxury managers to assess the planning and execution of inter-industry creative collaborations conducted by their brands.

Originality/value

The research makes a contribution to brand management literature by creating a connection between four topics of academic research: motivations of inter-industry creative collaborations; consumer-based brand equity; consumers' attitudes towards inter-industry creative collaborations; and the creative and emotional elements of luxury fashion.

Introduction

Collaboration scholarly research is not new. An Emerald search on "Collaborations and alliances" alone reveals 8,969 search results with some preliminary seminal contributions to the theories of cooperation and partnership established by Contractor and Lorange (1988), Buckley and Casson (1988, cited in Todeva and Knoke, 2005) and Blackett and Boad (1999). International management literature acknowledges many positive outcomes for companies engaged in such alliances, for example, higher return on equity, better return on investment and higher success rates (Todeva and Knoke, 2005; Keller, 2003; Aaker, 1996; Darby, 2006; Gammoh and Voss, 2011). Within fashion specifically, diverse partnership strategies have been deployed to drive innovation and newness in a highly competitive market (Ahn *et al.*, 2010; Wigley and Provelengiou, 2011). Ahn *et al.* (2010, p. 6) infer that "Fashion collaborations leverage entire fashion business concepts that transform their branding strategy into not only 'sleeping with enemies', but also to 'talking to strangers' regardless of product types". Fashion firms are thus willingly accepting intra-industry collaborations (e.g. H&M and luxury houses) as well as the more recent inter-industry partnerships (e.g. Prada-LG mobiles) to facilitate success within a particularly competitive sector (Ahn *et al.*, 2010; Wigley and Provelengiou, 2011). Ahn *et al.* (2010) suggest that these inter-industry partnerships are a distinct form of collaboration, which they refer to as "co-marketing alliances". Whilst a growing practice, scholarly literature on strategic alliances within the fashion industry is limited in number and scope, with the latter restricted to either a consumer perspective or a singular intra-industry case study (Ahn *et al.*, 2010; Wigley and Provelengiou, 2011). This exploratory study therefore serves to harness both a business and consumer perspective towards inter-industry collaborations within luxury fashion branding, a sector which has shown increasing prevalence towards such alliances but on which there is a lack of robust academic research. This study aims to make a novel contribution by drawing on three theoretical fields: strategic collaborations (alliances); consumer-based brand equity and luxury fashion, with four main objectives: to provide a working definition of these forms of inter-industry collaborations; to investigate the motivations for partnership formation; to analyse the effects of such inter-alliances on the brand equity dimensions; to evaluate consumers' attitudes towards these collaborations; to investigate the motivations for partnership formation; to analyse the effects of such inter-alliances on the brand equity dimensions; to evaluate consumers' attitudes towards these collaborations and the possible relationship between the brand equity effects and consumers' attitudes.

Based on Kawamura's (2005) Fashion-ology theory, Zhang and Juhlin (2011) analysed the term fashion in all things. Their study concluded that when seen as a symbolic product, fashion is capable of reshaping not only mobiles (the focus of their study) but also the appearance of other material objects. The seamless alliance between fashion and marketing has taken fashion's influence to a point where it also "reshapes" the perception of individuals when related to certain fashion actors such as brands. Furthermore, if fashion brands are capable of changing the image of individuals and redesigning products, it may be able to transform the perception of brands from non- fashion industries.

Today luxury fashion brands must search for revolutionary collaborative ideas that astonish consumers, especially in a world that has to reinvent itself every six months. Luxury fashion consumers may have multifaceted attitudes towards inter-industry creative collaborations involving luxury fashion brands. Moreover, by conducting collaborations, luxury fashion brands are exposed to potential negative consumer- based brand equity effects. This raises a number of research questions:

RQ1. Can luxury fashion really have a presence in all things (Zhang and Juhlin, 2011)?
RQ2. Why do luxury fashion brands create inter-industry collaboration projects?
RQ3. How are luxury fashion brands affected when they collaborate with non- fashion organisations?
RQ4. How do consumers' respond to them?

To answer these questions, this paper investigates the theoretical and practical motivations, the consumer-based brand equity effects and the attitudes of consumers towards inter-industry creative collaborations involving luxury fashion brands taking a multiple-case design approach involving four exemplary units of analysis (Yin, 2014).

Literature review

Collaborations

For John-Steiner *et al.* (2004) collaborations are an affair of the mind. Although vague, this definition provides two main concepts: the word affair refers to the existence of a relationship between two or more entities and the concept of mind is linked with perception. John-Steiner *et al.*'s (2004) research states clearly the difference between social interaction and collaboration. While the former includes "exchange, cooperation and coordination to achieve a shared purpose", the latter "involves an intricate blending of skills, temperaments, efforts and sometimes personalities to realise a shared vision of something new and useful", according to John-Steiner *et al.*, 2004, p.11). This paper focuses on exploring the collaborations conducted by business entities.

Types of collaborations

Co-branding and brand alliances are two of the most prominent types of collaborations between businesses (Darby, 2006; Blackett and Boad, 1999). There have been numerous attempts to classify the different types of collaborations businesses can perform. Table I presents the different types of business collaboration identified and the theorists that support them.

