Social Media and Impacts of Frames on User Engagement in the Fashion Industry

by

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A thesis submitted to the Graduate Faculty of
Auburn University
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the Degree of
Master of Arts

Auburn, Alabama
August 4, 2018

Key Words: Fashion Industry, Framing Theory, Social Media, User Engagement, Public
Relations, Content Analysis

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to understand how fashion brands use social media to engage social media users. In doing so, this study aimed to address the academic gap in understanding how major fashion brands use social media. To accomplish this goal, an exploratory content analysis was conducted to identify message frames six leading brands use in their Facebook posts. The findings include four major frame categories. Each category included sub-frames, yielding a total of 21. Second, this study aimed to examine how these message frames might influence user engagement by comparing user responses to different frames. The choice frame generated the highest total amount of user engagement, followed by the company-organized activity frame and the design-detail frame. The overall results indicated that the flattering, holiday, and expert frames had the top three highest percentages of positive high-level user engagement to all user engagement. This study had both practical and theoretical implications. From a practical standpoint, fashion PR practitioners can tailor the most suitable approaches to propose social media content based on their brands' situations accordingly, to better interact with publics to evoke favorable brand attitude, increase brand reputation, and gain media attention. From a theoretical standpoint, this study extended the use of framing in PR research and provided new frames for use in examining social media interactions. Future studies should examine the message frame identified and developed in this study's fashion brands' Facebook posts, because findings in this study were exploratory.

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INTRODUCTION

The emergence of the Internet allowed hundreds of millions of people to consume content at an unprecedented scale and rate. Moreover, after Web 1.0 gave way to Web 2.0., for the first time, producing online content was not the privilege of only technically savvy individuals (Simon, 2013, p. 206). Web 2.0 is a concept that focuses on user collaboration, sharing of user-generated content, and social networking (Blank & Reisdorf, 2012). Examples of Web 2.0 features include social media sites such as Facebook and Twitter. Social media are two-way communication platforms that allow users to interact with each other online to share information and opinions (Kim & Ko, 2010).

While Wright (2009) argued that the fashion industry had been slow to adopt social media, with some labels ignoring social media entirely, the industry has largely embraced social media sites such as Facebook and Twitter over the last decade. Luxury brands have traditionally been leaders in the fashion industry by setting fashion trends and management trends; therefore, not surprisingly, luxury brands such as Louis Vuitton and Gucci were also among the first to delve into social media, which is a type of platform that has been evaluated as a business take-off tool (Kim & Ko, 2010). Public relations (PR) scholars believe that social media and the online world are changing traditional PR practices (Cassidy & Fitch, 2013). Noricks (2012) argued social media use is transforming fashion PR, in that it potentially enables more engagement with fashion publics rather than just media relations.

Social media has brought unprecedented opportunities to the fashion industry. For example, in 2017, a designer canceled his show and announced a new business model that allows customers to see and purchase styles in season (Conlon, 2016). The new business model draws on social media data to understand consumer demands as they develop, in order

to accurately predict what they will want to buy before they buy it and allows a company to better anticipate production levels. Due to the instant-information-sharing characteristic of social media, immediate adjustments could be made instead of taking several months to adjust. Macnamara (2010)'s study looked at five sectors of the field of PR practice—large consultancies, small consultancies, corporations, government, and non-government organizations such as associations. The study revealed that some PR practitioners claimed that they use social media for research, "listening," and even 50/50 symmetrical communication; however, there were also a substantial number of practitioners using social media for marketing and brand promotion purposes. Most marketing, promotion, and sales-related communication is outbound and predominantly one-way, making those PR practitioners' claim for high levels of interactivity inconsistent (Macnamara, 2010). PR practitioner claims to high levels of listening and interactivity were also inconsistent with Wright and Hinson's (2009, 2010, 2014, 2015) findings of significant gaps between actual and ideal PR practices. Cassidy and Fitch's (2013) study suggested that fashion PR practitioners are facing the similar issues and are struggling to use social media as effective two-way communication platforms that meaningfully engage users. A number of researchers (e.g. Kumar, Aksoy, Donkers, Venkatesan, Wiesel, & Tillmanns, 2010; Malthouse, Haenlein, Skiera, Wege, & Zhang, 2013; Sashi, 2012; So, King, Sparks, & Wang, 2016) have found, that users consistently participating in higher level engagement activities, such as posting a lengthy, thoughtful comment or sharing the original post with personal thoughts added, can ultimately generate a loyal user base that is willing to spread positive word of mouth about the brand and thereby help the brand reach sales goals.

The current study examines how fashion brand Facebook page content might influence user engagement and how fashion brands might better leverage their social media presence to improve user engagement. To do so, the study applies framing theory, which

focuses on selecting certain aspects of an issue and making them more salient in a communicating context (Entman, 1993). A review of the literature revealed few studies that empirically examined social media use in the fashion industry through the lens of framing. The purpose of this study is to understand how major fashion brands use social media by examining how message frames may influence user engagement by comparing user responses to different frames. To accomplish this purpose, an exploratory content analysis will be conducted to identify the message frames that six leading fashion brands use in their Facebook posts, and code how users engage with the posts associate with different message frames.

This study's results have both practical and theoretical implications. From a practical standpoint, the study identifies the frames that fashion PR practitioners use and offers insights into which frames might be most useful in promoting user engagement, particularly long-term engagement. These findings may help guide fashion PR practitioners in using social media to better interact with publics to evoke favorable brand attitude, increase brand reputation, and gain media attention. This research also offers theoretical implications, particularly in extending the use of framing in public relations research and providing new frames for use in examining social media interactions. On a broader level, this study hopes to begin to address Cassidy and Fitch's (2013) concern that PR research has largely ignored the fashion industry PR.

CHAPTER 1:

LITERATURE REVIEW

In the United States, Facebook is the dominant social media platform among users over age 18 (Pew Research Center, 2018), with almost three-quarters of Facebook users accessing the site on a daily basis (Pew Research Center, 2018). It has over two billion active monthly users (Statista, 2018). This study aims to understand how Facebook users of fashion brand pages engage with different Facebook posts based on how brands frame their posts. To set up a framework for the study, the literature review provides an overview of research on the fashion industry's current social media, followed by a discussion of the industry and fashion brand categories. Next, the literature review discusses framing theory and how frames are developed—setting up the study's theoretical underpinnings. Finally, it explains the different social media engagement levels and the influence of user engagement, as well as what motivates users to engage in the first place.

Social Media and Public Relations

Social media are defined as "open source (i.e. publicly accessible) media sites on the Internet that accept user-generated content and foster social interaction," and social networks are "open source websites that facilitate social interaction and networking" (Stacks & Bowen, 2013, p. 30). There is a slight difference between social media and social networks regarding the definitions—social networks are more focused on engagement, therefore, there needs be a mix of both talking and listening; while on social media, people are doing all of the talking, such as publishing content, and hoping to generate engagement with other users. Social media experts consider some platforms, such as Facebook and Twitter, as "whole package

platforms" (Burke, 2013), meaning that they are both social media (tools) and a means of social networking (a way to engage). The two terms, social media and social networks, are used interchangeably most of the time (Burke, 2013). In this study, the term "social media" will contain both of the definitions of these two terms in Stacks and Bowen's (2013) booklet. This study uses the term "social media" to cover blogs, RSS (Really Simple Syndication), virtual worlds, podcasting and vodcasting, video sharing sites, photo sharing sites, wikis, business networking sites, social bookmarking, location-based services, microblogging services, etc.

Discussion of social media is widespread among public relations practitioners and scholars. A search on "public relations social media" returned 11.7 million references (Google, 2018). Scholars recognized how social media would change the practice of PR early on. For example, Breakenridge (2008) coined the term "PR 2.0" in the title of her book and indicated that Web 2.0 social media put the public back in public relations. Wright and Hinson (2009) claimed that their study was "the world's first extensive examination of how social media are being implemented in public relations" (p. 1). In 2010, they found that the percentage of PR practitioners who devoted some work time to social media had already increased to 96% (Wright & Hinson, 2010).

Macnamara (2010) looked at five sectors of the field of public relations practice, which are large consultancies, small consultancies, corporations, government, and non-government organizations such as associations, to analyze how Australian PR practitioners used social media. Considering the characteristics of social media, it seems that PR practitioners in Macnamara's (2010) study can engage in use of social media and that these interactive applications are able to help realize the two-way symmetrical model of communication recommended in Excellence Theory (Dozier, L. Grunig, & J. Grunig, 1995; J. Grunig & L. Grunig, 1992; L. Grunig, J. Grunig & Dozier, 2002). However, Macnamara's

(2010) study noted that some PR practitioners claimed that they use social media for research, "listening," and even 50/50 symmetrical communication. While some practitioners reported using social media for gathering feedback and building relationships, there were also a substantial number of practitioners using social media for marketing and brand promotion purposes. Most marketing, promotion, and sales-related communication was outbound and predominantly one-way, bringing into question some practitioner claims of high interactivity (Macnamara, 2010).

Verhoeven, Tench, Zerfass, Moreno, and Vercic (2012) indicated a significant shortage of using social media, because many PR organizations were not properly prepared to use social media correctly as only a small number of organizations had implemented social media guidelines for communicating in blogs, Twitter, Facebook, etc. The lack of guidelines or policy may cause potential problems, such as the consequence of everyone within the organization being able to spread information, or no systematic approach for strategic communication. In addition, they found that nonprofit organizations value communication through social media platforms more than other types of organizations (Verhoeven, Tench, Zerfass, Moreno, & Vercic, 2012). Guo and Saxton (2014) focused on nonprofit organizations only and examined how the PR practitioners utilized social media to engage in advocacy work. The results showed over 93% of the organizations in their sample were using social media in some capacity. In terms of communicative functions on social media, the PR practitioners tend to put the greatest effort into providing information to stakeholders, followed by building a community, and then calling to action.

Social media use in fashion public relations. The notion of "fashion industry" is a product of the modern age. Prior to the mid-19th century, most clothing was handmade for individuals, either as home production or on order from tailors (United States Fashion Industry Association, n.d.). Due to the rise of new technologies, the rise of global capitalism,

the development of the factory system of production, and the boom of retail stores, clothing has come to be mass-produced and gradually become a mature industry. Social influences, economic influences, political influences, technological influences and more all have effects on the trends of this industry. Fashion is a cultural phenomenon that integrates culture, the individual, and the economy (Barnard, 2011). The contemporary fashion industry consists of several different sectors, including raw materials supplier, designer, retailer, etc. (Stone & Farnan, 2018).

Sherman and Perlman (2010) defined fashion PR as "being in touch with the company's audiences, creating strong relationships with them, reaching out to the media, initiating messages that project positive images of the company, assuming social responsibility, and even adjusting company policies" (p. xix). Cassidy and Fitch (2013) point out that fashion PR has been largely ignored in the academic literature and argue that this neglect is because scholars often perceive fashion PR as "superficial and frivolous," (p. 5) and closely associate it with marketing and advertising. Given the lack of research on fashion PR in general, it is not surprising that the industry's use of social media as a PR tool has received scant attention from researchers.

Wright (2009) recognized the significance of social media for the fashion industry, even though he also indicated that the industry was slow to adopt social media. He claimed that fashion brands, designers, and retailers flock to Twitter and Facebook as the social media tools of choice, "in the hopes of reviving sales, generating larger customer bases, and finding more cost effective marketing outlets" (Wright, 2009, para. 1). However, Greenhill (2011) argued that numerous fashion brands suffer from "paper pixel syndrome" (para. 12), which means that they force traditional media relations and promotional activity onto social media platforms without any changes, and thereby fail to exploit the interactivity of social media. Interactivity is usually considered as the most salient characteristic of these two-way

communication platforms. In addition, several studies have noted that fashion PR practitioners struggle to use social media in ways that meaningfully engage fashion publics. Fashion PR practitioners seem to be experimenting with social media in professional contexts;the profession seems to be adopting social media erraticly, with a tendency to use social media for one-way communication (e.g., Cassidy & Fitch, 2013; Robson & James, 2012; Macnamara, 2011).

Organizations and users should be able to communicate with each other on social media with no restriction in time, place, or medium, so that traditional one-way communication can be transformed into interactive two-way direct communication (Kim & Ko, 2010). Therefore, even though the use of social media such as Twitter and Facebook has already expanded to almost every sector of the fashion industry, it is still necessary to find a systematic approach for fashion PR practitioners to strategically create content on social media to maximize the benefits of social media as two-way communication platforms. Social media serve the purpose of increasing customer sales, building brand reputation and awareness, and gaining media attention, but they should not be regarded only as another venue for replicating existing one-way communication such as advertising.

Fashion brand Facebook pages provide a variety of content, such as campaign videos, pictures, stories, designer biographies, interviews, etc. While the fashion industry uses a range of social media tools, including Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and YouTube (Mohr, 2013), Facebook is the most representative social media platform and one of the most popular, second only to YouTube (Pew Research Center, 2018). Facebook allows users to compose text without a maximum word limit (unlike Twitter) and to insert rich media, including video, images, music, articles, etc. Based on these facts, this study will focus specifically on the fashion industry's use of Facebook.

Fashion Brand Categories

Branding is important to the fashion industry because it is devoted to the goal of satisfying consumer demand for apparel under conditions that enable participants in the industry to operate at a profit. According to Banton (2014), fashion brands fall into six categories depending on their market level—haute couture brands, luxury brands, diffusion brands, bridge brands, high-street brands, and economy brands. Haute couture brands, such as Chanel, represent the highest market level. "Haute" is a French word that means high-class, and "couture" translates as dressmaking, sewing, or needlework. The term "Haute couture" is protected by law in France and is defined as exclusive custom-fitted clothing created by a handful of designers—14 officially (Fury, 2017). This level consists of bespoke garments handmade by seamstresses in Parisian workshops; it sits at the top of the market due to the high-quality nature of the pieces which take hours to create by the work of numerous seamstresses per garment (Fury, 2017). Luxury brands fall immediately below haute couture, but the products are "priced high enough to feel as if they are part of an elite market" (para. 9); brands that are included, such as Prada, Burberry, and Louis Vuitton, are normally featured in the fashion week shows (Banton, 2014)—semiannual events marking the beginning of the new season, typically spring/summer and fall/winter. Fashion week shows are where the latest fashion trends are made, and luxury brands are normally featured in the shows, therefore, luxury brands, which have admirable aesthetic value and innovation, have always been the fashion industry leaders (Kim & Ko, 2010).

Bridge brands, such as Michael Kors and Coach, are brands "at the top end of the high street, created to bridge the gap between high end and luxury" (para. 13); they give high-quality pieces within an affordable price bracket (Banton, 2014). Diffusion brands are a market level below luxury brands, and luxury brands sometimes market a diffusion line to make products available at a lower price point to appeal to younger customers with smaller

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budgets. For example, DKNY and Miu Miu are lower budget diffusions of the luxury brands Donna Karen and Prada (Banton, 2014). High street fashion brands, such as H&M and Zara, sit second from the bottom due to affordable pricing and the fact that the products are mass-produced to bring down the cost of each item (Banton, 2014). The origin of the term "high street fashion" was from Britain—a "high street" is the main street in a town or city where all the banks and shops are at; high street fashion refers to the clothing people can buy on the high street in ordinary towns and cities (Davies, n.d.). Nowadays, high street fashion brands are ones that replicate designs from the runway at the most affordable prices. Economy brands usually fulfill people's basic needs; customers go in knowing what they want and often leave with more items due to lower prices compared with brands in other levels (Banton, 2014).

