

The Role of Influencing Factors on Brand Marketing Performance: A Case Study of Le Labo

Yu Jiazhen, Loo Yew Liang

Institute of International Education, New Era University College, Kajang, Selangor, Malaysia

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ABSTRACT

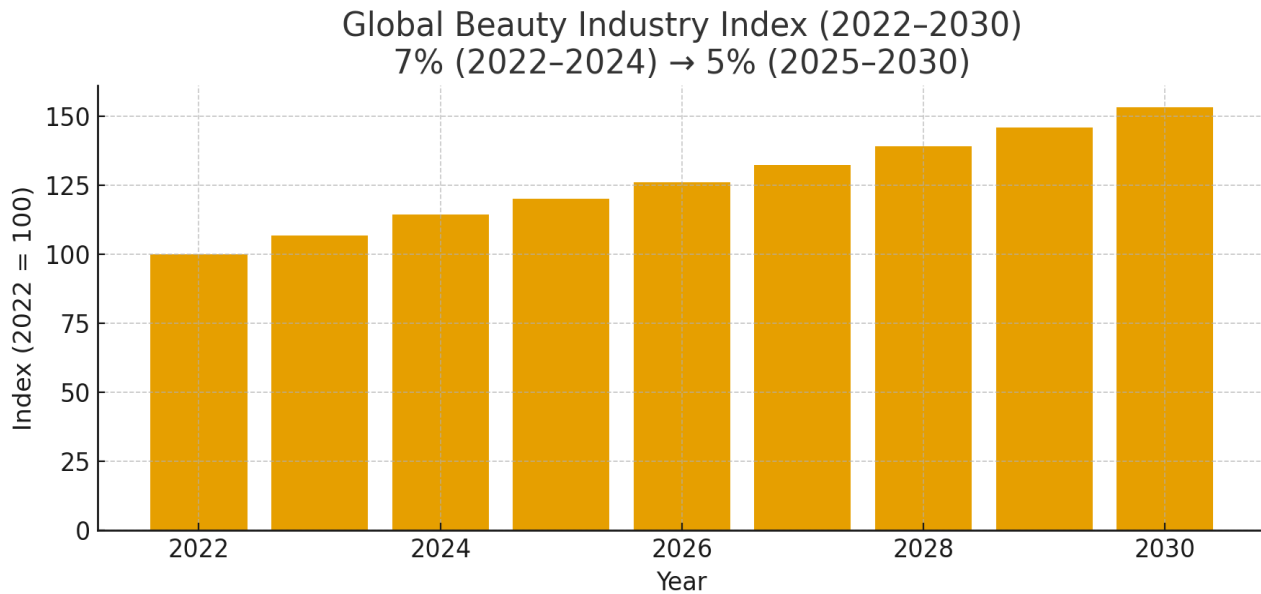
Global brand communication and cultural interaction have become increasingly frequent in recent years. This study selects the niche fragrance brand Le Labo as the research object. The purpose is to examine whether visual design, cultural localization and media integration jointly influence brand communication performance and shape brand marketing outcomes. The analysis focuses on three dimensions, namely brand visual management, cross-cultural visual localization and integrated media communication. Based on these dimensions, the study develops a conceptual model built on visual consistency, cultural resonance and communication synergy. The model is intended to explain how brands maintain a balance between global standardization and local adaptation, and how they build emotional connection and value recognition in this process. Theoretical foundations are drawn from visual recognition, cross-cultural communication and integrated marketing communication. The study uses a mixed approach combining quantitative questionnaires and qualitative visual analysis. Consumers from Beijing, Shanghai and Shenzhen are selected as samples, and their feedback reflects their perception of visual consistency, cultural fit and media integration. The findings show that brand marketing performance comes from the combined effect of visual cues, cultural contexts and communication strategies. The results also indicate that emotional perception and value recognition are often formed through the synergy of these elements. The study concludes by summarizing the main findings and acknowledging limitations in both sample coverage and analytical scope. It further recommends that future studies continue to test this logic in broader cultural settings and more diverse media systems so as to expand research in visual communication and brand management.

Keywords: Brand Visual Management, Cross-Cultural Visual Localization Strategy, Integrated Media Communication Strategy, Brand Marketing Performance, Le Labo

Background of the Study

Over the past decade, the global luxury and niche fragrance industries have undergone significant transformations with the market gradually shifting from product-oriented approaches to experience-driven strategies and design-driven value creation. According to McKinsey & Company's "Beauty Industry Report 2025 (State of Beauty 2025)", despite global economic uncertainties, the beauty sector maintains an average annual growth rate of approximately 5%, projected to continue through 2030. This growth momentum primarily stems from consumers increasing focus on authenticity, craftsmanship, and brand storytelling (McKinsey & Company, 2025). Against this backdrop, niche fragrance brands have redefined luxury brand connotations through sensory experiences, emotional resonance, and unique visual communication strategies, effectively conveying brand identity and exclusivity.

Figure 1: Global Beauty Industry Growth Index (2022–2030)



Source: McKinsey & Company’s “Beauty Industry Report 2025 (State of Beauty 2025)

Le Labo was founded in 2006 in New York, and it is often regarded as an example of how a brand can shift from product logic to experience-based branding. The brand is easily recognized by its pharmacy-like bottles, its minimalist typography, its amber glass containers and its handwritten labels. These elements are not random decoration. They work together and turn something invisible like fragrance into something that feels like a narrative or a ritual that can be seen and remembered (Le Labo, n.d.-a; Le Labo, n.d.-b). The brand relies heavily on simplicity and authenticity, and this visual approach has already become one of its most important sources of differentiation. In 2014, the Estée Lauder Companies acquired Le Labo to strengthen its premium fragrance portfolio, and this event shows that design and storytelling still hold long-term strategic value in the creation of brand value (Estée Lauder Companies, 2014; Premium Beauty News, 2014).

The success of Le Labo does not come from one single factor. It comes from the interaction between brand visual management, cross-cultural visual localization and integrated media communication. These elements connect visual thinking with the logic of strategic management. They also make visual identity and communication work as competitive advantages that can be observed and discussed. Brand visual management reflects the brand’s insistence on craftsmanship and authenticity. Cross-cultural localization helps the brand speak to audiences in different cultural settings without losing its core. Integrated media communication then ensures that the message remains coherent across different platforms.