Defining inter-industry creative collaborations

Inter-industry creative collaboration is an innovative concept, which many companies have exploited in recent years (Lanseng and Olsen, 2012; Park *et al.*, 1996). From an academic perspective, it could be said that this concept is found under the name of brand partnerships, brand alliances and co-branding (Breckenfeld, 2009; Darby, 2006; Lanseng and Olsen, 2012). Previous studies related to inter-industry creative collaborations have explored and defined the different types of alliances that brands and organisations may carry out, however, the concept of inter-industry creative collaborations has not been conceived. Therefore, it is important to study the characteristics of different types of business collaborations and link them to inter- industrial collaboration. First, to conceive a definition, inter-industry creative collaborations are a type of alliance. An alliance is defined by Darby (2006, p. 15) as "two or more partners working closely together to achieve something one cannot easily do or chooses not to do alone". Since the 1950s, consumers have been offered a variety of products, which are outcomes of collaborations (Lanseng and Olsen, 2012). Second, academic literature related to brand collaborations centre on co-branding, defined by Blackett and Boad (1999, p. 7) as, "A form of co-operation between two or more brands with significant customer recognition, in which all participants' brand names are retained". It represents a core concept in the emergence of a definition. Third, when addressing the notion of inter-industry, Enkel and Gassmann (2010, p. 256) state, "within cross-industry innovation, knowledge from other industries is creatively translated to meet the needs of the company's current market or products". Hence, it is possible to say that inter-industry refers to activities involving two or more industries, which aim to share knowledge and go beyond a conventional perspective. Finally, the last constituent to be defined is what differentiates inter-industry creative collaborations from other types

[Table I. Types of business collaborations]

of business collaboration: creativity. According to the Oxford English Dictionaries (2011), the word creative refers to the use of the imagination and original ideas to create something new. Imagination and creativity are directly linked to emotions. Hence, it could be said that inter-industry creative collaborations aim to use imagination and creativity to transmit the emotional element of a brand (Gobé, 2001).

Therefore, unifying all these concepts, it is possible to achieve a definition of inter- industry creative collaborations: the alliance between two or more entities from different industries with significant customer recognition, in which all participants' brand names are retained and which aims to work closely together to create something new that transmits the emotional element of a brand (adapted from Blackett and Boad, 1999, p. 7; Darby, 2006, p. 15; Gobé, 2001).

Table II illustrates inter-industry creative collaboration cases utilising the types of business collaborations previously mentioned (in Table I). All these examples fulfil the definition of inter-industry creative collaborations: they are all alliances; entities from different industries working closely together; all brands have significant customer recognition; and the result was to create innovation that transmits the emotional element of a brand.

Objectives driving inter-industry creative collaborations
Enhancing brand appeal represents one of the objectives that motivate businesses to conduct inter-industry creative collaborations (Breckenfeld, 2009). The emotional nature of such partnerships focuses this paper on marketing objectives that motivate business collaboration, notably to generate a point of differentiation (Washburn *et al.*, 2000; Aaker, 1996); to increase the influence of a brand (Blackett and Boad, 1999; Dorozola and Kohlbrenner, 2008; Breckenfeld, 2009); and to enter new product categories (Blackett and Boad, 1999; Aaker, 1996).

Fit in inter-industry creative collaborations
Dorozala and Kohlbrenner (2008) identified diverse types of fit between partners participating in a business collaboration: objective fit, value fit, market fit, target group fit, image fit and status fit. Due to its artistic nature, inter-industry creative collaborations focus on the last two: image fit and status fit. Whereas, different ideas and markets do not represent a barrier for conducting inter-industry creative

[Table II. Examples of inter- industry creative collaborations]

collaborations (objective, value, market and target group fit), partners should share a similar level of status and offer possibilities for positive image transfer. Moreover, companies involved in inter-industry creative collaborations need a partner that adds value to their brand (Oppermann cited in Dorozala and Kohlbrenner, 2008).

Attitudes of consumers towards inter-industry creative collaborations
James (2006) applied the brand extension conceptual model to alliances between companies. He suggested that the same components that can have an effect on the attitude of consumers towards brand extensions could affect brand alliances. As this paper defines inter-industry creative collaborations as a type of alliance, it is possible that the components of Aaker and Keller's model (applied by James, 2006) could also have an effect on the attitude of consumers towards inter-industry creative collaborations. The components relevant for this study are:

1. Difficulty of making: if the product seems too easy to make, consumers feel betrayed, as they believe that companies are taking advantage of their brand loyalty. It also refers to the opinions of consumers towards the final output of the collaboration.
2. Quality of partner brand: the positive brand associations that a brand can obtain and transfer from/to its partner brand.
3. Likelihood of purchase: the willingness of shoppers to buy the collaboration product.
4. Fit: the level of which the brands match each other in characteristics such as expertise, image or associations.

This section has defined the inter-industry creative collaboration concept, identified its objectives and discovered a method to evaluate consumer attitudes towards it. Figure 1 illustrates how the concept of inter-industry creative collaborations was conceived.

Combining the motivations, objectives, assets and characteristics of inter-industry creative collaborations, Table III highlights the benefits and risks of this kind of collaboration.

Damage to existing brand equity or negative brand equity represents a very significant hazard for brands (Keller, 2003). Therefore, the following section discusses this concept, particularly consumer-based brand equity.

