

ISM UNIVERSITY OF MANAGEMENT AND ECONOMICS
INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS AND COMMUNICATION PROGRAMME
UNDERGRADUATE STUDIES

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2013 01 04

**“COCCINELLE” BRAND DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY
IMPROVEMENT IN ITALIAN MARKET**

BACHELOR THESIS

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2013 01 04

VILNIUS, 2013

Želnytė, L. “Coccinelle” brand development strategy improvement in Italian market: Bachelor thesis: International business and communication. Vilnius, ISM University of Management and Economics, 2013.

SUMMARY

The topic of the thesis is “Coccinelle” brand development strategy improvement in Italian market. “Coccinelle” is an Italian leather accessories company. Even though “Coccinelle” is producing and retailing its articles in Italy and abroad, it does not have a leader position in its segment. Consequently, the objective of the thesis is to identify methods for improvement regarding the brand development strategy of “Coccinelle” in the Italian market. Research methods that were used: secondary data collection concerning leather accessories market, especially “accessible luxury” segment, with the aim to provide a general picture of brand position and problem perception; analysis of internal company resources and publicly available documents and articles about competitors for comparison and examples obtainment; quantitative research method – performing a survey of potential leather accessories market customers in order to have an opinion from end consumers’ perspective. The paper is primarily based on “Brand development model” by Charles Colby, 2012, in helping to highlight what is considered to be a brand strategy and its improvement. The first part of the paper contains evaluation of obtained and analysed information, whereas the second part emphasises on results. Provided results deliver a solution to the problem, that is, certain improving instruments, that constitute to the improvement of “Coccinelle” brand development strategy without drastically changing the existing one. Presented solutions, such as iconic product improvement, mono-brand shops development and promotion via Internet, may improve general image of a brand, enhancing its distinctiveness, and also deliver higher brand awareness, market share and satisfaction levels, especially with testimonials, brand community enrichment and partnerships with other organizations. All in all, with the help of provided instruments a strong brand equity should be achieved, which means a high-value and well-recognized brand.

Keywords: brand; strategy; development; improvement; “Brand development model”

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INTRODUCTION

In this paper, “Coccinelle” company, Italian leather accessories producer and retailer, is the aim of analysis. I did an internship at “Coccinelle” and observed the situation of the company. “Coccinelle” has already operated for over 30 years in the leather accessories market. It is a very good example of local business that grew into a big international company with business activities conducted in 85 countries around the world. Although “Coccinelle” possesses the priceless heritage regarding production technique, experience in business and its brand, nowadays “Coccinelle” faces a fast growing competition, requiring a very dynamic reaction to market changes and innovations.

“Coccinelle” company has a capacity to produce, it periodically expands its selling points, has a clear market segment to serve, however, its income numbers do not show significant changes, particularly growth. Therefore, main problem that pinpoints this situation is insufficient brand development strategy that does not represent substantial “Coccinelle” brand equity. The issue of how to improve current “Coccinelle” brand development strategy in Italian market is the core **problem** that is tackled in this paper.

The main **objective** of the thesis is to identify improving methods and to provide an action plan for the brand development strategy of “Coccinelle” in the Italian market.

Tasks of the paper are as follows:

1. To explore the “accessible luxury” segment of Italian leather accessories producers’ market and to evaluate the development strategies of competing brands from “Coccinelle” perspective in order to highlight the importance of the main issue.
2. To investigate certain criteria for further brand development strategy improvements for “Coccinelle” by analysing consumers survey results that represent clientele expectations about leather accessories brands and give directions towards potential instruments for improvement.
3. To provide managerial solutions for current brand development strategy’s improvement for “Coccinelle” in leather accessories market by presenting the discovered ways for further development and possible implementation in two-years period.

Research methods:

1. Secondary data collection about the leather accessories market, especially “accessible luxury” segment;
2. Analysis of internal company’s resources and publicly available documents and articles about competitors;
3. Quantitative research method – performing a survey of potential leather accessories market customers.

Logical sequence of the thesis follows the tasks raised herein. In the first part titled “Situation analysis” “Coccinelle” company profile is presented, including its strategies

investigation, competitors' evaluation and market situation assessment. Next part, "Empirical research", covers customers' perspective realisation (analysis made using statistical analysis package SPSS[®]) towards leather accessories brand and marketing. In this section all research approaches are explained and general results that are based on thesis objectives are presented. Final part which is titled "Managerial solutions" suggests practical solutions for "Coccinelle" company concerning the problem of the thesis that are based on all research made and information analysed.

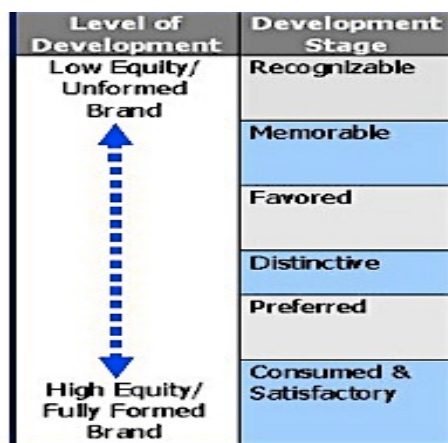
This thesis can be considered as a valuable article for further "Coccinelle" brand development as the relevant information was investigated with regard to varied aspects ranging from company's internal perspective, competitors and market analysis to the opinion of certain interest group of end-users. Moreover, the conducted research is a priceless experience for myself as an author and International Business and Communication student. The task of writing this paper enabled me to use a lot of theoretical knowledge gained at the university as well as implementing practical approach and to tackle the problem in a very comprehensive way with new material to learn and to analyse.

1. SITUATION ANALYSIS

This section covers “Coccinelle” company profile presentation and current business situation analysis, mainly focusing on branding strategy. Internal description includes the profile of target customers, financial and strategic overview. Analysis is complemented with the implementation of SWOT and PEST models. Furthermore, overview of Italian leather accessories market is provided, emphasising mostly the relevant “accessible luxury” segment where main competitors main aspects of marketing strategies are presented. The last part of “Coccinelle” company situation analysis shows the positioning of Italian leather accessories market players based on their internal brand researches. Generally, this section containing analysis of current “Coccinelle” position and situation pinpoints the importance of the problem raised in this thesis: “Coccinelle” brand development strategy improvement in Italian market.

Firstly, the model indicating what is held to be a successful brand development strategy is presented. By following this model, the issue of “Coccinelle” brand and solutions are analysed. Brand strategy development means gradual brand equity increment and vice versa. In other words, it means the bigger value a brand has, the more developed the brand strategy is. The model, which is used in this thesis was developed by Charles Colby and it is called “Brand development model: how to define and measure a brand equity”. It is briefly represented in this figure:

Figure 1. Brand Development Model



Source: Colby, C., 2012

Each development stage has its instruments of implementation that are analysed more deeply in sequencing parts of the thesis.

1.1. Company Overview

“Coccinelle” company (together with the brand) that is analysed in this paper was established in 1978 in Italy. It has its long history of development and growth. “Coccinelle” core product is leather bags, but there is a production line of accessories as well. Throughout the years of existence “Coccinelle” has developed a clear brand image that represents quality and price ratio,

Italian design, classics, contemporaneity, elegance and functionality, high of standard service. “Coccinelle” has expanded its business not only in the Italian market, but internationally as well. It has 85 mono-brand retail stores and corners in 1250 multi-brand stores in Italy and abroad. Until now, the Italian market, which is analysed in this paper, remained main target of “Coccinelle”. It represents 60% of all “Coccinelle” annual turnovers. It should be noted that the Italian market is huge and very well known for its leather produce, especially bags and shoes. Therefore, “Coccinelle” is in competition in this industrial cluster with lots of big names and high fashion players. In order to remain a competitive and profitable firm, it is essential for “Coccinelle” to have a powerful and efficient strategy.

First of all, it is important to describe the market that “Coccinelle” operates in. The market segment is referred to as “accessible luxury” (ital. “lusso accessibile”) mainly because of production characteristics that constitute a medium of 200 - 400 euro price tag for a handbag. This type of market attracts customers with medium to high income, those that usually buy apparel and accessories for functional use, and require high standards of quality and sophisticated style. Moreover, in order to be recognised among rivals in the market where “Coccinelle” is competing, the company has a clear segment of target customers, as described below:

- Woman;
- 25-60 years old;
- Having medium to high income (3000-6000 euros per month¹);
- Working;
- Elegant, but contemporary;
- Very individual;
- Practical, appreciating functionality;
- Loyal;
- Sensible for trends, which create the style, but not a “fashion victim”.

However, one of the main goals of “Coccinelle” is to reach out to a wider audience and regain its popularity, specifically, amongst younger women in the age group of 20-30 years and men by introducing a separate masculine collection line.

Financial situation of “Coccinelle” is stable. The data regarding the previous 3 years neither shows a huge growth on net income basis, nor dictates a significant decline (See Table 1.):

Table 1. “Coccinelle” Net Income

Year	2009	2010	2011
Net Income (million euros)	50,354	51,382	50,200

Source: “Coccinelle” company data

The situation may be interpreted differently in terms of selling points as the year 2009 and 2010 has seen an expansion (See Table 2.).

¹ The Economist online, 2012 and PayScale, 2012

Table 2. "Coccinelle" Shops Openings

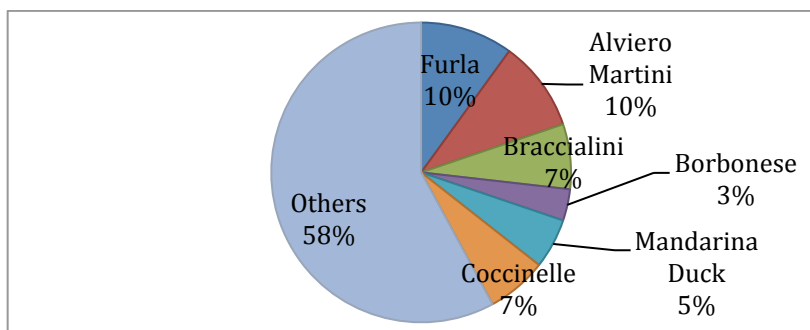
Year	2009	2010	2011
Number of shops opened	15	15	11

Source: "Coccinelle" company data

This means "Coccinelle" has certain potential to grow, however new stores do not necessarily guarantee significant additional revenues. The starting period for each shop may be slower (in terms of profit and investments ratio) and it may require some time to start gaining. On the other hand, experience shows that by applying very strong marketing instruments it is possible to start with a significant success (example "LiuJo" shop opening in Milano on 19th September 2012 with Kate Moss testimonial which attracted lots of attention - crowd was waiting outside, massive media representatives presence²).

With regard to approximate market share, in 2010 Italian leather accessories industry consumption reached 785 million euros³. Taking into account the net income of market players, approximate distribution in the market may be observed. It is calculated as follows: $net\ income / consumption \times 100\%$ (note: not all income is derived from Italian market for all players, numbers-approximate). Numbers are shown in the pie chart below:

Figure 2. "Coccinelle" and Main Competitors' Market Share in Italian Leather Accessories Market, 2010



Source: Italian leather accessories association, 2010 and calculations

From this approximate calculation the general image of market share may be seen. Even though income numbers are not directly related to brand awareness, this pie chart above shows the general position in the discussed market.

² Milan flagship store opening party. An unforgettable evening, 2012

³ Italian leather accessories association, 2010

1.2. Current “Coccinelle” Brand Development Strategy

The following section describes existing brand development strategy of “Coccinelle”. Information provided below helps to understand what has been already achieved in respect of this brand and what is still underdeveloped and in need of further improvements.

Current brand development strategy of “Coccinelle” comprises of:

- Advertising campaigns carried out twice a year presenting spring/summer or autumn/winter collections.
- Special events:
 - a) For customers (for example participating in “Vogue Fashion Night-Out” with special offers, service and gifts);
 - b) For journalists (for example “Press Day”, presenting upcoming collection. Usually presented in special theme, including small gifts, offers, catering and evening specialties);
 - c) For “Coccinelle” partners (for example sponsorships of special events like Milan’s prestigious “La Scala” opera theatre with special shows).
- Social web activity (Facebook and Twitter) where latest news and offers are uploaded.
- Development of stores. “Coccinelle” has a group of employees that are responsible for the image (visual part) of “Coccinelle” shops. They create particular style, based on collection ideas and characteristics, which sends a certain message to the fashion world. Most of the style is created for mono-brand boutiques, whereas with regard to the corners in department stores only some of the details may be adopted (due to the lack of space and overall shop constraints). The visualization policy includes not only the technique of how the windows and exposition of products inside the shop should look like, but also the creation of representative packaging bags, accessories, lights and service instruments as well.
- Brand logo development. In 2011 “Coccinelle” changed its logo, opting for a more sophisticated, elegant, graphic and cleaner signature. Following production line was stamped with the new logo.
- Close contacts with Italian celebrities. “Coccinelle” communication office always makes utmost effort to keep close contact with famous Italian people (for example, well-known women in Italy - Elena Seredova, Laura Barriales, Geppi Cucciari). In such way, “Coccinelle” does not only increase the awareness of the brand, but also presents its special projects and activities in the market by showing additional features of the brand.

Moreover, “Coccinelle” always tries to be up to date and notified with its special collaborations. These policies could not be held to be only as a part of marketing or branding strategy, because it usually includes collection enrichment or product development too. These are the most significant ones:

- In 2009 “Coccinelle” designers together with Italian accessories designer Gian Luca Lera and “Fondazione Francesca Rava - N. P. H. Italia NPO”, the international

humanitarian organisation protecting the children of Haiti, created a “Goodie Bag” (“ethical bag”). In the process an exclusive collection was presented and donations from proceeds of sales transferred to the organisation. This project revealed a socially sensitive feature of “Coccinelle” brand.

- There were two partnerships with young designers Kostas Murkudis (in 2010) and Alexander Terekhov (in 2011). These designers created capsule collections for “Coccinelle” and brought forward experience and a possibility to be recognised in middle-high market. While “Coccinelle” was able to show its attention to customers’ demand for exclusivity.
- The most recent collaboration was with Italian footwear designer “Manas” who undertook to create shoes for “Coccinelle”. In the process “Coccinelle” expects to increase quality in its footwear line by giving this part of work to professional specialists and permitting “Coccinelle” to concentrate on its core competence – bags.

1.3. Company Analysis

This part of the paper covers investigation of “Coccinelle” internal characteristics as well as evaluation of influential external market trends. Information is presented using two comprehensive business assessment models: SWOT and PEST.

a. SWOT analysis:

Table 3. "Coccinelle" SWOT Analysis

Strengths	Weaknesses
• Production quality • Italian style (Made in Italy traits) • Personalised client service • Presentation of fashion trends • Experience • Heritage • Partnerships/Collaborations	• Diminished brand popularity among younger people (25-30 years) • Shops that do not develop proper brand image, especially multi-brand • Conservative market approach: no innovations in the communication policies and in the characteristics of collections • No constant special and attractive stories in collections (as seen in “Goodie Bag” project) • Internet advantages not used efficiently enough
Opportunities	Threats
• New media usage for increase in brand awareness • Improvements of production due technological change • Leather producers’ cluster advantages • High income customers have stabilised disposable income to spend	• Increased amount of competitors (especially non Italian firms) • Economic downturn • Strong advertising campaigns of competitors • Attractiveness to high fashion • Diminishing price difference (between high and low quality production)

The above analysis summarises “Coccinelle” main positive and negative elements and shows core opportunities and threats in the Italian accessories market. Strengths are mostly concentrated on product characteristics that present quality. However, weaknesses reveal lack of innovation and dynamics in “Coccinelle” activities. Opportunities show great potential in the brand performance improvement: technologies amelioration and market communication enrichment, even though growing attraction to newly existing and innovative market players demonstrates unfavourable

trends for “Coccinelle”. In summarising SWOT analysis tool, it should be highlighted that the company has to keep its production heritage, but to also consider innovative ways on how to keep popularity in the market.

b. PEST analysis:

Table 4. "Coccinelle" PEST Analysis

Political	• Country's political instability (constant strikes highlights it) • Widespread lobbying • Corruption • Administrative delays and bureaucracy
Economical	• Deep crisis (decrease in turnover in textile-fashion industry of 4,4% is predicted in 2012⁴; in 2011 shoes and clothing market consumption decreased mostly in comparison to all other sectors – 5,6% decline⁵) • Taxation for business augmentation: in 2011 human resources taxation grew by 4%, material acquisition costs grew by 9% and production costs grew by 7% (taxes of energy 30% higher than other European countries)⁶ • High unemployment (11,1% in 2012 December⁷) • Increased immigration • High-income consumers are resistant to economic downturns (In September 2012 high spenders spent 5% more and medium spenders – 7% more⁸)
Social	• Establishment of natural shopping centres and their popularity (for example “Quadrilatero della Moda” in Milan) • Women do not tend to cut their expenditures on accessories. Clothing and shoes consumption in September 2012 increased by 9%.⁶ • Bigger appreciation of money (good service became crucial) • Customers becoming more sensitive to social media • Appreciation of “Made in Italy” as a quality sign
Technological	• Social media usage (figures of Twitter are predicted to increase to 634 million euros in 2014 and Facebook margin of advertising will reach 5,3 million euros in 2014)⁹ • Growing popularity of e-commerce – online retail turnover grew by 29% in 2011 (for clothing, electronics and grocery) and value of online acquisitions increased by 33% for clothing¹⁰ • With new marketing and retail channels that are based on the Internet, the market is becoming more transparent

As it may be seen, current economic and political situation of Italy is unfavourable for businesses. Administrative organisation in the country renders growth and development process longer and more passive (for example, confirmation of estate buying/renting documents is a lengthy process, with a necessity to confirm everything in multiple institutions), what is more, there are certain areas in Italy (like Sicily), where agreements need to be verified not only by the official institutions, but

⁴ Tronconi, M., 2012

⁵ Benna, C., 2012

⁶ Reggio, R., 2012

⁷ National Institution of Statistics [ISTAT], 2012 and Fontes, N., 2012 and Eurostat, 2012

⁸ Sabella, M., 2012

⁹ Robecchi, A., 2012

¹⁰ Bisazza, B., 2012

also with local parties as well. On the other hand, despite the deep economic downturn, “Coccinelle” market segment is a favourable one with strong resistance to country’s economic fluctuations. In addition, customers’ segment is very up to date and open to novelties, thus permitting “Coccinelle” to innovate, especially using online tools.

