

**Book Review:****Sustainable Luxury Brands - Evidence from Research and Implications for Managers**

by Cesare Amatulli, Matteo De Angelis, Michele Costabile, and Gianluigi Guido

Palgrave-Macmillan, London, UK

2017, 1st Edition

244 pages

Amazon: \$131 Hardcover/\$124 Kindle

ISBN 978-1-137-60158-2 (Hardcover)

ISBN 978-1-349-95626-5 (Softcover)

ISBN 978-1-137-60159-9 (eBook)

<https://www.palgrave.com/us/book/9781137601582>

Keywords: Marketing, branding, luxury, sustainability.

Luxury products are typically associated with superior quality, high price, and a certain exclusivity⁽¹⁾. Sometimes this category even enters the outrageous and decadent: Think \$13,000,000 gem-covered i-phones, \$50,000 crocodile-skin umbrellas⁽²⁾, or \$185 for a single designer paper-clip⁽³⁾. However, and given increasing public concern, over the past decade or so luxury brands started jumping onto the sustainability bandwagon. Whether out of legitimate concern or for mere PR purposes, the sustainability trend is here to stay.

Building on their academic and industry experience, Professors Amatulli, De Angelis, Costabile, and Guido now offer *Sustainable Luxury Brands - Evidence from Research and Implications for Managers*. Contrary to what might be conventionally thought, the book's main premise is that luxury and sustainability are indeed quite compatible. As the authors indicate, p. 2:

"Conspicuous consumption could be now called conscientious consumption... the hedonism and the indulgence of the past have given way to a demanding, sophisticated, and well-informed contemporary consumer. Today's luxury customers have higher-quality and service expectations; they look for more personalized and authentic relationships with luxury brands. They also increasingly like to see luxury brands to be deeply committed to environmental and ethical issues."

Sustainable Luxury Brands addresses a series of strategic and tactical managerial issues related to the topic. The book is structured into seven chapters. Briefly, Chapter 1, *Introduction*, eases the reader into how luxury brands might, after all, be sustainable. Chapter 2, *Inside Luxury*, defines the luxury construct, its main features, and recent consumer trends affecting it. Chapter 3, *Luxury, Sustainability, and "Made In,"* explains in-depth how luxury and sustainability are not mutually

exclusive, instead rather compatible. Chapter 4, *Luxury Consumption and Sustainability*, describes the different ways in which luxury marketers might convey their products' sustainability. Chapter 5, *Sustainability Across Industries*, illustrates how sustainability issues are being addressed within different sectors, by both luxury and mass-market brands. Chapter 6, *Insights from Key Topics in Sustainable Luxury Research*, discusses recent findings in the area. Finally, Chapter 7, *Conclusions*, summarizes main takeaways.

Book chapters are organized via headings and subheadings making their reading straightforward. All chapters also have their *Bibliography* section for easy sourcing. Chapters are preceded by a *Foreword* by Richard Bagozzi, an *Endorsement* by Philip Kotler, and a *Table of Contents*, a *List of Figures*, and a *List of Tables*. Chapters are followed by a thematic *Index*, which allows to conveniently look up concepts and companies.

Sustainable Luxury Brands has a well-defined audience. While its research findings might interest academics, the book targets managers and perhaps even students. These will find the book's fluid nature appealing. Its light insights and actionable advice are bound to go over well among the latter. Overall, *Sustainable Luxury Brands* is an engaging primer. It introduces, updates, and offers good food for thought as to the increasingly important field of sustainable luxury.

Dr. Francisco Conejo

University of Colorado at Denver

Sources:

1) Conejo, F.J., & Cunningham, L.F. (2017). On Luxury Brand Dimensionality. *Journal of International Marketing Strategy*, 5(1), 49-63.

2) \$60,000 Gold Toilet Paper and Other Real Life Extravagances

<https://www.thestreet.com/slideshow/14310088/1/most-expensive-collectibles.html#10>

3) 14 of the Most Ridiculous Luxury Gifts to Spend Your Money On

<https://www.entrepreneur.com/slideshow/304279>