Consumer-based brand equity

Keller (2003, p. 60) defines consumer-based brand equity as “the differential effect that brand knowledge has on consumer response to the marketing of that brand”. Related to the same concept the luxury management author Okonkwo (2007) surmises that when the sum of all distinctive qualities of a brand results in its continuous demand and commitment by consumers, the brand has high-brand equity. Consumer-based brand equity is related to intangible assets of a brand such as brand knowledge, image, awareness and attitudes (Oliveira-Castro *et al.*, 2008). Brand image, brand meaning and brand trust are among the concepts that are also related to brand equity. However, this paper converges on the categorisation of consumer-based brand equity developed by Feldwick (2002), adapted from Aaker’s (1996) brand equity study.

Feldwick (2002, p. 37), presents two different senses related to consumer-based brand equity: a measure of the strength of consumers’ attachment to a brand; a description of

[Figure 1. Inter-industry creative collaborations’ concept]

[Table III. Benefits and risks of inter-industry creative collaborations]

the associations and beliefs the consumer has about the brand. Each one of these senses, based on the four major asset categories of Aaker (1996) has a more concrete name: brand strength and brand description, as depicted in Figure 2.

Brand strength

Feldwick (2002) describes brand strength as a type of measurement of consumer demand for a certain brand. It encompasses two important facets, brand loyalty and brand awareness (Aaker, 1996). Brand loyalty is a feature that promotes the creation of loyalty-building programmes, which could help to enhance the brand’s emotional element (Aaker, 1996). Brand loyalty signifies an extremely precious asset when negotiating an inter-industry creative collaboration. If an entity is able to offer a strong consumer base beyond other qualitative assets it could demand greater benefits in the collaboration and it could also aim to work with major partners. Aaker (1996, p. 52) defines brand awareness as “the ability to identify a brand as associated with a product category”. Since this paper aims to research entities from different categories working closely together, brand awareness represents a vital concept, for two main reasons:

1. it is critical that at least one of the entities involved in an inter-industry creative collaboration is recognised as a leader in its category; and
2. increasing brand awareness could represent an objective for conducting inter- industry creative collaborations.

Brand description

Brand description refers to the attributes and associations that build a strong brand image (Feldwick, 2002). Brand description is especially important to inter-industry creative collaboration, because it represents the ability to transmit the emotional element of a brand (Gobé, 2001). The emotions generated by brands should be

[Figure 2. Four major category assets of consumer- based brand equity]

fascinating and lead consumers to buy the brand’s products. The sense of brand description includes two elements of Aaker’s (1996) brand equity conceptual framework: brand association and perceived quality. Aaker (1996, p. 109) defines brand association as “anything linked in memory to a brand”. Wood (2000) gives a more specific definition describing brand associations as a branding aspect that reflects the attributes (positive or negative) that are related to certain brands. When including "perceived quality" in his proposal of the four major assets of consumer-based brand equity, Aaker (1996) reinforced the idea of searching for tangible and intangible levels of quality. A more accurate definition of perceived quality is given by Zeithaml (1988) who defined perceived quality as the customer's perception of the overall quality of a product with respect to its intended purpose, and in relation to alternatives or substitutes. Perceived quality represents a vital concept for developing inter-industry creative collaborations because companies must ensure that the perception of quality improves during the collaboration process.

Inter-industry creative collaborations involving luxury fashion brands

The luxury market. According to *Verdict* (2014), global spending in luxury retailing reached €314.7 bn in 2014, up 3.8 per cent. With a growth of 40.7 per cent between 2010 and 2015, whilst modest compared to previous years, luxury retailing still continues to defy the broader macro-economic environment and accelerate the development of emerging markets. Luxury fashion brands are amongst the most influential brands in the world, with high relevance and high-brand awareness (Okonkwo, 2007). It is therefore not surprising that luxury fashion brands use their influential names to expand to other industries through brand extensions and collaborations (Keller, 2003). *Creative elements of luxury fashion*. A high level of creativity involved in inter- industry collaborations is a characteristic of this kind of cooperation. Three creative elements of luxury fashion are deduced from the literature (Tungate, 2009; Chadha and Husband, 2006; Okonkwo, 2007): expertise, craftsmanship, innovative design and emotion. Examples of luxury fashion inter-industry creative collaborations and the form used is evidenced in Table IV.

In these examples the differentiator produced by luxury fashion brands is the creation of collectors' pieces. For Balachander and Stock (2009), collector items are founded on scarcity and a sense of exclusivity. Hence, when an inter-industry creative collaboration achieves the creation of an exclusive and unique item it is inferred that it has generated a point of differentiation. In addition, the examples indicate that luxury fashion brands increase the influence of their brand collaborations with mainstream industries. Lastly, the examples demonstrate that inter-industry creative collaborations employ their innovative design and powerful brand names to enter new product categories (Darby, 2006).

Summary and conceptual framework

This study provides a definition for inter-industry creative collaborations. It illustrates how they might be executed and identifies a framework to evaluate consumer attitudes towards this kind of collaboration. In addition, consumer-based brand equity theory provides the basis for examining the impact of these collaborations on consumers (Keller, 2003). Finally, examples of inter-industry creative collaboration involving luxury fashion brands were explored and three creative elements of luxury fashion identified.