1.4. Competitors Analysis

In the “accessible luxury” segment of Italian leather accessories market there are several players that are considered to be direct competitors of “Coccinelle”. These rivals are similar to “Coccinelle” on the basis of production type, retail strategies, target customers and brand characteristics. Due to this, observing their achievements, ways of development and by taking their example, it is possible to distinguish potential ways for improving current situation of the “Coccinelle” brand.

The five direct competitors of “Coccinelle” are presented in following tables:

Table 5. "Furla" Overview

Company profile	Most visible marketing strategy instruments
- An Italian company, founded in 1927. - Keeping Italy its primary market as a representation of style, quality and production techniques. 1000 selling locations in the multi-brand shops all over the world and 319 mono-brand retail stores. - Production characteristics: elegant, modern, feminine, high quality and each line of production always having its own story. - Nowadays “Furla” is expanding fast in the international markets.	- Strategically well chosen places for selling locations (most current one in Italy, “Piazza di Spagna” in Rome, one of the most visited locations in Italy’s capital, perfect visibility). - Keeping up the main value – “Made in Italy” and its quality together. - Expansion of e-commerce. - Supporting young talents (“Furla” Talent Hub initiative). - Having a well-known iconic bag (“Candy Bag”). - Increasing brand awareness by expanding different product lines. - Active on social web sites.

Source: “Furla” company profile, 2012

Table 6. "Alviero Martini" Overview

Company profile	Most visible marketing strategy instruments
- Established in 1989. - High brand awareness was reached by introducing a “map” sign on their accessories line. - Has clothing line for men, women and children. - Owns 54 selling locations (including mono and multi-brand retail) in Italy and abroad. - Their production characteristics: “Made in Italy”, which is their base vision for production, representing high quality, classical, elegant, stylish, extraordinary accessories.	- Very well recognisable marking (map fragments). “Made in Italy” with high quality pursuing. - Broadening production lines. - Advertising in public transport places – target advertising according to a particular product (“ready to travel line”). - Frequent advertising in media.

Source: “Alviero Martini” company profile, 2012

Table 7. "Braccialini" Overview

Company profile	Most visible marketing strategy instruments
• "Braccialini" brand was established in 1954. • Production is unique, artful, creative, feminine and stylish. • Pursuing to create trends. • Their target woman has a very original personality. • Has 50 mono-brand boutiques.	• Very unique product. • Increasing brand recognition by creating very distinguished and individual lines. • Very clear, strict and homogeneous concept for all selling locations around the world. • Organising fashion shows. • Collaboration with VIPs.

Source: "Braccialini" company profile, 2012

Table 8. "Borbonese" Overview

Company profile	Most visible marketing strategy instruments
• "Borbonese" brand was established in 1910. • Handbags - basis of production (currently they produce clothes and accessories too). • They strongly increased their brand awareness by presenting their highly recognisable iconic bag "Luna". • "Borbonese" values: tradition, "Made in Italy" quality, innovation and modernity. • Company owns around 30 stores in Italy and has around 360 wholesale buyers that sell in department stores.	• Creation of wide variety of products. • Keeping up with its successful icon bag ("Luna"). • Focusing on mono-brand boutiques expansion. • Pursuing quality together with "Made in Italy" traits.

Source: "Borbonese" company profile, 2012

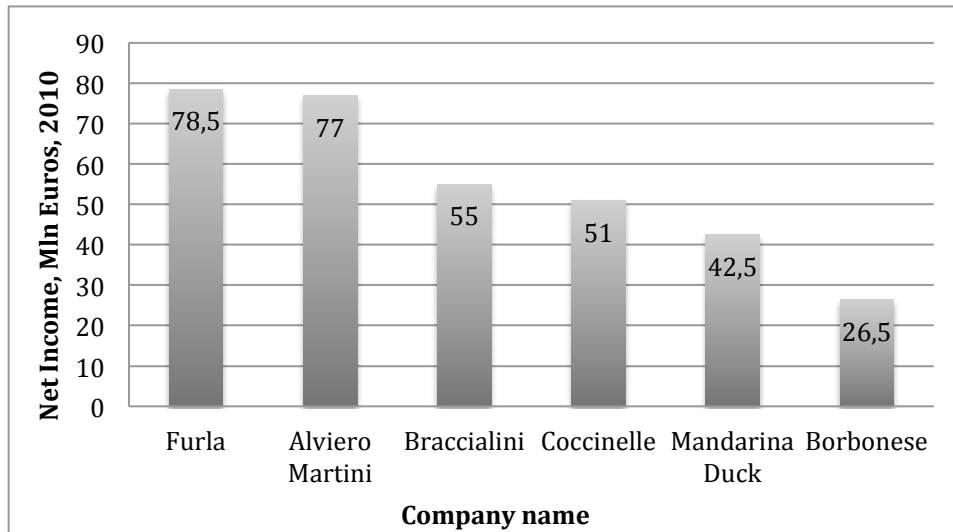
Table 9. "Mandarina Duck" Overview

Company profile	Most visible marketing strategy instruments
• Brand was founded in 1977 with an idea to produce sophisticated, functional and charming accessories. • Their production includes not only leather handbags, but also travel and work purses, sunglasses and watches. • They name their target clientele as clever, exploring, attentive, and practical. • Company owns around 80 mono-brand boutiques and 1000 selling corners in multi-brand shops around the world.	• Having a recognisable slogan that represents brand's core values "Emotional functionality". • Among for quality pursuing together with "Made in Italy" concept. • Innovative company. • Collaboration with well-known companys' for different lines of production (accessories with BMW company).

Source: "Mandarina Duck" company profile, 2012

In order to have a clear image on how these companies stand on the basis of their financial achievements, the below graph is presented. The net income presented is of the year 2010:

Figure 3. "Coccinelle" and Direct Competitors' Financial Situations on the Basis of Total Net Incomes, 2010



Source: "Furla", "Alviero Martini", "Braccialini", "Coccinelle", "Mandarin Duck", "Borbonese" companies' profiles

The diagram reveals that "Coccinelle" stands in the very middle. Better performers are "Furla", "Alviero Martini" and "Braccialini". "Mandarin Duck" and "Borbonese" are the worst performers.

The above analysis of direct competitors can be used to pinpoint and emphasise the characteristics that "Coccinelle" lacks in its segment and highlight the reasons for "Coccinelle" not achieving the leader status. "Coccinelle" must take into account these factors: importance of favourable places for selling locations; high recognition of iconic bags and brand logo; advertising campaign that is very clearly addressed to the target customer; variety of production lines.

The previous analysis was conducted based on the overviews of direct competitors of "Coccinelle". However, in order to draw a very clear picture a deeper analysis is needed, particularly taking into account that "Coccinelle" is also a part of the Italian fashion apparel market. This market is very dynamic and competitive and thus some insights stemming from general market tendencies should be investigated.

- Recently it became very popular to present a brand advertising campaign together with a celebrity. Examples would be supermodel Kate Moss for "LiuJo" Italian apparel company, supermodel Naomi Campbell for Italian apparel firm "Pinko". These campaigns create mass attention from media and customers as well.
- Not only the high fashion brands, but also lower segment market players are trying to introduce a brand's iconic item or at least perfectly recognisable sign. Previously mentioned examples of "Furla's" "Candy Bag", "Ray Ban" "Wayfarer" glasses etc. Iconic item

strategy is considered to be a very convenient tool with an objective to increase awareness and recognition of a brand.

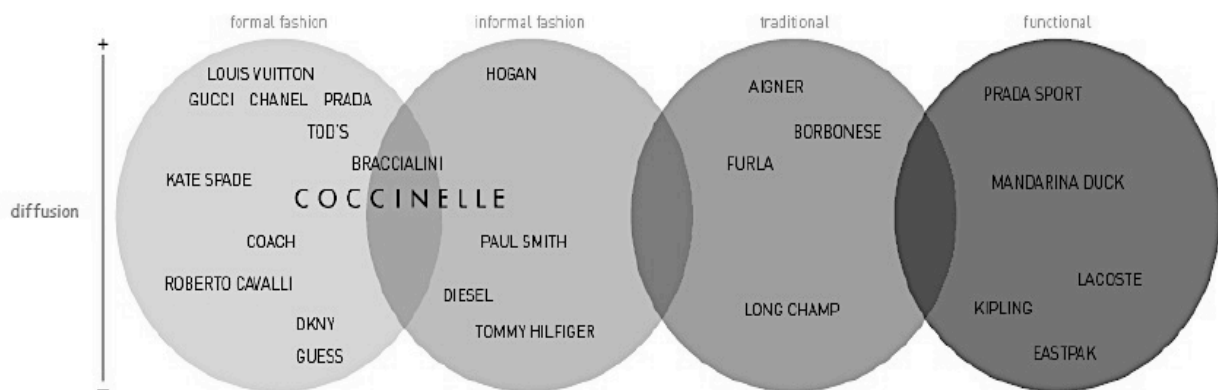
- Development strategy of mono-brand boutiques. Boutiques are considered to be a representation of quality and style providing a sense of prestige. Fine examples are luxury class brands (“Giorgio Armani”, “MaxMara”, “Prada”) that are never present in department stores (only in outlets for older collections). Moreover, some economic class brands are pursuing the same strategy, such as “Zara” or “Mango”.
- Most of the apparel brands (all segments - from economic to high fashion) are aiming to provide a “full-look”, meaning that they pay lots of attention to accessories as well. This trend creates an even tougher competition for specialised accessories producers because some customers are willing to purchase items from the same collection in order to acquire a “complete appearance”.
- Italian market is suffering from the impact of the market for “fake” brand products. People that sell copied (knock-off) items can be seen every day on the streets of Rome or the Italian capital of fashion – Milan. Prices are attractive as goods cost 10 times less than the original product and, unfortunately, producers of such goods are becoming highly skilled and, therefore, the quality of a knock-off product is usually much better than one would expect for such a low price.
- Another factor that is affecting higher segment companies is the speed of adaptation and production of goods of economic class players (such as “Zara”, “H&M”). These producers are able to copy most significant fashion trends, adapt them to the collections and distribute the items in the shops within two weeks. They attract loyal customers because of low pricing and average, but decent, quality. These producers are also quick in providing new supplies in order to satisfy the needs of spontaneous shoppers.
- Last, but not least, the current trend is leaning towards e-commerce. It is a tool for a product from a medium or higher segment. E-commerce shop may be held to be like a mono-brand shop as it is possible to observe the complete collection as well as the delivery policy, which provides a possibility to reveal the service quality and other perks for the customer.

1.5. Positioning of “Coccinelle” and Competitors’ Brands

In this section of situation analysis the positioning of main competitors’ brands in the Italian leather accessories market is presented. Firstly, “Coccinelle” view towards market players’ positions is shown. Information is taken from firm’s market research analysis. Further, “Braccialini” enterprise perspective towards its rivals is indicated. The presented map is taken from “Braccialini” company market research.

a. “Coccinelle” perspective:

Figure 4. Brand Positioning. "Coccinelle" Perspective

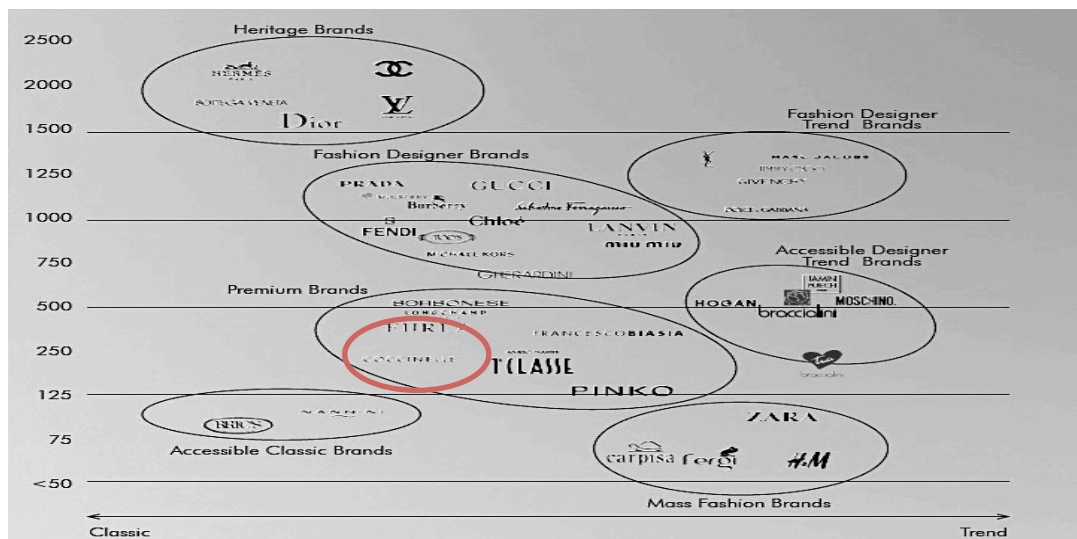


Source: “Coccinelle” company internal research, 2012

From this positioning map it is possible to observe the placing of the brands based on their characteristics and spread. This indicates recognition and awareness of the brand. It can be seen that “Coccinelle” falls into half formal and informal fashion representatives’ part and takes middle position regarding brand diffusion perspective (meaning sold production quantities, consumer awareness, selling locations).

b. “Braccialini” perspective:

Figure 5. Brand Positioning. "Braccialini" Perspective



Source: “Braccialini” company profile, 2011

The latter map from “Braccialini” company similarly to the one above shows brands’ positions according to their features and awareness. It can be seen that general characteristics of brands that amount to certain clusters have been named slightly differently as compared to “Coccinelle” map. Two brands that fall under Premium Brands cluster (“Francesco Biasia” and “Pinko”) are not considered to be direct competitors of “Coccinelle” as per “Coccinelle”

perspective. Despite this fact, it can be said that in this map “Coccinelle” (highlighted with red circle in the positioning map) is positioned very similarly as in the “Coccinelle” map, that is - taking the middle position in its segment. Moreover, “Braccialini” is positioned in a separate cluster, which is called Accessible Designer Trend Brands. Unfortunately, Y-axis meaning is not named. Even so, it is possible to observe that brand positions rise due to their value and awareness in the leather accessories market. For example, top places are reserved for such brands as “Chanel” or “Bottega Veneta” that, firstly, have operated in the fashion market for decades and, secondly, stand very firmly in the luxury market.

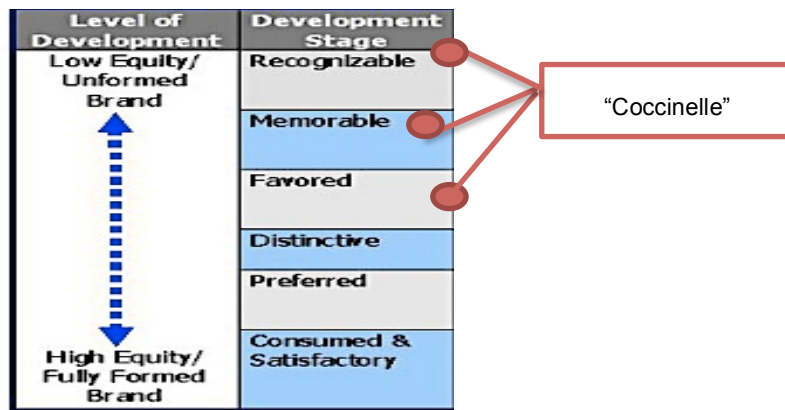
Drawing conclusions from these two approaches regarding brand positioning, it was shown that “Coccinelle”, compared to its direct competitors, is always placed in the middle cluster without any distinctive position in its segment. Due to this, there is a need for improvement, especially regarding “Coccinelle” brand development as its direct competitors serve the same market segment and manage to achieve better brand value positions and financial performance in the market. Their achievements may be considered as operating examples.

1.6. Problem Formulation

With the company’s overview presented above, it is clear that “Coccinelle” is an experienced player in the market, having a retail chain with well-described product and segment to serve. Competitors of “Coccinelle” are indicated and market situation determined. Taking into account “Coccinelle” income numbers, positioning of its brand, impact of direct competitors, we can pinpoint the main problem of “Coccinelle” - lack of efficient brand development strategy. The existing brand development strategy is not on par with the requirement of the current class of products. In this paper it was revealed that all direct competitors have similar product characteristics and a segment to serve. However, half of them manage to reach higher incomes. Furthermore, as indicated previously, they employ with very strong marketing and branding strategies. It means that apart from other business solutions certain ways to improve the brand development strategy should also be considered.