Since haute couture pieces are constructed almost entirely by hand, prices regularly range in the hundreds of thousands of dollars for a single piece (Fury, 2017). The audience for haute couture clothing usually consists of professional individuals, celebrities, or royalty/nobility with a large amount of budget to spend on clothing (Banton, 2014). This market level was excluded from the study, because its targeted audiences are not the general public. Given that diffusion brands are typically owned by luxury brands and play a role in propelling their respective luxury brands' growth, and economy brands are made to simply fulfill people's basic needs more than their appeal of fashion, this study did not include these two market levels, either. Therefore, two luxury brands, two bridge brands, and two high street fashion brands were selected. While this study, which seeks to fill the academic gap of examining social media use of the fashion industry through the lens of framing, will focus on this significant industry sector—fashion brands—by looking at three different market segments, it is hoped that the results will be able to serve as a guide for the rest of the fashion industry such as retailers or other brands.

Framing Theory

This study seeks to examine the presentation of information on fashion brands' official Facebook pages through the lens of framing theory and will explore how different market segments (luxury brands, bridge brands, and high-street brands) diverge in their approaches to framing their Facebook posts. This section of the literature review presents a general discussion of framing theory, followed by a discussion of how researchers have applied framing theory to PR and to the fashion industry. Finally, this section examines how frames are developed.

Framing theory attempts to explain the effects of mass media on audience perception of issues. Frame is "a central organizing idea for news content that supplies a context and suggests what the issue is through the use of selection, emphasis, exclusion, and elaboration" (Severin & Tankard, 2001, p. 277). In recent years, according to Borah (2011), a large and growing body of literature in framing studies has emerged from a wide range of disciplines and academic domains, including cognitive, constructionist, critical, sociology, economics, psychology, cognitive linguistics, communication, political science, sociology, and media studies.

Goffman (1974) was one of the first scholars to develop the general concept of framing, which he used synonymously with "schemata of interpretation" (p. 21). It is a framework that can make an otherwise meaningless aspect of scene into something that is meaningful (Goffman, 1974). Early framing research focused on the construction of news content. According to Entman (1993), framing involves selection and salience. To frame is to "select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation for the item described" (Entman, 1993, p. 52).

An example of news framing would be how journalists treat the abortion issue. One possible frame might be that of the rights of an unborn baby. Another frame might focus on a women's right to control her own body (Severin & Tankard, 2001). Healthcare-related issues in news could be framed either as an ethical or as a material issue. The ethical frame relates the issue with human rights and ethics associated with health care, while the material frame analyzes costs and benefits to society and indirectly to individuals (Shah & Domke, 1996). When news coverage on terrorism focuses on discrete events (e.g., scene of aircraft hijacking, bombing), it assigns responsibility for the social problems to individuals or groups (Kwon, 2013); however, if news coverage analyzes it as a general political problem such as economic oppression or politics, it implies that society as a whole is responsible (Iyengar, 1991). These portraits of framing have significant implications for political communication. Politicians seeking support are compelled to compete with each other and with journalists over news frames (Entman, 1989; Riker, 1986).

Frames in news research are under one of two broad foundations of framing research—sociological (e.g. Borah, 2011; Entman, 1991; Gamson & Modigliani, 1987; Gitlin, 1980; Goffman, 1974) and psychological (e.g. Domke, Shah, & Wackman, 1998; Iyengar, 1991; Kahneman & Tversky, 1984). Goffman (1974) laid the sociological foundations of framing research and this type of framing refers to "frames in communication" that tend to focus on the "words, images, phrases, and presentation styles" (Druckman, 2001, p. 227) that are used to construct news stories. Framing research is also often grouped with agenda setting, which refers to the idea that there is a strong correlation between the emphasis that mass media place on certain issues and the importance mass audiences attribute to these issues (McCombs & Shaw, 1972). In a later study, McCombs (2004) even argues that framing is simply a more refined version of agenda setting. Some scholars have disputed McCombs's claim, and explained the differences between framing and agenda setting from

the sociological aspect of framing: agenda setting occurs due to the frequency with which an issue is discussed in the mass media and it does not involve how the issue is treated in the media as framing does (Cappella & Jamieson, 1997).

Another broad aspect of framing research is psychological (e.g. Domke, Shah, & Wackman, 1998; Iyengar, 1991; Kahneman & Tversky, 1984); however, this aspect has not received enough scholarly attention compared with the sociological aspect of framing theory (Borah, 2011), which focuses on demonstrating how framing influences information processing and the subsequent decision-making processes. Whereas sociological studies examine the frames in communication, psychological studies examine the effects of framing on the audience and typically employ experiments and/or surveys, in order to control the factual and stylistic elements so that the pure influence of the frame can be observed (Borah, 2011). "Equivalency" and "emphasis" are the main approaches to observe the influence of the frame. The psychological origins of framing lie in experimental work by Kahneman and Tversky (1979, 1984), who examined how different presentations of essentially the same information can have an impact on individuals' choices. They found that individuals were willing to take risks when "losses" were highlighted whereas they would like to keep away from risks when the same information was presented as "gains." The opposite but logically equivalent messages had opposite impacts on how individuals made choices.

This "equivalency" approach is widely used for brand communication, which is meant to manipulate the message into positive or negative frames in the hope that the audiences respond more favorably at these dimensions. More specifically, positive framing, centering on the pursuit of positive outcomes of the product brand (such as monetary or psychological advantages), is underpinned by the approach principle of maximizing happiness. In contrast, negative framing, centering on departure from negative outcomes of the product brand (such as monetary or psychological losses), is based on the avoidance

principle of minimizing pain. For instance, Tsai (2007) mentioned a meat brand's product, which could be either presented as "75 percent lean" (positive framing) or "25 percent fat" (negative framing). She indicated that those different but logically equivalent messages had significantly divergent impacts on individuals' decision-making process, one of the examples is that the positive framing of the message is significantly more persuasive than the negative framing of the message to the consumers of low consumer involvement; thus, using framed messages in wrong scenarios can lead to a waste of money and also damage to brand image (Tsai, 2007).

Druckman (2001) took the "emphasis" approach to framing and found that accentuating certain information in a message can also influence individuals to focus on this information in the decision-making process. In a latter study, he pointed out that in many cases, especially with political issues, there is not always a way to present a situation in different but equivalent ways and that the "equivalency" approach does not always work (Druckman, 2004).

The psychological aspect can also help to understand framing as a process distinct from agenda setting. Scholars have used the accessibility model to explain agenda-setting, which assumes that individuals form attitudes based on the considerations that are most salient (i.e., most accessible) when they make decisions (Hastie & Park, 1986). Framing is significantly different from the accessibility-based model. Pan and Kosicki (2005) described the sequence of framing effects as "exposure to framing devices," "activation," and then "suitability judgment," resulting in the use of the suitable cognitions in understating an issue (p. 186). Thus, framing is based on the assumption that how an issue is characterized in news reports can have an influence on how it is understood by audiences. Accordingly, using the accessibility model to explain framing effects as to explain agenda-setting is inadequate (Scheufele & Tewksbury, 2007).

Framing and PR. Framing theory has been applied to a wide range of fields outside of news, including PR, and Hallahan (1999) argued that framing is not merely useful to PR, but is essential to the field. In developing PR campaigns, practitioners fundamentally operate as "frame strategists" (Hallahan, 1999, p. 224), which determine how situations, attributes, choices, actions, issues, and responsibilities should be posed to achieve favorable outcomes. According to Hallahan (1999), framing decisions are perhaps the most important strategic choices made in a PR effort. Framing cannot only provide a foundation for choosing images and texts that can be used to reinforce key ideas (the sociological aspect) but can also provide the basis for how people should take action (the psychological aspect).

Hallahan (1999) offered one of the first schema for evaluating PR frames, identifying seven distinct types of PR frames and suggesting that PR professionals can benefit from framing theory in developing and operating effective framing strategies. His framing models involve the framing of situations, attributes, choices, actions, issues, responsibilities, and news. He suggested that these models are "not mutually exclusive but are actually used in combination" (p. 229). By applying these models in the field of the fashion industry, for example, fashion brands' Facebook pages attempt to attract new customers, employees, and more, provide useful insights into processes of decision making, or deal with individuals confronted with uncertainty (framing of choices); they may attempt to make publics aware of environmental issues and harmful behaviors (framing of actions) in order to promote an eco-friendly conscious collection. When a crisis occurs, they either accept or deny being responsible for events. For example, H&M recently came under fire over an advertisement featuring a young black child in a hoodie with a racist slogan (CBS New York, 2018). It apologized on all of its social media accounts and the messages attempted to save the reputation of the company by emphasizing its responsibility to be aware of and attuned to all

racial and cultural sensitivities and to address diversity and inclusiveness as a global company (framing of responsibility) (H&M, 2018).

Lim and Jones (2010) argued that the question of how people interpret and understand messages flowing from PR practitioners and news media is important. However, they found only two PR-related studies between 1990 and 2009 that showed interest in examining how framing influences information processing, the effects of framing on audiences, or the response from audiences to PR activities. Borah's (2011) study on framing research between 1997 and 2007 found that most studies focused on the sociological aspect of framing, and that less than 20 percent of studies paid attention to the framing's psychological aspect. She argued that "examining media content is fundamental for understanding framing, but for a comprehensive growth of the theory, framing research should pay attention to the various aspects" of framing (Borah, 2011, p. 255). The analysis between the sociological aspect and the psychological aspect of framing would provide interesting knowledge and allow a better understanding of the relationship between organizations and publics.

Framing and fashion. A review of the literature revealed few studies that look at fashion brand social media use through the lens of framing. Although not looking at specific brands and social media, Kwon (2013) examined how fashion journalists used message frames in traditional media and looked at the frames used in presenting fashion and style information in popular American magazines. The study identified three major categories— attribute, attitude, and source-based frames. The attribute-based frame was the most complex one. According to Kwon (2013), the attribute-based frame took advantage of desirable attributes of clothing, such as style, price, and body-type in presenting fashion and styling information. Versatility and feasibility were two sub-categories under the attribute-based frames. Kwon (2013) further divided the versatility sub-category into basic, trendy, and context-setting; and feasibility into affordable and flattering frames. The second major

category, attitude-based frames, addressed the consumer's attitude toward style. Sub-categories of attitude-based frames were named after the two ambivalent attitudes that human beings hold toward fashion: prescriptive and rule-breaking (Kwon, 2013). Sometimes people need to conform to norms of society; sometimes they want to be unique. The last major category was source-based frames, which were often combined with other types of frames and featured the source effect in communication and persuasion. Kwon (2013) differentiated sourced based frames into three sub-categories, expert, celebrity, and typical consumer.

Kwon's (2013) research has important implications for this study, because her research sheds light on how the fashion industry used message frames in the media and the methods of developing those frame categories are partially replicable. That said, Kwon (2013) focused on frames used in fashion magazines and did not address online communication or social media. Social media, in particular, offers fashion brands unique opportunities to connect with their audience, and messages on fashion brands' Facebook posts are not simply aimed at promoting fashion products, but are also trying to promote the brand by gaining media attention and emphasizing corporate social responsibility. For example, Michael Kors cooperated with actress Kate Hudson for a campaign called "Watch Hunger Stop" (Simpson, 2017). The brand posted numerous pictures of Kate Hudson visiting schools and playing with children in Cambodia on its social media account and used different texts to remind publics why it is necessary to end world hunger. Even though fashion PR practitioners are still struggling to consistently and meaningfully engage with publics, they are attempting to use social media in ways that address public relations and marketing objectives. Additionally, given the disparities between social media, a two-way communication platform, and traditional media, it is not clear whether fashion brands employ the same or similar frames in social media posts. It is also unclear which frames promote user engagement, and researchers (e.g. Lim & Jones, 2010; Borah, 2011; Kwon, 2013;) have

repeatedly stressed the need for scholars to address the psychological aspect of framing, particularly in terms of audience perception and interpretation of content. The current study hopes to fill these gaps by identifying fashion brand social media frames and determining which frames promote user interactivity.

Developing frames. One of this study's purposes is to develop specific frames used in fashion brands' Facebook posts. According to Borah (2011), studies that examined frames specific to one particular issue developed unique frames, or issue-specific frames, which are different from consistent (or generic) frames that are broad enough to be applied to various issues across studies. While scholars (e.g., Borah, 2011; Hertog & McLeod, 2011) have often indicated the importance of studying a consistent set of frames, many studies, found by Borah (2011), still generate unique sets of frames as examining specific frames can help a research more thoroughly understand a particular issue or event. Borah (2011), however, argued that issue-specific frames would be more beneficial if they were tied to broader concepts in the framing theory answering some of the more general questions, such as "how does the unique set of frames associate with already developed generic frames in the literature?" (p. 256). According to Borah (2011), the propensity to develop only unique frames could result in the development of very specific frames unable to make any connection to the broader theoretical or conceptual issues of framing. The current study will tie the fashion brands' Facebook post frames to Hallahan's (1999) seven PR frames, which are framing of situations, framing of attributes, framing of choices, framing of actions, framing of issues, framing of responsibility, and framing of news.

Borah (2011) found that all of the studies that developed unique frames conducted content analysis. Content analysis is the most frequently employed method for framing research, especially for those looking at the sociological aspect of framing (Wimmer & Dominick, 2006). For instance, Park and Reber (2010) conducted a content analysis to

explore health organizations' PR efforts to frame health issues through their press releases. While Kwon (2013) developed a unique set of PR frames, Park and Reber (2010) based their research on frame categories developed the 1990's. Park and Reber's (2010) went on however, to extend those frames as part of their study. The researchers pulled a subsample of press releases from the total sample to discuss category definitions, provide an example of each category, and then looked for potential new frame categories in this subsample. After coding frames based on the category system, they double-coded another subsample of press releases to determine intercoder reliability.

Kwon (2013) conducted a qualitative content analysis of fashion in American popular magazines to study the presentation of trend or styling information and included the development of three unique sets of frames. To create the frames, Kwon (2013) first conducted open coding and made a note of potential categories of frames that describe the way a clothing item is presented by examining visuals and texts page by page. Based on the results of open coding, she developed a preliminary category coding system. Next, she tested the category system by coding the data to see if each category's concept was relevant and clear. The category system was revised multiple times and reviewed by experts in the field before being finalized and used for coding the final data. Kwon (2013) argued that as fashion has significant seasonal variation, researchers should minimize this potential effect when selecting the sample. She chose to analyze magazine titles and randomly selected four issues for each year. Issues from each year were selected using a random number generating program. The number of issues for each season over the five-year period were similar-14 issues were from the spring season, 13 from the summer season, 18 from the fall season, and 15 from the winter season.

This study is based on both of the two broad aspects of framing. First, identifying and developing frames in fashion brands' Facebook posts based on Kwon's (2013) fashion study

is the sociological aspect. Hallahan's (1999) seven models of PR framing helps guide the PR functions of the frames being developed. Second, this study seeks to examine the user engagement associated with each frame, which is the psychological aspect of framing. According to Borah (2011), the psychological studies examine the effects of framing on audiences, so he regarded research using experimental and survey designs as psychological. However, in this study, user engagement on social media, which is considered as the effect of framing on the audience, does not need to be measured by experiments or surveys. It can be coded by conducting a content analysis of brand posts and user responses.

