

# ECR Academic Student Award 2020

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Wirtschaftsuniversität Wien / Marketing Master

**Masterarbeit**

Betreuerin der Arbeit: Dr. Cordula Cerha

# Titel der Arbeit (englisch)

**Consumers' Acceptance of Sustainable Packaging in the Prestige Beauty Market**

# Ziel(e) / Forschungsfrage(n)

- **Forschungsfrage 1:**  
What is the role of packaging in general, and the role of sustainable packaging in particular in the prestige beauty market?
- **Forschungsfrage 2:**  
What factors influence consumers' acceptance of sustainably packaged products in the prestige beauty market?

# Methodik

- Literaturrecherche
- Empirisches Forschungsprojekt:
  - Online Umfrage
  - Between-subjects Study Design mit zwei Treatment Gruppen

# Ergebnisse

- **FF1: What is the role of packaging in general, and the role of sustainable packaging in particular in the prestige beauty market?**

Packaging can be defined as “the wrapping material around a consumer item that serves to contain, identify, describe, protect, display, promote, and otherwise make the product marketable and keep it clean.” (Agariya et al., 2012, p. 2). Packaging in the prestige beauty industry protects the product and its quality, provides market differentiation, embodies the brand’s personality and enhances the luxury experience through an exciting and interactive unpacking process. Moreover, it is characterized by its premium quality standards, exceptional materials, extraordinary shapes and figures, simple typography, high end colors, surrealistic designs and dramatic graphics. The role of sustainable packaging in general is to be recyclable, renewable, safe, beneficial, clean, healthy, optimizing, biological and effective. Although packaging in the prestige beauty industry tends to be heavy and excessive, the demand for reduced packaging is rising as packaging creates a huge amount of environmental waste. What is more, the experience of unpacking also leads to a higher perception of quality which is also an important driving force for sustainable packaging. Moreover, consumers’ curiosity and anticipation increase with the number of layers of the packaging, making it appear more mysterious, unique and luxurious.

- **FF2: What factors influence consumers’ acceptance of sustainably packaged products in the prestige beauty market?**

There are various factors influencing consumers’ acceptance of sustainable packaging solutions in the prestige beauty market. These include the quality of the packaging, the experience of unpacking, the perceived feeling of personal value, the general attitude towards environmental issues and the willingness to pay. Moreover, age could be identified as an influencing demographic factor when it comes to sustainable packaging in the prestige beauty industry.

- **Quality:** It is important, that sustainable packaging in the prestige beauty industry must not be leveraged at the expense of quality and general packaging requirements, such as safety requirements.
- **Experience of unpacking:** The experience of unpacking a luxury product is a key influencer for consumers’ acceptance of sustainable packaging. Research indicates a clear desire of luxury consumers for unique and exclusive experiences, as they enhance positive brand perception and a strong brand impression.
- **Personal value:** Luxury packaging enhances the value of the product and the brand positioning. In line with this, luxury cosmetics customers value unique, personal products and items that increase their feeling of uniqueness, intimacy, passion and brand attachment.
- **Age:** Especially Millennials and Generation Z are considerably environmentally conscious, strongly support sustainability matters and value sustainability in the luxury industry which is also reflected in their purchase decisions. Millennials value quality, service experience, and exclusivity while buying luxury consumer goods.

However, leveraging sustainable packaging in the prestige beauty industry is challenging for marketers and managers operating in the prestige beauty industry. Nevertheless, if done right, sustainable packaging enables companies to ensure efficiency gains, enter new markets, enhance long-term brand image and trust and establish better relationships with their customers as well as their employees.

# Relevanz für ECR / ECR-Mitgliedsunternehmen

- Nachhaltige Verpackung ist ein hochrelevantes aber auch sehr komplexes Thema.
- Nachhaltige Verpackung kann Unternehmen zu Effizienzgewinnen verhelfen, die Erschließung neuer Märkte ermöglichen, den Markenauftritt stärken und Beziehungen zu Konsumenten, Mitarbeitern und entlang der gesamten Wertschöpfungskette fördern.
- Die gesamte Wertschöpfungskette muss dabei optimal zusammenarbeiten und trägt Verantwortung, um eine ganzheitliche nachhaltige Verpackung zu verwirklichen.

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