Analysing on the basis of “Brand development model” with reference to the positioning map of “Coccinelle”, the analysed company has already achieved the stages of “recognisable”, “memorable” and “favoured” brand. “Coccinelle” is identified in the market, has some level of awareness, recognition and has its primary brand characteristics developed. However, the remaining 3 important characteristics are still underdeveloped, indicating an imperfectly developed brand strategy. Graphically “Coccinelle” brand position should look like this:

Figure 6. "Coccinelle" Position in "Brand Development Model"



Source: Colby, C., 2012

Distinctive positioning is not yet achieved as evidenced by "Coccinelle" taking all middle positions in the positioning maps. Distinction may be achieved by further developing the brand image. In order to successfully move to preferred brand development stage, "Coccinelle" should not only clearly present its brand advantages, but also make the brand more visible in the market. Finally, the last part of satisfactory consumption is directly related to the loyalty measure and post-purchase traits, which has to be improved by "Coccinelle" too.

2. EMPIRICAL RESEARCH

Current part of the paper investigates the problem by executing market research and observing customers' attitude towards leather accessories market, its players and "Coccinelle" brand itself. In this section all empirical research is discussed and explained using the methodical approach. Consequently, outcomes of the research help to better understand the reasons of the problem raised in this paper and to highlight possible decisions to take as presented in the following "Managerial solutions" section.

2.1. Objective and Tasks of the Research

The objective of the paper's empirical research is to evaluate customers' attitude towards marketing strategies of leather accessories brands such as "Coccinelle" in order to understand what measures would most efficiently improve current "Coccinelle" brand development strategy. The research of the paper is based on "Brand development model". The tasks of the research comprise of:

- Identification of target customers characteristics and their requirements for relevant branding policies (for "Coccinelle");
- Identifying the most effective instruments of brand marketing for customers, taking into account those set by "Coccinelle" and its closest competitors, in order to understand what measures would most effectively improve "Coccinelle" branding strategy;
- Investigating customers viewpoint towards competitors and leather accessories production in general;
- Obtaining information concerning most common ways of shopping and what feelings customers have about brand while they shop in the diverse retail channels and using this information as a potential tool for brand development;
- Collecting customers' views about "Coccinelle" as a brand, in comparison with its direct competitors, for proposing further solutions to the problem of the paper.

2.2. Theoretical Foundations of the Research

The essence of the research is primarily based on the current situation, its problems and available information. However, some theoretical models made an impact on the research as well. Including the creation mode and the lead for observations about possible outcomes. Additionally, theoretical models were used for better understating of the variables that were measured and the relationships observed (Appendix 2. indicates particular research questions and what models they are justified by)¹¹.

¹¹ Statistics Solutions, 2011 and Radhakrishna, R. B., et. al., 2007

2.2.1. 4P's Model

Marketing mix of 4P's¹² which helps to reveal how well customer needs are served and what company lacks in 4 approaches of business: product, price, place and promotion. Product part is investigated with regard to questions about quality, design and characteristics of production. Price analysis is executed by understanding how much money customers are willing to pay for leather handbag and realising how well "Coccinelle" pricing fits to that particular price range. This element is related to some marketing instruments that are included in the research, such as donations and special shopping events that usually include discounts. Furthermore, place examination has been carried out through inquiries about attitudes and habits for a shopping place (mono, multi-brand stores, outlets and online stores). And finally promotion part is investigated by presenting for evaluation some promotional instruments used by "Coccinelle" and its competitors (advertising campaign, special events evaluation). In addition, for the sake of general image of a brand observation, the strength of impact of promotional policies is revealed and the channels of information measured.

2.2.2. Stages of Purchase Decision Model

In order to understand at which purchase stage marketing strategy is the strongest one and where it lacks input, questions are based on customers purchase decision stages model¹³. First stage from the model is problem recognition that is when a client perceives a need. This stage may be stimulated with mass media promotions, advertising campaigns and thus these issues are evaluated and scaled in the questionnaire. The second stage of information seeking overlaps with the first one on the basis of customer stimuli. For this stage additional marketing activities that broaden brand identification and notification are much more important. Those are analysed through inquiries about company's activities (as special capsule collection, donations, etc.). Moving to 3rd stage – evaluation of alternatives – competitors' investigation is proposed. Purchase decision, the 4th stage, promotes evaluation of selling place and service, precisely at the purchase moment. Questions presented are about different shopping places that were proposed. Finally, the last stage is named "post purchase behaviour" which requires feedback and satisfaction evaluation. It includes attitude evaluation towards a brand, product quality assessment and loyalty diagnosis.

2.2.3. Market Segmentation Model

As market segmentation model¹⁴ was used in the first part of company's analysis, it is also used for empirical research creation with the aim to investigate the representative population and moreover, to check how well the target segment is served and what is still missing in the company's strategy. In the inquiry the questions that analyse target segment are about age, gender, disposable

¹² Borden, N., 1964

¹³ Tyagi, C.L., 2004

¹⁴ Wedel, M.A., Wagner, A.A., 2000

income for leather handbags, brand awareness testing and personal characteristics, such as loyalty. Therefore, this theory is used for checking the relevant market segment.

2.2.4. Brand Positioning Model

With reference to previous brand positioning maps, the method of perceived and checked information is brought to empirical research as well. Methodology is officially called “Perceptual Marketing Mapping”¹⁵. Which means that direct competitors are named according to their positions in the market (seen on brands’ positioning graphs).

2.2.5. Brand Equity Model

Generally the empirical research is based on brand name awareness, brand quality perception, associations with the brand and brand loyalty evaluation. So basically, with reference to the existing model of “Brand Equity”¹⁶, evaluation of “Coccinelle” brand equity is executed in the inquiry. This model and its outcomes will explain the position of “Coccinelle” in the market and investigation of competitors’ positions may indicate further developments for marketing strategy.

2.2.6. Brand Development Model

Without any doubt, the all paper-based model (Brand Development Model¹⁷) has significantly shaped the empirical research as well. Elements that are aimed to be obtained, mainly are shaped in order to distinguish potential brand development instruments for brand’s distinction, preference and satisfactory consumption elements. It should be noted that these elements were stated as lacking ones with regard to “Coccinelle” brand. Brand distinction is measured through questions about brand characteristics of “Coccinelle” and its competitors. Further, preference part is evaluated by analysing mostly appreciated features of brands, especially their promotional activities with the aim to further study about the differences of “Coccinelle” and its competitors. And, finally, satisfactory consumption and post purchase part is presented with loyalty measures, tendencies in product acquisition and stimuli for repeated consumption.

2.3. Research Method and Data Collection Method

2.3.1. Research Method

There is no concrete information available about customers’ insights towards marketing instruments for leather accessories producers and, specifically “Coccinelle”, thus primary data is collected through empirical research. Furthermore, in order to observe opinions of the widest possible audience that is relevant to research, quantitative research method was chosen. This data collection and analysis technique permits to investigate ideas, thoughts and habits of people and

¹⁵ Okonkwo, U., 2007

¹⁶ Aaker, D.A., 1991

¹⁷ Figure 1. Brand Development Model, p.p. 9

later give them numerical terms. In this way even very subjective and intangible matters can be scaled, measured and quantified in order to get the most common attitude.

2.3.2. Data Collection Method

An online survey was chosen as data collection method in order to increase response speed and to reach as much target respondents as possible. Also taking into account that this data collection method may not provide very accurate information. A survey was created on the web site, called www.apklausa.it¹⁸. Since the Italian market was studied and all respondents had to be Italians, questions were drawn up in the Italian language (Concrete survey questions that respond to research objectives raised are demonstrated in Appendix 3.).

The next step was to spread the survey to its target respondents for completion. Appropriate target customers, for the “accessible luxury” segment are 25-60 years old working women and, additionally, who are able to purchase a branded leather handbag and are interested in fashion trends. Thus the link of the survey was sent to Italian people that are potentially fit for collecting data samples, as described previously. Firstly, acquaintances from the fashion market were reached via email. Afterwards, they were asked to disseminate the link of the survey to their colleagues, especially women. In order to avoid ignorance, I kindly requested to forward a text together with survey link in which it was explained why this survey is important and the objectives of the research. The survey itself included an explanatory preamble re-stating the objectives of the research and motives for collecting data. This was done in case the survey reached a respondent without any explanations given. The text also included anonymity clause, which noted that the survey is anonymous and the answers will be used only for general purposes.

2.4. Data Collection Method Instrument and Its Logical Sequence

Survey was structured in such a way that respondents only needed to choose an answer or scale certain characteristics. The questions that required more than a choice or scaling were the questions about the age of the respondent and a couple of multiple-choice questions that required to type in individual choice under variant “other” (firstly, competitors’ brands could be typed in and the second question about “Coccinelle” brand news obtainment could have been specified individually). The reason for choosing structured questions is that these type of answers are better controlled and evaluated more easily. The risk of misunderstanding is averted. Questionnaire combined interval scale, multiple choice (possibility to choose only one answer) and dichotomous questions. Interval scale type questions (requiring to evaluate a particular issue under a 10 point scale) constituted 11/26 part of the whole questionnaire. Attitude of respondents was observed in a precise manner, as a number was appointed for the strength of feeling towards each proposed matter. Multiple-choice questions, which took 14/26th part of the inquiry, were derived from subjects that required a very concrete choice for the analysis. And finally 3rd type of questions,

¹⁸ <http://apklausa.it/f/-valutazione-delle-strategie-di-marketing-dei-marchi-di-pelletteria-nel-merca-554p6xy.fullpage>. Username: zelnlaur@stud.ism.it; password: empirinistryimas

dichotomous ones that comprised 3/26th of all questionnaire enabled to check people's familiarity to the e-commerce trend and the "Coccinelle" brand.

Questionnaire began with questions revealing the generic information about respondent status, such as financial capacity and/or willingness to spend on leather handbags (questions 1 and 2), moving to leather accessories market analysis and concrete marketing instruments investigation that are trending nowadays, together with customers' shopping habits inquiry (questions from 3 to 13). Afterwards, "Coccinelle" competitors and their branding strategies were analysed, very much focusing on the observations about general trends from previous questions (questions from 14 to 17). Finally, on the same manner and with the same characteristics as the former questions, opinion about "Coccinelle" brand and perceptions about its marketing was collected (questions from 18 to 24). Therefore, the questionnaire had a funnel shape. It began with a very generic information observation and was finalised concretely with company's characteristics. At the very end survey was finalised with 2 filtering and identification questions about gender and age.

2.5. Sampling Method

Nonprobability convenience judgmental sampling method was chosen due to the analysed situation that does not permit adequate data collection based on simple probability. As it was mentioned before, precise population data is not accessible and, what is more, it would not be representative.

Even though, based on theoretical material, nonprobability samples bring not as accurate and precise outcomes as probability ones, however, in the research of this paper it have appeared to be the most appropriate one to be used. Firstly, because of the exploratory nature of investigation and, secondly, because of the homogeneous characteristics of population. The ideal population would be those people who are aware of "Coccinelle" brand and favourably a customer of at least one of the brands mentioned in the survey (direct competitors of "Coccinelle"). Unfortunately, data about companies' customers are kept under strict privacy conditions and cannot be obtained. Consequently, general characteristics of the target population were described, having in mind such a target customer: Italian woman, in the age group of 25-60 years, having around 3000-6000 euros income per month. The attributes may include employment position - working, and product-related approach – "Coccinelle" or direct competitors' (named and described in previous part of the paper) customer, or at least aware of "accessible luxury" leather accessories class. Generally, it is those women that are interested in leather goods fashion. Based on these characteristics, the survey was distributed to women, who are working in the fashion market or have an interest in such market. This represents convenience sampling method, which, according to its features, is the most convenient one for selection bias, however, on the other hand, may be non-representative. Moreover, focusing on these precise population characteristics, judgmental sampling way has been motivated. Additionally, a request was issued to pass the questionnaire to women colleagues in order to increase the response rate.

However, even though the survey was distributed among people that are in one way or another related to the fashion business, men respondents were not avoided and not excluded. At the end of the survey there was a gap left to fill in the gender so in this way the responses may have

been filtered afterwards and only women opinions measured. Furthermore, people of ages that fall out of the target age were not neglected either. Even though answers of young people and men were not directly evaluated for current “Coccinelle” strategy, these opinions may be used considering product range expansion as mentioned before. So the questionnaire, with the help of “Coccinelle” employers and partners, was spread to people that are in certain ways related to fashion and may provide valuable insights about marketing instruments used in leather accessories business.

2.6. Research Sample

In order to obtain population sample, discrete variables sampling formula was used¹⁹:

$$n = \frac{z_{\alpha/2}^2 \times [\pi \times (1 - \pi)]}{\varepsilon^2},$$

where n =sample size; $z_{\alpha/2}^2$ = the standard normal distribution $N(0,1)$ α -level critical value (with 95 % guarantee, $z_{\alpha/2}^2=1,959$); π =proportion of the parameter in the selective sample and ε =sampling error, in this case 0,04 (+/- 4% sampling error margin). The target population was known – women contribute 52% of all Italian citizens²⁰, which means 31 720 000 people. From all Italian people only 11% of households receive medium-high income²¹. Another point to consider is approximate number of these women that are aware of leather accessories production with regard to at least one of the mentioned brands in the thesis. A rough assumption would be around 90% because all brands are well-known in Italy, but there is a possibility that not all women are interested in these brands. Due to this the proportion π is:

Target population:

- a. $31\,720\,000 - 11\% = 3\,489\,200$
- b. $3\,489\,200 - 90\% = 3\,140\,280$

Proportion (π) from all women population:

$$\frac{3\,140\,280}{30\,000\,000} = 0,104676 \approx 0,105$$

So sample size is counted as it follows:

$$n = \frac{1,959^2 (0,105(1 - 0,105))}{0,04^2} = \frac{3,838 \times 0,094}{0,0016} = 225,42 \approx 226$$

(Note that sample size is always approximated to the higher value.)

From here it is cleared out that it is enough to survey 226 respondents that would represent the population with +/- 4% sampling error and 95% guarantee.

¹⁹ Folz, D. H., 1996

²⁰ Comuni Italiani, 2012

²¹ D’Amuri, 2010

2.7. Sampling Limitations

Unfortunately, foreign market observation has its restraints in market research, mostly, because it limits possibilities regarding information obtainment. This is especially evident in the research sample number collection. First of all, because companies do not permit to use their customer databases in random researches that are not business related or initiated. Secondly, there is a limited number of Italian respondents, especially when sample is constrained with population characteristics as mentioned above. For these reasons the required sample amount has not been achieved and information theoretically should be treated as non-representative. On the other hand, as empirical research is exploratory, even with existing results, implications may be made for the research objectives raised. It should be noted that data should not be considered as applicable for all analysed population.

The obtained respondents number is 125. After filtering responses based on gender, considering only women, sample that is analysed decreased to 106 respondents (see Appendix 4. and Appendix 5.). Due to this, new sampling representativeness is calculated with the formula for the sampling error, in respect of the new sample proportion obtained²²:

$$e = \sqrt{\frac{z_{\alpha/2}^2 \times [p \times (1-p)]}{n'} \times \frac{N-n'}{N-1}}, me = e \times 100$$

, $me = e \times 100$, where:

e =sampling error (realisation); $z_{\alpha/2}^2$ = the standard normal distribution $N(0,1)$ α -level critical value (with 95 % guarantee, $z_{\alpha/2}^2 = 1,959$); p =parameter of interest ratio obtained for the sample; n' =derived sample (realisation); N =selected sample size; me =sampling error margin.

$$e = \sqrt{\frac{1,959^2 \times (0,105(1 - 0,105))}{106} \times \frac{3140280 - 106}{3140280 - 1}} = \sqrt{\frac{3,838 \times 0,094}{106} \times \frac{3140174}{3140279}}$$

$$= \sqrt{0,0034 \times 0,9999} = \sqrt{0,0034} = 0,0583$$

$$me = 0,0583 \times 100 = 5,83$$

So sample size of 106 respondents assures that research represents the population of Italian women, having medium-high income and being aware of accessible-luxury Italian leather accessories market with 95% guarantee and with $\pm 5,83$ sampling error margin.

2.8. Data Analysis Methods

Data is analysed using statistical analysis package SPSS[®]. First of all, the observed information is filtered, as it was mentioned before, based on gender - therefore, only women responses were analysed. This function is worked out with “Select cases” tool on SPSS[®]. When

²² Remenyi, 1998, p.p. 198

questions about “Coccinelle” brand are analysed (the last 6 questions in the inquiry), women responses due to their familiarity to the brand are filtered and 97 respondents are investigated. Filtering on the age bias was not necessary as outcome shows average age of 33,77 years and it is a perfect number for characteristics that were measured (See Appendix 5. Average age). Furthermore, question about income was not included, in order to avoid negative reactions for privacy and denials to fill-in questionnaire. On the other hand, judgmental sampling method was used and people who were answering the questionnaire were most likely able to purchase a leather handbag. Descriptive statistics methods were used to evaluate the collected information. Distribution of different measured parameters on the base of population is presented and evaluated by using distribution tables that permit evaluation of average and most frequent choices. What is more, in order to obtain relationship between answers and parameters, pivot tables are used.

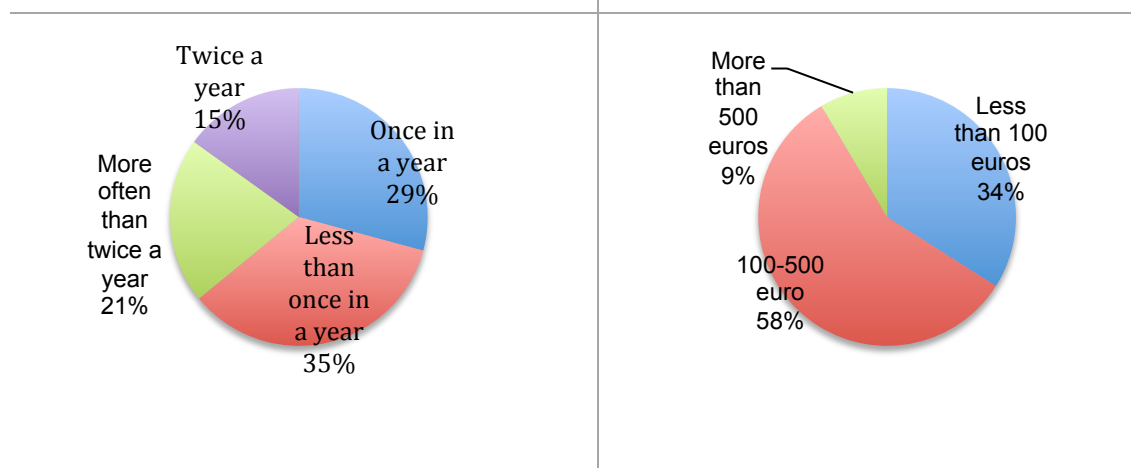
2.9. Research Results

After filtering obtained results, outcomes are measured, following the tasks raised for the empirical research.