Keller (2009) and Aaker (1991) pointed out that a brand can strengthen consumer memory and enhance customer-based brand equity when it maintains a distinctive and consistent identity. In the case of Le Labo, the minimalist aesthetic is not simply a matter of taste. It works as a strategic design choice that brings economic value. This approach is consistent with current ideas of value co-creation and experience-oriented branding. When a brand keeps its visual language unified, nurtures cultural resonance and maintains message consistency across media, it improves consumer experience, builds loyalty and supports long-term growth in brand value.

Problem Statement

While design-driven luxury brands have rapidly gained global prominence, there remains a critical gap in both academic research and practical implementation regarding the systematic correlation between visual communication strategies and measurable brand marketing performance. Many brands invest heavily in visual aesthetics yet lack systematic evaluation of their impact on brand awareness, consumer loyalty, and behavioral outcomes (Keller, 2013). Meanwhile, globalization has introduced cultural complexity. While maintaining globally consistent visual identity, brands must also adapt communication approaches to local cultures (Kim,

2017; Hofstede, 2011). Insufficient localization may create a sense of alienation, whereas excessive localization could undermine the brands core values.

Le Labos expansion in Europe, North America, Asia, and especially in the China market fully demonstrates the challenge of this balance. Facing the growing emphasis on cultural identity and lifestyle differences among Chinese consumers, Le Labo maintains its global core narrative of "craftsmanship" and "purity" while gradually integrating into the Eastern aesthetic context. For instance, in visual presentation, it places greater emphasis on the balance between negative space and natural materials to align with Chinese consumers cultural preference for "stillness" and "harmony." On the communication front, the brand conveys the philosophy of "slow fragrance" through localized social media platforms like WeChat and Xiaohongshu, creating an emotional resonance between its brand tone and the lifestyle of Chinas urban elite.

In addition, the integrated communication strategy of brands across physical stores, digital platforms, and social media continues to reinforce their "low-key and authentic" brand atmosphere. However, current academic research on how brand visual management, cross-cultural adaptation, and integrated media communication interact to influence brand marketing performance remains relatively limited. Exploring this research gap not only helps improve the theoretical framework of visual communication from the perspectives of strategic management and marketing, but also provides important practical insights for global luxury brands to optimize brand positioning, enhance market performance, and achieve sustainable competitive advantages in China and other multicultural markets.

Research Objectives and Research Questions

The research objectives (RO) and research questions (RQ) of study have been formulated as below:

RO1: Brand visual management has a positive impact on brand marketing performance.

RO2: Cross-cultural visual localization strategy has a positive impact on brand marketing performance.

RO3: Integrated media communication strategy has a positive impact on brand marketing performance.

RQ1: Does brand visual management influence brand marketing performance?

RQ2: Does cross-cultural visual localization strategy influence brand marketing performance?

RQ3: Does integrated media communication strategy influence brand marketing performance?

The Significance of Study

At the theoretical level, this study attempts to close the gap between two traditionally separate domains: visual communication design and strategic brand management. Existing literature rarely treats visual design as a variable that affects measurable brand outcomes. Simonson and Schmitt (1997) and Foroudi et al. (2021) pointed out that visual identity is more than a symbolic design element. It serves as a vehicle for emotional communication and value co-creation between firms and consumers. Visual cues shape expectations and influence how people perceive brands, build trust and develop loyalty. By linking this view to Keller's (2013) brand equity model, this study extends the explanatory range of brand equity theory. It provides a theoretical path to examine how design elements can generate quantifiable performance within managerial systems. In doing so, it enriches brand communication theory with a behavioural mechanism perspective and contributes a new analytical dimension for studying brand equity within strategic management frameworks.

From the practical implication, this study offers decision-making value for brand managers who must balance creative design with strategic performance goals. Through the analysis of visual consistency, cultural sensitivity and media integration, the findings reveal how these elements work together to improve brand awareness, strengthen loyalty and enhance market performance. For global luxury brands, the implications are particularly

relevant. The results help managers identify communication barriers caused by cultural differences and provide guidance on how to balance global consistency with cultural diversity (Allan, 2022; Kim, 2017). By developing a cross-cultural visual communication and performance model, this research supports companies in designing brand strategies that are both adaptive and competitively sustainable. At the same time, it offers practical insights for firms operating in design-driven business models that aim to convert design investment into long-term brand value growth.

Underpinning Theories

Brand Visual Management

Brand Visual Management (BVM) is an essential link between design and brand communication. It is not limited to visible items such as logos or packages. It functions as a structured system that keeps the visual identity of a brand consistent across channels and contexts. This consistency helps consumers understand what a brand stands for and how it differentiates itself. Simonson and Schmitt (1997) regarded visual identity as the central component of marketing aesthetics. They argued that the proper use of shapes, colours and imagery can generate a sensory bridge between brands and consumers. This bridge strengthens trust, increases memorability and nurtures emotional attachment. These three outcomes are fundamental pillars of long-term brand equity. Melewar and Saunders (1998) extended this view through the Corporate Visual Identity System (CVIS). They stated that standardized design elements such as typography, colour schemes and spatial layout turn abstract brand meaning into a perceivable form. A structured design system also enhances consistency in both external and internal messages. Stable visual signals therefore support clearer and more lasting cognitive impressions. Many fragrance brands confirm these ideas in practice. Their use of simple colours, clean typesetting and hand-finished labels helps communicate authenticity and personal intention. In such cases, visual elements act as material expressions of brand value.

With the evolution of design thinking, BVM is no longer seen as a passive tool for enforcing uniformity. It is now treated as a driver of continuous innovation. Pamfilie and Croitoru (2018) showed that design management allows experimentation to take place within organizational strategies. This helps brands maintain internal stability while still trying new ideas in their external appearance. Foroudi, Mahdavi and Foroudi (2021) reported that visual consistency not only shapes external impressions but also reinforces internal brand recognition. Strong internal recognition often leads to stronger cohesion and trust among consumers. Jin, Yoon and Lee (2019) found direct evidence that the use of consistent brand colours affects brand associations and emotional loyalty. Van den Bosch, De Jong and Elving (2005) also noted that visual coherence improves corporate credibility and reputation. Visual design therefore is not a neutral language. It carries emotional weight and can send signals about sincerity and reliability. Subtle approaches such as muted colour choices and minimal packaging often communicate a sense of authentic care. These expressions build resonance and encourage trust without the need for overt persuasion.