Social Media User Engagement

Engagement has been examined across a range of academic disciplines, including sociology, psychology, political science, and organizational behavior (Hollebeek, 2011) and there are multiple perspectives on engagment. For example, "student engagement" in educational psychology is defined by London, Downey, and Mace (2007) as students' academic investment, motivation, and commitment to their institution, and their perceived psychological connection, comfort, and sense of belonging toward their institution. Student engagement was found to be essential in a student's receipt of teacher support and achieved results (Bryson & Hand, 2007; Skinner & Belmont, 1993). Saks (2006) defined "employee engagement" as the amount of cognitive, emotional, and physical resources an individual is prepared to devote in the performance of one's work roles. A high level of employee engagement potentially contributes to increased productivity and profitability, so many organizations measure employee engagement and look for ways to maximize it (Greenwood, 2007). In social psychology, Achterberg and his colleagues (2003) conceptualized "social engagement" as a sense of initiative, involvement, and adequate response to social stimuli, participating in social activities, and interacting with others. With the increasing amount Internet users, the Internet has gradually connected people into a virtual society. Today

around 70% Americans use social media to connect with one another, engage with news content, share information, and entertain themselves (Pew Research Center, 2018). "Social media engagement" can be considered a concept under the umbrella of social engagement, because social media serve as platforms for individuals to participate in social activities and interact with others.

Engagement activities include how users interact with the social media site and the brand. This type of engagement can be defined as users' brand-related cognitive, emotional, and behavioral activity during or related to interaction between user and brand on social media (Hollebeek, Glynn, & Brodie, 2014). In this definition, Hollebeek and his colleagues (2014) addressed the user as the focal engagement subject, while the brand was considered as the specific engagement object.

Malthouse, et al. (2013) indicated that individuals could engage with content on social media platforms at two levels, lower engagement and higher engagement. Jain, Zaher, and Roy's (2017) built on Malthouse et al. (2013), and defined lower engagement as referring to those individuals that are casually involved without engaging in deep cognitive thought processes, and higher engagement as refering to those individuals that process content in a more thorough manner.

On Facebook, users can provide simple feedback such as liking or instantly sharing the content (low-level engagement); the more engaged users can comment on the content or share the original post by re-writing a post (high-level engagement). Based on Jain, Zaher, and Roy (2017) and Malthouse et al.'s (2013) definition, simply clicking a "like" button or instantly sharing a post without adding any personal thought belong to the lower form of user engagement, since they require very little processing of brand meaning; alternatively, a user who posts a lengthy, thoughtful comment on fashion brands' Facebook accounts or shares the original post with personal thoughts added displays a higher level of engagement.

Besides the two levels of user engagement, researchers (e.g., Jain, Zaher, & Roy, 2017; Malthouse, Haenlein, Skiera, Wege, & Zhang, 2013) have indicated users that invest deeply and process content in a thorough manner will promote long-term engagement. In other words, a higher level of engagement potentially leads to a longer-term relationship. Both long-term and short-term engagement have implications for the organization; however, a more enduring and positive long-term relationship (e.g., positive comments and positive re-writing of posts on Facebook) can generate stronger connections, a wider user base, brand advocates, user-generated content, and ultimately a loyal user base willing to spread positive word of mouth about the brand (Malthouse et al., 2013).

Positive electronic word-of-mouth communication is a positive statement made by a potential, actual, or former customer about a product or a company, which is made available to a multitude of people and institutions on the Internet (Strauss, 2000). Because it is considered a "natural, genuine and honest process" by the Word of Mouth Marketing Association website (http://www.WOMMA.org/), word-of-mouth communication has been identified as more trustworthy and as having greater impact on individuals' perceptions toward brands than other communication channels (Goldmith & Horowitz, 2006; Katz & Lazasfield, 1995). No matter how much social media has changed the tactics of marketing and PR, the primary objectives remain the same—raising brand awareness and reputation, maintaining a favorable brand image, and ultimately attracting and retaining customers (Weber, 2009; Wolny & Mueller, 2013).

Studies of the fashion industry have demonstrated how important it is for fashion brands to engage publics more on social media for achieving their sales goals, which is most important to all for-profit companies. For example, Kim and Ko's (2010) study indicated that user engagement on Louis Vuitton's Facebook page had a positive influence on purchase intention, which means that the more individuals are able to engage in two-way interaction

through Louis Vuitton's Facebook page, the greater their possibilities of purchasing in the future are. As brand reputation and trust are closely associated with purchase intention (Kim & Ko, 2010), social media user engagement can also help to achieve the goals of reputation and relationship management of the brand.

This study builds on prior social media engagement research to explore what frames encourage high-level engagement. This research may suggest ways for fashion brands to strategically create Facebook posts that generate increased user engagement as well as a high percentage of positive long-term engagement. As part of this process, we need a better understanding of what motivates users to engage on social media in the first place is still necessary because it potentially serves as the significant first step for creating effective social media content.

Motivations of engagement and relationship management

Relationship management is a strategy in which a continuous level of engagement is maintained between an organization and its audiences (Dalgic, 2013). These relationships are not just between a business and its customers, relationship management can also include relationships between a business and other businesses and a business and media. Hon and Grunig (1999) believed that the fundamental goal of PR is to build and then enhance on-going or long-term relationships with an organization's key constituencies, which PR practitioners typically call publics. Ledingham (2003) offered a refined theory of relationship management as "effectively managing organizational-public relationships around common interests and shared goals, over time, results in mutual understanding and benefit for interacting organizations and publics" (p. 190). The most productive relationships in the long run are those that benefit both parties in the relationship, rather than those designed to benefit only the organization (Hon & Grunig, 1999). Therefore, the relationship management

perspective holds that PR balances the interests of organizations and publics through the management of organization-public relationships (Ledingham, 2003).

Social media, however, has altered the relationship balance between organizations and the public. Baird and Parasnis (2011) argued that the rise of social media networks challenged traditional customer relationship management (CRM) approaches and shifted the balance away from organization control of the organization-public relationship, including organization relationship with customers. The public and highly influential social media networks are now driving the conversation, which can trump a company's strategic efforts with their unprecedented immediacy and reach. Nevertheless, social media still holds enormous potential for companies to get closer to customers and, by doing so, facilitate increased revenue, cost reduction, and efficiencies.

Accordingly, Baird and Parasnis (2011) argued that companies need to embrace a new strategy—social CRM. The traditional model of CRM assumes that customers are passive, who can only respond to a company's actions, therefore, Malthouse and his colleagues (2013) proposed that a fundamental way in which social media might affect CRM is by allowing customers to become active participants in the relationship by providing them with opportunities to engage with the firm. When a user generates content related to a specific brand, this individual is engaging with the company. In other words, social CRM differs from traditional CRM because it uses social media as channels for engagement. It also raises interesting challenges for traditional relationship management approaches, as most people do not engage with companies via social media simply to feel connected. Social media users turn out to be far more pragmatic. There has to be something on the company social media site that is attractive to users such as exclusive information, opinions, and reviews (Baird & Parasnis, 2011). Even before the rise of Web 2.0, the nationality director of public affairs argued that maintaining successful relationship with various publics meant understanding

"what their needs and wants are, how they can best be achieved, and how you can all work together toward common goals" (as cited in Hon & Grunig, 1999, p. 11). This understanding has become increasingly critical as the age of Web 2.0 sets in. Therefore, it is necessary to understand what drives customers to engage with companies on social media in the first place, what customers really want on social media, and other factors that can help manage customer relationships. In other words, understanding these factors is a critical first step toward building a new social CRM strategy for creating effective content on social media.

Baird and Parasnis (2011) noted that consumers are increasingly using social media to gain recommendations, reviews, and opinions from friends, family, experts, and the collective social community. The majority of consumers surveyed said they need to feel a company is communicating honestly before they will engage. Therefore, after understanding what people value or really want on social media, companies can accordingly create a unique social media experience that better balances their own interests with those of the publics to get publics to engage. Ang (2011) argued that the term "social CRM" is a misnomer because online community members are not necessarily customers of the organization. Thus, he came up with the term "community relationship management" (CoRM) because he thought it more accurately reflects what people do on social media. He suggested conversation as one of the major pillars to achieve successful CoRM. To stimulate conversations, users should be encouraged to comment on the posts, or engage on the posts in some other high-level forms, thus fueling more conversations within the community.

Baird and Parasnis (2011) also gave some practical suggestions for companies to consider for a successful social media program that can help them maintain customer engagement and thereby reinvent their customer relationships. For instance, the social media program should not be devised as an isolated standalone program, but needs to be thoughtfully integrated with other customer-facing initiatives. In other words, the customer

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experience should be made seamless across social media and other channels. Those suggestions are useful for analyzing why certain message frames can generate more user engagement than others.

Wolny and Mueller (2013) demonstrated that in the fashion industry, high brand commitment (sometimes termed brand involvement) and high fashion involvement motivates people to engage in talking about and interacting with fashion brands through social media platforms in the first place. Brand commitment can be described as positive feelings of attachment to a brand; enduring involvement in fashion was classified in their research as fashion involvement, it related to a more general attitude toward a product group or long-lasting involvement that arises out of a sense of high personal relevance (Beatty & Kahle, 1988; Bloch & Bruce, 1984; Wohlfeil & Whelan, 2006).

Understanding what factors might motivate user engagement and what companies must do to meet user demands is important; this understanding is "the key to managing successful relationships" (Ledingham & Bruning, 1998a, p. 27). Ledingham and Bruning (1998a) found that consumers who ranked an organization highly with regard to the divergent relationship dimensions, which are trust, openness, involvement, investment, and commitment, were more likely to use that organization's services when given a competitive choice. Trust was operationalized as an organization "doing what it says it will do" and openness was seen as "sharing the organization's plans for the future with public members"; involvement was described as "the organization being involved in the welfare of the community," investment as "the organization investing in the welfare of the community," and commitment as "the organization being committed to the welfare of the community" (p. 62). Ledingham and Bruning (1998b) demonstrated that relationship scores could be used to predict levels of customer satisfaction. Subsequently, Wilson (2000) argued that there is

support for the application of these conclusions and suggestions to communities, employees, and other publics.

This section reviewed studies that sought to understand the motivations of user engagement in the Web 2.0 age. By understanding these motivations, companies can create more effective social media content to manage successful relationships with their key publics. In this sense, framing not only determines different levels of user engagement, but also determines if users would be motivated to engage in the first place.

Research Questions

Based on the review of the current literature on framing studies, the following research question will be addressed by an exploratory content analysis:

RQ1—What message frames do the selected fashion brands employ to create the posts on their official Facebook accounts?

Also, based on the review of the literature on user engagement on social media, specifically for Facebook, the following research questions associated with message frames will be addressed:

RQ2—Which message frame(s) will generate the most user engagement?

RQ3—Which message frame(s) will have the highest percentage of positive high-level engagement to all user engagement?

Given that the select fashion brands have been categorized as luxury brands, bridge brands, and high-street brands, the following research question will be addressed to compare the differences among them:

RQ4—Is there a difference among the market levels of brands in terms of the user engagement associated with each frame?

CHAPTER 2:

METHODOLOGY

Sampling Procedure

Brand selection. According to the previous review on literature, fashion brands fall into six categories depending on their market level, which are haute couture, luxury fashion, diffusion brands, bridge brands, high-street brands, and economy brands. The researcher excluded three of these categories when constructing the sample for this study. Haute couture pieces are constructed almost entirely by hand, and prices regularly range in the hundreds of thousands of dollars for a single piece (Fury, 2017), so the audience for haute couture clothing usually consists of professional individuals, celebrities, or royalty/nobility with a large amount of budget to spend on clothing (Banton, 2014). This market level was excluded from the study, because its targeted audiences are not the general public. Then, given that diffusion brands are typically owned by luxury brands and play a role in propelling their respective luxury brands' growth, and economy brands are made to simply fulfill people's basic needs more than their appeal of fashion, this study did not include these two market levels, either. Therefore, this study only focused on luxury brands, bridge brands, and high-street fashion brands, and compared the difference among these three market levels.

The six brands that were selected for this study all meet specific criteria. First, they have both women's wear line and men's wear line, which means that they are not only targeting at female customers; this criterion can somewhat make the demographic groups of users who engage with the brands on Facebook more generalizable. Second, those six brands should all be able to fulfill people's appeal of fashion head-to-toe; in other words, their products should contain clothing, shoes, bags, accessories, and more. Based on these criteria,

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the researcher went through L2's Digital IQ Index: Fashion 2017 report which benchmarked the digital performance of 90 fashion brands globally. Gucci, Michael Kors, and Fendi earned the highest digital competence scores among all of the brands; Coach ranked 6, which was the highest bridge brand (L2 Inc., 2018). Accordingly, the researcher selected two luxury brands, which are Gucci and Fendi, two bridge brands, also known as affordable or accessible luxury brands, which are Michael Kors and Coach, from this report. However, L2's report only covered luxury brands, diffusion brands, and affordable luxury brands, which are all under the general concept of "luxury fashion" due to their definitions. Therefore, the researcher used another source to select the two high-street fashion brands for this study. The Best Global Brands report was published on an annual basis; the report identifies the world's 100 most valuable brands across the board. According to the Best Global Brands 2017 Rankings, H&M and Zara—which ranked at 23 and 24—are ranked higher than all other high-street fashion brands in the report (Interbrand, 2018). In addition, the researcher checked the official Facebook pages of H&M and Zara, and confirmed both of them have comparable amounts of followers, roughly 30 and 27 million, respectively, as to the above mentioned four fashion brands with the high digital competence scores. The researcher then selected these two high-street fashion brands—H&M and Zara.

The six brands that were selected for this study—Gucci, Fendi, Michael Kors, Coach, H&M, and Zara—all have exclusive details on their Facebook accounts which could not be found on their respective official webpages after an initial review; additionally, the relatively sufficient content on their accounts were convenient for the study. For instance, there were more than a thousand posts and approximately 16 million followers on Gucci's official Facebook page, and the page feature celebrities wearing its clothing at the recent Golden Globes red carpet show and more (Gucci, 2018), which could not be found on Gucci's official webpages.

Social media platform. The researcher compared three of the most commonly used social media sites in the United States—Facebook, Instagram and YouTube (Pew Research Center, 2018). Although, the statistical data showed that approximately 73% of U.S. adults use YouTube in 2018, while only 68% of U.S. adults use Facebook, which is slightly lower than the data of YouTube, the research indicated that Facebook is one of the most-widely used of the major social media platforms in the United States, and its user base is most broadly representative of the population as a whole (Pew Research Center, 2018, para. 4). Additionally, roughly three-quarters of Facebook users visit the sites at least once a day; however, less than half of the users visit YouTube as part of their daily routine (Pew Research Center, 2018, para. 6).

In addition to its broad adoption, Facebook allows more user interaction options than most other social media platforms. Facebook users are able to freely compose text and insert rich media into their posts, including video, images, music, articles, and more. This characteristic distinguished Facebook from other popular social media sites such as Instagram and YouTube, which are known primarily as visual-sharing platforms. Therefore, based on Facebook's overall popularity and the flexibility of user interactions compared with other social media sites, this study focused on fashion industry content and user interactions on Facebook.

Selection of posts. The researcher went back through the available content and gathered all of the posts of the six brands within the one-year period, which was from February 1, 2017 to January 31, 2018. Considering fashion has significant seasonal variation, the posts within this one-year period were equally divided into four seasons according to the meteorological definition of the Northern Hemisphere (National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, n.d., para. 5)—spring posts ran from March 1, 2017 to May 31, 2017; summer posts ran from June 1, 2017 to August 31, 2017; fall posts ran from September 1,

2017 to November 30, 2017; winter posts ran from December 1, 2017 to January 31, 2018, and also included the posts from February 1, 2017 to February 28, 2017. Accordingly, every season contained three months of posts.