2.9.1. Handbag Purchase Patterns

Firstly, target customers characteristics and handbag purchase patterns, related to leather accessories brands, are investigated in order to get a picture about how frequently women tend to buy a leather bag and how much she tends to spend for it. Further, general loyalty for a brand is evaluated and, finally, awareness of analysed “Coccinelle” brand is indicated.

Figure 7. Frequency in Buying a Leather Bag Figure 8. Expenditures for a Leather Bag



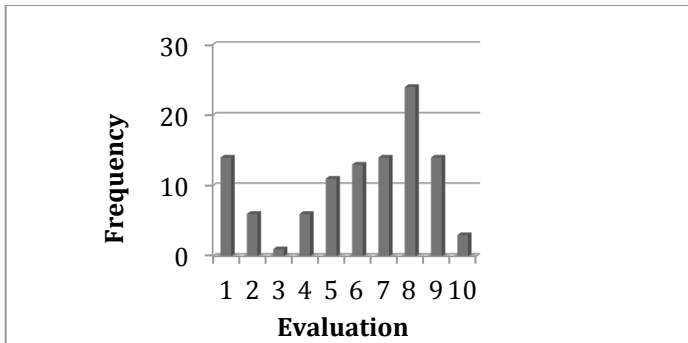
As it may be observed, most of the women buy a leather handbag less than once a year or once a year, as a second choice. Figure No.7 indicates that most of the Italian women spend 100-500 euros for a leather handbag and that is the cost of a “Coccinelle” handbag.

From these 2 measures there was a relationship checked if financial capacity or tendency to spend for a leather handbag is related with the frequency of acquisitions. Apparently, it does not have a very evident and strict connection, because frequencies of the answers vary among elements (See Appendix 6. for relationship evaluation). Hypothetical explanation, observing general Italian

market tendencies and customer habits, may be that women buy leather handbag as a quality and long-lasting good, while if there is a need to have an additional bag as an alternative they buy a lower quality (economy class) handbags.

Further loyalty was measured, in order to understand how much customers appreciate a particular brand.

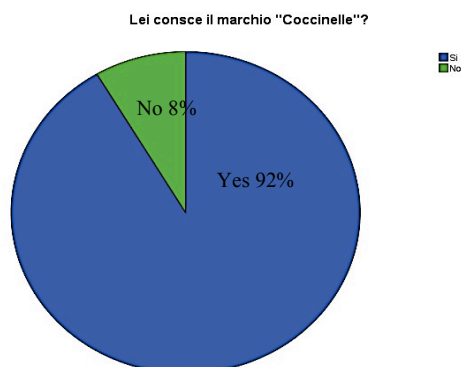
Figure 9. Loyalty Assessment for Leather Accessories Brand



As it was a scale question, requiring to evaluate personal loyalty from 1-“not loyal at all” to 10-“very loyal” the distribution of choices is shown. Apparently most of the women chose 8 as their loyalty evaluation, which means that Italian women are not 100% loyal, however it is possible to make an assumption that they appreciate and care about brands as the most frequent choices fall into upper scale points (7, 8 and 9).

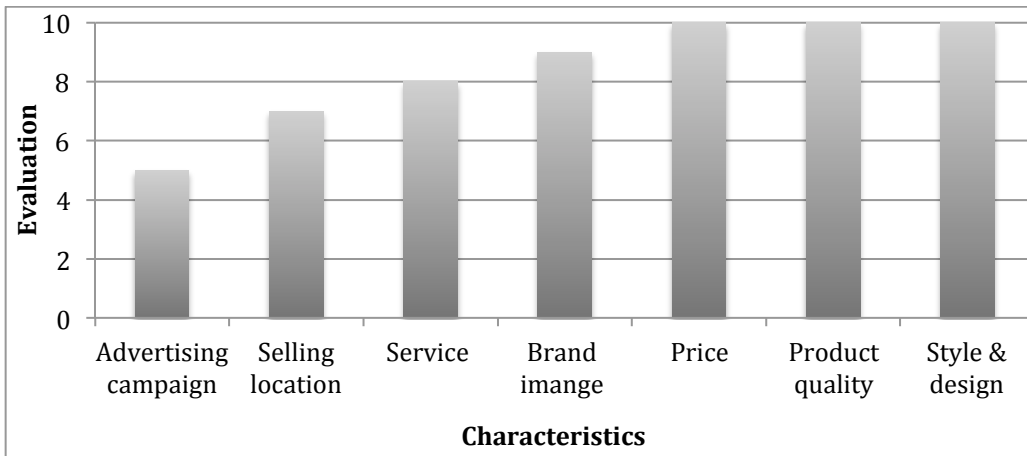
The last measure for customers’ characteristics element was familiarity to “Coccinelle” brand. So as it may be seen, almost 92% of women respondents know “Coccinelle” brand. This question only highlights that majority of women were able to evaluate the company and its competitors’ situation (filtering function for elimination of responses of non-aware people, is used only in further “Coccinelle” brand analysis part).

Figure 10. Familiarity with "Coccinelle" Brand



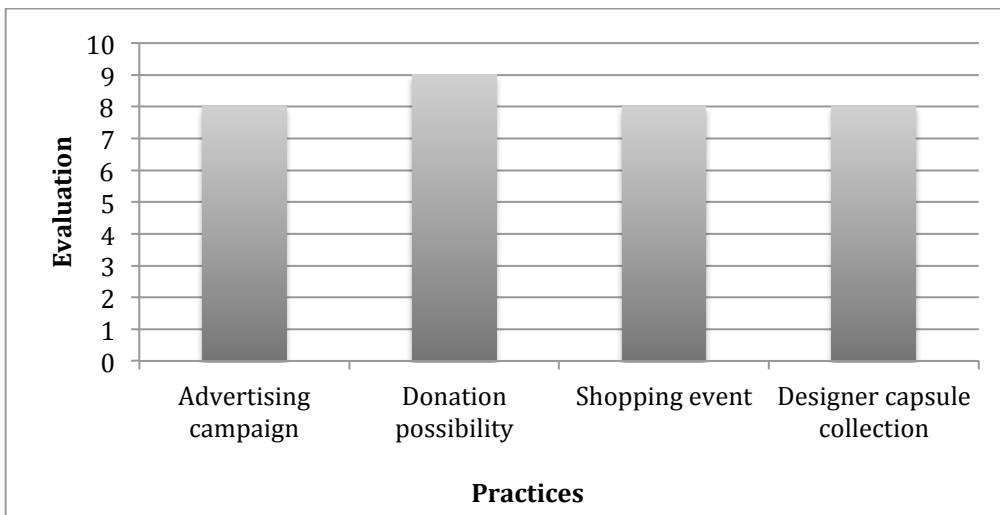
2.9.2. General Marketing and Branding Instruments Evaluation

Figure 11. Evaluation of the Importance of Characteristics for a Leather Accessories Brand



The latter figure shows what characteristics customers appreciate mostly. In the survey respondents were asked to scale each characteristic from 1-“not important” characteristic to 10-“very important”. Results are shown in the way that for each element a most frequent evaluation from scale is appointed. Outcomes in the graph indicate that 3 supreme elements of the brand are: style and design, production quality and price. However, judging from the figure, women do not appreciate brands’ advertising campaigns.

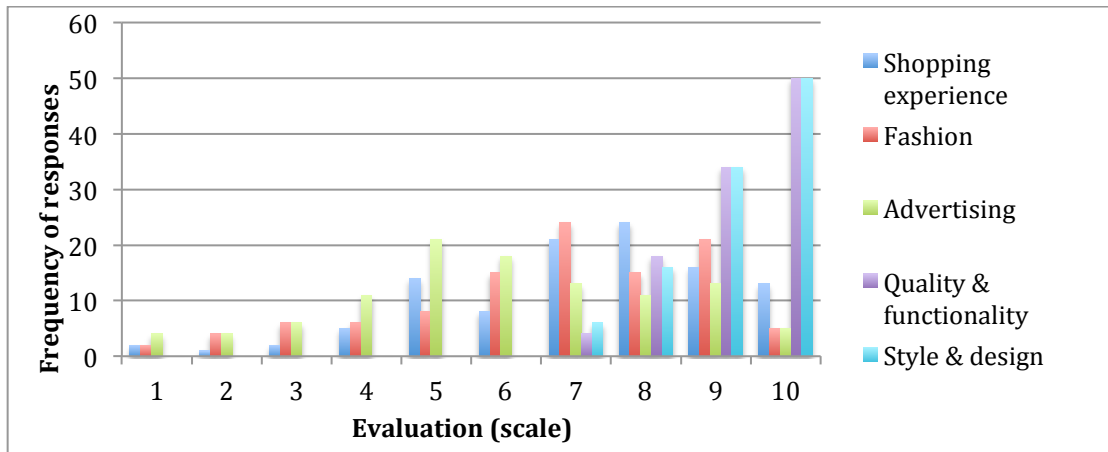
Figure 12. Evaluation of the Attractiveness of Practices of Leather Accessories Company



This data reveals that the most attractive practice of a company is a possibility to donate money for a charity while shopping. In this case respondents had to scale these practices from 1-“not attractive” to 10-“very attractive”, the same as in the above graph. This particular graph is constituted as based on the most frequent evaluation for each practice. It is seen that 3 elements are evaluated as 8, however, shopping event with designer capsule collection got more appreciation from 3 equal evaluation practices (seeing from general frequencies distribution).

Last evaluation for branding and marketing instruments for leather accessories brand in general, comprises measuring factors that would make women come back to buy the same leather accessories brand.

Figure 13. Factors That Would Most Likely Make Customers Come Back to Buy the Same Leather Accessories Brand

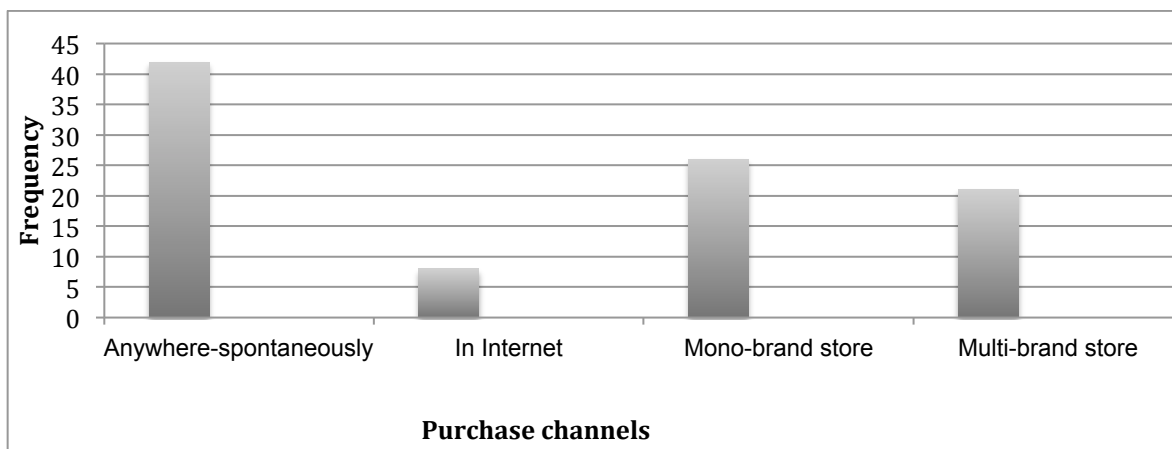


Evaluation was made by observing scaled answers for each factor from 1 – “not at all” to 10 – “totally would make me come back” and it is evident that product quality and functionality with style and design of production are the strongest factors in brand representation (see the highest scale evaluations and frequencies).

2.9.3. The Most Common Way of Shopping

As brand includes in-store representation too, thus it is highly important to measure and determine where customers tend to buy leather accessories brands. This may indicate where representation of brand is most convenient and most effective. First graph shows where respondents like to buy their leather accessories:

Figure 14. Purchase Channels



It is evident that customers search for a bag and then spontaneously buy it when they find the one they like. Second option in purchase patterns - mono-brand boutiques.

Since mono-brand stores are the best presenters of a brand the survey asked to scale the strongest associations listed that define a mono-brand boutique (from 1-“weak associations” to 10-“strong associations”). Opposite retail practice – multi-brand stores were measured in the same way. 2 sequent graphs represent the distribution of responses:

Figure 15. Evaluation of the Strength of Associations That Derive Mono and Multi-brand Stores

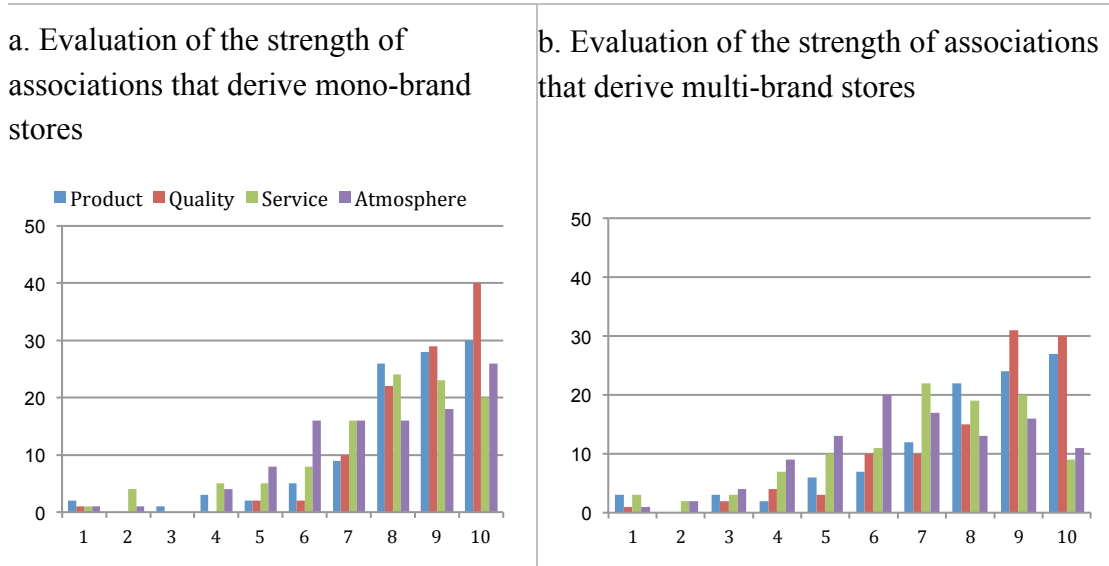
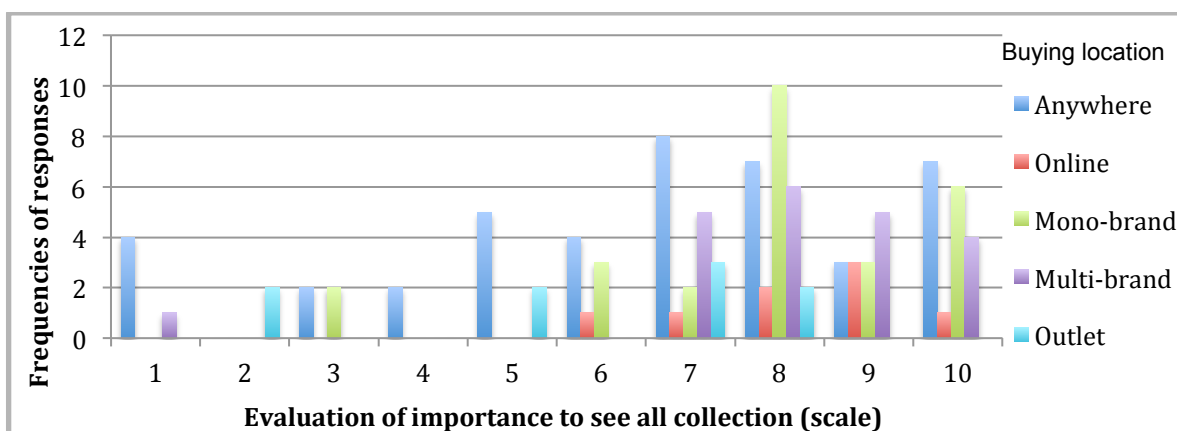


Figure 15 reveals that mono-brand boutiques associate mostly with the quality and the product. The same applies to multi-brand stores. However, strength of associations with regard to multi-brand stores is smaller, as it shown that frequencies among scaling points are lower.

