

# The Effect of Fit in Background Music on Brand Memory for Luxury vs. Non-luxury Brand Advertising

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## 럭셔리 vs. 非럭셔리 브랜드의 광고에서 배경음악 내 적합도가 브랜드 기억에 미치는 영향

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**Abstract** Current research examined the effect of fit in the executional cue on brand memory for luxury and non-luxury brand advertising. In particular, this research looked at music to see how well individuals memorize information about brands where background music and sound logo fit or non-fit in the advertisement. As results, the influence of fit in music was higher in the luxury brand advertisement than that of non-luxury brand. The findings demonstrate fit leads more positive response not only in the relationship between the executional cue and the brand image or executional cues, as seen in the literature, but also in the executional cue. Moreover, the effect of fit in the executional cue is greater for the luxury (vs. non-luxury) brand. Based on the results, present research proposes the academic and practical implications.

**Key Words** : Luxury, Non-luxury, Fit, Non-fit, Background music, Sound logo

요 약 선행문헌들은 사람들이 럭셔리 브랜드에 대해 非럭셔리 브랜드보다 추상적으로 아이덴티티를 형성하며, 브랜드 처리에 있어 적합의 영향을 많이 받음을 보여왔다. 본 연구는 럭셔리 브랜드에 대해 非럭셔리 브랜드 광고에 있어 실행단서 내의 적합 vs. 非적합이 브랜드의 기억에 미치는 영향을 살펴보았다. 특히 음악에 주목하여 배경음악과 사운드 로고가 적합하거나 그렇지 않은 조건에서 피험자들이 브랜드를 얼마나 잘 기억하는 지 살펴보았는데, 럭셔리 브랜드 광고에서 적합의 긍정적 영향이 강하게 나타났다. 이 같은 결과는 실행단서와 브랜드 이미지나 실행단서 간 적합 뿐 아니라 실행단서 ‘내’에서의 적합 또한 긍정적 영향력이 있음을 보여준다는 데에서도 의미가 있다. 본 연구는 이 같은 결과를 바탕으로 학문적 및 시사점을 제안하였다.

주제어 : 럭셔리, 非럭셔리, 적합, 非적합, 배경음악, 사운드 로고

## 1. Introduction

The global market for luxury goods has grown steadily over the past 20 years. There are not many companies in the luxury industry, but the industry has significant potential due to increased sales[1]. The top

100 luxury companies in the world recorded annual sales of close to \$ 1 trillion at the end of 2017[2], from \$ 217 billion in 2011. Since luxury goods differ from non-luxury goods in terms of characteristics and reactions of the market, many studies have been conducted especially focusing on luxury goods or

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brands[3]. These include the nature and definition of luxury, online luxury marketing[4] perceived value of luxury brands[5], management of luxury consumer behavior[6], and luxury brand counterfeiting[7]. In particular, marketing of luxury goods is more complicated and often counter-intuitive than marketing of non-luxury goods[8]. Hence, many researchers have insisted that the most obvious way which leads to fails in luxury business is traditional marketing[9]. There are significant differences in many contexts, such as non-luxury products and functional, empirical, and interactive symbolic dimensions. Luxury brands exude exclusivity, have a well-known brand identity, enjoy high brand awareness and perceived quality, and maintain high sales levels and customer loyalty[10].

Memory expressions for non-luxury brands are based on specific attributes, while associations for luxury brands are more abstract. Moreover this abstraction allows not only the product itself, but also the experiential part felt through the purchase of the product or the brand advertisement, from the social awareness related to the product to be integrated, to process the information about the luxury brand. In this respect, the perceived fit is a factor that has received a lot of attention recently, especially with respect to luxury brand marketing[11]. In addition to fitness, fitness is used in many studies in terms of congruency, matchup, etc. People have an episodic knowledge related to a specific experience and a semantic knowledge that is abstracted from this experience and stored in memory. The schema is a fusion of the two. If the new information is inconsistent with this schema, this information will cause the thinking to be assimilated into the existing schema when the level is weak according to the degree of inconsistency. In the case of luxury brands, unity identity formation is very important, and basically, it is aimed at perfection. Therefore, information that includes 'non-fit' when accessing information about luxury brands. In addition, there is a strong relationship between brand attitudes and brand attitudes.

The effect of perceived 'fit' on consumers' response to luxury brands, this study focuses on the suitability of these advertisements. People do not remember every single element of the ad when they see it, but they perceive it as an overall 'something' through their own interpretation. Therefore, if there is a part that seems unnatural to the advertisement, it can affect the information processing of the advertisement. Especially, the advertisement of the luxury brand with a strong tendency to collect information in an abstract manner is suitable. May be more affected by non-conforming factors. The purpose of this study is to investigate the effects of fitness of executive cues on brand memories through the music of luxury brand advertisement.