BVM also creates value through differentiation. Kapferer (1997) argued that visual identity materializes intangible ideas and makes brand beliefs concrete. Johansson and Holm (2006) remarked that design management can extend brand meaning beyond functional claims to cultural space. In this process, visual assets evolve from mere product markers into cultural and emotional carriers. This trend is even more pronounced in digital environments. Jurišová (2020) observed that visual identity is now a participatory process in which consumers also contribute meaning through sharing and reinterpretation. Digital consistency strengthens brand recognition and protects emotional continuity across platforms. Virtanen (2019) conceptualized visual identity as a system of symbolic forms that sustains coherence in multicultural and multi-media settings. Effective visual management therefore relies not on mechanical sameness but on the ability to communicate emotional and value-based stability. In essence, BVM operates as both a design practice and a strategic method. It turns visual expression into a long-term tool for building influence in culturally diverse and competitive markets.

Cross-cultural Communication and Localization

Brands operating in global markets must interpret how meaning changes across cultures. Kim (2017) proposed the Integrative Communication Theory of Cross-Cultural Adaptation to explain this process. The theory states

that individuals and organizations reach functional alignment and psychological balance through integration and adaptation. It emphasizes identity negotiation and cultural integration. These concepts matter to international brands because they explain how a brand can preserve its core identity while still forming emotional resonance with a local audience. Cheon, Cho and Sutherland (2007) showed through a meta-analysis of international advertising that effective communication across borders requires a balance between standardization and localization. Brands need to maintain a consistent identity at the global level while aligning with the symbolic systems and emotional logic of the local culture. Many successful luxury and lifestyle brands apply this dual logic in practice.

Moonesar and Thibaud (2018) expanded this idea with the concept of Glocalization. They argued that cross-cultural communication is not a direct transfer of language but a reinterpretation of values. A brand should carry a unified spiritual core into a new market while using localized expressions to translate values like craftsmanship, care and individuality into cultural language that can be perceived in context. Fragrance brands offer clear examples. By creating exclusive products for specific cities, they show cultural awareness and respect. This approach generates emotional resonance through both olfactory and visual dimensions. Research by Madden, Hewett and Roth (2000) confirmed that cultural differences shape how people perceive colours, symbols and visual styles. Cultural semiotics determines whether a visual signal will evoke warmth, distance or misunderstanding. The use of low-saturation palettes, minimalist layouts and neutral packaging can limit cultural misinterpretation and allow consumers to assign their own emotional meaning to the brand.

The rise of social media has changed the nature of cross-cultural communication. It has shifted from one-way information delivery to cultural dialogue. Allan (2022) and De Mooij (2019) emphasized that cross-cultural brand building depends less on language accuracy and more on understanding consumer psychology and cultural expectations. Yusuf (2023) described brand communication in the digital age as a co-creative exchange in which meaning is constructed jointly rather than imposed. Custom packaging and personalized branding can give consumers a feeling of being recognized. That feeling itself forms a cultural narrative. Khair (2022) noted that localization consists of both technical modification and cultural shaping. These adjustments influence how sincere a brand appears. Cheung (2010) pointed out that persuasive communication works only when it fits the sociocultural context. Craig and Douglas (2006) concluded that cultural adaptation is an ongoing process of negotiating meaning. Global brand success depends on achieving emotional and value resonance across different cultures. When brands communicate with sincerity, restraint and respect, they can move beyond linguistic and geographic boundaries and establish long-lasting emotional connections and a sense of global identity.

Integrated marketing communications and media strategy

Modern brands must ensure that their communication remains coherent across media environments. Rose and Miller (1994) noted that Integrated Marketing Communication emerged from the convergence of advertising and public relations. Over time, it evolved into a management philosophy that links communication strategy with brand outcomes. Keller (2013) explained that brand equity increases when communication elements coordinate across touchpoints. Luxton, Reid and Mavondo (2015) offered empirical support for this view. Their work showed that an organization's IMC integration capability has a direct effect on brand performance and customer loyalty. These studies point to the same principle. Integration is not only the alignment of media channels. It is also the ability to extend and reinforce a brand's narrative in a way that lets consumers experience a unified and coherent identity across visual, emotional and experiential layers.

Digital transformation has pushed IMC into a new stage. Mulhern (2013) argued that in the digital era the core of integration lies in connectivity rather than channel management. Brands must form continuous exchanges with consumers across their life journeys. Rashkova et al. (2024) observed that global brands now face the task of balancing standardized digital communication with localized expression in multichannel settings. Vernuccio and Ceccotti (2015) stressed that successful implementation depends on building a strategic consistency culture. This requires shared visions and cross-department collaboration to ensure that tone, values and communicative styles remain unified. Kitchen and Burgmann (2015) proposed that integrated communication should operate at a strategic level that merges marketing, design and organizational culture. When this cultural integration is in place, a brand can preserve coherence and authenticity through stable aesthetic language and narrative logic.

In the current media environment, IMC functions not only as an information system but also as a social space where meaning is co-created. Juska (2021) and Davidson (2010) argued that cross-platform integration is essential for maintaining engagement. Gonzalez (2002) noted that social media operates as both a channel and a site for meaning reproduction and emotional interaction. Jusuf (2024) explained that the strength of IMC lies in coherent storytelling and media synergy, which enhance recognition and emotional connection through consistent messages and visual symbols. Niemann-Struweg (2014) and Caemmerer (2009) described IMC as a cyclical process of planning, execution and feedback across platforms. Successful brands refine authenticity and resonance over time through audience interaction. The Brand Narrative Theory of Quesenberry and Coolsen (2023) shows that under digital dominance authenticity and emotional sincerity outweigh traditional persuasion. Brands that communicate stable and sincere narratives through visual, linguistic and experiential elements are more likely to build enduring emotional bonds and sustain communicative value in the long term.