Importance of seeing the full collection before purchasing an item was also measured in the survey (requesting to scale from 1-“not important” to 10-“very important”), in order to understand if that has any impact on selling location preferences. So relationship in the analysis was made and it is presented in the following figure:

Figure 16. Buying Location and Importance to See All Collection

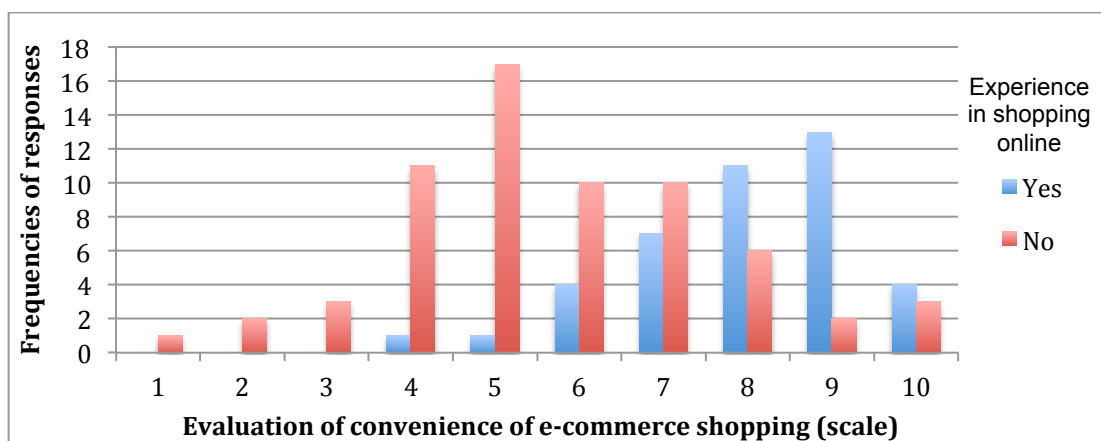


Consequently, it may be seen that women, who consider seeing the full collection before making an acquisition, see this as an important part of shopping (8, 9 and 10 scale points are observed) and usually chose mono-brand boutiques or buy the goods anywhere. Those who chose multi-brand

stores, as evaluation evidenced, also like to see the full collection presented, however, an assumption could be made that they make no preference which brand's collection it is.

E-commerce was investigated as another way of shopping. Firstly, respondents were asked if they ever tried buying leather accessories online (See Appendix 7.). It is revealed that 61% of women have never bought any leather accessory online, while 39% did. Another question with regard to online shopping requested to evaluate the convenience of an e-commerce tool (scaling from 1-“not convenient” to 10-“very convenient”). Research outcomes indicated that Italian women consider e-commerce tool as a moderately good instrument (See Appendix 8.), because most frequented evaluation point was 5, meaning medium, but with small difference as compared to 7 and 8 points. However, it is possible to understand that women are still not very confident about it. With an objective to realise why e-commerce is not considered as a convenient tool, relationship between the aforementioned information was measured. Specifically, evaluation of e-commerce tool from women, who already tried buying leather accessories online, and controversially, from respondents', who never bought online (results are shown in following figure):

Figure 17. Relationship Between Experience in Shopping Online and E-commerce Tool Convenience

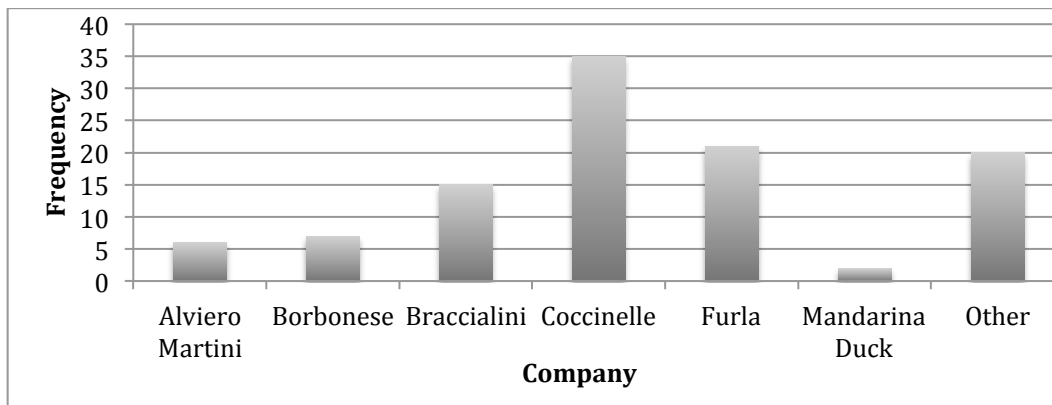


According to this bar chart, the biggest percentage of women, who have tried e-commerce tool for leather accessories (signed “Yes”), evaluated the convenience of it as 9, which is a high point. Scale point 5 was the most frequent evaluation from those who have never tried this tool (signed “No”), meaning an average evaluation. This may be understood as basically lack of knowledge or lack of comprehensive opinion.

2.9.4. Competitors' Identification

In this part of the research analysis, the strongest competitors were identified (those that “Coccinelle” considers as its direct ones) and it can be seen from the graph (See Figure No. 18) that “Furla” and “Braccialini” are those brands. In this survey question there was a possibility to write in a personally preferred brand if the preferred one was not listed in the possible answer choices (answers may be seen in Appendix 9.). “Balenciaga”, “Fendi”, “Piero Guidi” and “The Bridge” are brands to consider, because each of those names were inserted by at least 2 respondents.

Figure 18. Competitors' Identification



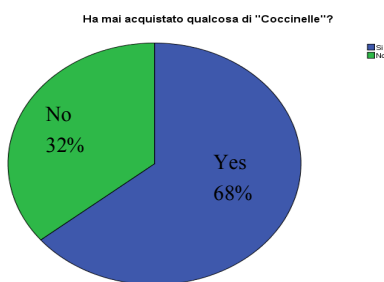
Further investigation and analysis, related to competitors, is described in sequencing part, as it is convenient and useful for research to observe respondents' opinions towards these brands in comparison with "Coccinelle" position.

2.9.5. "Coccinelle" brand evaluation

The last section of questions was dedicated for "Coccinelle" brand evaluation. Questions were identical to those as dedicated to competitors. The new filter was included and evaluation was executed only for those respondents who were familiar with "Coccinelle" brand.

As numbers of awareness of "Coccinelle" brand is revealed in the respondents' characteristics part (See Figure 10. Familiarity with "Coccinelle" Brand), here, in this part it is measured how many women actually have bought something from "Coccinelle". Sequent pie chart shows that 68% did buy and 32% have never bought anything from "Coccinelle".

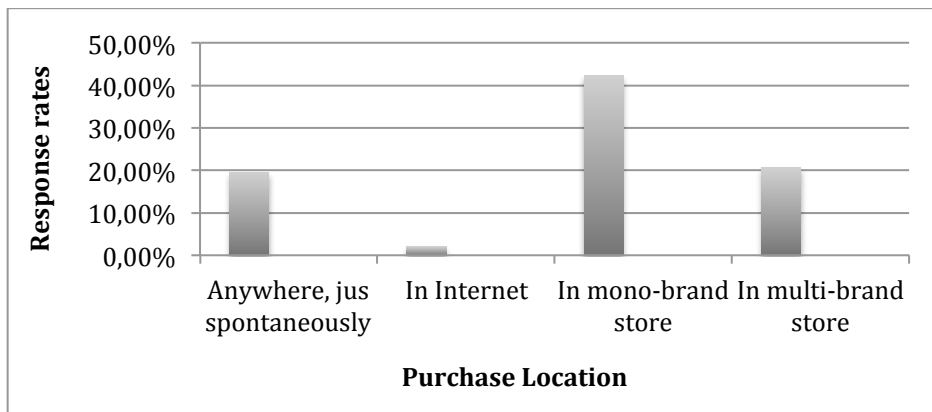
Figure 19. "Coccinelle" Purchase Rates



Note, that even if people have never bought "Coccinelle" production, they were still asked to evaluate characteristics of a brand, because they are familiar with it and should have their opinion or certain insights. Questions were formulated in conditional sentences in order to motivate responses from women who have never bought "Coccinelle".

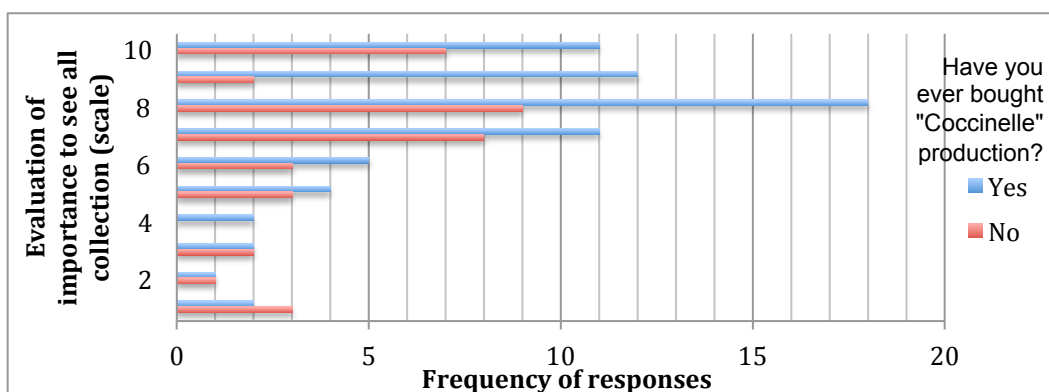
Next "Coccinelle" brand evaluation step was determining where the brand is usually purchased. Following histogram reveals that it is mono-brand boutiques that received the most choices, with the second place for multi-brand stores.

Figure 20. "Coccinelle" Purchase Locations



Comparing to general leather accessories brands' purchase channels (Figure 14. Purchase Channels), "Coccinelle" is bought more in mono-brand stores than in unspecified locations as it was indicated in previous graph for general leather accessories.

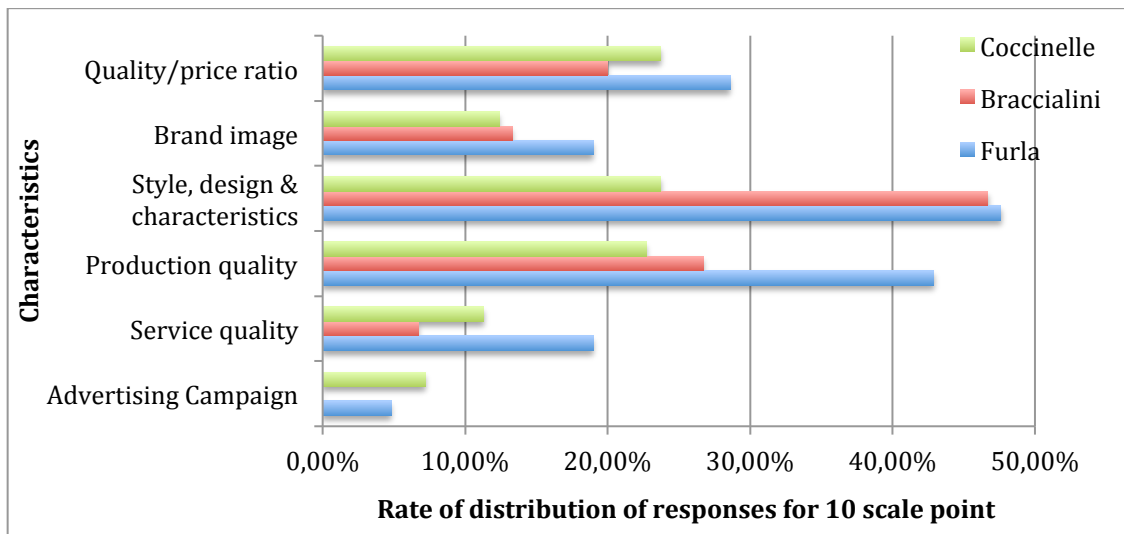
Figure 21. Importance to See All Collection Before Making an Acquisition for "Coccinelle" Customers



This graph shows, how much "Coccinelle" customers like to see the whole collection before making an acquisition. As it may be seen, "Coccinelle" clientele ("Yes"-blue line) answers are more distributed towards that are of the highest importance (8, 9 and 10 scale points). It means that they appreciate getting comprehensive image before purchasing their product. This is very much related to mono-brand shops because there clients can see the full collection (it is possible see the full collection on the Internet, however, "Coccinelle" customers did not indicate such purchase channel as a convenient one).

The following figure reveals how many women appreciate these particular characteristics of "Coccinelle" and the same characteristics of the strongest competitors' brands. The survey requested to scale each element from 1-"not appreciated" to 10-"totally appreciate". Thereafter, the distribution of the results was observed, considering a scale point of 10 for each brand and its characteristics (as a presentation of full appreciation). Results are combined and presented in one table in order to compare "Coccinelle" and competitors' brands (separate distribution of answers with regard to "Coccinelle" and its competitors is indicated in Appendix 10., 11., 12.)

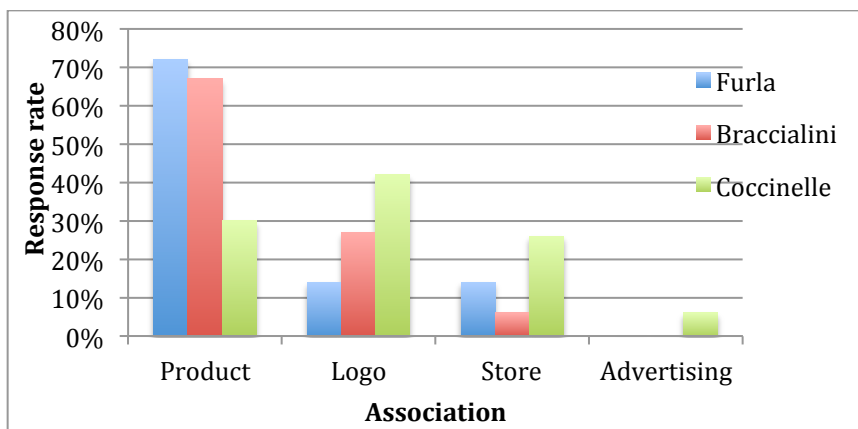
Figure 22. Leather Accessories Brand Characteristics Appreciation



As it may be seen from the graph above, “Furla” and “Braccialini” brands are very much appreciated for their style, design and brand characteristics. “Furla” brand is ahead for its brand’s quality, price ratio and production quality. Graph indicates that “Coccinelle” brand is mostly appreciated for its price and quality ratio, style, design characteristics and product quality. However, strength of customers’ appreciation for these elements is less intense than that of the competitors. What is more, all brands are characterised as relatively weak considering their advertising campaigns.

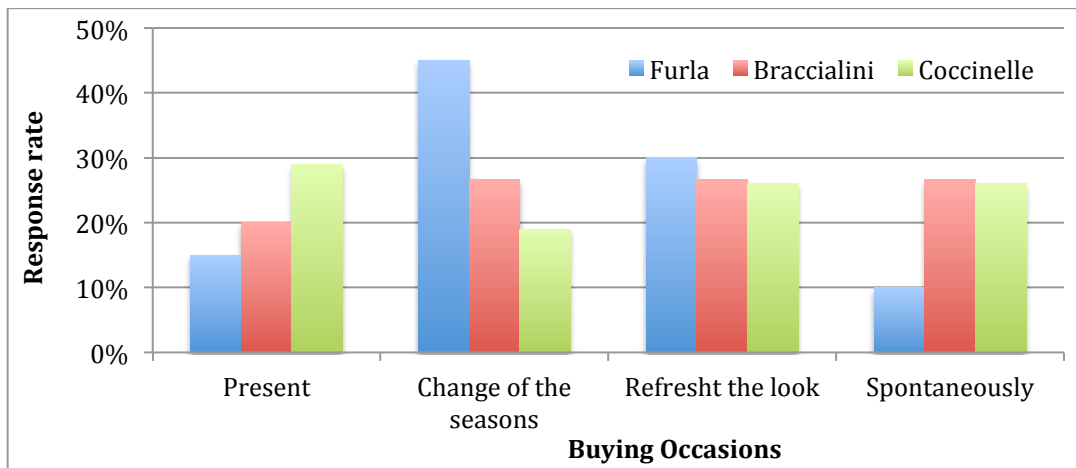
Furthermore, associations with “Coccinelle” and its competitors’ brands were measured. Brands’ evaluations were observed separately and afterwards they were put in one chart (separate distributions are shown in Appendix 13., 14., 15.), as it is shown in the figure:

Figure 23. Associations That Brands Derive



This chart clarifies that “Coccinelle”, in comparison to its competitors, has less distinguished and recognised iconic product characteristics. On the other hand, it has its brand logo as a primary recognition element.

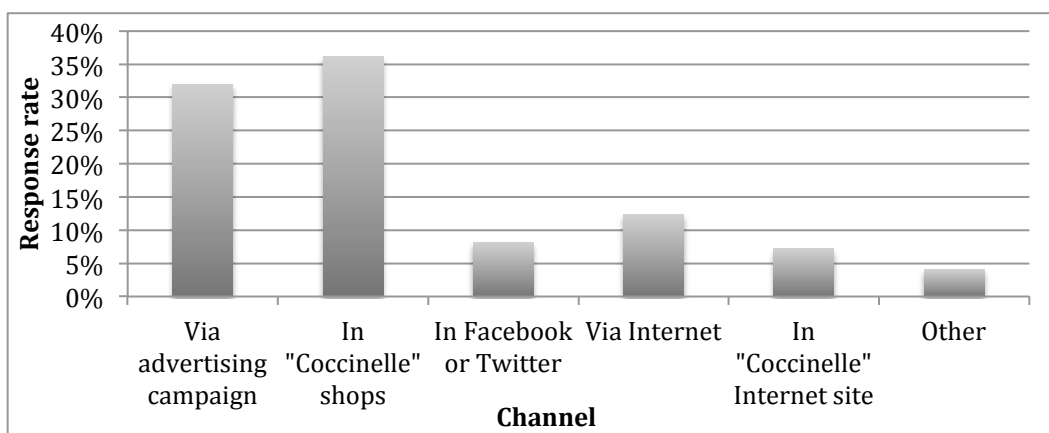
Figure 24. Buying Occasions



The above figure compares positions of 3 brands on the basis of reasons for purchase. So “Furla” is mostly bought when seasons change and new collections arrive. “Braccialini” is purchased likewise in all proposed occasions, except as a present. Meanwhile “Coccinelle” is mostly purchased as a present. Separate brand evaluations (that may be seen in Appendix 16., 17., 18.) were observed and put in one graph. Percentages present purchase frequencies, with regard to all choices, in each case for each brand. Survey included a question with respect to “loyalty” as an acquisition circumstance. However, only “Furla” and “Coccinelle” received one respondent choice each. Due to this, loyalty occasion of purchase was not evaluated.