## 2. Background Research and Hypothesis

One advertisement contains many executional cues. However, because individuals perceive the ad as Gestalt, or the whole, they don't perceive these clues individually. The preference for a style is related to how the elements that make up the form are combined or configured. These ensembles refer to cue congruency or unity-in variety. Consistently, Green, Wind, and Jain (1972) demonstrated that individuals expect a certain pattern when they see a collection of items[12]. When applied to an advertisement, it is more likely that the overall goodness of fit leads to process information fluently[13]. In particular, luxury brands are more likely to be perceived fit in advertising because abstract knowledge about unity is important.

This study examines the music that has been especially important in academia among various execution clues of the advertisement[14]. Music is not a simple sonic mass[15] but adds tempo, pitch, tone, rhythm, chord, and melody to the consumer's response to the brand[16]. It consists of many different elements. Many prior studies have focused on 'fit between music and advertising objects'[17]. Present study focuses on

the effect of adaptation in music 'on' persuasion. In many commercials where music is used, the sound logo is distinct from the background music throughout the advertisement. The background music is newly created for every advertisement version, while the sound logo is presented in the form of the same (or slightly distorted, but main melody line is maintained) over several versions of advertisements of the same brand over a relatively long period of time. In many cases, the background music of the advertisement has the purpose of inducing a specific emotion for an advertisement, forming a product image, or attracting attention to an advertisement and inducing memory, while the sound logo is used for attracting attention to the brand itself and inducing memory[18].

Therefore, in order to make sure that the brand name is remembered even if the other contents of the advertisement are tipped in the head, in many cases, the sound logo is matched to the end of the advertisement to induce the recency effect. The problem is that, in many reality ads, two different forms of music are used in a single ad, but studies dealing with the impact of advertising music only use music as a "single" clue. This has two problems to think about: The expectations of music, and the suitability of the advertising brand. Music itself has an amount of information[19]. In particular, the amount of information in music is closely related to the expectation of music[20], which is based on the relationship of musical structural elements such as melody, melody, rhythm and tonality. Based on literature, the impact of fitness on the luxury brand's advertising music may be stronger than that of the non-luxury brand, since the luxury brand will expect a higher level of suitability in reaching consumers. Therefore, this study has established the following hypothesis based on the previous research mentioned above.

H1. The difference in brand memory performance between high-quality branded ads and high-quality branded brands is likely to be greater than non-luxury brands.

H2. When the relevance within the advertising music is high, the brand memory performance will be better in the advertisement of the luxury (vs. non-luxury) brand.

H3. The difference in the memory performance between the luxury and non-luxury brands will not be significant when the fitness within the advertising music is low.

### 3. Experiment

233 undergraduate undergraduates from the metropolitan area participated in the experiment (166 males, 76 females) with a reward of about 2,000 won. The experiment examined whether there is a difference in the effect of different suitability between the overall background music and the sound logo on advertising memory and brand name memory in presenting background music and sound logo, respectively, for non-luxury oral brands. In the case of the brand, the influence of the existing attitude may be large, so it has not been sold in the official channel in Korea yet, and in the investigation conducted after the experiment, all the subjects answered that they did not know before the experiment were selected (Luxury: Germany Oral brand Heinrich Dinkelack vs. non-luxury: US shoe brand Steve Madden). In order to manipulate the music without harming the completeness of the advertisement, the actual video advertisement of the brand was utilized and the background music and the sound logo were broadcast after the existing sound was removed.

The suitability of music was manipulated using the Circle of 5<sup>th</sup>, which has been established as a solid theory for hundreds of years in chords and harmony. This is the basis of Western tonal music's harmony. For example, in the case of C or Do, the C scale of Do-Mi-Sol and the C scale of Do-Re-Mi-Fa-Sol-La-Si-Do is composed. And they are the most important C major, which is the key to composition music. One

octave is composed of twelve notes. Each note has a chord, a scale, and a chord, consisting of a root note or root. Each trunk distance can be expressed as Circle of 5<sup>th</sup>. Krumhansl(1990) goes around Circle of 5<sup>th</sup>, and neighboring groups share a single note, and adjacent groups share a degree of similarity to other groups[21]. On the other hand, the similarity decreases as the distance from Circle of 5<sup>th</sup> increases. In the experiment, background music and sound logo composed by a professional composer were used. The background music was in the A major and the sound logo was in the A major (fit condition) or E<sup>b</sup> Major. The background music was exposed for 12 seconds and the sound logo was exposed for 3 seconds at the end of the advertisement.

