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The Lure of Luxe: Climbing the Luxury Consumption Pyramid
Jordan Phillips
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Five Stars (out of Five)

The luxury-goods market is a distinct segment of the consumer market with an aura all its own. Most closely associated with fashion, luxury goods tend to remain popular even in a down economy because of their timeless appeal to the wealthiest segment of society. In fact, writes Jordan Phillips in her excellent book on the subject, “luxury is the opportunity to purchase pleasure that lasts.”

Phillips takes the reader on a journey that includes a historical overview of the rise of luxury goods, as well as an explanation of modern-day marketing strategy used by those promoting luxury goods. Like any well-trained marketer, Phillips concentrates much of her attention on the audience for such luxury items. Her insights might be revelations to some readers; she notes, for example, “The reality of luxury consumption today is that a very large portion is done by the newly affluent, not old money, and these newly affluent are constantly learning, changing, and trying to climb the socioeconomic ladder.”

For those with an interest in the international market, Phillips shares her considerable knowledge about the global consumption of luxury goods and the nuances from country to country. (While she resides in New York City, the author earned a master’s degree in fashion marketing and management from a school in Paris.) In Europe, for instance, “luxury” and “fashion” are distinguished from one another, which is not necessarily the case in other parts of the world. In China, buying luxury goods for some consumers is equivalent to improving one’s reputation.

The author’s keen understanding of the luxury consumer makes *The Lure of Luxe* particularly interesting. For her “Luxury Consumption Pyramid,” Phillips uses the classic marketing pyramid, appropriately adapted to the luxury consumer. The author does a fine job explaining how a woman moves up from first being attracted to a luxury brand logo to making luxury a part of her everyday life to a point at which “her style has become her own.”

Phillips also addresses the manner in which luxury goods are marketed, which diverges

significantly from conventional thinking. Unlike the traditional retail world, writes Phillips, “in the luxury field, if the price of an item is raised, the demand may increase.” In fact, a higher price, along with limited availability, represents part of a luxury item’s exclusivity. For the most part, Phillips discusses marketing from a strategic perspective, but she occasionally delves into tactical considerations, such as specific ways to use online marketing versus a retail store.

Jordan Phillips’s thorough, well-researched work could serve as an instructional text for a student of fashion marketing, a guide for practitioners, or an authoritative overview of the luxury market for any interested reader. *The Lure of Luxe* is both an educational and enjoyable read.

Barry Silverstein