[Table IV. Luxury fashion brand inter-industry creative collaborations]

Inter-industry creative collaboration involving luxury fashion brands can be analysed from two perspectives. First, from a consumer perspective using James' (2006) framework, which evaluates attitudes towards brand alliances. This model is applied to inter-industry creative collaborations based on four components: difficulty of making, quality of partner brand, likelihood of purchase and fit. Second, from an industry perspective, utilising Aaker (1996) and Feldwick's (2002) theories on consumer-based brand equity. These theories comprise four major asset categories of consumer-based brand equity: brand awareness, brand loyalty, brand associations and perceived quality. Figure 3 illustrates the two perspectives for analysing inter-industry creative collaborations involving luxury fashion brands. It provides a model of how these collaborations could be reviewed. It also applies the creative elements of luxury fashion (expertise, craftsmanship and innovative design) to inter-industry creative collaborations and the emotional element they transmit. It proposes the existence of a direct relationship between the components that evaluate consumers' attitudes towards inter-industry creative collaborations and the brand equity effects they produce. This model will inform the case study enquiry.

Methodology

Research was conducted using a comparative case design, with the data being qualitative in nature (Yin, 2014; Miles and Huberman, 1994). Four cases, believed to be literal replications, were selected to illustrate cross-industry creative collaborations and specifically the research questions of why luxury businesses are motivated to use them and how they impact brand equity and consumer attitudes, which arose from the literature review (Yin, 2014). The context in which this study was conducted is luxury fashion and partnering inter-industry sectors, encompassing food, art institutions, auction houses, entertainment and manufacturing, all of which have engaged in

[Figure 3. Conceptual framework: Inter- industry creative collaborations incorporating luxury fashion brands]

"real-life" collaborative activities during the time of research and thus collectively provides a more compelling and robust study (Yin, 2014, p. 34). Schramm (1971, cited in Yin, 2014, p. 15) infers that the "essence of a case study is that it tries to illuminate a decision; why they were taken, how they were implemented and with what result". Thus the collective case study selected is both descriptive and explanatory in nature. First, it serves to describe cross-industry creative collaborations and provide a real-world context of how they occur; second, it attempts to explain why luxury brands engage with them and their brand equity effect.

The research employed a theoretical framework (see, Figure 3) to shed empirical light on a little comprehended topic (Robson, 2002; Yin, 2014) and a case study protocol was constructed to navigate the data collection and improve the reliability of the study (Yin, 2014). The rationale for case selection was purposive: they represented examples of recent cross-industry creative collaborations, typified a variety of collaboration types (see, Table I) and were with whom the researcher had access (Silverman, 2014), as shown in Table V. Cases of inter-industry creative collaborations were identified by surveying fashion industry media for examples of companies engaged in such partnerships. The companies were then contacted by e-mail, phone or via LinkedIn with research cooperation secured with four partner cases.

The data were obtained using semi-structured industry interviews and consumer focus groups, which allowed for deeper exploration and discussion of the topic (Silverman, 2014). In total, eight industry informants, representing senior managers of the four partner cases and three focus groups, containing 18 participants were recruited to take part in the study. Informants were selected using purposive and convenience sampling approaches respectively (Yin, 2014). Senior managers who had a high level of participation in or that

[Table V. Case selection]

were well informed of the collaboration were contacted and interviewed in order to investigate the motivations behind the creation of inter-industry creative collaborations and the effects of the same on the major asset categories of consumer-based brand equity. As Table VI depicts, the interviews were conducted face-to-face or via Skype due to the geographical spread of informants with each interview lasting 30 minutes.

Moreover, consumer participants had to meet the criteria of comprising multi- nationalities (aligned to the international reach of the collaborations), consider themselves as fashion-forward and interested in luxury brand collaborations (Bryman and Bell, 2007). These were restricted to London, where the researcher was based and took an hour to complete. Consumer attitudes towards inter-industry creative collaborations involving luxury fashion brands were explored through the focus groups and the potential relationship between these (consumer) attitudes and the brand equity effects assessed through industry interviews. Gaskell suggests focus groups are an appropriate method to elucidate a realistic approach of social interaction and because they offer an insight to the dynamics of attitude, opinion change and opinion leadership within a social group. Both interviews and focus groups were audio recorded and additional notes were taken, from which full transcripts were developed. From this full set of data, main themes were identified and analysed utilising word (thematic) tables to display the data from the individual cases according to the common categories identified in the literature (Figure 3). Qualitative analysis of these multiple word tables enabled the study to thus draw cross-case conclusions and enhance the generalisability of the findings (Yin, 2014; Silverman, 2014; Miles and Huberman, 1994).

[Table VI. Informant selection]

Findings and discussion

Consumer-based brand equity effects of inter-industry creative collaborations incorporating luxury fashion brands

Brand awareness. The collaboration that generated the most significant effect on brand awareness was the Minnie Mawi collection. Partnering with an influential company such as Disney gave Mawi the "opportunity to achieve global recognition", (Interviewee 1) which improved its ability to be identified within its product category: high-end jewellery (Aaker, 1996). For Hermès, Leather Forever attracted new customers, "who had no previous brand awareness" (Interviewee 3). However, Leather Forever's main aim was to, "deepen people's knowledge about the brand" (Interviewee 3). For Atelier X, the main aim of the Mètiers d'Art Show was to, "create an annual event that showcases the expertise of specialized French ateliers", (Interviewee 5). Moreover, theses ateliers bought by Chanel in recent years, are generally unknown. Therefore, it can be inferred that brand awareness did not have a major impact on Chanel during this collaboration. For L'Oréal, the creation of Innéov did not aim to enhance the brand awareness of the cosmetic company (Interviewee 7).