Brand marketing performance

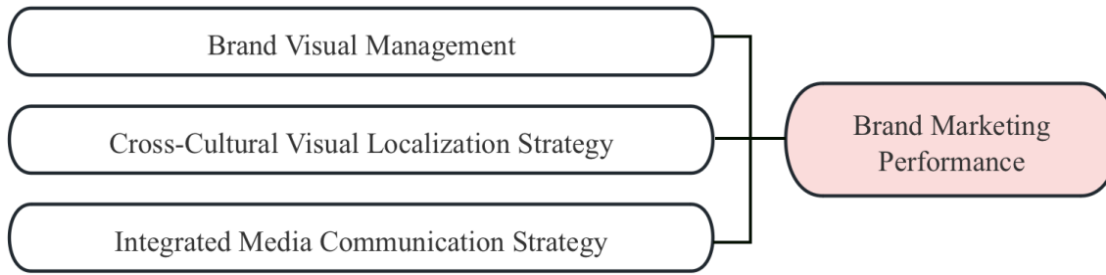
The performance of a brand can be assessed through the value it creates, the emotional connections it builds and the competitive advantage it maintains in the marketplace. This concept is broader than sales figures. It also includes intangible outcomes such as brand equity, customer loyalty and psychological resonance. Madhavaram, Badrinarayanan and McDonald (2005) pointed out that brand identity and integrated marketing communication are key drivers of brand equity. Consistent messaging increases visibility and improves brand recall. Over time, such consistency helps build trust and long-lasting emotional attachment among consumers. Keller (2013) further stated that brand performance is not achieved through one-time communication but emerges as a cumulative effect formed over time and across regions. Brands that maintain a stable core image while adapting to cultural contexts tend to gain stronger global recognition and deeper recall. When a brand presents coherent visuals, demonstrates cultural empathy and communicates with authenticity, it is more likely to be perceived as credible, independent and emotionally meaningful even in complex environments.

Empirical findings support this view. Luxton, Reid and Mavondo (2015) demonstrated that integrated marketing communication directly enhances brand performance by improving information coherence and reducing cognitive bias among audiences. When consumers observe consistent visual, verbal and emotional cues, they are more willing to show trust and satisfaction. Vernuccio and Ceccotti (2015) also noted that cohesive communication shapes external reputation and strengthens internal cultural identity. This internalization produces cultural capital that can support long-term brand growth. Jusuf (2024) showed that integrated strategies increase brand awareness and emotional resonance through the combined effect of digital storytelling and experiential touchpoints. These findings indicate that brand performance is not a standalone result. It reflects strategic consistency across visual identity, cultural adaptation and integrated communication. The synergy among these elements forms the core strength that enables brands to stand out in markets driven by emotional consumption.

Table 1: Research Hypotheses

| | Description of Hypotheses | Independent Variables | Dependent Variable |
|-----|---|---|-----------------------------|
| H1 | Brand visual management has a significant positive impact on brand marketing performance | Brand visual management | Brand marketing performance |
| H 2 | Cross-cultural visual localization has a significant positive impact on brand marketing performance | Cross-cultural visual localization | Brand marketing performance |
| H 3 | Integrated media communication strategies have a significant positive impact on brand marketing performance | Integrated media communication strategies | Brand marketing performance |

Figure 2: Research Framework



RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research subjects of this study were adult consumer groups in China’s first-tier cities which are Beijing, Shanghai, and Shenzhen who had knowledge or contact with Le Labo. Considering the brands positioning in the high-end fragrance market, its target audience includes not only young consumers but also urban populations of different age groups with aesthetic awareness and purchasing power. Therefore, this study did not set an upper age limit for respondents, and all those aged 18 or above were included in the sample. This group generally demonstrates high sensitivity to design, experience, aesthetic narratives, and cultural expression, as well as the ability to evaluate brand visuals and communication. The study employed convenience sampling, distributing approximately 330 questionnaires, with 300 valid responses ultimately selected. This sample size meets the recommended standards for multivariate statistical analysis (Hair et al., 2019), providing sufficient data support for subsequent statistical inferences.

Table 3: Measurement of Variables or Instrumentation

| Section | Source | Measurement Item | Scale Type | Number of Items |
|--|--|---|--------------|-----------------|
| Section A: Brand Visual Management | Van den Bosch et al. (2005); Foroudi et al. (2021) | The brand’s visual style (store/packaging/layout) appears consistent and clear. | Likert scale | 5 |
| | | The brand’s visual expression reflects its values and personality. | | |
| | | There is a unified visual standard across packaging, stores, and online content. | | |
| | | The brand’s visual design enhances my trust in its quality and professionalism. | | |
| | | The brand builds a unique market differentiation through visual communication. | | |
| Section B: Cross-Cultural Visual Localization | Marcus & Gould (2012); Cheung (2010) | The brand’s visual presentation in the Chinese market aligns with local aesthetics or lifestyle. | Likert scale | 5 |
| | | Although localized, the visual content maintains the brand’s core identity. | | |
| | | The brand’s visual expression makes me feel “understood” or culturally resonated. | | |
| | | Compared to overseas versions, the visual expression in China is easier to understand and accept. | | |
| | | This visual localization makes me more willing to approach or choose the brand. | | |

| | | | | |
|--|--|--|--------------|---|
| Section C: Integrated Media Communication | Luxton et al. (2015); Quesenberry & Coolsen (2023) | The brand delivers consistent information across all media platforms (official website/Xiaohongshu/WeChat/offline experience). | Likert scale | 5 |
| | | Its content strategy makes the brand story coherent and credible. | | |
| | | The brand's communication effectively conveys its value proposition and lifestyle philosophy. | | |
| | | Different communication channels work synergistically to reinforce the brand impression. | | |
| | | The brand's integrated communication enhances my overall experience and positive feelings. | | |
| Section D: Brand | Keller (2013); Jin et al. (2019) | My awareness of the brand has significantly increased with repeated exposure. | Likert scale | 5 |
| | | I can clearly describe how this brand differs from other fragrance brands. | | |
| | | I am willing to recommend this brand to others. | | |
| | | I feel emotional attachment or brand identification with this brand. | | |
| | | If the price is reasonable, I am willing to continue purchasing or trying new products. | | |

This study employed convenience sampling for data collection, a method suitable for research scenarios with a relatively specific target population and broad geographical distribution. Participants had to meet the inclusion criteria which having basic awareness of the Le Labo brand and exposure to its visual presentations or promotional activities (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016). The questionnaire was distributed online via Google Forms and circulated through fragrance enthusiast communities, design-related social media groups, and brand fan forums to ensure sample relevance and response validity.

While non-probability sampling has limitations in generalizability, it remains a valid and practical exploratory approach in studies examining high-end brands and luxury perception (Malhotra et al., 2020). By covering consumers from diverse cultural regions, this method reduces regional bias while enhancing the interpretability and external validity of research findings. The sampling design not only aligns with the practical accessibility of the research subjects but also provides representative baseline data for subsequent empirical analyses.