The last observation that was made was only with regard to “Coccinelle” brand, measuring the most effective brand information channels. It appeared that “Coccinelle” transmits its news most efficiently in its shops. In this question an open answer was created indicating an “other” choice, expecting to discover other ways of news transmission and reception. Unfortunately, among 4 women that chose to type in their answer, only one wrote that she informs herself in the multi-brand stores, others indicated that they are not seeking for novelties from “Coccinelle” in general. The most effective “Coccinelle” information channels are presented in sequencing diagram:

Figure 25. "Coccinelle" Communication Channels



2.10. Research Findings

Empirical research indicated that target customers consider a leather handbag as a quality product and, even though, women are willing to spend a certain amount of money for it, they do not tend to do that often. This means that they expect high quality from a brand. Furthermore, without quality and functionality of a product, customers mostly appreciate style and design of a brand, including exclusive creations from different designers that express uniqueness. However, as evidenced above, advertising campaign is not a significant tool in leather accessories brand purchase decision-making. Another element that survey revealed is that women like to observe overall brand representation by checking out the full collection. Even so, they do not tend to that online. They do not consider e-commerce tool for buying as a convenient one either. Apparently, even though women do not think specifically about the place or way of shopping, they still like the process of walking around and buying “anywhere, spontaneously found” as marked in the survey answers. This may explain an average loyalty attribute as well. On the other hand, those respondents who indicated a specified purchase location mainly chose mono-brand stores that best represent the product, customer service and the brand itself.

It was proven in the research that the biggest competitor of “Coccinelle” is “Furla”. Moreover, Italian women revealed that they are open for other brands, not only those that carry the “Made in Italy” sign, as some international “Coccinelle” rivals also participated in the research. Those who preferred competitors’ brands indicated that for them other brands’ style and design are more appealing. Additionally, “Furla” appeared to have a better quality of service and production and the brand image too. The strongest associations that rival brands derive are their iconic products.

Survey results revealed significant information about “Coccinelle” as a brand itself. First of all, even though respondents knew about the brand, not all of them had ever purchased something from “Coccinelle” and if they did, mostly as a present for someone. Despite the fact that the best evaluations for “Coccinelle” were indicated with regard to its style and design, as compared to competitors’ assessments, these characteristics are still insufficient because the strength of associations with the brand, style and design attributes are generally lower. Differently than the competitors’ brands, “Coccinelle” is associated more with its logo rather than its iconic product. The positive thing that derived from market research is that “Coccinelle” brand customers tend to be loyal and this is revealed not only by their tendency to shop and inform themselves in “Coccinelle” stores, but also on the basis of relationship measured (See Appendix 19.). Most of the women, who marked themselves as loyal buyers, have indicated that they had bought something from “Coccinelle” too.

Information from empirical research outcomes is used further in this paper for distinction and analysis of potential solutions for “Coccinelle” brand development strategy improvement.

3. MANAGERIAL SOLUTIONS

“Coccinelle” is operating in the accessible luxury (medium-high) leather accessories market and evidently has characteristics representing both: economic class production and high-fashion or luxury class products. Due to this, it should adapt the most convenient elements from both classes and in this way create its own brand character, which would be highly applicable to the segment and its customers. It is important to highlight that every brand strategy should have exclusivity regarding all aspects as its primary objective. It was concluded in “Situation analysis” section that “Coccinelle” branding strategy lacks 3 top level characteristics from “Brand development model”, that is: distinction, preference and customer post-purchase satisfaction (See Figure 6.).

This part of the paper discusses several instruments for development with regard to “Coccinelle” brand strategy. The essence of these instruments stems from general “Coccinelle” brand position, competitors’ evaluation and customers’ opinion. These results derived from empirical research and theoretical sources. Practices described in this part are considered to be applicable, as they do not drastically change the current brand strategy. The proposed practices keep the same path and do not include huge financial investments that would not be possible knowing the current financial situation of “Coccinelle” and economic factors of the Italian market. What is more, the applicability of proposed solutions is based primarily on the process of improvement as under “Brand development model” and follows its sequence, keeping in mind that some improving instruments may correspond to more than one stage of the model.

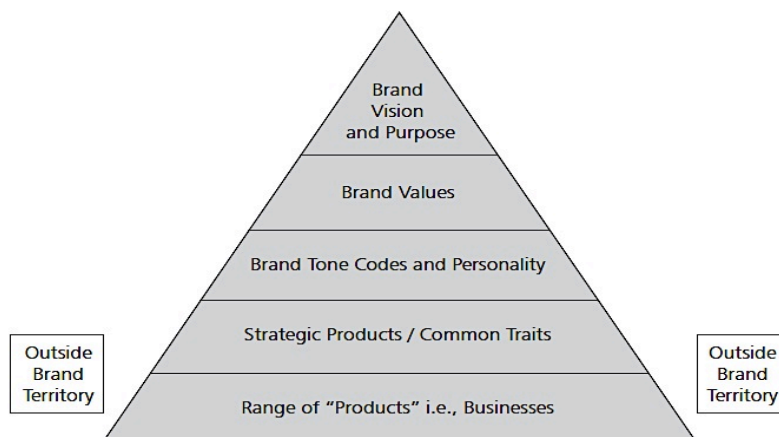
3.1. Distinction Improvement

Based on model’s explanation as provided above, distinguishable brand is the unique and desired one, having a clear brand identity. Putting it simply, it is the brand that clearly out-stands its competitors in positioning maps. It is the fourth step towards a fully developed brand strategy and strong brand equity achievements. For “Coccinelle” there are 3 ways that were discovered while conducting the research and explained in this paper in order to arrive at distinguishable brand position: brand personality improvement and development, emphasis on mono-brand shops development and progression via Internet.

3.1.1. Brand Personality Development

As a primary solution “Coccinelle” has to work on its brand personality, which is the base of exclusivity and uniqueness. The sequencing pyramid represents the brand system (another model for brand strategy development)- main attributes of a strong and well-developed brand. Beginning from top are the fundamental parts with developing ones following below:

Figure 26. Brand System



Source: Kapferer, J.N., 1997

This theory simply highlights and assures that brand personality is one of the core elements in general brand system. It takes the position just after fundamental parts, such as brand vision, purpose and values. “Coccinelle” already has described its brand vision and purpose, together with its values. However, it lacks distinctive personality, as this characteristic comprises of clear brand associations and product attributes. As it was shown from the empirical research, “Coccinelle” mostly brings associations related with the product’s style and quality, but does not present any exclusivity because as none of the characteristics signed were evidently different than those of competitors’. Also taking into account that “Coccinelle” goods are mostly bought for presents, thus it does not associate with any personal comfort or willingness/need to have. As it was mentioned in Bini, V. presentation “Customer relationship management”, 2012: *“Brands must have their own personality, otherwise they are not interesting, just as people”*. Moreover, when a brand has a certain distinction, it achieves a habitual purchase image which means that when customers realise a need for a specific product, they instantly imagine a particular brand for satisfying the crave (like hamburger = “Mc’Donald’s”). “Coccinelle” core values as distinguished by the company are high quality with strong recognition of Made in Italy traits, practical and elegant. Fortunately, customers appreciate these values, because these are the most important elements for a leather accessories brand as evidenced in the empirical research. Style, design and quality were indicated by respondents as being very important (See Figure 22.). However, none of the characteristics of “Coccinelle” brand represent very different attributes than those of the competitors. Therefore it does not show any distinction with regard to the brand. Necessity for originality may be also justified on the basis of the outcomes of the empirical research, where it was discovered that women chose a capsule collection for a brand created by a special designer as the second most attractive practice for a leather accessories brand, which definitely would bring novelties (See Figure 12.). The tendency of situational brand consumption confirms the importance of the brand innovation and originality too. It means that people who nowadays have lots of choices for purchases are led by moods and diverse situations, which motivate their shopping. Consequently, a brand through clever marketing should target not only people, but their moods as well. This means a need for dynamic market approach. Success of these policies is brought forward by worldwide known

brands from the economic class, such as Zara and H&M. In “Coccinelle” case, when collections are presented twice a year (not every two weeks, as it is processed by Zara or H&M) keeping principal values of a brand, but also working on its various presentation possibilities may increase brand’s preference.

The way to boost the personality of a distinctive brand, clear brand associations should be created. In “Coccinelle” case, the most efficient way would be to further develop its iconic product. Empirical research revealed that one of the fundamental drawbacks of “Coccinelle” brand is its underdeveloped iconic product (See Figure 23.). It should be noted that a brand is usually associated primarily with the iconic product, especially when a product has its distinctive and appreciated characteristics (style, quality). As it was mentioned in the book “The New Strategic Brand Management: Creating and Sustaining Brand Equity Long Term” by Kapferer, J.N., 2008:

“A product has to have a name to advertise. Brands such as coca started with particular product, representing authenticity, quality and then promoted the name. And then even though production changes, gets innovate-brand stays. And then brand starts to sell production, not advertising.”

On the other hand, “Coccinelle” company has something what they consider their iconic product - a “Celeste” bag. However, it does not bring together any special story describing core values of a brand that may be associated with it. Obviously, only the product, which to the fullest extent represents a brand’s identity, should be made the iconic one. Research revealed that competitors’ brands are primarily linked with their iconic products (See Figure 23.). For example, “Coccinelle” main competitor “Furla” “Candy bag” has its history about creativity, joy and innovation that gives an image in customers’ minds of that specific brand as well. Iconic product, appropriately representing the brand, attracts customers, who relate their lifestyles with it. For “Coccinelle” it would not be difficult to implement this tool, as there is already an iconic product in the market. What is needed is an attractive story, which would represent core features of the brand. So instead of making plain advertising campaigns, a better solution would be to involve a model in the bag’s presentation, invoke some creativity with regard to a story behind the iconic product.

3.1.2. Emphasis on Mono-brand Shops Development

A mono-brand store is another evident representation of the brand and it is a direct distinction signal because of a possibility to present brand visually in a very individual and distinguished way. Another reason for keeping mono-brand stores, as far as distinction development is concerned, is that until now none of the direct competitors identified and promoted their brands using this branding technique. Obviously, it all begins with an efficient retail strategy because the company has to decide in what type of stores it is most convenient to present its produce. In “Coccinelle” case, as it was mentioned before, concentration on mono-brand stores development is highly applicable, as for now “Coccinelle” has a miscellaneous retail strategy and it would be clever to stick to one type of strategy. Especially now when there is already a team working on representation with regard to mono-brand stores. In this way concentration and all supplies would be distributed to one particular type of retail. Additionally, empirical research showed that “Coccinelle” customers prefer to shop in mono-brand boutiques (See Figure 20.). But what are the advantages of mono-brand retail from brand distinction perspective?

- Full representation of a brand

In this type of store only products of one brand are sold and fully represented with all collections displayed together. This layout helps to show distinctiveness. What is more, empirical research indicated that for “Coccinelle” customers it is important to see the full collection before buying an item (See Figure 21.).

A customer who is entering the store at the same time enters into the brand’s world (obviously, the brand has to have a distinctive personality for attractiveness). In other words, it is a universe fulfilled by emotions²³. Relevant atmosphere and mood has to be created as the customers observe the style with the help from all of the senses: sight, hearing, touch and smell. Consequently, clientele links themselves with certain brand characteristics. In addition, a customer may be strongly influenced by the shop’s staff service, as they are human representatives for the client of the certain type of product. A brand strategy requires a peculiar service orientation, especially for products with a customer touch²⁴. This is very relevant for “Coccinelle”. In result, this would help to improve distinction of a brand that “Coccinelle” lacks.

Another approach that involves presenting a full scope of information about the brand to the clients is “Consumer involvement” theory²⁵. This approach is based on the following factors that influence the strength of consumer involvement in purchase process: *“price, frequency of purchase, symbolic meaning, social visibility, time commitment, potential harm, technical complexity”* (Kapferer, J.N., 2008). So the stronger these factors influence a brand, the higher level of consumer involvement is achieved, meaning more comprehensive information is presented with regard to a particular product before its acquisition. In “Coccinelle” brand situation, due to this model, consumers are highly involved, meaning they tend to research before buying the products. This motivates mono-brand stores into having full information about the brand and proper representation of it, which in the end may stimulate overall consumption.

- Advertising

Physical existence of a shop is a way to efficiently advertise, especially nowadays when natural shopping centres are fast becoming attractive places for shopping. Stores with well-placed windows catch the attention of the prospective customers and promote the product on sale. Empirical research revealed that women still like going shopping, like spending their time in the shops and are keen on buying spontaneously (See Figure 14.). A mono-brand store in the right location may attract such clientele. Furthermore, aforementioned clients are not interested in media advertising (See Figure 11., which indicates that advertising campaign is least appreciated brand attribute) and do not consider it as a good representation of a brand. In result, a brand store in this case is a reasonable instrument for a brand promotion. In addition, mono-brand stores always have

²³ Shop experience, 2012. “Fashion” magazine

²⁴ Luck, K., 2012

²⁵ Kapferer, J.N., 2008

all information about the brand – important achievements and upcoming events, novelties that may be transferred to clients for their convenience (See Figure 25., showing that “Coccinelle” customers most frequently inform themselves about news in “Coccinelle” stores).

- A proof of particular prestige level

It is considered that mono-brand shops display particular brand level. This trend, firstly, is highlighted by higher investments and maintenance costs as it includes space rent (“Coccinelle” requires 60-100 m² space for a shop), more staff employment and higher utility rates. Secondly, natural shopping centres represent a brand potential and class. For example, Milan’s “quadrilatero della moda” area is rightfully associated with high fashion brands. Rome has its fashion district as well which is situated very close to the Spanish stairs. Moreover, it is considered that brand has its full character to present if it has a mono-brand boutique. This strategy may be strengthened by taking some examples from the market. For example, high fashion or luxury brands do not retail in multi-brand shops: Giorgio Armani, Prada, Hermes, etc. (despite outlets where only discounted products are sold). It is important to mention that mono-brand boutiques are highly associated with quality. This can be seen from empirical research as well (See Figure 15.).

- Direct loyalty demonstration

When customer comes back to a mono-brand store for a new purchase it demonstrates direct loyalty for a brand with the full image appreciation. Sometimes even a certain shop is an association of a brand in consumer’s mind. This strategy has a high utility for “Coccinelle” since the brand does not have a highly recognisable iconic product that would always remind consumer about the brand. Furthermore, as “Coccinelle” customers are loyal, they should be comprehensively appreciated and provided with an opportunity to shop in mono-brand boutiques. What is more, empirical research permits to note a tendency that people who shop in mono-brand boutiques tend to be loyal (as seen Appendix 20. table). This indicates that respondents who scaled their loyalty with the highest points (8, 9 and 10) usually shop in mono-brand boutiques.

- Easier appreciation of a customer

And finally in mono-brand store the service provided for a consumer is always perceived from the brand’s perspective. Having specific characteristics of a brand and people who appreciate the brand, it makes it easier to generalise clientele characteristics and describe their expectations with certain requirements. When these issues are clear, a customer receives better service and feels more appreciated which leads to higher satisfaction of a company, brand and their product.

3.1.3. Brand Development via Internet

As it was mentioned before, current trend of social media network growth is very strong. Evidently, there are countries where it has already become a well-developed marketing instrument. However, Italy is a more conservative one. Social media marketing, as a tool, is currently growing in the Italian market. For comparison, “Coccinelle” has around 70 000 likes on Facebook and “Michael Kors” an American accessories and apparel brand (International “Coccinelle” competitor) has almost 3 000 000 likes. Social media instrument permits spreading of information for customers

on real time basis. All news reach the audience straightaway. Additionally, the latter tool enables interaction with clientele without meeting anyone in person. Comments, reactions may be observed instantly and used for further processes. Using the Internet tool brand distinctiveness may be promoted, firstly, by gathering individual web community and interacting with it and, secondly, by visually promoting brand personality, similarly to the promotion in mono-brand stores (specifically in an e-commerce site). What is more, as it was noted previously, “Coccinelle” wants to re-establish its young customer segment (20-25 years) and, certainly, social media instrument is very suitable for such a goal.

Based on social media advantages from the consumer behaviour perspective “Interaction of cognition and emotion in making brand choices”²⁶ model may be used. This theory explains that consumers make choices for brands from two acknowledgement perspectives: cognition, which indicates general recognition and memory of a brand, and emotion that is derived from associations with the brand. Emotional distinction is influenced by socio-cultural background. On the Internet, especially in the social media portals, people quickly receive all social trends. Due to this, invoking these tools emotional brand acknowledgement may be successfully affected. It is important to gather as much “fans” on social media sites as possible and stimulate their interaction, opinion sharing about the brand. Moreover, financially it is a very favourable tool as it includes moderate and flexible additional costs²⁷ and, according to the theory, may lead to brand distinction as the desire to consume/purchase certain products of a brand is effectively stimulated.