Brand loyalty. It is inferred that Innéov evidenced the greatest effect on brand loyalty. The exploitation and display of brand names L'Oréal and Nestlé in all the communication of the products, "has been crucial for its success" (Interviewees 7 and 8). Due to the complexity of the collaboration, which included a license holder, a distributor and the brands, the Minnie Mawi collection did not offer any special activity for loyal consumers and the effects of the collection on loyal customers was not measured (Interviewees 1 and 2). Hence, it could be said that the collaboration did not have an important impact on the brand loyalty of Mawi. Conversely, Hermès held a special evening for 500 UK loyal customers and press as part of the Leather Forever Exhibition launch. The exhibition and the bags auctioned by Christie's intended to, "inspire loyal customers and educate them more about the intricacies of Hermès's craft" (Interviewees 3 and 4). Although, these activities may have enhanced the relationship of Hermès with its loyal customers, this exhibition was also directed to a much wider audience (Interviewee 3). When it first started, the Métiers d'Art Show relied on the strength of the brand loyalty of Chanel, because it was the only widely known brand involved in the project. With time, the "collaboration become a brand name in itself- a tribute to haute couture" (Interviewee 5); thus suggesting a shift of loyalty from Chanel to the event itself.

Brand associations. Whilst all four cases exerted positive brand associations arising from their collaborations (Interviewees 1, 3, 5 and 7), it can be deduced that the collaboration that infused its partners' brand associations most profoundly was the auction arising from the Leather Forever Exhibition. The three organisations involved shared a common identity value, which was their specialism in very particular fields: craftsmanship, art and auctioning (Holt, 2004).

Perceived quality. Whilst perceived quality played a significant role for all the collaborations studied, the Métiers d'Art Show evidenced a clear aim to intensify the perceived quality of Chanel by reinforcing the close relationship between the brand and the skilled French artisans (Interviewees 5 and 6). The overall superior quality of Chanel's products in relation to alternatives was emphasised, generating a point of differentiation based on high quality (Zeithaml, 1988).

Table VII summarises the most significant major asset category in each collaboration and provides evidence from the cases interviewed to support this.

[Table VII. Quotes supporting the most significant consumer-based brand equity category asset]

Consumers' attitudes towards inter-industry creative collaborations involving the luxury fashion brands
James (2006) identified four components to evaluate consumers' attitudes towards inter- industry creative collaborations: quality of the partner brand, difficulty of making, likelihood of purchase and fit. Following this order, each component is assessed.

Quality of the partner brand. This refers to the positive and negative brand associations a brand could obtain from its partner in an inter-industry creative collaboration (James, 2006). The collaboration in which the quality of the partner brand had a higher relevance for consumers was the Minnie Mawi Collection. Consumers, who like Disney, were immediately attracted by the collection and showed positive attitudes towards Mawi even if they did not know the brand. Concurrently, consumers' dislike for Disney showed immediate negative attitudes towards the collection.

Difficulty of making. This refers to the level of complexity of the collaboration and its successful accomplishment based on the joined work of the partners (James, 2006). Due to its artistic profile, its acute attention to detail and its impressive display, the collaboration where the difficulty of making had the highest relevance for consumers was the Mètiers d'Art Show.

Fit. This refers to the level in which the brands match each other in characteristics such as expertise, image or associations (James, 2006). As stated, inter-industry creative collaborations focus on status and image fit (Dorozala and Kohlbrenner, 2008). The collaboration where the partners showed the highest level of consistency and demonstrated positive level of status and image fit for consumers was the Leather Forever Exhibition.

Likelihood of purchase. This refers to the willingness of consumers to buy the product resulting from the collaboration (James, 2006). Possibly due to its beauty and mainstream profile, half of the focus group respondents were willing to try Innéov and test its efficiency.

The above-mentioned section highlights linkages between each case and the component ascribed to evaluating consumers' attitudes towards inter-industry creative collaborations (James, 2006). Table VIII illustrates this by presenting supportive quotes obtained from the consumer focus groups conducted.

The direct relation between a major category asset of consumer-based brand equity and a component to evaluate consumers' attitudes towards inter-industry creative collaborations
The four cases helped to structure and define the suggested relationship between specific major category assets of consumer-based brand equity and certain components that evaluate consumers' attitudes towards inter-industry creative collaborations, as shown in Table IX.
The findings suggest that:

1. The effects on brand awareness are directly linked to the quality of the partner brand. For example, when positive, Disney's image had an influence on the increase of Mawi's brand awareness.
2. The effects on brand associations are directly related to the positive fit of the partners. For example, the consistency of the collaboration between Hermès with the Royal Academy of Arts and Christie's; all leading specialists in their industries.

[Table VIII. Quotes to support the most relevant component to evaluate consumer attitudes]

[Table IX. Direct relationships between consumer-based brand equity assets and components to evaluate consumers' attitudes]

3. The effects on perceived quality are directly linked to the difficulty of making. For example, the matchless complexity and detailed execution of the Métiers d'Art Show.
4. The effects on brand loyalty are directly related to the likelihood of purchase. For example, the willingness of some consumers to try Innéov, because it has the support of a leading beauty company like L'Oréal.

The research identifies the existence of a direct relationship not only between the major category assets of brand equity and the components that evaluate consumers' attitude towards inter-industry creative collaborations, but also with the types of business collaboration and the marketing objectives pursued by luxury fashion brands, as illustrated in Table X. This linkage represents the basis to build a model for analysing inter-industry creative collaborations involving luxury fashion brands.

