

**AN ANALYSIS OF THE PERFORMANCE OF
PREMIUM FURNITURE BRANDS IN WESTERN
EUROPE BASED ON HYBRID IDENTITY
CONSTRUCTION AND QUALITY
COMMUNICATION**

Thesis summary

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Relevance of the Topic

“Premium brands are connected to people’s desire to find meaning and construct identities. They possess a kind of ‘aura’ that appeals to consumers on an emotional or even spiritual level, rather than on a purely rational basis.”¹

The complex system of values and identity construction that defines the operation of premium and luxury furniture brands has undergone significant transformation over the past decade. In increasingly globalized markets, brands are more frequently required to respond to the expansion of digital technologies, the diversification of consumer expectations, and the growing importance of sustainability and ethical considerations. Luxury is no longer interpreted solely as a status symbol or an aesthetic representation, but rather as part of a broader cultural discourse in which authenticity, the experience of quality, and community connection play a central role.

¹ Cattaneo, E. (Ed.). (2023). *Managing luxury brands: A complete guide to contemporary luxury brand strategies*. Kogan Page.

In this new context, brands — beyond being producers of products and services — also function as complex cultural actors that convey value and shape identity. Interactions taking place on digital platforms, personalized customer experiences, and experience-based brand strategies require new competencies that go beyond traditional industry norms. Physical spaces, such as showrooms, exhibitions, or luxury interior design salons, can no longer be interpreted in isolation; rather, they function as extensions of the digital presence, jointly shaping the holistic perception of the brand. This hybrid presence represents, on the one hand, a technological challenge, and on the other hand, it compels brands to rethink their identity. Among the key resources of luxury value creation are the unique combination of specialized knowledge and skills, as well as powerful, deeply evocative brand narratives, which play a decisive role in shaping luxury-specific management practices.²

² Rigaud-Lacresse, E., & Pini, F. M. (Eds.). (2017). *New luxury management: Creating and managing sustainable value across the organization*. Palgrave Macmillan.

The transformation of the premium sector is further intensified by a broader cultural and philosophical shift from modern and postmodern paradigms toward a metamodern perspective. This new interpretive framework entails the reframing of styles and narratives, while simultaneously repositioning luxury as a form of meaning construction on new foundations. Metamodernity is inherently ambivalent, simultaneously seeking tradition and innovation, grounded in authenticity while experimenting with virtual possibilities. Accordingly, the effort of premium furniture brands to simultaneously express the aesthetics of craftsmanship heritage and design intelligence based on technological and material innovation has become one of the most ακρυάλis strategic challenges of our time. Brand identity can no longer be considered a static element, but rather a continuously reconstructed, glocal set of values, the alignment of which is a prerequisite for competitiveness in international markets.

Societal changes also exert a profound influence on the operation of the premium sector. Consumers are

becoming increasingly conscious, more sensitive to environmental and social impacts, and are setting higher expectations toward brands—particularly in terms of ethical production, transparency, and experiential value. In purchasing decisions, increasing weight is given to the narrative conveyed by the brand, its sensory authenticity, and its ability to connect to higher-order cultural or even spiritual meanings. Experience, therefore, extends beyond product use; it is present at every stage of consumption—from visiting the website, through the atmosphere of showroom interiors, to the tactile perception of material textures.

Digitalization and algorithm-driven communication systems simultaneously create new challenges and opportunities for brands, particularly in the domains of personalized customer relationships and predictive marketing. In this context, premium brands face not only the necessity of technological adaptation, but also the strategic question of how to remain centered on human connection and value-based experiences. Brand positioning thus transcends competitive differentiation

and increasingly becomes an ontological stance—a response to what quality, durability, beauty, and value mean in contemporary society.

Finally, the world of premium furniture brands, which constitutes the focus of this research, represents a point of intersection between applied arts, design, cultural studies, business strategy, and sustainability theories. Consequently, the investigation extends beyond purely economic or aesthetic considerations and emerges as a multidisciplinary challenge that sheds light on a particularly sensitive and highly relevant domain of the contemporary knowledge-based economy.

