Understanding the Chinese luxury market
A research into China’s luxury fashion consumerism

Process Book Martijn van der Bas 2016

This source helped me gain more perspective in the differences between China and the West in what way people express themselves.


This article gave me a lot of insight into what has been happening to the economy of China in the past and what role the government plays in this. But also about what is expected to happen in the future.


This report pictured the difference demographics of the Chinese luxury fashion consumer for me. It worked with visuals that were helpful in understanding the issue.


This article was helpful in revealing statistics about the e-tail market of China.


I used this news article to find out about the abolishment of the one-child policy in China.


This article opened up my mind about interdependency as a factor in Chinese culture and how gift gifting is a part of this.


This piece helped me further understand Chinese rationale for buying luxury products.

"luxury goods are items that are expensive, exclusive and show power, something that is nonessential and provides satisfaction"


This article enlightened me on the reasons why Chinese luxury fashion consumers prefer to buy their products in a store compared to online.


This report of the CIA helped me to form a nice overview of what has been happening to China’s economy over the last 30 years and also had a lot of statistics to picture these developments.


This piece was helpful to understanding why the Chinese love to consume luxury products.


This article I could use a lot of concerning information about the middle-class of China. It not only defines what this middle class is about but also what their reasons for doing things are.


This article made it more clear to me what is so special about a luxury brand, and what it makes it different from a “normal” brand.


This news article was very insightful into the daigou trade, explaining what it is, how it came to become present in China and what is expected to happen to it in the future.

More information about the democratisation of luxury.


This report was super helpful. You can find a couple of its visuals in the appendix of my research report. I love it when a report comes with a nice visuals that makes things so much clearer.

Informative report about the e-tail market of China. Also had informative visuals, of which you can find a couple in the appendix.

News article that I could use for several things: It was helpful in describing the “new normal” in the economy and the developments of the middle class of China. But also the e-tail market and the fact that the Chinese are buying a lot of products abroad were mentioned in this article. I could even use it for the rationale of buying products because the act of gift giving is also covered in this article.

This piece talks about the importance of humility in Chinese society.

A helpful article in defining what luxury is.

Introducing the term democratisation of luxury.


Data I needed to make a distinction between China and the US about the average age of millionaire in each country.


I used this article to describe why the Chinese are consuming luxury products. What kind of social benefits it gives them. It mostly focusses on the importance of interdependency in the Chinese culture.


In this article I found different reasons wether or not to keep or open retail stores in China. Nice that it gave clear reasons.


Helpful article in describing the phenomenon of the democratisation of luxury. Also introduced a new term to describe this: Populence, i.e. popular opulence.


This article helped me to get a bigger overview of what has happened since the 90’s in China and linking China’s progress to the progress of other countries.


Insightful piece about the differences in self worth and reflection between American and Chinese citizen. Used to describe these differences and how this influences the rationale of Chinese in buying luxury fashion products.
This article gave an overview of the developments of small, craftsman family-owned companies to an economic sector on its own led by dominant luxury groups. What kind of strategics were applied and how this has made the luxury fashion industry grow to the size it is today.

The articles of Kapferer have greatly helped me to further investigate what luxury is and how luxury brands are operating.

How to brand luxury and how this is perceived by the consumer.

This article informed me further about the branding of luxury products.

Really helpful article. The information that Bain & Company made available has been of great support to my research report. Helped me to put a number on the size of Chinese luxury market and the daigou trade.

Clear article that helped to understand the differences in perception between American and Chinese consumers in how they evaluate an opulent lifestyle.

This article helped me to further define the distinction between the coastal and more inland cities. Differences became more clear, but also an outlook for the future is given. Helped me to further
construct where the demographic differences between consumers inland and in a city like Shanghai come from.


From this article I got a more in-depth understanding of the concepts of independent and interdependent selves and the social hierarchy in China.


Described what is special about a luxury brand, what it is that makes it different from any other brand. It also talks about how luxury brands have become big, different strategies and outcomes.


Statistical data on how the e-tail market is expected to develop.


Made me better understand the currency fluctuations of the renminbi. And also the consequences for China for devaluing its currency. Made me better understand how the stockmarket works and how this has an effect on the economy of a country.


What is a luxury brand. The democratisation of luxury is increasing the customer base of luxury brands. Chinese culture is different than the one we find in the West. The middle class consumer in China is using luxury to feel apart of the elite, upper class.


This article helped me better understand how the masstige brands came to become so popular.

Solca further explained the differences of middle class consumers with the upperclass consumers in this article for me. She also gave directions to luxury brands on how to handle middle class consumers which I thought were insightful and made me better understand the market.


Put the luxury idea for me in perspective, making me understand better that luxury means something different to someone depending on time, place and context. Also made differences of the Chinese luxury market with the Western market more clear to me, with nice details and examples. Also talks about the Chinese going abroad to buy their luxury products.


This article provided me with a lot of trends going on in China. It talks about a backlash against living too lavish, China becoming the biggest luxury market in the world and the trips the Chinese make to other countries. It also discusses an upcoming middle class market


This website provided me with statistical data and I used it to investigate the income differences in China.


I used this website for its information on the growth of China’s GDP.


I used both these articles by Triandis to describe the differences between an interdependent and an independent self. How this affects peoples behaviour.


I used the information in this article to research the phenomenon of the democratisation of luxury. What masstige brands mean for their consumers.

I used the information in this article to build up a picture of what a luxury brand is, what it is what makes it different from any other "normal" brand. I used it to formulate a definition of a luxury brand.


This article made it clear that the concept of luxury is all in the perception of the customer. It is something that is more a personal thing, something that can be luxurious to one person is just a regular thing for another.


From this article I got a better understanding of the rationale of Chinese luxury fashion consumers. I used it in my fourth subquestion to further explain how the minds of the Chinese work.


Even though this is an old source, I used a part of it to describe the culture in China. It is from the basis that has already been built up hundreds of years ago that this culture has been shaped to what it is today. It is funny that more than 50 years ago, Weber already made an prediction how this culture would change and to see that it actually is becoming true.


This article was of great help in describing the differences between the Chinese and Western culture. How this affect the behaviour and perception of buying luxury fashion products. This article also helped me to find other interesting articles that I could use for my fourth subquestion.


Introducing the concept of masstige, i.e. mass prestige.


Even though an older source, it is describing how the perceptions of luxury consumption by society. It is still viable to be used the Chinese society today, with some corrections.
From this news article I learned more about the income inequalities in China and how this is affecting society.


This article further expounds on the middle class consumer market and how this is expected to develop. It also talks about how luxury brands can change their strategies to market more towards this upcoming market.


This article gave a nice overview of the rationale behind the consumption of luxury fashion products by Chinese consumers. It talks about the middle class, what their perception towards luxury fashion products is. It also talks about conformity as an important value in Chinese society and how this affects behaviour.