Conclusion and implications

This research contributes to the emerging research on fashion collaborations. It provides an in-depth analysis of inter-industry creative collaborations practiced

[Table X. Relationship between brand equity, components, objectives and type of collaboration]

by luxury fashion brands, an un-researched field of study. The study allowed us to understand the motivations driving luxury fashion brands to develop inter-industry creative collaborations and the consumer-based brand equity effects of such type of projects. Luxury fashion consumers' attitudes regarding inter-industry collaborations were elicited and a theoretical model deduced that could be applied to inter-industry creative collaborations conducted by any brand within the luxury fashion industry, as evidenced in Figure 4.

Unifying two perspectives: the brand perspective (consumer-based brand equity) (Aaker, 1996), and the consumer perspective (consumer attitudes) (James, 2006), the model proposes that certain types of inter-industry creative collaborations (composite branding, dual branding, ingredient branding and sponsorship and experiential

[Figure 4. Inter-industry creative collaborations conceptual framework]

marketing) aim for specific objectives (to generate a point of differentiation, to increase the influence of a brand or to enter other product categories). Likewise, they are related to a particular major category asset of brand equity and a specific component that evaluates consumer attitudes towards inter-industry creative collaborations. The creative elements of luxury fashion (expertise, craftsmanship and innovative design) represent the central part of the model, the part that joins it together. This is because in all the types of collaboration, at least one of these creative elements is exploited to transmit the emotional elements of luxury fashion brands:

- Composite branding: luxury fashion brands collaborating with other industries and creating a composite name for a new product such as a special collection. The main aim of this type of collaboration is to increase the influence of the brand by generating a positive effect on the brand awareness of luxury fashion labels. Luxury fashion brands involved in this type of collaboration are highly affected by the quality of their partner brand.
- Dual branding: corporate luxury fashion brands endorsing products that they have created with another corporate brand from a different industry. Together, both partners aim to enter new

product categories. Due to the high level of brand loyalty of the corporate brand involved they are likely to produce a high likelihood of purchase.

- Ingredient branding: luxury fashion brands using brands from other industries as "ingredients". This type of collaboration aims to produce unique projects that are difficult to make and replicate, generating a point of differentiation. The utilisation of high-quality ingredient brands has a significant impact on the perceived quality of the luxury fashion brand.
- Sponsorship and experiential marketing: luxury fashion brands that conduct experiential marketing activities aim to create a point of differentiation by sharing positive brand associations with high-fitted partners. To achieve a positive level of connected brand associations, luxury fashion brands should partner with organisations that offer a high level of status and image fit.

This study provides a definition and a theoretical framework that specifically analyses the motivations, elements and effects of inter-industry creative collaborations. Unifying two perspectives, brand and consumer, the model provides a strategic perspective of how inter-industry creative collaborations could affect diverse elements of a luxury fashion brand. Moreover, it provides new insight into the characteristics and motivations of different types of collaboration.

The framework could serve as a practical guide for luxury brand managers to assess the planning and execution of inter-industry creative collaborations conducted. Once an objective to undertake an inter-industry creative collaboration is determined and the creative elements to be exploited are selected, the model illustrates the best method to achieve this objective and the possible implications the inter-industry creative collaboration could generate.

In terms of theoretical contribution, this paper makes an original connection between four topics: motivations of inter-industry creative collaborations (Blackett and Boad, 1999; Dorozola and Kohlbrenner, 2008; Breckenfeld, 2009; Washburn *et al.*, 2000), major category assets of consumer-based brand equity (Aaker, 1996), consumers' attitudes towards inter-industry creative collaborations (James, 2006) and the creative and emotional elements of luxury fashion (Tungate, 2009; Chadha and Husband, 2006; Okonkwo, 2007; Thomas, 1993). It provides a useful starting point for further empirical research to test the validity and reliability of the model outside of the stated cases.

Limitations and future research

The theoretical model proposed is limited in application to the luxury fashion sector due to the unique creative elements it displays. Moreover, the model was based on the specific components used to evaluate consumers' attitudes towards brand alliances proposed by James (2006), however, there are other important components that could influence consumers' attitudes such as distribution, location and consumer service among others. Finally, this model is limited to four forms of collaborations based on contemporary luxury fashion brand examples: ingredient branding, composite branding, dual branding and experiential marketing. It could be argued that luxury fashion brands conduct other types of business collaborations such as co-branding and joint promotions. The exploratory nature of the study limits the generalisation of the results. The sampling was limited in size and scale and there is merit in expanding the number of participants in future research using a quantitative approach to test more robustly consumer perspectives of fashion collaborations involving luxury brands. Some authors have suggested fashion has sacrificed its integrity by making their brands accessible through collaborations (Thomas, 1993). Future research could therefore explore how inter-industry creative collaborations may reinvigorate rarity to luxury fashion by the execution of imaginative projects that are able to convey the emotional element of luxury fashion brands. Whilst there are limitations, this study makes a unique contribution to this nascent yet important field of study.

References

Aaker, D. (1996), *Building Strong Brands*, Simon & Schuster UK Ltd, London.