After completing the questionnaire collection, this study first employed SPSS 27.0 for data preprocessing, including missing value detection, outlier screening, and invalid sample exclusion. As Saunders et al. (2019) emphasized, data cleaning is a fundamental step in quantitative research that cannot be overlooked, as its quality directly impacts the credibility and interpretability of subsequent statistical analyses. Through rigorous processing in this phase, the study ensured the inclusion of clean and usable data for analysis, avoiding interference from unqualified data, thereby laying a solid foundation for subsequent analyses.

Subsequently, this study conducted reliability and validity assessments of the scale based on the classical measurement principles proposed by Churchill (1979) and Hair et al. (2019), with correlation analyses performed in the SPSS environment. Reliability testing confirmed the internal consistency among items, while validity testing verified whether the scale truly reflected the theoretical constructs. These procedures not only meet statistical requirements but also demonstrate a commitment to rigorous research outcomes. Through this process, the study ensured the scales quality and reliability, providing a solid methodological foundation for subsequent empirical modelling and inferences.

Pilot Test

Prior to the formal distribution of questionnaires, this study conducted a pilot test to verify the questionnaire structure and response logic, ensuring smooth implementation and confirming respondents’ ability to provide analytically valuable feedback based on real-world experiences. This assessment helped determine the scales adaptability in the target context. The pilot test involved 30 eligible adult participants from first-tier cities including Beijing, Shanghai, and Shenzhen. All participants demonstrated awareness of or prior use of the Le Labo brand, enabling them to provide precise responses to survey items from a genuine consumer perspective.

The pre-test data underwent reliability testing using SPSS 27.0. All constructs demonstrated Cronbachs α coefficients exceeding 0.70, meeting Nunnally’s (1978) criterion for good internal consistency. Participants reported clear item wording and unobstructed comprehension, with no substantial revisions required. These results confirm the scales readiness for both content validity and statistical reliability, providing methodological assurance and confidence for the formal data collection phase. This solid foundation enables subsequent empirical analyses to be conducted with greater confidence.

Table 1: Cronbach’s Alpha Result of Pilot Test

| Reliability Analysis of Pilot Study | No. of Items | Cronbach’s Alpha |
|---|--------------|------------------|
| Brand Visual Management | 5 | 0.783 |
| Cross-Cultural Visual Localization Strategy | 5 | 0.842 |
| Integrated Media Communication Strategy | 5 | 0.768 |
| Brand Marketing Performance | 5 | 0.817 |

Response Rate

This study distributed questionnaires online to consumers in first-tier cities in China. No upper limit was set on the number of questionnaires distributed; instead, the collection target was 300 valid responses, evenly distributed across Beijing, Shanghai, and Shenzhen. After the questionnaires were collected, 100 valid questionnaires were obtained from each city, totalling 300 valid responses, achieving the target sample size. Therefore, the effective response rate can be considered 100%. The response results are shown in **Table 5**:

Table 2: Response Rate

| City | Target sample size | Actual effective recovery amount | Effective response rate |
|----------|--------------------|----------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Beijing | 100 | 100 | 100% |
| Shanghai | 100 | 100 | 100% |
| Shenzhen | 100 | 100 | 100% |
| Total | 300 | 300 | 100% |

Respondent profile and attention distribution

Table 6 below shows the demographic information of the respondents collected in this study.

Table 3: Profile of Respondents

| Demographic | Frequency | Percentage (%) |
|-------------|-----------|----------------|
| Region | | |
| Beijing | 100 | 33.3 |
| Shanghai | 100 | 33.3 |
| Shenzhen | 100 | 33.3 |

| Age | | |
|-------------------|----|------|
| 18–25 years old | 93 | 31 |
| 26–30 years old | 87 | 28.9 |
| 31–35 years old | 27 | 9.0 |
| 36–40 years old | 21 | 7.0 |
| 41–45 years old | 22 | 7.3 |
| 46–55 years old | 28 | 9.3 |
| Over 55 years old | 22 | 7.3 |

The percentages mentioned above are based on 300 valid samples. As shown in the table, the sample in this study is evenly distributed across urban areas, with Beijing, Shanghai, and Shenzhen each accounting for 33.3% of the total sample. Regarding age structure, the 18–25 age group accounted for the largest proportion of respondents (31%, n=93), followed by the 26–30 age group (28.9%, n=87). Together, these two groups comprise more than half of the overall sample, indicating that younger consumers dominate awareness and participation in high-end fragrance brands. Furthermore, the 31–55 age group and above also showed a certain proportion, meaning the overall sample covers consumers of multiple age groups, providing high external representativeness and explanatory validity for subsequent analysis.

Attention distribution

Table 4: Distribution of respondents' attention to brand visual design

| Degree of attention | Frequency | Percentage (%) |
|--------------------------------|-----------|----------------|
| Pay great attention | 101 | 33.6 |
| Pay relatively close attention | 93 | 31 |
| Neutral | 41 | 13.6 |
| Pay little attention | 29 | 9.6 |
| Pay no attention at all | 36 | 12 |

The survey results show that respondents generally pay high attention to brand visual design. Among them, those who "pay close attention" and "pay some attention" accounted for 64.6% combined, indicating that visual management has a significant influence on the minds of consumers of high-end fragrance brands. Meanwhile, only about 12% of respondents indicated they paid no attention at all, suggesting that visual elements remain an important touchpoint influencing brand perception. This trend is highly consistent with the industry characteristics of the high-end fragrance sector, which emphasizes consistency between design, quality, and brand story, and provides a realistic basis for subsequent analysis of the causal relationship between visual variables and brand performance.

Descriptive Analysis

To ensure the data characteristics met the requirements of subsequent statistical analysis, this study first conducted descriptive statistical analysis on four main variables. The results (see Table 8) show that the mean scores for each variable were all above 4.0, with standard deviations ranging from 0.66 to 0.70, reflecting a generally positive and stable attitude towards the brand among respondents. Specifically, the mean scores for Brand Marketing Performance (BMP) were 4.1960, Cross-Cultural Visual Localization (CVL) were 4.1040, Integrated Media Communication Strategy (IMC) were 4.0293, and Brand Visual Management (BVM) were 4.0853. Overall, the standard deviations for each variable were all below 1.0, indicating a concentrated data distribution with minimal fluctuations, demonstrating high stability and reliability. This also indirectly reflects Le Labo's consistency and brand cohesion across visual, cultural, and communication aspects.