The researcher then selected one month randomly for each season to use for analysis for all six brands. The researcher used Random.org, which is a true random number service that generates randomness via atmospheric noise (Randomness and Integrity Service Ltd, n.d.), to randomly select the months for this study. This subsample was used to conduct open coding to identify frames. The researcher first started with analyzing whether the attribute-based, attitude-based, and source-based frame categories developed by Kwon (2013) could be adapted to this study and then looked for potential new frame categories by examining visuals and texts post by post. Borah (2011) indicated it is more beneficial to tie issue-specific frames to broader concepts in framing theory. Therefore, the researcher also analyzed if Hallahan's (1999) seven PR frames, which are framing of situations, framing of attributes, framing of choices, framing of actions, framing of issues, framing of responsibility, and framing of news, could associate with the set of frames just developed and made necessary adjustments. Based on the result of open coding, the preliminary coding guide was identified and organized to make a category system. A final category system was developed after the researcher reanalyzed category definitions to test if the concept of each frame category was relevant and clear, provided an example of each category, and made necessary revisions.

The same method was used to obtain the posts included in the second subsample. However, the posts were pulled outside of the prior subsample, which means that the second subsample did not contain any of the posts that had been selected into the first subsample. This second subsample was used for the final coding after the training process. The researcher and the coder used the second subsample to code frames based on the category

system developed and user engagement associated with each frame. During January 2018, H&M experienced a significant PR crisis, which arose out of the release of a racist hoodie. In order to avoid outside interferences as much as possible and concentrate only on how the framing of Facebook posts influences user engagement, the researcher had already selected this month into the first subsample used for the process of open coding, so that the posts in this month would not appear in other subsamples.

Coding Procedure and Intercoder Reliability

After the category system was finalized, a codebook was developed to guide the systematic examination of message content. An exploratory content analysis was conducted by two independent coders; one of them was the researcher. Besides the researcher, another independent coder was trained to use the coding instrument. As part of the training process, the researcher revised the codebook repeatedly until the researcher and the other coder were all comfortable with the coding scheme; then the researcher and the coder practiced coding using a third subsample, which could inform the researcher as to the reliability and overall viability of the coding scheme so revisions may be made before final coding commences (Neuendorf, 2017). A similar method was used to obtain the posts included in the third subsample which was used for training coders; however, the researcher only selected one week randomly for each season of each brand to make this subsample significantly smaller. This third subsample did not contain any of the posts that had been selected into the first and the second subsample, either. To clarify, there were a total of three subsamples in this study. The first subsample was used for the process of open coding, the third subsample was used to train the coder, and the second subsample was used to conduct the final coding. All the posts included in these three subsamples were selected from the one-year period. Moreover, these three subsamples were mutually exclusive, meaning none of the subsamples contained the posts that had been selected into the other two subsamples.

The two coders cross-coded 20% of the total posts included in the third subsample to assess the intercoder reliability. The coders coded for the presence or absence of a frame in a post. The rows were all frames identified in the previous phase, and the columns were all posts used to assess the intercoder reliability. The coders filled in the form separately by assigning the number "0" or "1", which represented "absence" or "presence" respectively, to each cell. The coders assigned "1" to all frames that appeared in a post instead of assigning "1" to the most dominate frame only. For instance, if three frame categories appeared in one post, the coders assigned "1" to all of them. Intercoder reliability of the two coders was calculated using Cohen's Kappa. A coefficient of $\kappa=.80$ or above usually is considered reliable (Kassarjian, 1977); however, intercoder reliability of $\kappa=.70$ is appropriate in some exploratory studies (Lombard, Snyder-Duch, & Bracken, 2002). The researcher and another coder worked together and reached agreements on coded units about which they disagreed.

After the training process, final coding commenced in the second subsample. An individual post on six fashion brands' official Facebook accounts served as the unit of analysis. First, the frame of an individual post was coded in terms of the frame category system developed from the first subsample. The coders also coded for the presence or absence of a frame in a post like assessing the intercoder reliability before. The sum of coded posts of each frame was greater than the total number of posts coded with frames, considering that the two coders coded all frames that appeared in a post instead of coding the most dominant frame.

Next, the coders analyzed the total amount of user engagement and the levels of user engagement of an individual post. Facebook recently added six new emotions to the social network throughout the world in addition to "Like" (Woollaston, 2016). These six new emotions include "Love", "Haha", "Yay", "Wow", "Sad" and "Angry", so there are currently seven reactions in total. The list of emotions appears when a user holds down the like button

on a mobile, or hovers their mouse over it on the desktop version of the site. Given that the users could simply choose what emotion they want to express within seconds, the researcher considered all these seven options as low-level engagement. In order to simplify the description, and also because all these options could be completed through the like button, the researcher will simply say "liking" below.

Given that liking, represented by number "I", sharing, represented by number "II", and commenting, represented by number "III", were all considered as user engagement (Jain, Zaher, & Roy, 2017; Malthouse, Haenlein, Skiera, Wege, & Zhang, 2013), the amount of user engagement of each post was simply the sum of I, II, and III, which were shown directly on Facebook pages. To identify the level of user engagement that appeared in each of I, II, and III, the coders assigned a "yes" or "no" response to each of I, II, and III; "yes" means that this engagement was a higher level one while "no" means it was not. Considering that simply clicking a like button to express emotion (I) was already defined as the lower level of user engagement (Jain, Zaher, & Roy, 2017; Malthouse, Haenlein, Skiera, Wege, & Zhang, 2013), the coders skipped this part and started with sharing (II) and commenting (III). A user who posted a lengthy, thoughtful comment on fashion brands' Facebook accounts or shared the original post with personal thoughts added (re-write post) displayed a higher level of engagement. Considering that the comment posted must be lengthy and thoughtful in this definition, those comments that only mention someone (typing @ then begin letters of a name) and use emotion icons were excluded from the higher level of, or long-term, engagement. By the same token, if a user shared the original post only with an emotion icon added, or in other words, the user did not compose any text, it was not assigned to the higher level of engagement either. Therefore, instantly sharing the original post and sharing the original post only with an emotion icon added were assigned to "no," while sharing the original post with texts added (re-write post) was assigned to "yes." Similarly, comments that

only contain an emotion icon and the @ sign with usernames were assigned to "no," while the other comments were assigned to "yes."

To identify the attitude of users that presented in the higher level of engagement, the coders assigned numbers "1" to "4" to each engagement that had been assigned to "yes." Among these four numbers, "1" represents the pro-attitude; "2" represents the negative attitude; "3" represents the neutral attitude, and "4" represents the mixed attitude. For the purpose of this study, the identification of the four different attitudes will be justified in the following. The positive high-level engagements, that this study intended to look at, were those engagements which were assigned to both "yes" and "1."

The pro-attitude comments and re-written posts were those posts wherein users express that they like, want, desire a product or a service; support the perspective of the post; or appreciate the aesthetics behind the specific product or the brand, etc. On the contrary, some comments and re-write posts contained user complaints regarding quality or service, and disapproval of the perspective of the post, the design of a product, or any other thing related to the brand. The researcher considered these types of posts as displaying negative attitudes. The neutral, or ambiguous comments and re-write posts were those that did not contain any strong attitude. Those comments and re-write posts were mostly giving advice or questions to the brand, for example, a user asked "is there a way to filter by size? Can't figure out how to shop (an emotion icon added)" on one of Zara's posts; these neutral comments and re-write posts could also use humor. For example, a user commented "we'll never accept your apologies before 75% off and free shipping on our entire purchases for one week" on H&M's post which was apologizing for the racist children's hoodie advertisement. Some comments and re-write posts contained two opposing attitudes, for example, a user commented "love the brand and just spent $100 yesterday! Used to order a lot online but the

shipping fee is ridiculous" on one of H&M's posts; the researcher considered these as mixed attitudes, which was represented by the number "4."

Due to the characteristic of social media, it was possible that social media managers and users went back to the available content and deleted some posts, comments, or re-write posts after the researcher gathered them. Therefore, the researcher saved the screenshot of every post, comment, and re-write post gathered.

To analyze the information, the researcher firstly looked at basic descriptive statistics to see the frequency of each frame being employed, which frame could generate the most user engagement (the sum of I, II, and III), and which frame could generate the highest percentage of positive long-term engagement to all user engagement (the amount of 1/the sum of I, II, and III). Then the researcher delved deeper to determine if there were differences among the three market levels of brands regarding the user engagement associated with each frame. The researcher conducted a one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) to address this problem because the research question intended to determine whether there were any differences between three independent groups on one dependent variable. Moreover, the independent variable (market level) was nominal and the dependent variable (user engagement) was rational, which met the assumptions of ANOVA.

CHAPTER 3:

RESULTS

In this study, a total of 21 frames that fall into four major categories and several sub-categories emerged. The four major categories are attribute-based frames, attitude-based frames, source-based frames, and media-based frames, based on the content of the six fashion brands' Facebook posts. More specifically, attribute-based (78.07%), attitude-based (8.20%), source-based (32.64%), and media-based frames (31.70%) were respectively located on the 1158 posts analyzed. The attribute-based frame is the most complex frame and is the only one to be divided into sub-categories. The first sub-category is diversification, the second is feasibility, the third is creativity, and the last is simply named other. In addition, both the creativity and "other" under the attribute-based category are completely new sub-categories developed by the researcher for this study. The three other major categories also had several frames under each of them.

The effect on each frames' user engagement is divergent based on the frequencies. The choice frame generated the most user engagement, but the flattering frame had the highest percentage of positive high-level user engagement to all user engagement. After running ANOVA, the results showed that the difference among the three market levels of brands in relation to the percentage of positive high-level user engagement to all user engagement was significant.

During the first part, which aimed at identifying message frames the brands used in the Facebook posts, the two coders cross-coded 20 percent of the total posts in the subsample to access the intercoder reliability. Using Cohen's Kappa, calculated by the dfreelon website

http://www.dfreelon.org/ (Freelon, 2013), intercoder reliability was $\kappa=.85$ for the use of message frames in the six fashion brands' Facebook posts. According to McHugh (2012), the value of a kappa between .80 to .90 indicates a strong level of agreement, which meant that the data collected in the first part of the study was are sufficiently reliable for use in the second part. During the second part, which aimed at coding user engagement in the Facebook posts, the two coders again cross-coded 20 percent of the total posts in the subsample, this time yielding was $\kappa=.88$ for all user engagement and for positive high-level user engagement.

RQ1

RQ1 asked what message frames the selected fashion brands employed to create the posts on their official Facebook accounts. The researcher first analyzed whether the attribute-based, attitude-based, and source-based frame categories developed by Kwon (2013) can be adapted to this study. It turned out that all three frame categories developed from the previous magazine study (Kwon, 2013) were found in fashion brands' Facebook posts, and sub-categories under the attribute-based frame category emerged. Some of the definitions of the frames were slightly adjusted for this study. For example, the flattering frame in Kwon's (2013) study customizes style for body type, and the rhetorical strategy of this frame is that there is indeed a style for every body type; but the definition of the flattering frame in this study was adapted into assuming how great the consumers will look if they wear the clothing or accessories presented. By examining visuals and texts post-by-post, the researcher also discovered a new frame category, media-based frame. In the following sections, the researcher will discuss the definitions and applications of all the categories, sub-categories, and specific frames individually.

Attribute-based frame category. The frames under the attribute-based category all capitalize on desirable attributes of fashion items, such as style, price, occasion, and body-type in presenting fashion information. The first type of attribute-based frame is

diversification, which focuses on increasing the perceived value of the style by demonstrating ways to make more use of an item. Under the sub-category of diversification, three different frames emerged: basic (2.59%), trendy (1.90%), and context-setting (5.79%) (See Table 1). Basic frame features the most common styles or items, such as little black dresses, trench coats, or blue jeans; most likely, the posts that employed the basic frame include keywords like basic, staples, classic, etc. The trendy frame emphasizes how compatible a trendy design can be with other designs; unlike the basic frame, posts that used the trendy frame usually concentrated on items that are a new design in the market. The context-setting frame, which sometimes also appeared as a theme-setting frame, is a way of grouping clothing and accessories by their usage or similarity. Kwon (2013) found that magazines frequently used the following contexts: the workplace for adults, outfits for a date, travel, the beach, a night out, etc.; In the current study, however, the researcher found that these groupings can include not only real world but also fictional contexts or themes on fashion brands' social media accounts nowadays. For example, in the case of a recent Gucci clothing grouping, the brand used a Star Wars theme to group some of its latest products to highlight the similarity of the products' style.

The second type of attribute-based frame is feasibility, which aims at increasing the perceived value of the style by providing positive aspects or solutions for reducing risks in purchasing and wearing trendy items. Under the sub-category of feasibility, three different frames emerged: affordable (1.21%), flattering (0.35%), and choice (11.92%) (See Table 1). The affordable frame, also known as a price frame, emphasizes how affordable the prices of the products are, considering that a relatively lower price can potentially reduce the perceived risk of consumers when they are purchasing a new item. Featuring the discount and on-sale information is a typical example of the affordable frame. According to the results of coding,

as expected, the affordable frame was only used in high-street fashion brands' posts, but never used by luxury brands or bridge brands.

In this study, the definition of the flattering frame is different from the flattering frame defined in Kwon's (2013) study. The editorial goal for a magazine article is to help readers find fashion items that are most suitable for them no matter what the brands are; therefore, the flattering frame in Kwon's (2013) study customizes style for body type, and the rhetorical strategy of this frame is that there is indeed a style for every body type. However, the ultimate goal for a post on a specific fashion brand's official Facebook account is not the same, so the definition of the flattering frame in this study was adapted into assuming how great the consumers will look if they wear the clothing or accessories presented. Example phrases found in a flattering frame include "look amazing," "look sexy," etc. The flattering frame is still grouped under the attribute-based category, because the flattering frame capitalizes on a desirable attribute, like having an attractive outward appearance; and the brands seem to have targeted this specific desirable attribute. Fashion items are typically not necessities of life, so in addition to affordable frame and flattering frame, there is also a frame under the sub-category of feasibility needed to provide useful insights into processes of decision making and deals with individuals confronted with uncertainty. Therefore, the researcher developed choice frame, which accentuates positive gains that can be attained or emphasizes the benefits that consumers can get by choosing the items that the post displays.

The third type of attribute-based frame is creativity. Under this sub-category, three different frames emerged: inspiration (3.11%), design-detail (26.51%), and signature (3.54%) (See Table 1). Design-detail frame can be used separately but is often combined with another type of frame, such as inspiration, signature, choice frame, and celebrity frame, which will be mentioned later. Design-detail frame objectively describes or presents the details of design, including materials, patterns, styles, etc., by text or by picture. A great number of posts with

design-detail frame started with "take a closer look at" something, and then either or both described the details of designing or presented extreme close-up photography. Inspiration frame was frequently combined with design-detail frame in luxury brands' posts. This frame features the inspiration of the item or how the designers came up with these specific ideas; a typical inspiration frame states that something "was inspired by" For instance, Gucci proposed that its new pumps were "inspired by a 50s shoe shape and the Sabot slipper from the eighteenth-century." Signature frame, also known as icon frame, was frequently combined with design-detail frame in luxury brands' posts as well. It focuses on the most symbolic characteristic of a brand's products, such as the logo and iconic motif, or sometimes it just simply regarded a whole product as an icon. Interestingly, signature frame was largely used by luxury brands, occasionally used by bridge brands, but never used by high-street fashion brands, which was opposite of the usage of the affordable frame.