Furthermore, social media and e-commerce are strongly inter-related. Both tools are executed via Internet and usually navigated from one to another if the customer collects certain information. Additionally, an e-shop could be considered as a mono-brand store, because only one brand is sold in this one place (as “Coccinelle” strategy officially permits e-commerce only on their Internet site) and e-shop has its particular style and décor that represents brand characteristics. “Coccinelle” already has its e-commerce site, which is merged together with its general Internet site. However, it has not been developed professionally. Compared to “Coccinelle” rivals in the fashion industry, like for example “Burberry”, “Coccinelle” lacks distinctiveness. “Burberry” production online is presented in such a form that it looks very attractive to the customer’s eye. Due to this, improving e-commerce tool may potentially lead to an increase in brand’s distinctiveness.

3.2. Brand Preference Development

The “Brand development model” explains this level as a certain brand’s position when customers who are thinking about the particular product (in this case leather handbags and accessories) instantly imagine the one particular brand. This may be achieved by promoting particular brand characteristics, including general brand personality, quality, price, which are instantly associated with that product and the brand at the same time. Such promotion invokes an

²⁶ Kapferer, J.N., 2008

²⁷ Mielach, D., 2012 and Black, V., 2012

idea that the brand is significantly better than the competitor's brand. What is more, increasing awareness and desire of brand's trial should help to reach this stage too.

3.2.1. Testimonials

Fashion business companies often include some well-known person as their testimonial in advertising campaigns in order to increase awareness of brand characteristics and its attractiveness. This is obviously related to a personality of a certain celebrity. Examples include: "Emporio Armani Underwear" with David Beckham, a famous football player, who is associated with sporty and elegant personality; previously mentioned chick and youthful Kate Moss model for "Liu-Jo" that emphasises youthful elegance of the brand, "Longines" watches company having its advertising campaign with Kate Winslet as a soft, elegant and feminine icon. Without current marketing examples, theories witness the effectiveness of this practice too. Kapferer, J. N. in his book "The New Strategic Brand Management: Creating and Sustaining Brand Equity Long Term" analysed inclusion of celebrities into the development of a brand. The author claimed that high market shares could be achieved by positioning a brand in mass market. This is obtainable with the help of a testimony of well-known people. Celebrities are described as opinion leaders as according to their activities in the society they feature some particular lifestyle that different people are attracted to and want to familiarise with. As it was mentioned before, consumer behaviour is based on emotional approach as well, which is influenced socially, therefore, opinion leader is another instrument to boost this approach. The book demonstrates some ways for choosing a celebrity person on the basis of what specific brand characteristics are in need of a boost, however, it is claimed that the opinion leader should be chosen in such a way so as to represent some particularly characterised group of customers in the brand's community. This strategy may be effectively used to expand the visibility of "Coccinelle" brand attributes. Firstly, because, as it was indicated in the "Situation analysis" part of this paper, "Coccinelle" currently has some celebrity collaborations that potentially may effectively represent the brand. Taking into account that "Coccinelle" brand characteristics derive elegance, quality and femininity, the current brand ambassador, Italian celebrity Martina Colombari, is very well suited for such a campaign. She has been a model – a very suitable attribute, she also has an esthetical look and has participated in poor children assistance program (together with "Fondazione Rava" organization). Since she already appreciates "Coccinelle" brand and has all the features of "Coccinelle" target women, she may accept a brand testimonial position and would definitely be a very influential figure for family women, especially for those who are aware of social inequalities. What is more, without enriching recognition of a brand, "Coccinelle" may possibly achieve this testimonial without huge expenses as M. Colombari already voluntarily participates in all "Coccinelle" events as its ambassador without getting paid. She only receives handbags as presents, which is also very advantageous for "Coccinelle" marketing aims.

3.2.2. Product Range Expansion

As it was mentioned before, "Coccinelle" plans to expand its product range. Reasons are mature market and expected increase in profitability and brand growth. According to Kapferer, J.N.

book “The New Strategic Brand Management: Creating and Sustaining Brand Equity Long Term”: *“brand extensions are necessary”*. Firstly, “Coccinelle” plans to introduce one or some separate lines dedicated for youth, maintaining fundamental “Coccinelle” brand values (elegance, contemporaneity and femininity) but also creating products with more extravagant elements (such as more colours and decoration elements), but decreasing the quality issue in order to present a lower price. There could be some models of handbags for different occasions presented (such as evening purses, school/university bags and shopping handbags) together with interesting accessories, including gloves, scarfs and bijouterie. In this case, due to the theoretical approach from the Kapferer, J.N. book it would be effective to give a different name for this line as it is a downward extension and may be harmful to the primary brand name and its image. Another development of a product range is dedicated to men. Company plans to add a separate masculine leather accessories line. Some working and travelling handbags with some accessories, such as gloves and scarfs may be presented, however, without exaggeration, because the need for such accessories for men is significantly smaller than that of women. Taking into consideration company’s rivals and their success, it may be a profitable brand development strategy for “Coccinelle”. This would broaden customers’ segment and brand awareness, obviously, creating more circulation in the shops, augmentation in brand’s preference, selling power and a potential increase in profits. Even so, it is important to retain brand’s heritage and core values in order not to loose the existing clientele, possibly unsatisfied with the new adapted brand image. Generally, observing market trends and concluding that all competitors have more than one product line and following the theory that indicates a potential brand awareness increase and higher satisfaction of customers as more expectations are fulfilled, it may be a strong preference to development the brand strategy in the above-mentioned ways.

3.2.3. Media Advertising

Based primarily on empirical research results that showed lack of influence of media advertisements (See Figure 11. low scale for advertising campaign as brand characteristic) “Coccinelle” should consider a decrease in direct advertising via press, which is, firstly, a costly one and, secondly, not functioning perfectly. Furthermore, the most important issues that have to be dealt with in order to improve the branding strategy (from the model: distinction, preference and satisfaction of a brand) are not concretely described as achievable through media advertising. Additionally, it seems that market has a tendency to use advertising campaigns only for presentation of newly produced products, but afterwards other instruments are employed for reminding and visibility purposes, such as special events or discounts. What is more, an Italian magazine of advertising “Pubblicita Italia” has published articles²⁸, where it was showed that Italian companies are sharply cutting their expenditures on press advertising, because of the costs and, secondly, of lack of effectiveness, because currently Internet usage is growing fast in Italy and people tend not to buy so much press anymore. This is because of money saving and decreased necessities since all information is available on the Internet. Consequently, the solution would be to diminish media

²⁸ Ruso, S., 2012 and Cassino, C., 2012

advertising (specifically press) and to employ it more only when special projects are presented (like new production lines, some special events or partnerships).

3.3. Solutions for Reaching Brand Satisfaction Level

Satisfaction, according to the aforementioned model, means a long-term/repeated consumption and willingness to recommend the brand. In order to reach the satisfaction level, fostering loyalty should be kept as a primary objective.

3.3.1. Brand Community

A physical brand community of customers that links their personalities with the brand, such as lifestyles, habits, social positions, etc., similar to the virtual one, may be created as well. Identically to the Internet community, physical brand society is favourable for the emotional brand acknowledgement and, additionally, it enables to increase brand awareness in satisfaction spread terms, as clientele tend to attract other people (for example, by giving out presents, as “Coccinelle” customers like to do, see Figure 24.). Moreover, gathering brand community enables to organise events that successfully boost sales (such as shopping days, donation periods, etc.), increases attention and awareness of a brand. What is more, Italians are a very sociable nation and so they like to socialise in whatever process they find themselves in. Due to this, events, which unite the brand community, permit socialisation with people that already have a “brand” in common and may boost overall appreciation of a brand. Also brand attractiveness may be extended in this kind of community events by enabling people to observe other customers who sport a nice look or distinguished character. All these attributes are parts of emotional brand acknowledgement, which leads to brand equity increase. In order to establish customers’ community more easily there may be a fidelity card system implemented. Finally, when a customer clearly associates himself with a brand, it is easier to adapt innovations, as clientele tend to innovate and grow hand-in-hand with a brand.

3.3.2. Special Projects

When importance of a brand community has been established, another improving element for a brand strategy should be distinguished. Current example from the market is an Italian accessories brand “Carpisa” that developed a successful capsule collection with “Gusto Barcelona” apparel brand in order to expand positive brands’ features and integrate both brands’ customers. As it was described in the first “Situation analysis” segment of a paper, “Coccinelle” since now had carried out some special projects. Some of them were successful and others not so much. However, it is considered that these events increase interest in the brand and boost loyalty and satisfaction levels and also gives a chance to for the community of the brand to unite. Especially, when they share same social views, such as donations to help the poor, etc. Empirical research justified that customers appreciate these practices. They evaluated the practice of “possibility to donate a part of acquisition price to some charity organisation” as the best from the provided ones (See Figure 12.). And obviously, this expands brand satisfaction and may stimulate loyalty as clientele begin to expect these projects from a brand and may begin to follow its activities more closely.

So the current possibility for the company would be to sponsorship some sports or cultural events (national tournaments, concerts, exhibitions or theatres), in this way receiving advertising and brand visibility, additionally supplementing its brand personality with new attributes. This strategy is analysed as perceptual grouping in “The Essential Brand Book: Over 100 Techniques to Increase Brand Value” by Ellwood, I. Basically, in the book it is stated that people tend to perceive information on the basis of patterns, even though complete description is lacking. The model is called “Proximity Branding” when clear associations due to brand participation in some activities are created. A good example was given – Ralph Lauren brand and horse-riding always derive instant association because of constant brand presentation in horse-riding events. Considering current “Coccinelle” activity with Milan’s “La Scala” prestigious theatre, this partnership may be developed in a more effective way. For now “Coccinelle” creates small leather cases for theatre’s season tickets. According to “Coccinelle” brand elegance and customer segment, “La Scala” is an appropriate channel to boost brand’s exclusivity and satisfactory levels on the basis of additional activities that represent brand’s personality. In order to reach effective advertising on theatre’s premises, which would definitely obtain target customer visibility, without investing a fortune, it would be possible to continue seasoning ticket channel, but also amending it a little. For example, for visitors, who subscribe, to “Coccinelle” there could be a discount provided or an invitation to a “Coccinelle” event given for free. The theatre should also permit “Coccinelle” to display its goods and/or slogans on their premises. It would be mutually beneficial as “La Scala” collaborating with “Coccinelle” may attract more subscribers and “Coccinelle” would receive another advertising channel together with close brand associations with cultural sophistication, including potential increase in the level of brand satisfaction.

3.4. Budget and Timeline for Brand Development Strategy Improvement Instruments

When instruments for the brand development are clear, planning the timing of their implementation and making financial outline are essential in order to reach effective outcomes. Unfortunately, exact numbers of analysed instruments are not available, however, it is enough to show approximate levels of values for each element of improvement plan on the base of current communication budget. It is known that “Coccinelle” dedicates around 5% of its yearly income to communication department expenses, which constitutes to around 2 500 000 € ($50\,000\,000 \text{ (income in 2011)} \times 0,05$) and 60% is dedicated to Italy’s market, so approximate yearly investments in Italian market are 1 500 000 €. Costs for each improving instrument are included only on the communication basis (meaning public relations expenses, advertising costs, etc.). Following table graphically represents the most convenient plan of activities in terms of timing and financial issues, evidently with a will to implement solutions straightaway and to measure results the following year.

Table 10. Budget and Time Planning for Brand Development Instruments

Brand development instruments\ Year	2013		2014	
	Spring/summer	Autumn/winter		Total
Brand personality and iconic bag promotion				30 000 €
Image building	20 000 €			
Public relations		10 000 €		
Mono-brand shops development (15 shops opening)				173 000 €
Windows decorations	70 000 €			
Catalogues	80 000 €			
Packaging	15 000 €			
Posters	8 000 €			
Brand development via Internet				36 500 €
Facebook (50 € per day)	18 250 €			
Twitter (50 € per day)	18 250 €			
Testimonial advertising campaign				190 000 €
Model	15 000 €			
Campaign costs (including staff, location price, accomodation, etc.)	100 000 €			
Presents for the model	5 000 €			
Media advertising with testimonial				
Press		30 000 €		
Outdoor (Milan, Rome train stations, one month ad)		40 000 €		
Product range expansion promotion (2 new lines)				40 000 €
Media advertising-press			2 x 20 000 €	
Media advertising-press	- 50 000 €			- 50 000 €
Events (at least 15 per year)				140 000 €
Vogue Fashion night out		10 000 €	10 000 €	
Shopping night out		10 000 €	10 000 €	
Brand community/VIP shopping		10 000 €	10 000 €	
Press Day		10 000 €	10 000 €	
Testimonial representation		10 000 €		
"Coccinelle" birthday commemoration			10 000 €	
Collection presentation		10 000 €	10 000 €	
National holidays commemoration		10 000 €	10 000 €	
"La Scala" partnership				30 000 €
Sponsorship		5 000 €		
Subscription cases		10 000 €		
Invitations to events		5 000 €	5 000 €	
Advertising posters production		5 000 €		
				589 500 €

Timing is divided into 2 years (2013 and 2014) with the following year of 2013, being the closest one and requiring most of the work, split into spring/summer and autumn/winter collection periods. Instruments for brand strategy development are listed on the left side of the table and are divided into sub points, meaning different channels for action implementation. Further, there are cells colored in dark grey, which represent instrument implementation timing, while light grey cells indicate planning and negotiating period before any action may be taken.

As it is shown in the table, in the beginning of 2013 it is possible to start focusing on the most important brand development instrument – brand personality improvement. This issue comprises of two steps: image building, which should be started immediately, and public relations that may be initiated after the proper image is created and presented. Mono-brand shops development should be started instantly too, including openings of already planned shops (as it is indicated in the table - an assumption is 15 new shops based on the achievements of previous years), seeking for new ones and giving away planned multi-brand corners openings (if possible, avoiding financial losses). From communication point of view, this involves more expenses in windows decorations, catalogues, packaging and production of posters. The sequencing instrument, which has to be initiated in 2013, is brand development via Internet. Expenditures are for Facebook and Twitter, requiring around 50 € investment in promotion per day, if efficiency is what is sought after. Testimonial advertising campaign should be carried out in the spring/summer period in order

to have it ready for new autumn/winter collection. Price of a model is just a little bit higher than that for an ordinary one, because, as it was mentioned before, the plan is to hire one of “Coccinelle” celebrity ambassadors, who most likely would not ask for high remuneration and as being fan of “Coccinelle” would be happy to get some brand products as presents. Afterwards, when it comes to collection presentation, advertising costs are included. Product range expansion is planned for youth and men, which would require the longest planning period, because it includes styling, production and presentation. Current advertising in media should be diminished for the first half of the year, thus permitting to save some expenses. Further, with new testimonial advertising campaign to start in autumn/winter collection and with new product lines in the next year, advertising should reach same investment levels, since these novelties need more intense promotion in order to reach the customers. During spring/summer collection period the presented events should be planned and negotiated and further implemented in second half of the year. On average their execution costs should total to around 10 000 € each. Those events should be carried out at least 15 units per year in order to reach high brand satisfaction levels. Last, but not least, financially possible to evaluate brand development instrument from communication perspective is partnership with “La Scala” theatre. As the above table indicates, the proposed plan needs further negotiations before it can be implemented.

The above table shows approximate communication cost of analysed development instruments. Total costs take around one third of all communication budget for Italian market, which is acceptable as the company should continue its current marketing and brand promotion activities as well. However, these costs are calculated only from the promotion perspective, but there are also production, retail and human resources expenses that should be taken into account. Unfortunately, those are hardly measurable, because the company may move towards new policies, but give up some current ones, so certain costs may be equalized. For example, focus on mono-brand shop development is costly, but if multi-brand corners are not opened anymore, surplus money is used for mono-brand boutiques. Similarly with product range expansion: each year new collections and products are created and merged into collections, so even if new product lines are implemented, they need only more stylistic advancements. Only human resources department may certainly consider significantly higher expenses as additional employees for visual development might be necessary (as more mono-brand shops require more service) and intensive communication via Internet demands additional persons, who would be employed only for this communication channel.

According to this plan, in the second half of 2014, all improvement elements should see their actual results, with each described in previous paragraphs of “Managerial solutions”.

All in all, the presented managerial solutions, corresponding to the 3 levels of brand development model: distinction, preference and satisfaction, should bring for “Coccinelle” a strong brand equity. Even though provided solutions and measured outcomes (presented below) are developed in the sequence of the model, as it was mentioned at the beginning of solutions section, each of them might help to improve more than one level from “Brand development model”.

CONCLUSIONS

1. Current “Coccinelle” company situation in “accessible luxury” market analysis revealed that the company and its brand position is an average one, however, there is a potential to improve it, especially when competitors are taking more advanced positions, meaning that there are ways for development. Unfortunately, economic recession and political instability indicate that both market and economic situations are not favourable for “Coccinelle”. On the other hand, the good thing is that the brand has luxury brand characteristics and does not compete in the pure economic leather accessories market segment, which is suffering mostly as it sells to the upper social class clientele (middle price range fashion production, if top and lowest are taken). All these observations grounded further explorations for “Coccinelle” brand strategy development.
2. Since customers’ opinion is essential for a brand, but not so easily described, empirical research was invoked for obtaining this type of information. The empirical research clarified the attitudes of main consumers towards leather accessories brands. General information regarding leather handbags purchase was presented. It showed that customers are willing to pay higher than average price for such items, however, buying them mostly once in a year. Further the importance of selling locations was noted, which revealed that customers who buy leather accessories are not very picky for the location (i.e. like to buy anywhere). However, certain clients appreciate mono-brand boutiques characteristics other than those of a multi-brand shop. The research demonstrated that quality and style are the most important factors for a leather accessories brand, which, fortunately, perfectly satisfies “Coccinelle” production, as these core values are evident. Compared with the competitors’ brands, “Coccinelle”, even though having appropriate characteristics for a leather accessories brand, always stand below its direct competitors. All this research permitted to understand that the brand lacks mostly its distinction and preference and led to name the crucial issues to be dealt with in order to further develop “Coccinelle” branding strategy.
3. With the help of information from the company and clientele perspectives there were implications made and potential managerial solutions presented. They were primarily based on “Brand development model”. Brand distinction, preference and customer satisfaction were named as underdeveloped. Knowing that “Coccinelle” would not be able to invest a lot of additional money into development of its brand, solutions were presented that are applicable due to company’s current financial constraints and that keep current branding strategy instruments (like fundamental brand characteristics promotion, types of retail strategy, events dedicated to brand and partnerships), but effectively innovate them. This was also done keeping in mind the short-time period, which is needed to improve the brand’s position instantly. Internal brand enrichment and personality improvements, adopted socialisation methods (community, events, etc.) would definitely have an impact on the branding strategy of “Coccinelle”. Brand distinction enhancement brings precise brand identity to differ from its rivals. As far as preference part is concerned, efficient brand

strategy should enable “Coccinelle” brand to take priority over its rivals. The final section of satisfaction indicates brand’s strength in post-purchase stage.