Ahn, S., Kim, H. and Forney, J.A. (2010), “Fashion collaboration or collision?”, *Journal of Fashion Marketing and Management: An International Journal*, Vol. 14 No. 1, pp. 6-20.
Balachander, S. and Stock, A. (2009), “Limited edition products: when and when not to offer them”, *Journal of Marketing Science*, Vol. 28 No. 2, pp. 226-355.
Blackett, T. and Boad, B. (1999), *Co-Branding: The Science of Alliance*, Macmillan Press Ltd, London.
Breckenfeld, D. (2009), *The Cool Factor: Building Your Brand's Image Through Partnership Marketing*, John Wiley & Sons, Inc, Hoboken, NJ.
Bryman, A. and Bell, E. (2007), *Business Research Methods*, 2nd ed., Oxford University Press, Oxford.
Chadha, R. and Husband, P. (2006), *The Cult of the Luxury Brand: Inside Asia's Love Affair with Luxury*, WS Bookwell, London.
Chanel (2012), “Chanel official website”, available at: www.chanel.com (accessed 19 September 2012).
Contractor, F.J. and Lorange, P. (Eds) (1988), *Co operative Strategies in International Business*, Lexington Books, Lexington, MA.
Darby, M. (2006), *Alliance Brand: Fulfilling the Promise of Partnering*, John Wiley & Sons Inc, Hoboken, NJ.
Dorozala, N. and Kohlbrenner, A. (2008), Co-Branding as a Tool for Strategic Brand Activation – How to Find the Ideal Partner; An Explanatory Case Study in the Fashion and Design Sector, School of Economics and Management Lund University, Lund.
Enkel, E. and Gassmann, O. (2010), “Creative imitation: exploring the case of cross-industry innovation”, *R&D Management*, Vol. 40 No. 3, pp. 256-270.
Feldwick, P. (2002), *What is Brand Equity Anyway?* World Advertising Research Center, Henley.
Gammoh, B. and Voss, K. (2011), “Brand alliance research: in search of a new perspective and directions for future research”, *Journal of Marketing Development and Competitiveness*, Vol. 5 No. 3, pp. 81-93.
Gobé, M. (2001), *Emotional Branding*, Allworth Press, New York, NY.
Hermès (2012), “Hermès official website”, available at: www.hermes.com (accessed 19 September 2012).
Holt, D.B. (2004), *How Brands Become Icons: The Principles of Cultural Branding*, Harvard Business School Publishing Corporation.
Innéov (2012), “Innéov official website”, available at: www.inneov.com (accessed 19 September 2012).
James, D.O. (2006), “Extension to alliance: Aaker and Keller's model revisited”, *Journal of Product & Brand Management*, Vol. 15 No. 1, pp. 15-22.
John-Steiner, V., Moran, S. and Seddon, F. (2004), in Miell, D. and Littleton, K. (Eds), *Collaborative Creativity: Contemporary Perspectives*, Free Association Books, London.
Kawamura, Y. (2005), *Fashion-ology: An Introduction to Fashion Studies*, Berg, New York, NY. Keller, K.L. (2003), *Strategic Brand Management: International Edition, Building, Measuring, and Branding Brand Equity*, Pearson Education Ltd, Harlow.
Lanseng, E.J. and Olsen, L.E. (2012), “Brand alliances: the role of brand concept consistency”, *European Journal of Marketing*, Vol. 46 No. 9, pp. 1108-1126.
Mawi (2011), “Mawi official website”, available at: www.mawi.co.uk (accessed 19 May 2012). Miles, M.B. and Huberman, M.A. (1994), *Qualitative Data Analysis: An Expanded Sourcebook*, 2nd ed., Sage Publications Limited, CA.
Okonkwo, U. (2007), *Luxury Fashion Branding: Trends, Tactics, Techniques*, St Martin's Press LLC, New York, NY.
Oliveira-Castro, J.M., Foxalb, G., James, V., Pohla, H.B.F., Diasa, M. and Chang, S. (2008), “Consumer-based brand equity and brand performance”, *The Service Industries Journal*, Vol. 28 No. 4, pp. 445-461.
Oxford English Dictionaries (2011), *Concise Oxford English Dictionary*, 12th ed., Oxford University Press, Oxford.
Park, C.W., Jun, S.Y. and Shocker, A.D. (1996), “Composite branding alliances: an investigation of extension and feedback effects”, *Journal of Marketing Research*, Vol. 33 No. 4, pp. 453-466.
Pine, J. and Gilmore, J. (2011), *The Experience Economy. Revised Edition*, Harvard Business School Publishing, Boston, MA.
Robson, C. (2002), *Real World Research: A Resource for Social Scientists and Practitioner- Researcher*, 2nd ed., Blackwell Publishing, Oxford.

Silverman, D. (2014), *Interpreting Qualitative Data*, 5th ed., Sage Publications Limited, London. Thomas, R.J. (1993), *New Product Development: Managing and Forecasting for Strategic Success*, John Wiley & Sons, Inc.
Todeva, E. and Knoke, D. (2005), "Strategic alliances and models of collaboration", *Management Decision*, Vol. 43 No. 1, pp. 123-148.
Tungate, M. (2009), *Luxury World: The Past, Present and Future of Luxury Brands*, Kogan Page Limited, London.
Verdict (2014), "Global luxury retailing", *Verdict*.
Washburn, J., Till, B. and Priluck, R. (2000), "Co-branding: brand equity and trial effects", *Journal of Consumer Marketing*, Vol. 17 No. 7, pp. 591-604.
Wigley, S.M. and Provelengiou, A.-K. (2011), "Market-facing strategic alliances in the fashion sector", *Journal of Fashion Marketing and Management: An International Journal*, Vol. 15 No. 2, pp. 141-162.
Wood, L. (2000), "Brands and brand equity: definition and management", *Journal of Management Decision*, Vol. 38 No. 9, pp. 662-669.
Yin, R.K. (2014), *Case Study Research: Design and Methods*, 5th ed., Sage Publications Inc., CA.
Zeithaml, V.A. (1988), "Consumer perceptions of price, quality and value: a means-end model and synthesis of evidence", *Journal of Marketing*, Vol. 52 No. 3, pp. 2-22.
Zhang, Y. and Juhlin, O. (2011), "Fashion as system or action net in 'Fashion in All Things' a case in color design of mobile phones", Vinn Excellence Center, Stockholm.