The researcher grouped the remaining frames of the attribute-based category into the "other" sub-category, because the remaining three frames all capitalized on different desirable attributes of fashion items. The three different frames are indirection (6.30%), holiday (3.28%), and teasing (11.57%) (See Table 1). Indirection frame promotes particular aspects of the products or services which are only indirectly related to the brand's principal business activity; for example, positioning a product as being environmentally safe, and supporting of the arts, education, and philanthropy. Holidays such as Mother's Day, Valentine's Day, New Year's Eve, and Christmas are usually the occasions that people want to purchase new fashion items for themselves and others. Therefore, those holidays were frequently mentioned during their respective seasons; these posts were considered to be employing a holiday frame. Teasing frame directs users to click a link and check out more information therein or arouses users' curiosity and excitement by displaying the upcoming products, but without involving detailed information so that the users have to wait until the

launch date and figure everything out by themselves. Most of the posts that employ a teasing frame are short.

Attitude-based frame category. Only 8.20% of the posts among the six fashion brands employed attitude-based frames. This frame category was directly adapted from Kwon (2013). The two frames under the attitude-based category, prescriptive frame (7.08%) and rule-breaking frame (1.12%) (See Table 1), both refer to a mode of presenting fashion and style information by addressing the consumer's attitude towards style. Kwon (2013) named these frames after the two ambivalent attitudes that human beings hold toward fashion: prescriptive and rule-breaking. Prescriptive frame appeals to the human need for affiliation, because "being in fashion" here means following the fashion rules of the majority. For example, some posts pointed out what the latest trend of the season is using the phrases like "essential items," "must-haves," etc., and displayed some items that follow the trend. In the recent case of the brand H&M's posts, the brand encouraged users to own certain styles or items by listing important items of the season or month, refered to as the "editor's pick."

In contrast to the prescriptive frame, the rule-breaking frame appeals to individualization. It presents style information as a guide to stand out and look unique. Although the messages appear to be going against the norms, the actual message does not encourage users to be outliers; it encourages users to be fashionably rule-breaking. Typically, in these posts, the writers would reveal "secrets" that would place the users in a group of trendsetters or those who seek to be stylish but unique.

Source-based frame category. The frames under the source-based category provide trendy information along with its source such as designers' runway pictures, celebrities, or ordinary people. Within this category, three different frames emerged: expert (11.92%), celebrity (20.12%), and consumer (0.60%) (See Table 1). According to Kwon (2013), almost all the source-based frames were combined with other types of frames, because experts,

celebrities, and ordinary consumers are similar to three types of spokesperson that can reinforce the credibility of magazine contents. However, in this study, the researcher found that source-based frames can either be combined with other types of frame categories or used separately, because sometimes fashion brands just wanted to post an advertising campaign or a simple, but effective, endorsement to promote their products.

The expert frame includes designers, editors of fashion magazines, and well-known stylists and bloggers. Displaying designers' work on the runway, discussed above, was one of the most typical ways to employ the expert frame. While presentation by the expert frame signifies the proposal of the style, presentation by the celebrity frame can signify the adoption of a style; therefore, seeing clothes or accessories in the celebrity frame, users are assured that the new style is being or will be successfully diffused. Compared to the two other frames in this category, the celebrity frame, located on 20.12% of the analyzed posts, was more popular with these six fashion brands possibly because, from the brands' perspective, publics tend to be attracted to celebrities. The consumer frame uses typical consumers as models or stylists in the presentation of their clothes and accessories. The use of the consumer frame was extremely rare, only occurring in 0.60% of the analyzed posts. Ordinary consumers sometimes can make an advertising message more effective and more believable, but they are not as eye-catching as famous people.

Media-based frame category. The media-based frame category is a completely new major category outside of Kwon's (2013) findings. Hallahan (1999) indicated that PR practitioners are inextricably involved in these frames as suppliers of much of the content found in the news media. Therefore, the purpose of the frames under this category is to attract the media's attention. If the frames under this category are being employed, the posts are well-planned to deliver the content to the news media; in other words, news media can obtain information for their stories directly from posts that use media-based frames. By applying

media-based frames to Facebook posts, brands assure that resulting stories found in news media are framed in a way that is consistent with the brand's preferred framing, or in a way that the brand would like to have their story told. The researcher developed four different frames under this category: company-organized activity (17.88%), community-organized activity (6.48%), responsibility (0.78%), and opportunity (6.56%) (See Table 1). Both the company-organized activity frame and community-organized activity frame are a description of activities. As the names suggest, the company-organized activity frame features activities such as launching parties, a new campaign shooting, the opening of a pop-up store, etc., while the community-organized activity frame features the brand's community involvement. Examples of community-organized activities include film festivals, film premieres, award dinners, etc.; the goal is to enhance brand awareness. The celebrity frame and the community-organized activity frame are a common combination for luxury brands, especially.

For companies in crisis, the responsibility frame is acceptance or denial of being responsible for events; for companies engaged in good works, the responsibility frame is used to enhance the reputation of the company by calling attention and seeking out credit for the company's actions. The goal of the responsibility frame is different from the goal of the indirection frame, considering that the latter is more focused on product or service altruism yet still aims at promoting specific products or services, but in an indirect way. For instance, Fendi brought together fashion and philanthropy for the Hong Kong Peekaboo project that features specially designed Fendi Peekaboo bags; this was a typical case of using the indirection frame. However, if a brand merely calls on users to donate to American Red Cross to help those affected by a hurricane or states that they have donated a portion of their income for animal protection, it would be considered a responsibility frame. The opportunity frame features communication opportunities that facilitate dialogue and open discussion.

Hence, those that call on the participation of an online discussion, online activity, or an upcoming offline activity such as an organization's achievements—grand openings, the anniversary of the establishment, etc., were all labeled as opportunity frame.

The first part of content analysis examined what message frames the selected fashion brands employed to create the posts on their official Facebook accounts. The findings include four major frame categories: attribute-based (including diversification, feasibility, creativity, and other as the sub-categories) 78.07%, attitude-based (8.20%), source-based (32.64%), and media-based frames (31.70%). Each category included sub-frames, yeilding a total of 21. The 21 frames are basic (2.59%), trendy (1.90%), context-setting (or theme-setting) (5.79%), affordable (or price) (1.21%), flattering (0.35%), choice (11.92%), inspiration (3.11%), design-detail (26.51%), signature (or icon) (3.54%), indirection (6.30%), holiday (3.28%), teasing (11.57%), prescriptive (7.08%), rule-breaking (1.12%), expert (11.92%), celebrity (20.12%), consumer (0.60%), company-organized activity (17.88%), community-organized activity (6.48%), responsibility (0.78%), and opportunity frame (6.56%).

RQ2

RQ2 asked which message frame(s) generated the most user engagement. The choice frame generated the most user engagement (n=280,636), followed by the company-organized activity frame (n=260,532), and the design-detail frame (n=257,460) (see Table 1). Even though the design-detail frame was the most frequently used frame, it only ranked third in user engagement. In contrast, the choice frame generated the most user engagement, but ranked fourth in frequency of use (11.92%).

RQ3

RQ3 intended to find out which message frame(s) would have the highest percentage of positive high-level engagement to all user engagement. As previously mentioned, positive high-level engagement is important for a brand because a high-level engagement potentially

leads to a long-term relationship and a positive long-term relationship benefits the brand in many ways, including raising brand awareness and reputation, ultimately generating a loyal user base, etc. (Malthouse et al., 2013). As shown in Table 1, the flattering frame had the highest percentage (9.98%), of positive high-level engagement to all user engagement, however it was the least used message frame among all the 21 message frames. In addition, 9.98% exceeded the percentages that the second-highest and the third-highest frames had. The holiday frame had the second-highest percentage of positive high-level engagement (5.90%) and the expert frame had the third-highest percentage (5.27%).

If we look into every brand separately, the results of which message frame would have the highest percentage of positive high-level engagement to all user engagement would be slightly different from the above-mentioned overall results. Table 2 indicates the first three message frames and the last three message frames of each brand in terms of the percentage they had. According to the table, the flattering, the holiday, and the expert frame that appeared in the top 3 positions of the overall results did not always appear in the top 3 positions of each of the six fashion brands. More specifically, company-organized activity, context-setting, inspiration, signature, prescriptive, indirection, opportunity, and teasing frame popped up occasionally into the top 3 positions of the percentage of positive high-level user engagement throughout the six fashion brands. While the flattering frame had the highest percentage of positive high-level user engagement in the overall results, it generated no positive high-level user engagement in H&M's posts (see Table 2).

The second part of the content analysis examined how the message frames developed in the first phase of the study might influence user engagement by coding user responses to different frames. Regarding RQ2, which asked which message frame(s) generated the most user engagement, the choice frame generated the most of it, followed by the company-organized activity and the design-detail frame. Regarding RQ3, which asked which message

frame(s) had the highest percentage of positive high-level engagement to all user engagement, the flattering, the holiday, and the expert frames had the top three highest percentage of positive high-level user engagement to all user engagement, but the rations varied widely between brands.

RQ4

RQ4 asked if there was a difference among the different market levels of brands in terms of the user engagement. The researcher conducted a one-way ANOVA to determine if there is a significant difference among the different market levels of brands, which are luxury brands, bridge brands, and high-street fashion brands, in terms of generating positive high-level user engagement.

A one-way ANOVA found that brands falling into different market levels generated positive high-level user engagement differently ($F(2, 123) = 5.59$, $p = .01$) (see Table 3). In other words, how many positive high-level user engagements the frames could generate were significantly dependent on which market level they fall into. To determine which of the specific groups differed, the researcher looked at the multiple comparisons table which contains the results of the Tukey post hoc test. A one-way ANOVA using Tukey follow-up procedures found that bridge brands ($M = 1110.21$) generated significantly more positive high-level user engagement than the high-street fashion brands ($M = 37.81$). However, the differences between luxury brands and bridge brands, and luxury brands and high-street fashion brands were not significant ($p = .16$; $p = .30$).

The differences regarding the positive high-level engagement were significant as expected, considering that high-street brands' Facebook posts usually included more complaints regarding quality and customer service under the posts. The researcher will discuss the implications of the results on both of the two aspects of framing, sociological and psychological, in the discussion section.

CHAPTER 4:

DISCUSSION

Framing research has two broad foundations—sociological and psychological. The sociological foundation is about examining the frames in communication, and the psychological foundation is about examining the effects of framing on the audience. This study was based on both of the two broad aspects of framing. The first purpose of this study, which was extending the existing research on fashion frames and examining how these frames fit into the broader PR research, was based on the sociological aspect of framing. The results yielded a total of 21 frames that fall into four major categories, which are attribute-based, attitude-based, source-based, and media-based frame category. The second purpose of this study, which was examining the user engagement associated with each frame on social media platforms, was based on the psychological aspect of framing. Among those 21 frames, the choice, company-organized activity, and design-detail frame generated the most user engagement, and the flattering, holiday, and expert frames had the highest percentages of positive high-level user engagement to all user engagement.

Developing Frames—The Sociological Aspect

Borah (2011) argued that researchers need to tie issue-specific frames back into broader concepts in the framing theory, answering some of the more general questions such as "how does the unique set of frames associate with already developed generic frames in the literature?" (p. 256). Tying issue-specific frames back into broader concepts allows researchers to define the conceptualization and operationalizations of their particular studies clearly, and contribute much to the advancement of framing theory. The propensity to

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develop only unique frames could result in the development of very specific frames unable to make any connection with the broader theoretical or conceptual issues of framing (Borah, 2011). Hallahan's (1999) study was the first article that clearly identified distinct types of framing applicable to public relations, and these seven types of PR framing shed light on the PR functions of the frames developed in the current study. The first part of the discussion section will analyze the sociological aspect of this study. Specifically, the researcher is going to discuss how a few of the frames developed from this study fit into Hallahan's (1999) PR frames to answer Borah's (2011) question mentioned above. However, it is worth noting that not all of those seven PR frames were capable of these issue-specific frames, and some of the PR frames may only be identified in certain situations. More specifically, the researcher failed to associate framing of actions and framing of issues with the unique set of frames of this study. The theoretical implication of tying a few of the fashion brands' Facebook post frames to Hallahan's (1999) seven PR frames is to break away from the general tendency, as Borah (2011) indicated, of generating a unique set of frames for every study rather than studying a consistent set of frames.

Framing of situations. Hallahan's (1999) framing of situations corresponds to the current study's opportunity frame. The opportunity frame that was developed from this study features communication opportunities that facilitate dialogue and open discussion. Special events that elicit group gatherings to mark organizational achievements such as grand openings, anniversary celebrations, and some online and offline activities are meant to be a two-way symmetric exchange. Therefore, practitioners are supposed to ensure that the structure of the encounters are framed properly to facilitate dialogue and open discussion. Structuring encounters in ways that will be favorably received and reinforce the intent for all parties is the primary concern in organizing communications between an organization and key publics. If organizations frame any of these communication opportunities in a way that

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fails to meet those publics' expectations, the groups might redefine the event such that the opposite of the intent of the event's sponsor is realized.

Framing of attributes. The indirection frame promotes particular aspects of the products or services that are only indirectly related to the brand's principal business activity, and fits in well with Hallahan's (1999) framing of attributes, which is about accentuating particular aspects or characteristics of objects and people. All six companies employed the indirection frame as part of their social media strategy. Using this frame allows practitioners to consistently engage in accentuating particular aspects of the products or services they represent. In doing so, practitioners hope to portray their products/services as the ones that would be evaluated favorably, influencing key publics such as customers and investors to continue supporting the company through purchases and investment.

In many posts, practitioner relied on the indirection frame to create positively-valenced associations with beliefs and values or with other cultural artifacts that people admire. For example, H&M and Zara both regularly posted content on Facebook to position their products as being environmentally friendly. Gucci unveiled Art Walls in New York, Milan, and some other major cities, which were painted by young and rising artists who were invited by the brand for the collaboration. The murals caught not only the curiosity of people on the street, but also social media users. Over the past few years, Gucci has discovered and partnered with a series of young and rising artists from the social media platform, turning their unknown illustrations into capsule collections; in order to ultimately turn the collections into the lucrative opportunities, Gucci had posted plenty of content featuring the eye-catching Art Walls and also positioning the collections as a way to support arts development and encourage new artists. In contrast, practitioners avoided the negatively-valenced associations that would require tearing down an opponent, preferring instead to capitalize on their own positive actions. Therefore, even though the researcher tied the indirection frame to a broader

PR concept, it was not fully capable. The creation of negatively-valenced associations seems to be useful in political campaigns, considering that messages frequently focus on a competitor; however, whether this type of creation is effective in other areas still needs to be examined in future study.

Framing of choices. Hallahan's (1999) framing of choices corresponds to the current study's choice frame. Framing of choice is involved when individuals must make a choice between two independent options when some level of uncertainty or risk is present. Purchasing fashion items normally does not involve taking high levels of risk; potentially wasting money would be considered a moderate or low level of risk, but not nearly as high as the risk people take when they purchase a house or car. While, fashion items are not essential for living like a house or car, people still need to make decisions about whether or not they are willing to spend money on a specific fashion product. PR practitioners face a difficult challenge when trying to encourage key publics to make choices that involve even low levels of risk because people are risk-averse and more concerned with preventing losses than achieving gains; therefore, Hallahan's (1999) framing of choices and the choice frame of this study are used by companies to motivate people to make decisions and provide useful insights into the processes. In other words, the choice frame aims at dealing with individuals confronted with uncertainty. Most typically, the Facebook posts that used this frame emphasized the best value the product offers, and how worthy it is of being exchanged for money since for instance, it is a thing that "goes with everything," with "premium quality," etc.