Table 5: Descriptive Analysis of the Variables

| Variables | mean | Standard Deviation |
|---|--------|--------------------|
| Brand Visual Management (BVM) | 4.0853 | 0.66114 |
| Cross-Cultural Visual Localization (CVL) | 4.1040 | 0.70724 |
| Integrated Media Communication Strategy (IMC) | 4.0293 | 0.70256 |
| Brand Marketing Performance (BMP) | 4.1960 | 0.66018 |

Brand Visual Management

Table 9 shows that the standard deviations of various aspects of brand visual management range from 0.85 to 0.98, with a relatively concentrated distribution. This indicates that respondents generally believe that a unified and professional brand visual style can effectively strengthen brand recognition and trust.

Table 6: Brand Visual Management

| No. | Items | Min | Standard Deviation |
|-----|--|-----|--------------------|
| 1 | The brand's visual style (storefront/packaging/layout) leaves a consistent and clear impression. | 1 | 0.963 |
| 2 | The brand's visual expression can reflect its values and personality. | 1 | 0.850 |
| 3 | There is a unified visual standard among packaging, storefronts and online content. | 1 | 0.949 |
| 4 | The brand's visual design enhances my trust in its quality and professionalism. | 1 | 0.984 |
| 5 | The brand has established a unique differentiated market image through visual communication. | 1 | 0.902 |

Cross-Cultural Visual Localization

As shown in Table 10, respondents generally approved of the brand's visual presentation in the Chinese market, believing it effectively integrated local cultural aesthetics with the brand's original style. The standard deviation ranged from 0.91 to 1.05, indicating that most evaluations were concentrated, but a small number of differences still existed, suggesting that consumers had different perceptions of the balance between cultural adaptation and brand identity maintenance.

Table 7: Cross-Cultural Visual Localization

| No. | Items | Min | Standard Deviation |
|-----|--|-----|--------------------|
| 1 | The brand's visual presentation in the Chinese market conforms to local cultural aesthetics or lifestyles. | 1 | 0.913 |
| 2 | Although the visual content is adapted to local culture, it still maintains the brand's core identity. | 1 | 1.052 |
| 3 | The brand's visual expression makes me feel "understood" or "have cultural resonance". | 1 | 0.950 |
| 4 | Compared with the overseas communication version, the brand's visual expression in China is easier to understand and accept. | 1 | 0.906 |
| 5 | This kind of visual localization makes me more willing to approach or choose the brand. | 1 | 0.935 |

Integrated Media Communication Strategy

Table 11 shows respondents' evaluations of the brand's integrated media communication strategy. The first item, "The brand maintains consistency in its message across various media platforms," has a minimum value of 1 and a standard deviation of 0.95, indicating a relatively consistent view among respondents on this item. In contrast, the third item, "The brand's communication methods effectively convey its value proposition and lifestyle philosophy," has the highest standard deviation at 1.03, suggesting some differences in understanding and acceptance of the communication content. Overall, the standard deviations range from 0.93 to 1.03, indicating that most respondents generally recognize the consistency and synergy of the brand's multi-platform communication, and the integrated communication strategy performs well overall.

Table 8: Integrated Media Communication Strategy

| No. | Items | Min | Standard Deviation |
|-----|--|-----|--------------------|
| 1 | The information conveyed by the brand on various media platforms (official website/ Xiaohongshu/ WeChat/offline experience) is | 1 | 0.948 |
| 2 | Its content strategy endows the brand story with coherence and credibility. | 1 | 0.928 |
| 3 | The brand's communication methods can effectively convey its value proposition and life philosophy. | 1 | 1.026 |
| 4 | There is a synergy between different communication channels, which enhances the brand impression. | 1 | 0.983 |
| 5 | The brand's integrated communication has improved my overall experience and preference for the brand. | 1 | 0.995 |

Brand Marketing Performance

Table 12 reflects stable brand marketing performance, with a standard deviation ranging from 0.90 to 0.94. Most respondents indicated a significant increase in brand awareness and the formation of emotional identification and attachment. Furthermore, high recommendation and repurchase intentions demonstrate that the brand has successfully established a positive market image and a foundation of trust in consumers' minds.

Table 9: Brand Marketing Performance

| No. | Items | Min | Standard Deviation |
|-----|---|-----|--------------------|
| 1 | My awareness of the brand has significantly increased with the number of exposures. | 1 | 0.907 |
| 2 | I can clearly describe the differences between this brand and other fragrance brands. | 1 | 0.904 |
| 3 | I am willing to recommend this brand to others. | 1 | 0.922 |
| 4 | I have emotional attachment or brand identity to this brand. | 1 | 0.941 |
| 5 | If the price is reasonable, I am willing to continue purchasing or trying its new products. | 1 | 0.906 |

Reliability Analysis

To test the internal consistency of the scale, this study used Cronbach's α coefficient test (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994) to assess the reliability and measurement stability of each variable. The results showed that the α values for the four core variables ranged from 0.754 to 0.796, all exceeding the statistical minimum standard of 0.70, indicating that the scale has good internal consistency and reliability. Notably, the α values for brand visual management and brand marketing performance were relatively higher, suggesting that the measurement items

in these two constructs are closely related and can more realistically reflect consumers' subjective perceptions of brand visual experience and market performance. This result not only validates the scientific nature of the questionnaire design but also lays a solid and reliable quantitative foundation for subsequent regression analysis.

Table 10: Result of Reliability Analysis

| Variables | Cronbach's Alpha | Number of Items |
|---|------------------|-----------------|
| Brand Visual Management (BVM) | 0.754 | 5 |
| Cross-Cultural Visual Localization (CVL) | 0.796 | 5 |
| Integrated Media Communication Strategy (IMC) | 0.767 | 5 |
| Brand Marketing Performance (BMP) | 0.769 | 5 |

Correlation

Given that the data used in this study is based on a five-point Likert scale, which is of the ordinal type, the Spearman correlation coefficient was selected for variable relationship testing. Table 14 shows a significant positive correlation between brand visual management and brand marketing performance ($r = 0.514$, $p < 0.01$). When a brand presents a clear, consistent, and recognizable design language in its visual system, consumers are more likely to build trust and develop emotional identification, thereby improving the overall brand performance.