Research Methodology

The research methodology applied a mixed-method approach, integrating qualitative and quantitative elements to ensure the valid exploration of complex, multidimensional phenomena. Primary data collection was conducted through an online survey targeting

consumers and followers of Western European premium furniture brands across 11 countries, measuring various aspects of brand experience, perceived quality, and price–value perception using a ten-point Likert scale. The 348 responses were complemented by a qualitative research phase involving the analysis of 77 companies from 10 different Western European countries, from which the author selected 15 brands per hypothesis for in-depth examination.

Within the case studies, key analytical dimensions included hybrid presence, metamodern aesthetic complexity, ecosystem-based operation, narrative-driven quality communication, and the cultural interpretation of pricing. Content analysis was based on the brands' official websites, social media platforms, product imagery, interior presentations, and customer feedback. The comparison of quantitative and qualitative findings enabled the multidimensional testing of the hypotheses and supported the development of a theoretically grounded and empirically validated model.

Theses

The performance of premium furniture brands in the 21st-century knowledge-based and aesthetically driven economy can be interpreted within an increasingly complex network of factors. The research demonstrates that brand performance does not depend on a few selected dimensions—such as product quality—but is instead the result of multiple, interrelated effects. The understanding and conscious application of the synergy between hybrid identity construction, sensory and narrative quality communication, and ecosystem-based collaboration constitute fundamental conditions for maintaining competitiveness in contemporary premium markets, building value-based relationships, and sustaining a relevant identity in the metamodern socio-economic landscape.

Thesis 01

Hybrid Presence and Aesthetic–Emotional Resonance

A key success criterion for premium and luxury furniture

brands is their ability to integrate digital and physical presence in order to provide a coherent and unified brand experience.

Thesis 02

Foundations of Metamodern Identity: Aesthetic Complexity and Glocal Design Culture

Brand identity becomes strong when it simultaneously reflects innovation and preserves its unique values, while integrating both local and global aesthetics.

Thesis 03

Value-Fusion Networks and Ecosystem-Based Performance

Brand performance is not autonomous; it is more effectively realized through coopetitive (cooperative–competitive) networks.

Thesis 04

Narrative Quality Communication and Sensory Authenticity

Premium experience is most effectively created by brands that operate through multisensory and narrative-driven strategies.

Thesis 05

Price as a Complex Value Indicator: Prestige, Investment, Content

Premium pricing becomes meaningful when, beyond its transactional role, it also functions as a carrier of cultural capital, aesthetic experience, and temporally extended value anchoring, thereby reinforcing the brand's ontological position in the consumer's perception.

Synthesis

The success of premium brands today depends on systemic capabilities that ensure consistent presence

across both digital and physical environments, while simultaneously generating emotional and aesthetic resonance in consumers. Identity becomes powerful when a brand communicates both global and local values while remaining open to continuous reinterpretation. Value creation, in this context, emerges as a collective process realized through networked collaboration, shared knowledge, and relational synergies. Quality acts as an reinforcing and reflexive sensory and narrative experience that structures consumer perception at deeper levels. Within this system, price functions not only as an economic indicator but also as a form of cultural value expression, integrating durability, prestige, and aesthetic heritage.

Further research directions

Future research directions may primarily focus on a deeper examination of dynamic changes in consumer behavior and the impact of technological innovation. In an increasingly fast-evolving, technology-driven

environment, it is recommended to analyze brand interactions in the digital space in real time, as well as to explore how algorithm-driven personalization influences the perception of premium brand identity.

Another important avenue of research lies in investigating the integration of artificial intelligence and experience design, particularly in terms of how new interpretations of quality emerge at the intersection of technology and craftsmanship heritage. Further opportunities include examining sustainability narratives and ethical brand communication within the premium segment, especially with regard to how these are embedded in the emotional and cultural dimensions of consumer decision-making.

Finally, the analysis of value-fusion relationships between brands through a transdisciplinary approach — employing network analysis and organizational psychology methods — also represents a relevant and promising direction for future research.

Related publications

P1: A perceptual impact model of material, quality, and identity in wood furniture consumers' value associations (2025)

Furniture and Wooden Material Research Journal, 8(2), pp. 389-403. (Journal article)

P2: A kreatívipar dinamikája: értékteremtés és fogyasztói élmény a tudásalapú gazdaságban (2025)

In: A kreatív ipar az alkotói és befogadói szemléletben : tanulmányok. 171 p. pp. 105-114. , 10 p. (Book chapter)

P3: New Luxury Positions: Value-Fusion Offerings through the Synergy of Integration Network Development, Hyper-Personalized Identity Design and Price Acceptance Mechanisms (2025)

In: 6th Monaco Symposium on Luxury. Luxury: a Story of Heritage, Innovation and Disruption in the AI Era. (Abstract) International University of Monaco. 75 p. pp. 28., 1 p.