Except for motivating current customers to be loyal to the brand and continue purchasing its products, brands also want to attract new customers, employees, partners, etc., the challenge confronting message creators of brands is to overcome the comfort offered by

the status quo and thus accentuate positive gains that can be attained by changing brand loyalty, getting a new employee, seeking new partnerships, etc.

Framing of responsibility. The next PR frame of Hallahan (1999) that was tied to this study is the framing of responsibility. In this study, the researcher also developed a frame named the responsibility frame; however, the definition was slightly different because the responsibility frame of this study did not involve acceptance or denial of being responsible for events of a crisis. A recent crisis of a specific brand or a brand currently going through a crisis would potentially influence how an individual might respond to its posts or whether someone would be willing to engage with the brand, regardless of the framing of online messages the brand presents. Thus, when creating the second subsample for the final coding, which was coding for the presence or absence of a frame in a post and coding for how users responded to the posts, the month (January 2018) that a specific brand (H&M) was experiencing a significant crisis (the release of a racist hoodie) was not included; actually, January 2018 had been selected into the first subsample of this study for the process of open coding, which aimed at identifying and organizing the category system of frames. By doing this, the researcher intended to avoid outside interferences as much as possible and thereby concentrate only on how the framing of Facebook posts influences user engagement.

The responsibility frame was for the brands engaged in good works. The goal of these efforts is to enhance the reputation of the brands by calling attention to their roles in activities that demonstrate a social conscience. According to RQ1, the responsibility frame also included the acceptance or denial of being responsible for events, because the frame categories had been organized in the process of open coding, and January 2018 (the month that H&M was experiencing a major crisis) was selected into that subsample for open coding. Therefore, the description of the responsibility frame for answering RQ1 involved the situation of a company under crisis. However, when the researcher was coding for the

presence or absence of a frame in a post and coding for how users responded to the posts (answering RQ2 and RQ3), January 2018 was not included in the subsample used for this final coding process. Thus, even though the responsibility frame was coded for presence many times, none of the posts using this frame was about accepting or denying responsibility for events.

The responsibility frame involved acceptance of being responsible for those good works, such as donating a portion of income to a hurricane-affected city, expressing deep sympathy to victims of a shooting, etc., in the day-to-day operation of the company. The companies actively sought out credit and recognition for any of their good actions as long as the companies did. Nevertheless, there is a great possibility that the efforts to gain recognition by employing Hallahan's (1999) framing of responsibility be discounted by cynics who see such efforts as self-serving, cleverly designed to ingratiate the company with the community; this potential for cynicism also applies to the responsibility frame of this study. For example, Fendi consistently posted content about Rome's iconic Trevi Fountain being carefully restored with the support of Fendi, and how the company would often give back to the country where it is based. Some users commenting under the posts pointed to the fact that there were tax breaks to be had in exchange for the restoration of the fountain, and luxury brands like Fendi also benefit from Italy's glamorous image, so it has a stake in ensuring that image is maintained. Many users felt Fendi engaged in projects like restoring Trevi Fountain for self-serving purposes. Accordingly, this cynicism may be major reason why the responsibility frame did not perform well in generating positive high-level user engagement.

Framing of news. Hallahan's (1999) last PR frame tied to this study is the framing of news, but the researcher applied it as a major category—media-based frame category—for this study. This frame category is an entirely new category outside of Kwon's (2013)

findings. Unlike the magazines that Kwon (2013) examined, the fashion brands' Facebook posts were not simply aimed at promoting fashion products or offering information for people. The posts were also trying to promote the brand itself by gaining media attention. Hallahan (1999) noted in his framing of news that PR practitioners are inextricably involved in the framing of the news, and are "suppliers of nearly half of the content found in the news media" (p. 228). Given the role of PR practitioners in supplying news content, brand Facebook pages have the potential to shape news about the brands and the fashion industry. Message creators of the brands are involved in supplying the content found in the news media while the magazine editors of Kwon's (2013) study are not. It was even possible that some of the content found in the magazines that Kwon (2013) examined was supplied by different brands.

No matter what specific frame under this category is being employed—the company-organized activity, the community-organized activity, the responsibility, and the opportunity frame—news media were expected by the brands to obtain information for the news stories directly from posts. In proposing a particular story to an editor or reporter by applying any of these media-based frames, brands attempt to assure that resulting stories found in news media are framed in a way that the brands would like to have their story told. However, as Hallahan (1999) indicated, the framing of a news story almost invariably corresponds to the framing or schematic understanding of the event by at least some groups. There might be some frame contests between the brands' posts and other sources who are also seeking their favored treatment of the story. Therefore, whether the framing of news stories can be consistent with the brands' favored frames as they promote in their posts still needs to be examined in the future studies.

As Hallahan (1999) noted, the seven types of PR frames are not mutually exclusive. Reflecting Hallahan's (1999) perception into this study, it was not unreasonable to put the

responsibility frame and the opportunity frame under the media-based category; for example, a PR practitioner might have to address the potential interpretation of responsibility to make publics better understand how conscientious the company is (responsibility frame) as well as be concerned with packaging the information regarding what they have done and the company's response to it in order to shape media coverage in the most beneficial way (media-based). Accordingly, news framing seems to be the most inclusive notion of framing discussed in Hallahan's (1999) study, considering it can incorporate many of the notions of framing in this study.

The above discussion has suggested that the five types of Hallahan's (1999) framing—framing of situations, framing of attributes, framing of choices, framing of responsibility, and framing of news—could be tied to the frames developed from the current study. However, as previously noted, framing of actions and framing of issues were not applicable at all. This first part of discussion made this study break away from the general tendency, as Borah (2011) noted, of generating a unique set of frames for every study rather than studying a consistent set of frames, and made the unique set of frames of fashion posts more beneficial by tying them to a more general concept in the framing theory.

User Engagement—The Psychological Aspect

The second part of the discussion section will analyze the current study's psychological aspect. Specifically, the researcher is going to discuss the user engagement, especially the percentage of positive high-level user engagement to all user engagement, associated with each frame based on the results and analyze why using this specific frame could lead to the respective result. Therefore, this discussion and analysis may be able to guide fashion PR practitioners to tailor the most suitable approaches to propose and generate social media content based on their brands' situations accordingly. Also, considering that Borah (2011) pointed out that the psychological aspect of framing had not received enough

scholarly attention compared with the sociological aspect of framing, the second part of the discussion section can serve for broadening the discussion of the psychological aspect of framing.

Attribute-based frame category. The attribute-based frame category is one of the major categories and also the largest; it has four sub-categories. Three kinds of frames were identified under diversification, the first sub-category: basic, trendy, and context-setting (or theme-setting). Interestingly, the basic frame and trendy frame's percentages of positive high-level user engagement were approximately close; this is likely because the strategy of using these two frames allowed almost any post featuring fashion products to be presented either in the basic or the trendy frame. Specifically, a basic and classic design, such as a pair of simple blue jeans, would be presented as a central product in a post employing the basic frame, and a trendy and new design, such as a pair of shoes called "the modern slip-ons", would be presented as a central product in a post employing the trendy frame. Both the basic and the trendy frame required the presentation of basic and trendy items, although the role of each type of design may differ in each frame. In other words, basic designs could play the role of a supporting piece for a trendy item in the trendy frame, and trendy designs could play the role of a supporting piece for a basic item in the basic frame. Thus, the brands could provide diverse designs using frames under the sub-category of diversification; the difference was which item, basic or trendy, the message creator wanted to put a spotlight on. The researcher considered these two frames interchangeable in any post that had employed either one of them. Users might hardly perceive a significant difference between a post using the basic frame and a post using the trendy frame due to the above relationship. Therefore, these two frames had similar percentages of positive high-level user engagement.

Although Kwon (2013) already identified the context-setting frame, the researcher of this study expanded the definition of this frame to a broader level so that the context-setting

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frame could also be called theme-setting frame. More specifically, some real-world contexts, such as workplace attire for adults or an outfit for a date, were frequently used by magazines in Kwon's (2013) study, but fashion brands' Facebook accounts also included some fictional contexts or themes to group clothing and accessories in order to highlight the similarity of the products' styles. Therefore, the definition of the context-setting frame in this study was broader than the context-setting frame in Kwon's (2013) study. Regarding the effects of the context-setting frame (or theme-setting frame) on audiences, the percentage of positive high-level user engagement that this frame had was interesting. In both Fendi and Coach's posts, the percentages of positive engagement were extremely low, and even ranked at the bottom three, but as a luxury brand like Fendi, Gucci employed this frame as well but generated a high percentage of positive high-level user engagement which was in the top three of all frames Gucci employed. The reason these two extremes occurred was possibly because the context-setting frame is a frame that requires a high level of editor creativity and aesthetic sense. Brands should be aware of this characteristic of the context-setting frame and use it with caution because its performance on positive high-level user engagement correlates highly with the capacity and ability of the message creators themselves.

Three kinds of frames were identified under feasibility, the second sub-category: affordable (or price), flattering, and choice. Not surprisingly, the affordable frame was only used in high-street fashion brands' posts but never used by luxury brands or bridge brands. Strikingly, this frame had a low percentage of positive high-level user engagement. Almost all the posts using the affordable frame were on-sale ads, and only one post was about providing a less expensive version of the same style, a post that featured some Oscar-worthy outfits for the after party, at prices that "would not break the bank." This post had a substantially higher total amount of user engagement and a higher percentage of positive high-level user engagement than the other posts using the affordable frame, which were on-

sale ads. This high level of engagement suggests that providing an inexpensive version of the same style is a more effective way of employing the affordable frame for high-street fashion brands than just providing a simple on-sale ad. As people coming to the high-street fashion brand Facebook pages likely already expect relatively low price, pure on-sale ads may not be attractive enough engage them. Future research can either conduct experiments or surveys to explore why the on-sale ads may not be engaging in high-street fashion brands' posts. As high street fashion brands replicate designs from the runway at the most affordable prices, this type of brand can fulfill people's appeal of both fashion and budget. As such, high-street fashion brands, may be still be able to employ the affordable frame in their posts, but in diverse ways, such as offering the less expensive options of the trendy styles as mentioned above, rather than merely posting discount information.

While the flattering frame was the least used message frame, it had the highest percentage of positive high-level engagement to all user engagement. Wolny and Mueller (2013) demonstrated that high brand commitment and high fashion involvement motivates people to engage with fashion brands on social media platforms. Brand commitment is a positive feeling of attachment to a brand, and fashion involvement arises out of a sense of high personal relevance (Beatty & Kahle, 1988; Bloch & Bruce, 1984; Wohlfeil & Whelan, 2006). After clearly identifying the definition of each frame, the flattering frame appears to be able to evoke both of the two feelings, as this frame is defined as assuming how great consumers will look wearing the clothing or accessories presented. The definition of the flattering frame in this study is different from the flattering frame in Kwon's (2013) study; therefore, before identifying the flattering frame in the posts of this study, the researcher did not consider that the flattering frame may be able to evoke both high brand commitment and high fashion involvement. In this study, the frame's rhetorical strategy was designed to make people feel confident wearing the brand's product, as well as making them feel they are

relevant to the brand and product because almost all the posts employing the flattering frame were communicated in second person, such as the phrase "you are gorgeous." Second-person perspective allows the content to speak directly to one individual reader and put the reader in the central role of the post. Therefore, employing the flattering frame could potentially lead to highly positive feelings of attachment to a brand (high brand commitment) and a sense of high personal relevance (high fashion involvement), which motivates people to be engaged, especially in a positive way.

The choice frame is the last one under feasibility. The frame had an extremely low percentage of positive high-level user engagement in the luxury brands' posts, especially Gucci. The price of luxury brand products is already expensive compared to the price of comparable products in other market levels. Based on this, it seems both ineffective and even counterproductive for luxury brands to employ the choice frame and expect it to subtly influence people's decision making. While the choice frame does appear to be useful when individuals are confronted with purchasing uncertainty, but the high price of luxury products makes many consumers not willing to even consider purchasing the product. So, no matter how much effort the luxury brands make to emphasize the benefits that consumers can reap by choosing their product, if a consumer cannot afford it in the first place, he or she may not even consider purchasing the product. If the consumers that cannot afford luxury products are over-exposed to choice framed posts by luxury brands, they may eventually develop a resistance to the posts, thereby causing the percentage of positive high-level user engagement to all user engagement to drop sharply; even worse, the consumers may start to feel repugnance for the brand. The percentages of positive high-level user engagement were substantially higher in both the bridge brands and the high-street brands. Considering that the choice frame did not perform well in generating positive high-level user engagement in the

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posts of luxury brands, future studies on framing of choice can pay attention to whether the price and necessity of the products have an impact on the effect of this frame on an audience.

The creativity frame sub-category included frames related to inspiration, design-detail, and signature (or icon). People can learn the aesthetic value of a new or retro style through these types of presentations. This sub-category, creativity frames, has the highest percentages of positive high-level user engagement in the posts of luxury brands, followed by bridge brands, and had the lowest percentages of positive high-level user engagement in the posts of high-street fashion brands. Since the signature (or icon) frame was not employed by the two high-street brands of this study, it was excluded from consideration for the high-street fashion brands market level. The characteristics of these three market levels—luxury brands, bridge brands, and high-street brands—caused the above results regarding the percentage of positive high-level user engagement. Luxury brands have admirable aesthetic value and innovation and have always been the fashion industry leaders (Kim & Ko, 2010). Therefore, it is possible to assume that users were more attracted by the luxury brands' posts that demonstrated their aesthetic value. Moreover, high-street fashion brands usually just replicate designs from the runway or imitate trendy ideas that brands in the upper levels (i.e., luxury and bridge) already set up, thus, it was most likely that users were not interested enough in exploring the aesthetic value of the high-street brands. Some users even negatively engaged with the posts of high-street brands that employed creativity frames, for example, criticizing these brands for "stealing" other designers' or artists' work without their consent.

It was understandable for the two high-street fashion brands to not use the signature frame in any posts. It may be because that the logo, iconic motif, signature material, or whole iconic item of the luxury brands are usually extremely recognizable; these highly recognizable items rapidly convey a sense of status, wealth, exclusivity, and accomplishment at first glance. The products of bridge brands could also be presented using the signature

frame, but not as effectively as when luxury brands use it. Most importantly, high-street fashion brands' products do not have the function of helping people show off to gain acceptance from others, and since most of the designs were not original (Banton, 2014), it was difficult for the high-street fashion brands to find something to frame as their signature or icon. Even if the signature frame had been employed by the high-street fashion brands, the percentage of high-level user engagement would be extremely low.

Indirection, holiday, and teasing were the last three types of frames under the attribute-based frame category. The percentage of positive high-level user engagement of the holiday frame ranked second. Understanding what drives customers to engage with companies on social media in the first place, what customers really want on social media, and other factors that can help manage the relationship with customers in the age of Web 2.0. is a critical first step toward building a new social CRM strategy for creating effective content on social media (Baird & Parasnis, 2011). Baird and Parasnis (2011) perceived that consumers are increasingly using social media to connect with their friends, family, the collective social community, etc.; therefore, if users perceive that a post will potentially contain useful opinions, information, or recommendations, and they can connect with their friends or families at the same time, the chance that the users engage with the post will possibly increase. Celebrations such as Mother's Day, Valentine's Day, New Year's Eve, Christmas, and other festivals specific to religious, social, or geographical groups celebrate (e.g. Lunar New Year, which appeared in almost all the posts of every brand) are about a sense of belonging, or the bonds between individuals. Most of the posts employing the holiday frame focused on guiding users to pick out the perfect gift for a specific holiday. Therefore, the holiday frame was highly effective due to its nature of building bridges between users and the people they value.