Subjects were randomly assigned to one of two conditions of 2 Luxury (luxury vs. non-luxury) X 2 Fit (fit vs. non-fit), and after being told that they were studying advertising evaluation, and watched the corresponding advertisement image. In the next five minutes, subjects performed a task (puzzle matching) that was irrelevant to the advertisement, and remembered the name of the brand that they saw in the advertisement. Because the two brand names are two words in English, the memory score was tailored as 0 (no matching words), 1 (only one word and two spelling errors), 2 (only one word and one spelling error), 3 (two words are all but only one word is perfect and the perfect one word has two spelling errors), 4 (two words are all but only one word is perfect and the perfect one word has one spelling error), and 5 (two words are perfect). In the experiment, the existing advertising image was used. Hence, subjects responded to the 7-point scale ( $\alpha = .83$ ) as to how generalized the advertisement was and felt familiar because the newly composed sound was embedded in the image. Finally, subjects were asked to respond whether they have listened to or used the experimental brand and their sex.

## 4. Results

Results of Analysis of variance showed that memory performance of the luxury brand ( $M = 2.74$ ) was better and that of non-luxury brand ( $M = 1.70$ ,  $F(1,229) = 74.18$ ,  $p < .001$ ). The main effect of fit was also significant (fit:  $M = 2.94$  vs. non-fit:  $M = 1.52$ ,  $F(1,229) = 109.78$ ,  $p < .001$ ). More importantly, the effect of the 2 Luxury X 2 Fit was significant ( $F(1,229) = 50.12$ ,  $p < .001$ , H1 support). The results of the contrast analysis showed that the memory performance of the luxury brand was better in the fit condition ( $M = 3.82$ ) than in the non-fit condition ( $M = 1.61$ ,  $t(229) = 13.46$ ,  $p < .001$ ). The memory performance of the non-luxury brand was also better in the fit condition ( $M = 1.96$ ) than in the non-fit condition ( $M = 1.43$ ,  $t(229) = 3.15$ ,  $p < .005$ ), however, this difference was greater in the advertisement of the luxury brand. As a result of applying the contrast based on the fit vs. non-fit condition, the memory performance of the luxury brand was superior to that of the non-luxury brand ( $t(229) = 11.18$ ,  $p < .001$ , H2 support), while the difference between the two was not significant ( $t(229) = 1.07$ ,  $p > .2$ , H3 support). There were no effects of gender, ad generality, and ad familiarity ( $ps > .2$ ).

## 5. Discussion

Prior studies have argued that individuals are more abstract for luxury brands relatively to non-luxury brands. They also have shown that fit perception has a greater impact on brand processing. Present research examined the effect of fit in the executional cue on brand memory for luxury and non-luxury brand advertising. In particular, this research looked at music to see how well subjects memorize information about brands where background music and sound logo fit or non-fit in the advertisement. As results, consistent with prior expectations, the influence of fit in music was higher in the luxury brand advertisement than that of non-luxury brand. The findings demonstrate fit

leads more positive response not only in the relationship between the executional cue and the brand image or executional cues, as seen in the literature, but also in the executional cue. Moreover, the effect of fit in the executional cue is greater for the luxury brand.

In luxury goods, sales at stores still account for 75% of purchases[22], but sales at single-brand stores and department stores are declining due to increased sales at other channels such as multi-shop and duty-free shops. Online sales are also growing rapidly. Bain's report predicts online sales of personal luxury will account for 25% of the total market by 2025. Now it is necessary to recreate the brand to better communicate with customers in a way that transcends the sales channel[22]. Consumers need to provide an immersive experience so that they can feel brand identity clearly online. This study examined the consumer reaction in online advertising in particular, and it will be meaningful to investigate the effect of fit perception on more diverse distribution channels in future studies.

This study examines the net effects of variables such as luxury and non-luxury, fit and non-fit by excluding subjects' pre-existing influence on experimental brands by targeting only those that were not known before experiment saw. In addition, actual advertising was used to enhance the reality of existing brands. However, there is a limit to the generalization of the results of this study because in many cases consumers are exposed to pre-existing brand's new promotions rather than brand new ones. Therefore, present research propose that future works examine and show whether the findings are replicated by brands which subjects are already familiar with and have their attitudes. If the results are different, investigating the factors that led to them will be meaningful.

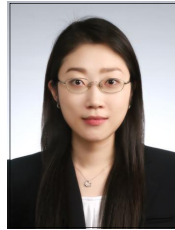
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