P4: Fenntarthatóság és kreativitás a XXI. században: metamodern kihívások és transzdiszciplináris megoldások (2025)

In: A kreatív ipar az alkotói és befogadói szemléletben : tanulmányok. 171 p. pp. 75-84. , 10 p. (Book chapter)

P5: Creative Industry Value Creation and Sustainable Consumer Experience in the Metamodern Society (2025)

In: FENNTARTHATÓSÁGI ÁTMENET – INNOVÁCIÓS

ÖKOSZISZTÉMÁK – DIGITÁLIS MEGOLDÁSOK:
Konferenciakötet 651 p. pp. 568-581., 14 p. (Book chapter)

P6: Smart Network: The Role of Meta-Organizational Networks in the Sustainability-Digital Transition (2024) In: Wood 4 Sustainability : Processing, Construction, Products and Design. 281 p. pp. 150-160. , 11 p. (Book chapter)

P7: Metamarketing: fenntartható innovációk a valós és virtuális lehetőségek imperatív szimbiózisa mentén (2024) In: FENNTARTHATÓSÁGI ÁTMENET: KIHÍVÁSOK ÉS INNOVATÍV MEGOLDÁSOK. 821 p. pp. 237-260, 24 p. (Book chapter)

P8: Fenntarthatóság és design kapcsolata a hazai bútorgyártásban (2022) In: GAZDASÁG ÉS TÁRSADALOM 15 (33): 4 pp. 21-46., 26p. (Journal article)

P9: Stílustranszfer és a kreativitás kodifikálása – művészetértelmezés a szingularitás küszöbén (2023)
Művészet-elmélet és értékmenedzsment az MI korában. MTA VEAB Gazdaság-, Jog- és Társadalomtudományi Szakbizottság Képzőművészet, Művészetelmélet és Design Munkabizottsága, ELTE. (Conference presentation)

P10: Value Creation in the Creative Industry and Sustainable Consumer Experience in the Metamodern Society (2024)
In: FENNTARTHATÓSÁGI ÁTMENET – INNOVÁCIÓS ÖKOSZISZTÉMÁK – DIGITÁLIS MEGOLDÁSOK 128 p. pp. 120-120., 1 p. (Abstract)

P11: A designesztétika gazdasági megközelítésének lehetőségei (Reményi A., Zalavári J.) (2024)

In: FENNTARTHATÓSÁGI ÁTMENET: KIHÍVÁSOK ÉS INNOVATÍV MEGOLDÁSOK 821 p. pp. 76-97., 22p. (Book chapter)

P12: A design hét megjelenési szintjei (2023)

In: Az alkalmazott művészet létmódjai és a kreatív ipar kihívásai napjainkban 348 p. pp. 152-160., 10 p. (Book chapter)

P13: SMART NETWORK: metaszervezeti hálózat, mint a fenntarthatósági - digitális átmenet fúziója (2023)

In: FENNTARTHATÓSÁGI ÁTMENET: KIHÍVÁSOK ÉS INNOVATÍV MEGOLDÁSOK 148 p. p. 34 (Abstract)

P14: Metamarketing: fenntartható innovációk a valós és virtuális lehetőségek imperatív szimbiózisa mentén

In: EMOK PhD Master Fórum, Szeged, 2023.08.23., (Conference presentation)

P15: Design fenntarthatósági stratégia marketing szemszögből (2023)

In: Közgazdász Doktoranduszok és Kutatók IX. Nemzetközi Téli Konferenciája 282 p. pp. 195-203., 9 p. (Book chapter)

P16: Fenntarthatóság és design a hazai bútorgyártásban (2022) In: FABUNIÓ KONFERENCIA 2023: OTTHONDesign ÉRTÉKTEREMTŐ FA- ÉS BÚTORIPAR Hungexpo Bp. (Conference presentation and journal article)