Baird and Parasnis (2011) reported that most users say they need to feel a company is communicating honestly before they will engage with it, and if they feel the brand is not honest and sincere, negative engagement may occur. The teasing frame directs users to click a link to find out more information or arouses their curiosity and excitement to learn everything about the post themselves. Brands should use this frame with caution; if the actual items, events, etc. are far below the expectations of the users, they may regard the brand as an insincere company and express their dissatisfaction by engaging with the post in negative ways (e.g., leaving negative comments). For example, Coach posted "introducing the Bandit, our newest bag comes packing a secret inside…" and a link directing users to the page of the product. Negative comments like "I found out the answer of the secret after I checked out this bag in the store today. Ridiculous price with poor quality" were frequently seen under this post. The above discussion about using the teasing frame could explain why two extremes appeared in the results: in Coach's posts, the percentage of positive engagement of the teasing frame was the second lowest; but in H&M's posts, this frame generated a high percentage of positive high-level user engagement, ranking second.

Attitude-based frame category. Two frames that capitalized on the ambivalent nature of fashion emerged under the attitude-based frame category: prescriptive and rule-breaking. Neither of these two frames performed well in generating positive high-level user engagement. However, if the brand still wants to capitalize on users' attitudes towards fashion, using the prescriptive frame may be more effective than using the rule-breaking frame based on the results. One of the roles of fashion brands' Facebook accounts is to inform users about new trends the brands set up or, in the case of high-street fashion brands, follow, and establish fashion product consumption norms. The prescriptive frame is more efficient in performing this role and is thereby able to provide more exclusive information, such as fashion trend forecasting, to users.

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Exclusive information on a brand's social media account can potentially make users more engaged (Baird & Parasnis, 2011). Therefore, comparing the prescriptive and rule-breaking frame, the prescriptive frame understandably had a higher percentage of positive high-level user engagement than the rule-breaking frame.

Source-based frame category. The source-based frame category is comprised of the expert, celebrity, and consumer frames. Compared to the two other frames in this category, the celebrity frame was significantly more popular among the six fashion brands in the study. This popularity may be due to the brands' shared perspective that publics are attracted toward celebrities. The celebrity frame was often combined with other frames, for example, saying "filmed in Venice, presenting the campaign for new men's fragrance Gucci Guilty Absolute, starring Jared Leto" with a video, the post featurred the brand's campaign starring a celebrity (combined with the company-organized activity frame); or stating "to the world premiere of 'Dunkirk', Harry Styles wore a custom Gucci suit with a shirt and Gucci Cruise 2018 leather boots," and offering some other information and a few pictures about the premiere, the post featured a celebrity wearing the brand's items and attending a movie premiere (combined with the community-organized activity frame). Also, the celebrity frame could be used alone such as street snaps of celebrities wearing the brand's products, for instance, Fendi posted "Gigi Hadid keeps cool in a minimalist look elevated with a bright yellow Micro Peekaboo" and a street snap of Gigi Hadid carrying Fendi's purse. However, being different from what the brands perhaps expected, the celebrity frame did not generate a substantially higher percentage of positive high-level user engagement than the other two source-based frames (i.e., expert and consumer frame). How users engaged with the posts using the celebrity frame was highly influenced by the crisis and scandal history, reputation, and even the popularity of the specific celebrity as they are received on social media. For example, one of Coach's posts featured James Franco at a party held by Coach. Although the sample included

many comments or re-written posts that expressed the users' excitement to see him in Coach's post, there were also many comments discussing James Franco being accused of inappropriate or sexually exploitative behavior and ironizing Coach's "great" choice of inviting him to the party. This incident, in particular, highlights that fashion brands need to be aware of a celebrity's background and reputation before featuring the celebrity in its post, even if the celebrity is not the brand's ambassador, and the post is just about him or her casually wearing the brand's product on the street. If the scandal happens after the brand posted the content featuring the celebrity and the celebrity is just occasionally involved with the brand, like the James Franco example, rather than full-time involvement as the brand's ambassador, simply removing the post from its Facebook page is probably a good option.

Among the three frames under the source-based frame category, the expert frame was most effective in generating positive high-level user engagement. The reason is likely that experts such as designers, stylists, and editors of fashion magazines are believed to be more credible than celebrities and ordinary consumers, as fashion is considered their career path, and the information they provide is based on their competence. The more credibility users perceive, the more likely they are to engage with a post (Baird & Parasnis, 2011).

Media-based frame category. Media-based is the last major frame category the study developed. The company-organized activity, community-organized activity, responsibility, and opportunity frames emerged under this category. As mentioned above, cynics, who see companies' efforts to gain recognition as self-serving, were the major reasons why the responsibility frame did not perform well in generating positive high-level user engagement. Between the company-organized activity frame and the community-organized activity frame, the former had a higher percentage of positive high-level user engagement; the percentage of positive high-level user engagement of the community-organized activity frame ranked at the bottom.

Ledingham and Bruning (1998a) found that if consumers perceive a company highly with regard to several dimensions—openness being one of them—the relationship between the company and its consumers tends to be successful. The successful relationship management signifies high and positive user engagement. In the age of Web 2.0., indeed, online community members are not necessarily customers of the company (Ang, 2011). Openness is seen as sharing the organization's actions for right now, plans for the future, etc., with public members. Considering that employing the company-organized activity frame in the posts was able to keep publics informed about the brand's recent moves and even let publics have insight into the brand's future development, users would likely perceive the brand to be highly open and thereby tend to be more engaged in positive ways. The community-organized activity frame, included seeking out recognition for the brand's community involvement, such as guests during a film festival wearing the brand's products, and consequently enhancing brand awareness. Therefore, this frame's effect could be similar to the responsibility frame, particularly in terms of cynics having a potentially negative view of the company merely trying to ingratiate itself with the community.

The differences among the three market levels regarding the percentage of positive high-level user engagement were statistically significant as expected. The high-street fashion brands' Facebook posts had a lower average percentage of positive high-level user engagement when compared to the brands in the other market levels, especially bridge brands because the high-street brands' posts always included more complaints regarding quality and customer service under the posts no matter what frames the posts employed. Some of these negative comments had no relation to the posts they appeared on.

For some individuals, their needs might not be satisfied through other channels such as email or official websites, so they had to flock to Facebook or other social media platforms to make their voice heard. Baird and Parasnis (2011) suggest that the social media program

should not be devised as an isolated, standalone program, which means that the experience should be made seamless across multiple social media platforms and other channels. In addition to brands, particularly high-street fashion brands, deciding which frames should be used to design and generate Facebook posts, brands should also pay special attention to structuring their social media channels to ensure a seamless user experience. For example, one way this could be achieved is by brands creating a section on their Facebook page devoted to suggestions, requests, or complaints for the brand and employing someone or a group of people to respond to and handle these messages so that the negative comments that have no relation to the posts will decline in number and users can provide greater focus to the actual content of the posts. Zara has already inserted a section of reviews on the left side of its Facebook page (while the other five fashion brands in this study have not). Unfortunately, Zara representatives did not respond to the requests or angry complaints directly on Facebook. It is possible that Zara responded to them in a private message, however, there were some reviews showing that Zara either did not respond to them in any way at all or was extremely slow to respond. For example, a user left reviews on different dates, counting how many days she had been waiting, and saying that Zara's customer services is useless because nobody ever replied to her.

This study was based on the two broad perspectives of framing. From the perspective of sociology, the study identified and developed frames in fashion brands' Facebook posts based on Kwon's (2013) study. Therefore, the first part of the discussion analyzed how a few of the frames developed from this study fit into five of Hallahan's (1999) PR frames. Regarding the psychological aspect of framing, this study examined the effects of framing on audiences by looking at the user engagement associated with each frame on Facebook. The second part of the discussion focused more on suggesting to companies how to increase positive high-level user engagement, because, although all types of user engagement can

potentially benefit the organization, a more enduring and long-term relationship (i.e., positive

high-level user engagement) has significantly more implications for the organization, such as

raising brand awareness and reputation, ultimately generating a loyal user base.

CHAPTER 5:

CONCLUSION

This study was a two-part content analysis of the Facebook posts of six fashion brands that fall into three different market levels. The first part of the content analysis was identifying the message frames the brands used in the Facebook posts. The findings include four major frame categories: attribute-based (including diversification, feasibility, creativity, and other as the sub-categories), attitude-based, source-based, and media-based frame. Each category included sub-frames, yielding a total of 21, which were basic, trendy, context-setting (or theme-setting), affordable (or price), flattering, choice, inspiration, design-detail, signature (or icon), indirection, holiday, teasing, prescriptive, rule-breaking, expert, celebrity, consumer, company-organized activity, community-organized activity, responsibility, and opportunity frame. Among the 21 frames, choice, indirection, responsibility, and opportunity could be tied respectively to the framing of choice, attributes, responsibility, and situation from Hallahan's (1999) study. One of the major frame categories, the media-based frame category, was associated with the framing of news.

The second part of the content analysis examined how the message frames developed in the first phase of the study might influence user engagement by coding user responses to different frames. The choice frame generated the highest total amount of user engagement, followed by the company-organized activity frame and the design-detail frame. The overall results indicated that the flattering, holiday, and expert frames had the top three highest percentages of positive high-level user engagement to all user engagement. Considering that positive high-level user engagement is more important to a brand, and the results of which

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message frame had the highest percentage of positive high-level engagement were slightly different if looking into every brand separately, this study also offers prescriptive recommendations to help companies increase the percentage of positive high-level user engagement based on the brands' unique, individual situations.

The holiday and the expert frame were consistently effective in generating positive high-level engagement. The context-setting, teasing, and celebrity frames like the double-edged swords; whether the frames would be useful in generating positive high-level engagement was profoundly influenced by other factors; for example, the effect of the context-setting frame on positive high-level user engagement correlates highly with the capacity and ability of the message creators themselves. The three frames under the sub-category of creativity were most effective for luxury brands, followed by bridge brands, but seemed not to be good choices for high-street fashion brands. The affordable frame might be effective for high-street fashion brands only if the post is not just a simple on-sale ad; more specifically, users would like to see the brands providing more inexpensive versions of the similar styles because high-street brands are made to fulfill people's appeal of both fashion and budgets. The community-organized activity frame and the responsibility frame might not be effective in generating positive high-level user engagement. Using these two frames means companies might have to suffer from cynicism about the companies' motivation for actively seeking out recognition or credit.

Practical Implications

This study's results and discussion have both practical and theoretical implications. From a practical standpoint, the study identified the frames fashion brands used and offered insight into which frames might be most useful in promoting user engagement, particularly positive high-level engagement, which may help guide fashion PR practitioners in using social media to better interact with publics to evoke favorable brand attitude, increase brand

reputation, and gain media attention. This study not only offered insight into which frames are more effective in promoting positive high-level user engagement according to the overall results, it further discussed the performance of the frames at different market levels. Therefore, fashion PR practitioners can tailor the most suitable approaches to propose social media content based on their brands' situations accordingly.

Theoretical Implications

This study also offered theoretical implications, particularly in extending the use of framing in public relations research and providing new frames for use in examining social media interactions. Furthermore, this study broke away from the general tendency of generating a unique set of frames for every study rather than studying a consistent set of frames and made the unique set of frames of fashion posts more beneficial by tying them to a more general concept in the framing theory. Also, this study filled the academic gap that the psychological aspect of framing has not received enough scholarly attention. On a broader level, this study took one small step toward addressing Cassidy and Fitch's (2013) concern that PR research has largely ignored the fashion industry PR.

Limitations and Suggestions for Future Research

Considering that the review of literature did not reveal any study that empirically examined social media use in the fashion industry through the lens of framing, except for those frames developed based on Kwon (2011), most results of this study are exploratory. Although the results have both significant practical and theoretical implications, as an exploratory study, the limitations cannot be neglected. The first limitation is that the results may not be generalizable. How users engage with content on brands' social media accounts may not only be influenced by the framing of the online messages the brands present because a prior relationship or crisis history of a specific brand that an individual has perceived possibly has an effect on how he or she responds to the posts or if he or she is willing to

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engage with the brand. As previously noted, when selecting one month randomly for each season to use for the final coding, the researcher intentionally removed January out of the months of winter to ensure that H&M's major reputational crisis would not influence people's willingness of leaving positive comments based on the frames of the posts. Even though the researcher did not use any post in January 2018 for analysis, there was still a possibility that some users went back to the brand's earlier posts (posts of 2017) to leave negative comments to express their dissatisfaction and anger, regardless of what the content of the posts was. Also, the prior relationship or crisis history of a specific brand that an individual has perceived might differ for everyone, and an individual might perceive a prior negative relationship with the brand on a personal level, such as a bad shopping experience or customer service experience. Therefore, the results of this study may vary according to the fashion brands chosen.

The data collection method is the second limitation of this study. The researcher went back through the available contents of a one-year period rather than actively gathering them throughout a year. Thus, it was possible that social media managers and users may have deleted some posts or comments, re-written/edited posts, etc. To eliminate this limitation as much as possible, the researcher performed a screen recording of all the content of the posts in addition to the comments and sharings under each post before starting the process of data collection, but there was still a possibility that social media managers and users had already deleted content earlier than the study.

The demographics of the followers of the brands at different market levels are likely varied. Some may argue that the age, educational background, economic status, and other characteristics of followers are different for the market levels, and these characteristics of the followers would influence how they engage with the brands. However, there was evidence showing that many users still follow the Facebook pages of luxury brands or bridge brands,

even though they cannot afford the products. Under the posts of the two luxury brands in the study, comments that expressed how much the user admires the products and wishes to purchase the products were prevalent. Luxury brands, which have admirable aesthetic value and innovation have always been the fashion industry leaders; therefore, people may follow them on social media merely for the sake of appreciation and enjoyment. Due to the reason mentioned above, the researcher is skeptical about whether the difference of demographics of the followers is genuinely significant and thereby affects the results of the study.

Even though Facebook is a US-based social media platform, and all of the posts in the sample and the majority of the comments and re-written posts were composed in English, there was still a small portion of comments and re-written posts written in other languages. The language barrier is considered another limitation of the study. In addition to English, the researcher can read Chinese, and the coder can read Spanish. If the researcher or the coder were not proficient in the language of a particular item, the comment or re-written posts would be interpreted through Google Translate. Technology-assisted translation might cause inaccuracy, notwithstanding the researcher and the coder only needed to identify the attitude of a comment or re-written post.

The last and most notable limitation of this study is Facebook's privacy settings. The total amount of user engagement was simply the sum of liking, sharing, and commenting, which were shown directly on Facebook pages, so the privacy setting would not have an influence on it. But, the researcher and the coder needed to go through every comment and instance of sharing to identify their attitudes. If a user enabled specific privacy settings on his or her account, for example, selecting "friends" as the only group of people who can see the user's posts each time he or she creates a new post, when he or she shared a post the researcher and the coder would only be notified that a user had engaged with the brand by sharing content, but had no way of knowing whether the user just instantly shared the content

(low-level engagement) or shared the content by re-writing a post (high-level engagement). The privacy settings, though, does not influence comments under the posts. In short, it is highly likely that the actual percentage of positive high-level user engagement of every frame of every brand is higher than what turned up in this study. Therefore, the existence of privacy settings had a massive influence on the percentage of positive high-level user engagement of every frame of every brand. This influence is the most notable limitation that future studies examining user engagement on Facebook should pay attention to.