Table 11: Brand Visual Management (BVM) and Brand Marketing Performance (BMP)

| | | BVM | BMP |
|--------------|-----|-------------------------|-------|
| Spearman Rho | BVM | Correlation coefficient | 1.000 |
| | | Sig. (2-way) | . |
| | | N | 300 |
| | BMP | Correlation coefficient | 0.514 |
| | | Sig. (2-way) | 0.000 |
| | | N | 300 |

As shown in Table 15, the correlation coefficient between cross-cultural visual localization and brand marketing performance is 0.402 ($p < 0.01$). This verifies that the localization of visual symbols and cultural expressions by brands can effectively shorten the psychological distance between them and consumers, making the brand more approachable and culturally resonant.

Table 12: Cross-Cultural Visual Localization (CVL) and Brand Marketing Performance (BMP)

| | | CVL | BMP |
|--------------|-----|-------------------------|-------|
| Spearman Rho | CVL | Correlation coefficient | 1.000 |
| | | Sig. (2-way) | . |
| | | N | 300 |
| | BMP | Correlation coefficient | 0.402 |
| | | Sig. (2-way) | 0.000 |
| | | N | 300 |

As shown in Table 16, the correlation coefficient between integrated media communication strategies and brand marketing performance is 0.390 ($p < 0.01$), which also indicates a significant relationship. When a brand achieves coherence and coordination in its communication content across different media platforms, it can further enhance consumers' overall experience and brand impression.

Table 13: Integrated Media Communication Strategy (IMC) and Brand Marketing Performance BMP)

| | | IMC | BMP |
|--------------|-----|-------------------------|-------|
| Spearman Rho | IMC | Correlation coefficient | 1.000 |
| | | Sig. (2-way) | . |
| | | N | 300 |
| | BMP | Correlation coefficient | 0.390 |
| | | Sig. (2-way) | 0.000 |
| | | N | 300 |

In summary, all three independent variables showed a significant positive correlation with brand marketing performance, with brand visual management having the most prominent influence, highlighting the core position of visual identity in brand communication and value creation.

Hypothesis Testing

After completing the multiple regression analysis, this study further used the model output to determine whether each research hypothesis was valid. The regression results (see Table 17) show that all three independent variables have a statistically significant positive impact on the dependent variable. Therefore, the hypotheses can be verified one by one as follows:

Hypothesis 1: Brand visual management has a significant impact on brand marketing performance.

According to the regression results, the standardized coefficient of brand visual management is $\beta = 0.441$, with a significance level of $p = 0.000$ ($p < 0.01$), and $t = 7.996$, which is statistically significant. Therefore, this hypothesis is valid.

Hypothesis 2: Cross-cultural visual localization has a significant impact on brand marketing performance.

The analysis results show that the standardized coefficient of cross-cultural visual localization is $\beta = 0.222$, with a significance level of $p = 0.000$ ($p < 0.01$), corresponding to $t = 3.981$, showing a significant positive effect. Therefore, this hypothesis is verified.

Hypothesis 3: Integrated media communication strategy has a significant impact on brand marketing performance.

Regression coefficients show that the standardized coefficient for integrated media communication strategy is $\beta = 0.200$, with a significance level of $p = 0.000$ ($p < 0.01$) and $t = 3.783$, also meeting the significance standard. Therefore, this hypothesis is also supported. In summary, all three independent variables (brand visual management, cross-cultural visual localization, and integrated media communication strategy) have been empirically tested to have a positive impact on brand marketing performance, with brand visual management having the strongest influence. Therefore, all hypotheses proposed in this study are statistically supported.

Table 14: Summary of Multiple Linear Regression

| Model | Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients | t | Sig. |
|---|-----------------------------|------------|---------------------------|-------|-------|
| | B | Std. Error | Beta | | |
| 1 (constant) | 0.792 | 0.167 | | 4.754 | 0.000 |
| Brand Visual Management | 0.440 | 0.055 | 0.441 | 7.996 | 0.000 |
| Cross-Cultural Visual Localization | 0.207 | 0.052 | 0.222 | 3.981 | 0.000 |
| Integrated Media Communication Strategy | 0.188 | 0.050 | 0.200 | 3.783 | 0.000 |

Dependent Variable: Brand Marketing Performance

The results of the hypothesis tests are summarized in Table 18.

Table 15: Hypotheses Result

| No. | Hypotheses | Tested results |
|-----|---|----------------|
| H1 | Brand visual management has a significant positive impact on brand marketing performance | Supported |
| H 2 | Cross-cultural visual localization has a significant positive impact on brand marketing performance | Supported |
| H 3 | Integrated media communication strategies have a significant positive impact on brand marketing performance | Supported |

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Brand marketing is a crucial way for companies to build differentiated advantages and emotional connections in a fiercely competitive market, with visual, cultural, and communication strategies playing a key role. This study takes the niche fragrance brand Le Labo as its research subject, systematically analyzing the impact of three independent variables which are brand visual management, cross-cultural visual localization, and integrated media communication strategy on brand marketing performance. The study used a questionnaire survey method, collecting 300 valid samples from Beijing, Shanghai, and Shenzhen. The research model was empirically validated through reliability tests, correlation analysis, and multiple regression analysis. The results show that all major variables have high reliability and stability, and all three independent variables have a significant positive impact on brand marketing performance. Among them, the impact of brand visual management is the most prominent, indicating that the visual identity system plays a decisive role in strengthening brand awareness and consumer trust. Overall, the research results are highly consistent with the theoretical model, verifying the important significance of the synergistic effect of visual, cultural, and communication elements in brand marketing.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

This study constructed a brand marketing performance structure model consisting of three key influencing factors. By reviewing relevant literature, the theoretical connotations and functional characteristics of brand visual management, cross-cultural visual localization, and integrated media communication strategies in brand communication were first clarified. Based on this, the interrelationships among the three were further explored, and the scientific validity and adaptability of the model were verified through empirical testing. The results show that the model can systematically explain the comprehensive impact of visual, cultural, and communication elements on brand marketing performance.

All three independent variables were confirmed as important predictors of brand marketing performance. Through multiple regression analysis, it was found that after controlling for demographic variables, brand visual management, cross-cultural visual localization, and integrated media communication strategies all had significant positive effects on brand marketing performance. Among them, the impact of brand visual management was the most significant, indicating that a unified and distinctive visual identity system can effectively strengthen consumers' awareness and trust in the brand. The positive impact of cross-cultural visual localization suggests that when international brands enter the Chinese market, if they can integrate local aesthetics and cultural symbols, they will more easily achieve emotional resonance and recognition. The significant effects of an integrated media communication strategy demonstrate that multi-platform content synergy and consistent narrative help enhance brand image coherence and communication depth. Overall, all the hypotheses of this study were validated, further confirming the core value of the synergistic effect of visual, cultural, and communication elements in improving brand marketing performance.