Further reading

British Fashion Council (2011), *The Value of the UK Fashion Industry*, Oxford Economics, London. Carter, K. (2010), "Fashion Week Live", *The Guardian Blog*, 29 September, available at: www. guardian.co.uk/lifeandstyle/2010/sep/29/paris-fashion-week
Celeste, R. (2010), "Anemone Barbie' by Christian Louboutin", *Luxist*, 29 April, available at: www. luxist.com/2010/04/29/anemone-barbie-by-christian-louboutin
Christodoulides, G. and De Chernatony, L. (2010), "Consumer-based brand equity conceptualisation and measurement: a literature review", *International Journal of Market Research*, Vol. 52 No. 1, pp. 43-66.
Connor, S. (2011), "40 years of Gucci edition cars: spanning American Motors to Cadillac, now Fiat!" *Examiner*, 1 September, available at: www.examiner.com/classic-cars-in-newark/ cadillac-gucci-seville
Foster-Barry, G. (2010), "Christian Louboutin gives Barbie a lesson in dressing (but the £100 price tag is certainly not child's play", *Daily Mail*, 15 February, available at: www. dailymail.co.uk/femail/article-1250775/Christian-Louboutin-gives-Barbie-lesson-dressing- 100-price-tag-certainly-childs-play.html
HPRINTS (2007/2012), "Chanel & Lesage (Embroidery) 1983", available at: http://hprints.com/ Chanel_Lesage_Embroidery_1983-12796.html
Kapferer, J.N. (2008), *The New Strategic Brand Management: Creating and Sustaining Brand Equity Long Term*, Kogan Page Limited, London.
Karmali, S. (2009), "FIRST LOOK: Louboutin Barbie!", *Marie Claire Online*, 4 December, available at: www.marieclaire.co.uk/news/fashion/433703/first-look-louboutin- barbie.html
Lee, H. (2011), "San Pellegrino teams up with BVLGARI for some sparkly water bottles", *Sassybella*, 18 July, available at: www.sassybella.com/2011/07/s-pellegrino-bvlgari-sparkly- water-bottles/
Lucire (2011), "San Pellegrino launches second, limited-edition Bulgari bottle", *Lucire*, available at: http://lucire.com/insider/20111118/san-pellegrino-launches-second-limited-edition- bulgari-bottle/
Mason, J. (2002), *Qualitative Researching*, Sage Publications Ltd, London.
Michault, J. (2011), "Gucci 90th anniversary: in Florence Gucci pulled out all the stops with a gala evening to celebrate the brand's 90th anniversary", *Vogue Italia Online*, 27 September, available at: www.vogue.it/en/shows/fashion-events/2011/09/gucci-90th-anniversary- florence
Mona, P. (2007), "Creating a competitive edge: the value of cross-industry knowledge", *Business Strategy Series*, Vol. 8 No. 2, pp. 142-147.
Perez, H. (2009), "More deets on Christian Louboutin for Barbie", *Coco Perez*, 18 October, available at: http://cocoperez.com/2009-10-18-more-deets-on-christian-louboutin-for-barbie

Perez, M. (2011), “The New York of ‘Breakfast at Tiffany’s’ ”, *AMNY*, 29 June, available at: www.amny.com/urbanite-1.812039/the-new-york-of-breakfast-at-tiffany-s-1.2994768
Press, M. and Cooper, R. (2003), *The Design Experience: The Role of Design and Designers in the Twenty-First Century*, Ashgate Publishing Limited.
Rawi, M. (2011), “From Bombay to Paris: Chanel stages Indian-inspired fashion show as guests dine on opulent ‘runway’ feast fit for royalty”, *Daily Mail*, 7 December, available at: www.dailymail.co.uk/femail/article-2070790/Chanel-Metiers-dArt-Karl-Lagerfelds-opulent- Indian-inspired-fashion-runway.html#ixzz1vUqWu6md
Reuter Hapgood, H. (2012), “Leather Forever: Hermès celebrates 175 years”, *Instyle Online UK*, 18 May, available at: www.instyle.co.uk/news/leather-forever-herm-s-celebrates-175-years- 18-05-12
Roberts, A. (2010), “L’Oréal, Nestle Beauty-Pill joint venture Inneov to enter China”, *Bloomberg Mobile*, 15 December, available at: http://mobile.bloomberg.com/news/2010-11-25/wrinkle- hair-loss-pills-gain-popularity-as-l-oreal-venture-targets-china.html
San Pellegrino SpA (2011), “San Pellegrino official website”, available at: www.sanpellegrino.com/ (accessed 19 October 2012).
Senett, R. (2008), *The Craftsman*, Yale University Press.
The Royal Academy of Arts (2012), “The Royal Academy of Arts official website”, available at: www.royalacademy.org.uk
Tungate, M. (2005), *Fashion Brands: Branding Style from Armani to Zara*, Kogan Page Limited, London.