Findings in this study were exploratory. Thus, future studies should examine the message frames identified and developed in this study's fashion brands' Facebook posts. This study examined the effects of framing on audiences by looking at the user engagement associated with each frame on Facebook; future studies may more accurately measure the effects of framing on audiences by conducting an online questionnaire survey. By conducting surveys or experiments, future studies can also explore why the on-sale ads are not engaging in high-street fashion brands' posts employing the affordable (or price) frame. Furthermore, future research on framing of choice should examine whether the price and necessity of the products have any impact on the effect of this frame. In addition, future studies can examine whether the framing of the news stories can be consistent with the brands' favored frames as they promote in their Facebook posts.

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APPENDIX 1: CODEBOOK

Summary

The purpose of this data collection is to identify message frames six fashion brands use in their Facebook posts and examine how these message frames might influence user engagement by coding different types of user response to each Facebook post. Data are taken from the six fashion brands' official Facebook accounts. The six brands are Gucci, Fendi, Michael Kors, Coach, H&M, and Zara. Variables are brand, Facebook post, season, the market level of the brand, and user response.

Part 1: Identify Message Frames the Brands Use in the Facebook Posts

Sample: posts from February 1, 2017 to February 28, 2017 (winter); posts from April 1, 2017 to April 30, 2017 (spring); posts from July 1, 2017 to July 31, 2017 (summer); and posts from September 1, 2017 to September 30, 2017 (fall).

There are a total of 21 frames (number 1-number 21) that fall into four major categories and several sub-categories have been developed from the previous phase. A description of each category and the frames under them follows.

Attribute-based frame: capitalizes on desirable attributes of fashion items.

Diversification frame: increases the perceived value of the style by demonstrating ways to make more use of an item.

1. Basic frame: features the most common styles or items, such as little black dresses, trench coats, or blue jeans; key words found in the basic frame include basic, staples, and classic.

2. Trendy frame: emphasizes how compatible a trendy design can be with other

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designs; the item selected is usually a new design in the market.

3. Context-setting (or theme-setting) frame: a way of grouping clothing and accessories by their usage or similarity. These groupings encompass both real world and fictional context or themes. Contexts/themes include workplace, outfits for date, travel, beach, and a night-out, or even, in the case of a recent Gucci clothing grouping, Star Wars.

Feasibility frame: increases the perceived value of the style by providing positive aspects or solutions to reduce risks in purchasing and wearing trendy items.

4. Affordable (or price) frame: emphasizes how affordable the prices of the products are; featuring the discount is an example of the affordable frame.

5. Flattering frame: assumes how great the consumers will look if they wear the clothing or accessories; example phrases found in flattering frame include "look amazing," "look sexy," etc.

6. Choice frame: fashion items are typically not necessities of life, so this frame provides useful insights into processes of decision making and deals with individuals confronted with uncertainty. It accentuates positive gains that can be attained or emphasizes the benefits that consumers can get by choosing the items that the post displays.

Creativity frame:

7. Inspiration frame: features the inspiration of the item or how the designers came up with these specific ideas; a typical inspiration frame states that "was inspired by."

8. Design-detail frame: overall describes the details of designing, including materials, patterns, styles, etc.; starting with "take a closer look at…" is mostly considered the design-detail frame.

9. Signature (or icon) frame: focuses on the most symbolic characteristic on the products of the brand, such as the logo and iconic motif.

Other:

10. Indirection frame: promotes particular aspects of the products or services which are only indirectly related to the brand's principal business activity, for example, positioning a product as being environmentally safe, and supporting of the arts, education, and philanthropy. See note under frame 20, Responsibility frame, for distinguishing the difference between the indirection frame and responsibility frame.

11. Holiday frame: holidays such as Mother's Day, Valentine's Day, New Year, Christmas are usually the occasions that people want to purchase new fashion items.

12. Teasing frame: directs users to click a link and check out more information therein; or arouses users' curiosity and excitement by displaying the upcoming products but not involving detailed information, so that the users have to wait till the launch date and figure everything out by themselves. The posts that employ the teasing frame are usually extremely short.

Attitude-based frame: refers to a mode of presenting fashion and style information by addressing the consumer's attitude toward fashion.

13. Prescriptive frame: appeals to human need for affiliation; "being in fashion" here means following the fashion rules of the majority, for example, listing editor's pick of the month (e.g., "essential items," "must-haves") or pointing out what the latest trend of this season is and displaying some items that follow the trend.

14. Rule-breaking frame: presents style information as a guide to stand out and look unique; although the messages appear to be going against the norms, the actual

message does not encourage being outliers, it encourages readers to be fashionably rule-breaking.

Source-based frame: provides trendy information along with its source such as designers' runway pictures, celebrities, or ordinary people; reinforces credibility of the contents; can be used separately or combined with the other types of frame categories.

15. Expert frame: includes designers, editors of fashion magazines, or well-known stylists and bloggers; a typical expert frame uses experts' work on the runway.

16. Celebrity frame: presentation by the celebrity frame signifies the adoption of a style, while presentation by the expert frame signifies the proposal of the style; seeing clothes in the celebrity frame, consumers are assured that the new style is being or will be successfully diffused.

17. Consumer frame:　presentation of typical consumers' clothes; typical consumers become models or stylists in this frame.

Media-based frame: attracts media's attention; prepared to supply the content to the news media.

18. Company-organized activity frame: description of these activities, such as launching party, new campaign shooting, pop-up store, etc.

19. Community-organized activity frame: description of these activities, such as film festival, film premiere, award dinner, etc.; features the brand's community involvement; the goal is to enhance the brand awareness.

20. Responsibility frame: acceptance or denial of being responsible for events; seeks out credit for the company's good works to enhance reputation by calling attention to the brand's role in, for example, donating a portion of their income to a hurricane-affected city, protecting animals, etc. The goal of the responsibility frame is different from the goal of the indirection frame, considering that the latter

still aims at promoting specific products but in an indirect way. Be careful to distinguish between the Indirection frame and the Responsibility frame. Following are examples of each. Indirection frame: Fendi brought together fashion and philanthropy for the Hong Kong Peekaboo project. The Hong Kong Peekaboo project features specially designed Fendi Peekaboo bags. Responsibility frame: Help those affected by Hurricane Harvey! Donate to American Red Cross at H&M stores and we will match all donations up to $100,000.

21. Opportunity frame: features communication opportunities that facilitate dialogue and open discussion (e.g. call on the participation of an online discussion, online activity, or an upcoming offline activity such as the organization achievements—grand openings, anniversary of the establishment, etc.)

Instructions

Each coder is responsible for 60% of the sample, which means that two coders cross-code 20% of the sample to assess the intercoder reliability. The specific posts of each coder are to be assigned.

Label—Please write the label of each post that you code in this format:

The first letter of the brand/date/the first word of the content

e.g. G/4/13/Including

Frame—Please code for the presence or absence of a frame in a post. You should fill in the form separately by assigning the number "0" or "1" to each cell.

0: This frame is absent in this post.

1: This frame is present in this post.

e.g.,

	Frame 1 (0-1)	Frame 2 (0-1)	Frame 3 (0-1)	Frame 4 (0-1)	…	Frame 19 (0-1)	Frame 20 (0-1)	Frame 21 (0-1)	Comments (if any)

G/4/13/including	0	0	1	0	…	1	0	0
G/4/13/Shot	1	0	0	0		0	0	0

Part 2: Coding User Engagement in the Facebook Posts

Sample: posts from February 1, 2017 to February 28, 2017 (winter); posts from April 1, 2017 to April 30, 2017 (spring); posts from July 1, 2017 to July 31, 2017 (summer); and posts from September 1, 2017 to September 30, 2017 (fall).

There are a total of 3 types of user engagement on Facebook. A description of each type follows.

I.   Liking: This is the simplest feedback that users can provide on Facebook. Facebook recently added six new emotions to the social network throughout the world in addition to "Like." These six new emotions include "Love," "Haha," "Yay," "Wow," "Sad," and "Angry," so there are currently seven reactions in total. The list of emotions appears when a user holds down the like button on a mobile, or hovers their mouse over it on the desktop version of the site. In order to simplify the description, and also because all these options can be completed through the like button, all of the seven reactions are considered as "liking." Given that the users can simply choose what emotion they want to express within seconds, all the "likes" are **low-level engagement**.

II.   Sharing: User can either instantly share the post without adding any personal thought, or share the original post by re-writing a post. If the user instantly shares the content, it is considered as **low-level engagement**; if the user shares the original content by re-writing a lengthy and thoughtful post, it is considered as **high-level engagement**. "Lengthy and thoughtful" means that the re-writing post has to contain at least one complete sentence, has to have substantive content (not

meaningless comments), and cannot be an emoji or "@" someone only; otherwise, the re-writing post is still considered as low-level engagement.

III.   Commenting: Typically, the more engaged users would like to comment on the content. However, not all comments can be considered as high-level engagement. In order to be considered as **high-level engagement**, the comment has to be lengthy and thoughtful, and the standards of "lengthy and thoughtful" have been described above. If the comment does not meet the standards, it is still **low-level engagement**.

There are a total of 4 different types of attitude that can be identified in the high-level engagements. A description of each type of attitude follows.

1. Pro-attitude: The pro-attitude comments and re-write posts express how a user likes, wants, desires a product or a service, supports the perspective of the post, appreciates the aesthetics behind the specific product or the brand, and more.

2. Negative attitude: The negative comments and re-write posts are usually complaints regarding quality and service, and disapproval of the perspective of the post, the design of a product, or any other thing related to the brand.

3. Neutral attitude (or ambiguous attitude): The neutral, or ambiguous comments and re-write posts are those that do not contain any strong attitude. Those comments and re-write posts are mostly giving advice or questions to the brand, for example, a user asked "is there a way to filter by size? Can't figure out how to shop (an emotion icon added)" on one of Zara's posts; these neutral comments and re-write posts can also be using humor, for example, a user commented "we'll never accept your apologies before 75% off and free shipping on our entire purchases for one week" on H&M's post which was apologizing for the racist children's hoodie advertisement.

4. Mixed attitude: Some comments and re-write posts contain two opposing attitudes; they are considered as mixed attitude. For example, a user commented "love the brand and just spent $100 yesterday! Used to order a lot online but the shipping fee is ridiculous" on one of H&M's posts.

Instruction

Each coder is responsible for 60% of the sample, which means that two coders cross-code 20% of the sample to assess the intercoder reliability. The specific posts of each coder are to be assigned.

The Total Amount of User Engagement—The sum of liking, sharing, and commenting

Please carefully count and record the user engagement from every post in the sample and fill out the table. An example of the table is shown below.

e.g. Gucci:

	Total Amount of User Engagement (the sum of liking, sharing, and commenting)	Amount of High-level Engagement (only in sharing and commenting)	Amount of Positive High-level Engagement (1. pro-attitude)	Comments (if any)
Frame a				
Frame b				
Frame c				
…				
Frame u				

Fendi:

	Total Amount of User Engagement (the sum of liking, sharing, and commenting)	Amount of High-level Engagement (only in sharing and commenting)	Amount of Positive High-level Engagement (1. pro-attitude)	Comments (if any)
Frame a				

Frame b		95	
Frame c			
…			
Frame u			

Table 1.

The Use of Message Frames and the User Engagement They Generated

Category	Sub-category	Specific Frame	% of Total Posts	Total UE	% Positive High-level UE
Attribute-based	**Diversification**	Basic	2.59%	2,374	1.26%
		Trendy	1.90%	50,009	2.93%
		Context-setting	5.79%	55,829	3.06%
		Diversification Total	**10.28%**	**108,212**	**7.25%**
	Feasibility	Affordable	1.21%	1,915	1.10%
		Flattering	0.35%	2,164	9.98%
		Choice	11.92%	280,636	3.72%
		Feasibility Total	**13.48%**	**284,715**	**14.80%**
	Creativity	Inspiration	3.11%	24,438	5.21%
		Design-detail	26.51%	257,460	2.75%
		Signature	3.54%	54,489	3.78%
		Creativity Total	**33.16%**	**336,387**	**11.74%**
	Other	Indirection	6.30%	51,795	1.49%
		Holiday	3.28%	222,826	5.90%
		Teasing	11.57%	99,144	2.53%
		Other Total	**21.15%**	**373,765**	**9.92%**
		Attribute-based Total	**78.07%**	**1,103,079**	**43.71%**
Attitude-based		Prescriptive	7.08%	73,634	4.27%
		Rule-breaking	1.12%	10,310	0.91%
		Attitude-based Total	**8.20%**	**83,944**	**5.18%**
Source-based		Expert	11.92%	153,541	5.27%
		Celebrity	20.12%	128,917	2.22%
		Consumer	.60%	8,066	1.88%
		Source-based Total	**32.64%**	**290,524**	**9.37%**

Media-based	Company-org. activity	17.88%	260,532	4.88%
	Community-org. activity	6.48%	22,270	0.88%
	Responsibility	0.78%	3,162	1.20%
	Opportunity	6.56%	76,485	2.59%
	Media-based Total	**31.70%**	**362,449**	**9.55%**

Notes: All percentages are rounded up to two decimals. UE=User Engagement

Table 2.

The Percentage of Positive High-level User Engagement to All User Engagement of Each Brand

	Gucci		Fendi		Michael Kors		Coach		Zara		H&M	
Rank	Frame	Percent	Frame	Percent	Frame	Percent	Frame	Percent	Frame	Percent	Frame	Percent
1st	Company-organized activity	8.38%	Flattering	10.12%	Holiday	5.77%	Indirection	9.40%	Expert	6.18%	Company-organized activity	22.62%
2nd	Context-setting	7.42%	Inspiration	8.67%	Prescriptive	5.66%	Holiday	8.00%	Opportunity	4.00%	Expert	5.88%
3rd	Inspiration	6.45%	Signature	8.48%	Expert	5.41%	Expert	7.68%	Company-organized activity	3.02%	Teasing	4.80%
19th	Community-organized activity	0.92%	Context-setting	1.67%	Community-organized activity	0.48%	Context-setting	1.41%	Rule-breaking	0.00%	Trendy	0.29%
20th	Choice	0.78%	Rule-breaking	1.62%	Rule-breaking	0.30%	Signature	0.72%	Celebrity	0.00%	Community-organized activity	0.22%
21th	Responsibility	0.62%	Community-organized activity	1.34%	Consumer	0.06%	Community-organized activity	0.67%	Community-organized activity	0.00%	Flattering	0.00%

*All percentages are rounded up to two decimals.
Note. 0.00% means either the frame did not generate any positive high-level user engagement or the percentage was extremely low and was rounded down to 0.00%.

Table 3.

ANOVA Analysis

Source	SS	df	MS	F	p
Positive High-level User Engagement					
Between Groups	24237820.111	2	12118910.056	5.587	.01
Within Groups	266797427.190	123	2169084.774		
Total	291035247.302	125			

Table 4.

ANOVA—Multiple Comparisons

(I) Market Level	(J) Market Level	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Luxury Brands	Bridge Brands	-591.8571	321.3872	0.16	-1354.323	170.609
	High-street Brands	480.5476	321.3872	0.297	-281.919	1243.014
Bridge Brands	Luxury Brands	591.8571	321.3872	0.16	-170.609	1354.323
	High-street Brands	1072.4048*	321.3872	0.003	309.938	1834.871
High-street Brands	Luxury Brands	-480.5476	321.3872	0.297	-1243.014	281.919
	Bridge Brands	-1072.4048*	321.3872	0.003	-1834.871	-309.938