Theoretical Implications

By integrating the three major theories of visual communication, cross-cultural communication, and integrated marketing communication into a unified research framework, this study breaks through the limitations of previous studies that were independent and lacked systematic integration. By taking visual identity, cultural adaptation, and media integration as the core dimensions of brand communication, it explores the internal logic and synergistic mechanism of brand image shaping from a holistic perspective, enriching the theoretical system in the field of brand management and communication. This integrated framework not only broadens the application scenarios of visual communication theory but also provides new analytical ideas for cross-cultural brand communication.

Previous studies have mostly focused on the role of single variables, lacking a systematic analysis of multi-dimensional interactive effects. This study, through empirical methods, reveals the significant correlation between brand visual management, cross-cultural visual localization, and integrated media communication strategies, demonstrating that the effectiveness of brand communication stems from the synergistic driving force of multiple factors. This finding further deepens our understanding of the mechanisms underlying brand awareness, trust, and preference formation, and provides solid support for the systematic research of brand communication theory.

The proposed three-dimensional conceptual model of "visual-culture-communication" provides an operational theoretical foundation for subsequent scholars to explore the effects of brand communication. The model emphasizes the key roles of visual consistency, cultural fit, and media integration in the brand communication system, providing a new theoretical perspective for studying the relationship between brand image, brand awareness, and brand loyalty. At the same time, this framework also provides a verifiable path for cross-industry and cross-cultural comparative brand research, which is of great significance for improving the theoretical system in the field of brand communication.

Practical Implications

In the current brand communication environment where globalization and localization are developing in parallel, international brands need to achieve deeper integration and innovation in visual, cultural, and communication aspects when entering the Chinese market. Brands should continuously strengthen the unity and coherence of their visual identity system, maintain a consistent visual style in different communication scenarios, and make the logo, packaging, spatial design, and digital media image echo each other. A unified and distinctive visual system can not only help consumers quickly identify the brand and build trust, but also accumulate brand assets and strengthen market recognition in long-term communication. Cross-cultural localization should not only stay at the surface level of language translation or symbol conversion, but should deeply understand the cultural aesthetics, value orientation, and social psychology of the target market. While maintaining the core brand identity and international characteristics, visual elements and emotional expressions that conform to the local cultural context should be integrated, so that consumers can feel the brand's affinity and cultural resonance in a familiar cultural atmosphere, thereby establishing a deeper emotional identification. Brands should establish an integrated communication system across multiple platforms, maintaining content consistency and narrative coherence across different media platforms. Through coordinated online and offline communication, they can improve information delivery efficiency and overall user experience. Especially in the highly active environment of social media, it is crucial to focus on content integration and control of the communication pace, enabling the brand story to continue to extend and form a solid communication influence. Brand managers should also establish a scientific communication evaluation and feedback mechanism, regularly monitor the implementation effect of communication strategies, analyze consumer feedback and market reactions, and continuously optimize visual presentation and content strategies based on changes in the external environment. Through continuous improvement and innovation, brands can maintain long-term vitality and cultural relevance in a highly competitive and diverse market, further achieving steady growth in brand value.

Limitations of the Study

While this study achieved relatively reliable empirical results in terms of research scope and methodology, certain limitations remain. Regarding the sample scope, the survey subjects were mainly concentrated in first-

tier cities in China (Beijing, Shanghai, and Shenzhen). Although these regions represent typical high-consumption and high-awareness groups, they did not fully cover second-tier and third-tier cities or overseas markets, which may limit the external universality of the research conclusions. In terms of the research time dimension, this study adopted a cross-sectional data collection method, which only reflects the consumer perception and behavioural characteristics at a specific point in time, and failed to show the dynamic evolution and long-term effects of brand communication strategies at different stages. Future research could consider using longitudinal tracking or experimental design to more comprehensively reveal the continuous impact of brand strategies. Based on the part of variable design, the main measurement indicators focused on consumers' subjective perceptions and attitudes, and did not include objective indicators such as actual purchasing behaviour, sales performance, or media exposure data. Future research could further combine behavioural data or brand financial data to enhance the explanatory power of the model and the empirical depth of the conclusions. Overall, these limitations provide directions for improvement in subsequent research and lay the foundation for further in-depth research on brand visuals and communication.

Recommendations for Future Research

In terms of research methods, a combination of quantitative and qualitative research methods, including questionnaires, in-depth interviews, and experimental analysis, can be used to obtain richer data and evidence to verify and supplement the conclusions of this study. In terms of sample selection, the geographical and cultural scope should be expanded to compare the differences in perception of brand visual management and cultural adaptation among consumers in different regions, at different consumption levels, or of different brand types, in order to reveal the communication patterns and differentiated performance of brands in a multicultural environment. For the part of theoretical deepening, the mechanism of action between visual narrative, cultural identity, and brand emotional resonance can be further explored, and their mediating or moderating effects in brand communication can be studied to improve the comprehensive model of visual-culture-communication. For data dimensions, future research can combine behavioural data and market performance indicators to dynamically track the long-term impact of brand communication strategies to enhance the empirical depth and generalizability of the research.

CONCLUSION

This study uses the niche fragrance brand Le Labo as an example to explore the impact of brand visual management, cross-cultural visual localization, and integrated media communication strategies on brand marketing performance. Through questionnaire surveys and empirical analysis of consumers in Beijing, Shanghai, and Shenzhen, the results show that all three factors have a significant positive impact on brand marketing performance, and all hypotheses were verified. Among them, brand visual management has the most prominent impact, indicating that a clear and unified visual identity system can effectively enhance consumers' brand awareness and trust. Cross-cultural visual localization also played a positive role; while maintaining its core identity, the brand's integration of local cultural aesthetics can shorten the psychological distance with consumers, enhancing cultural identity and emotional resonance. Meanwhile, the integrated media communication strategy, through multi-platform collaboration and a consistent brand narrative, further strengthened the coherence and overall influence of the communication. Overall, visual, cultural, and communication elements form a mutually reinforcing synergistic relationship, providing a new development path for the brand in a market environment that integrates globalization and localization. The research results not only validate the importance of multi-dimensional collaboration in brand communication, but also provide practical insights for the localization and long-term development of international brands in the Chinese market.

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