4. All in all, gradually achieving those innovations, based on paper’s fundamental model, it should definitely guide “Coccinelle” brand towards distinctive, preferred and satisfying brand levels and in the end indicate a strong brand equity, which is one of the most significant success factors for a leather accessories market players such as “Coccinelle”. Specifically, achievement of relevant brand equity levels mean a competitive position in the market share, possibility to have more autonomy in price setting in “accessible luxury” segment, high brand awareness and appreciation, and also a possibility to have a successful and smooth gradual progress in adapting with the market changes. It is crucial to understand that these innovations are not eternal, as market fluctuates all the time, so the proposed innovations should be improved periodically in order to maintain a decent brand position.

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LIST OF APPENDIXES

Appendix One: Empirical Research Specifications

Appendix 1. Survey in English and Italian Languages

1. How often do you buy a leather handbag? <i>(choose one)</i> a. Once in a year b. Less often than once in a year c. More often than twice a year d. Twice a year	Quanto spesso Lei acquista una borsa di pelle? a. Una volta all'anno b. Meno di una volta in un anno c. Più spesso di due volte all'anno d. Due volte all'anno
2. How much do you usually spend for a leather handbag? <i>(choose one)</i> a. Less than 100 euro b. 100-500 euro c. More than 500 euro	Di solito Lei quanto spende per una borsa di pelle? a. Meno di 100 euro b. 100-500 euro c. Più di 500 euro
3. Evaluate the importance of these characteristics for a leather accessories brand. <i>(scale from 1=not important to 10=very important)</i> a. Advertising campaign b. Selling location c. Service d. Brand image e. Price f. Product quality g. Style & design	Valuti l'importanza di queste caratteristiche per una marca di accessori di pelle. <i>(scala da 1 = non importante a 10 = molto importante)</i> a. Campagna pubblicitaria b. Il punto vendita c. Il servizio d. Immagine di una marca e. Prezzo f. Qualità di prodotto g. Stile & design
4. Evaluate the attractiveness of these practices of a leather accessories company: <i>(scale from 1=not attractive to 10=very attractive)</i> a. Advertising campaign represented by a celebrity b. Possibility to donate a part of item acquisition price to some charity organizations c. Special shopping events, parties for a brand d. Special capsule collections for a brand created by special designer	Valuti l'attrattività delle seguenti politiche di un'azienda di pelletteria. <i>(scala da 1=non attrattivo a 10=molto attrattivo)</i> a. Campagna pubblicitaria presentata da una celebrità b. Possibilità di donare una quota parte dell'ammontare dell'acquisto ad una organizzazione di carità c. Un evento shopping/una festa della firma d. Una linea della collezione firmata da un designer particolare
5. Where do you usually go to buy leather accessories, particularly handbags? <i>(choose one)</i> a. Anywhere, because I am a spontaneous buyer b. Online c. In mono-brand stores d. In multi-brand/department stores e. In the outlet	Di solito Lei dove compra una borsa di pelle? a. Dovunque, perché compro spontaneamente b. In internet c. In un negozio monomarca d. In un negozio multimarca e. In un outlet

6. Evaluate the strength of associations that derive for you, when you think about mono-brand boutiques of leather accessories? <i>(scale from 1=weak to 10=strong associations)</i> a. Production b. Service c. Quality d. Atmosphere	Quando pensa ad una boutique monomarca di accessori di pelle, quanto strettamente Lei relaziona alla firma i seguenti aspetti? (scala da 1=poco relazionata a 10=molto relazionata) a. Il prodotto b. Il servizio c. La qualità d. L'atmosfera
7. Evaluate the strength of associations that derive for you, when you think about multi-brand shops of leather accessories? <i>(scale from 1=weak to 10=strong associations)</i> a. Production b. Service c. Quality d. Atmosphere	Quando pensa ad un negozio multimarca di accessori di pelle, quanto strettamente Lei relaziona ad una firma i seguenti aspetti?(scala da 1=poco relazionata a 10=molto relazionata) a. Il prodotto b. Il servizio c. La qualità d. L'atmosfera
8. How much is important for you to see a whole collection of a leather accessories brand before buying an item? <i>(scale from 1=not important to 10=very important)</i>	Valuti quanto è importante per Lei vedere la collezione completa prima di acquistare una borsa di pelle di marca?(scala da 1=non importante a 10=importantissimo)
9. How often do you visit web sites of interesting leather accessories brands? <i>(scale from 1=never to 10=always)</i>	Quanto spesso Lei visita i siti web dei marchi interessanti di pelletteria? <i>(scala da 1=mai a 10=sempre)</i>
10. Have you ever tried buying your leather accessories production online? <i>(choose one)</i> a. Yes b. No	Ha mai provato a comprare qualche accessorio di pelletteria online? a. Sì b. No
11. According to you, how much convenient is e-commerce tool for shopping fashion leather accessories? <i>(scale from 1=not convenient to 10=very convenient)</i>	Secondo Lei, quanto è conveniente lo strumento dell'e-commerce (shop-on-line) per la moda degli accessori di pelletteria? (scala da 1=non conveniente a 10=molto conveniente)
12. Evaluate these factors that would mostly make you comeback to buy the same leather accessories brand? <i>(scale from 1=not at all 10=totally would make me come back)</i> a. Shopping experience b. Popularity/fashion c. Advertising d. Product quality and functionality e. Style & design	Valuti quali di questi fattori la farebbero ritornare ad acquistare la stessa marca dei accessori di pelle? (scala da 1 = non mi farebbe ritornare a 10 = sicuramente mi farebbe ritornare) a. Piacevole esperienza di shopping b. Popolarità/moda c. Pubblicità d. Qualità e funzionalità del prodotto e. Stile e design dei prodotti
13. How much do you consider yourself as a loyal leather accessories brand buyer? <i>(scale from 1=not loyal to 10=very loyal)</i>	Lei quanto si ritiene acquirente fedele ad una marca di accessori di pelletteria? (scala da 1 = non fedele 10 = fedelissimo)
14. Which brand would you choose if buy leather handbag? <i>(choose one)</i> a. Alviero Martini b. Borbonese c. Braccialini d. Coccinelle e. Furla f. Mandarina Duck g. Other <i>(fill-in)</i>	Quale marchio Lei sceglierebbe per un acquisto di una borsa di pelle? a. "Alviero Martini" b. "Borbonese" c. "Braccialini" d. "Coccinelle" e. "Furla" f. "Mandarina Duck" g. Altro

15. What firstly strikes to your head, when you think about previously signed brand? <i>(choose one)</i> a. Brand logo b. Shop c. Their iconic product d. Advertising	Quale aspetto Le viene in mente quando pensa alla marca che ha indicato nella precedente domanda? a. Il logo della marca b. Il negozio della marca c. Il prodotto iconico della marca d. La pubblicità della marca
16. How much do you appreciate these characteristics of upper-signed brand? <i>(scale from 1=not at all 10=totally appreciate)</i> a. Advertising campaigns b. Service quality c. Production quality d. Production style, design and characteristics e. Brand image f. Price and quality ratio	Quanto apprezza le seguenti caratteristiche della marca indicata precedentemente? <i>(scala da 1=non apprezza a 10=apprezza molto)</i> a. La campagna pubblicitaria b. La qualità del servizio c. La qualità di produzione d. Lo stile, il design e le caratteristiche della produzione e. L'immagine della marca f. Il rapporto qualita/prezzo
17. In what case do you buy/did you buy previously signed brand? <i>(choose one)</i> a. As a present for someone b. Change of seasons as new collections arrive c. Loyalty d. As a necessity to refresh the look e. Spontaneously as being attracted from advertising	In quale caso ha comprato o solitamente compra prodotti di pelletteria della marca indicata prima? a. Come regalo per qualcuno b. Per il cambio di stagione, quando escono le nuove collezioni c. Perché è fedele a quel marchio d. Quando sente la necessita di rinnovare il look e. Spontaneamente, per esempio per avere notato la pubblicità
18. Are you familiar with "Coccinelle" brand? <i>(choose one)</i> a. Yes b. No	Lei conosce il marchio "Coccinelle"? a. Si b. No
19. Have you ever bought "Coccinelle" production? <i>(choose one)</i> a. Yes b. No	Ha mai acquistato qualcosa di "Coccinelle"? a. Si b. No
20. If you go to buy, where would you do that? <i>(choose one)</i> a. Anywhere, just spontaneously found b. Online c. In a mono-brand store d. In a multi-brand store e. Outlet	Se desiderasse comprare qualcosa di "Coccinelle" dove andrebbe? a. Dovunque, perché compro spontaneamente b. In internet c. In un negozio monomarca d. In un negozio multimarca e. In un outlet
21. How much do you appreciate these characteristics of "Coccinelle" brand? <i>(scale from 1=not at all 10=totally appreciate)</i> a. Advertising campaigns b. Service quality c. Production quality d. Production style, design and characteristics e. Brand image f. Price and quality ratio	Quanto Lei apprezza queste caratteristiche del marchio "Coccinelle"? <i>(scala da 1=non apprezza a 10=apprezza molto)</i> a. La campagna pubblicitaria b. La qualità del servizio c. La qualità di produzione d. Lo stile, il design e le caratteristiche della produzione e. L'immagine della marca f. Il rapporto qualita/prezzo

22. What firstly strikes to your head, when you think about "Coccinelle" brand? (<i>choose one</i>) a. Brand logo b. Shop c. Its iconic product d. Advertising	Quale aspetto Le viene in mente quando pensa alla marca "Coccinelle"? a. Il logo di "Coccinelle" b. Il negozio di "Coccinelle" c. Il prodotto iconico di "Coccinelle" d. La pubblicità di "Coccinelle"
23. Where do you usually get informed about "Coccinelle" news? (<i>choose one</i>) a. Media advertisements b. In "Coccinelle" shops c. Facebook, Twitter d. Internet media sites e. "Coccinelle" web-site f. Other (<i>fill-in</i>)	Di solito come viene a conoscenza delle novità di "Coccinelle"? a. Attraverso la pubblicità b. Nei negozi di "Coccinelle" c. Su Facebook/Twitter d. Sui siti web in Internet e. Sul sito web di "Coccinelle"
24. In what case do you buy or would buy "Coccinelle" products? (<i>choose one</i>) a. As a present for someone b. Change of seasons as new collections arrive c. Loyalty d. As a necessity to refresh the look e. Spontaneously as being attracted from advertising	In quale caso ha comprato o solitamente compra prodotti di "Coccinelle"? a. Come regalo per qualcuno b. Per il cambio di stagione, quando escono le nuove collezioni c. La fedeltà d. Quando sente la necessita di rinnovare il look e. Spontaneamente, per esempio per avere notato la pubblicità
25. What is your gender? a. Female b. Male	Qual è il suo sesso? a. Femmina b. Maschio
26. What is your age? (<i>fill-in</i>)	Qual è la sua età?

Appendix 2. Research Questions and Theoretical Model Justification

Question	Models
1. How often do you buy a leather handbag?	Stages of Purchase Decision; Market Segmentation Model
2. How much do you usually spend for a leather handbag?	4P's; Market Segmentation Model
3. Evaluate the importance of these characteristics for a leather accessories brand.	4P's; Stages of Purchase Decision; Brand Development Model
4. Evaluate the attractiveness of these practices of a leather accessories company.	4P's; Stages of Purchase Decision; Brand Development Model
5. Where do you usually go to buy leather accessories, particularly handbags?	4P's; Stages of Purchase Decision; Brand Development Model
6. Evaluate the strength of associations that derive for you, when you think about mono-brand boutiques of leather accessories?	4P's; Stages of Purchase Decision; Brand Development Model
7. Evaluate the strength of associations that derive for you, when you think about multi-brand shops of leather accessories?	4P's; Stages of Purchase Decision; Brand Development Model
8. How much is important for you to see a whole collection of a leather accessories brand before buying an item?	4P's; Stages of Purchase Decision; Brand Development Model
9. How often do you visit web sites of interesting leather accessories brands?	4P's; Stages of Purchase Decision; Brand Development Model

10. Have you ever tried buying your leather accessories production online?	4P's; Stages of Purchase Decision; Brand Development Model
11. According to you, how much convenient is e-commerce tool for shopping fashion leather accessories?	4P's; Stages of Purchase Decision; Brand Development Model
12. Evaluate these factors that would mostly make you comeback to buy the same leather accessories brand?	4P's; Stages of Purchase Decision; Brand Development Model
13. How much do you consider yourself as a loyal leather accessories brand buyer?	Stages of Purchase Decision; Market Segmentation Model; Brand Equity Model; Brand Development Model
14. Which brand would you choose if buy leather handbag?	Stages of Purchase Decision; Market Segmentation Model; Brand Positioning Model; Brand Equity Model; Brand Development Model
15. What firstly strikes to your head, when you think about previously signed brand?	4P's; Stages of Purchase Decision; Brand Positioning Model; Brand Equity Model; Brand Development Model
16. How much do you appreciate these characteristics of upper-signed brand?	4P's; Stages of Purchase Decision; Brand Positioning Model; Brand Equity Model; Brand Development Model
17. In what cases do you buy/did you buy previously signed brand?	4P's; Stages of Purchase Decision; Brand Positioning Model; Brand Equity Model; Brand Development Model
18. Are you familiar with "Coccinelle" brand?	Stages of Purchase Decision; Market Segmentation Model; Brand Positioning Model; Brand Equity Model; Brand Development Model
19. Have you ever bought "Coccinelle" production?	Stages of Purchase Decision; Brand Positioning Model; Brand Equity Model; Brand Development Model
20. If you go to buy, where would you do that?	4P's; Stages of Purchase Decision; Brand Positioning Model; Brand Equity Model; Brand Development Model
21. How much do you appreciate these characteristics of "Coccinelle" brand?	4P's; Stages of Purchase Decision; Brand Positioning Model; Brand Equity Model; Brand Development Model
22. What firstly strikes to your head, when you think about "Coccinelle" brand?	4P's; Stages of Purchase Decision; Brand Positioning Model; Brand Equity Model; Brand Development Model
23. Where do you usually get informed about "Coccinelle" news?	4P's; Stages of Purchase Decision; Brand Equity Model; Brand Development Model
24. In what case do you buy or would buy "Coccinelle" products?	4P's; Stages of Purchase Decision; Brand Positioning Model; Brand Equity Model; Brand Development Model
25. What is your gender?	Market Segmentation Model
26. What is your age?	Market Segmentation Model

Appendix 3. Research Questions and What Objectives They Correspond To

Objective	Questions
Identification of target customers characteristics and their requirements for relevant branding policies (for “Coccinelle”);	1 (frequency of leather bag acquisition); 2 (financial capacity); 13 (loyalty); 25 (gender); 26 (age)
Identifying the most effective instruments of brand marketing for customers, taking into account those set by “Coccinelle” and its closest competitors, in order to understand what measures would most effectively improve “Coccinelle” branding strategy;	3 (importance of particular characteristics for leather accessories brand); 4 (attractiveness of particular marketing strategies); 8 (importance of seeing all collection); 9 (frequency of web-sites visiting); 12 (factors that increase loyalty)
Investigating customers viewpoint towards competitors and leather accessories production in general;	14 (strongest competitor); 16 (importance of particular characteristics for previously signed brand); 17 (reasons of previously signed brand attractiveness)
Obtaining information concerning most common ways of shopping and what feelings customers have about brand, while they shop in the diverse retail channels and using this information as a potential tool for brand development;	5 (type of shops visited); 6 (mono-brand shop evaluation); 7 (multi-brand shop evaluation); 10 (online buying evaluation); 11 (convenience of e-commerce)
Collecting customers’ views about “Coccinelle” as a brand, in comparison with its direct competitors, for proposing further solutions to the problem of the paper.	18&19 (awareness of “Coccinelle”); 20 (type of buying “Coccinelle”); 21 (importance of particular characteristics for “Coccinelle” brand); 22 (associations with “Coccinelle”); 23 (strongest advertising way of “Coccinelle”); 24 (reasons of “Coccinelle” brand attractiveness)

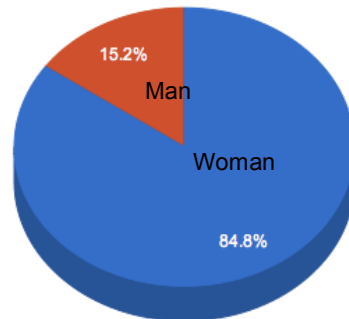
Appendix Two: Results of Empirical Research

Appendix 4. Gender Distribution

Qual è il suo sesso?

What is your gender?

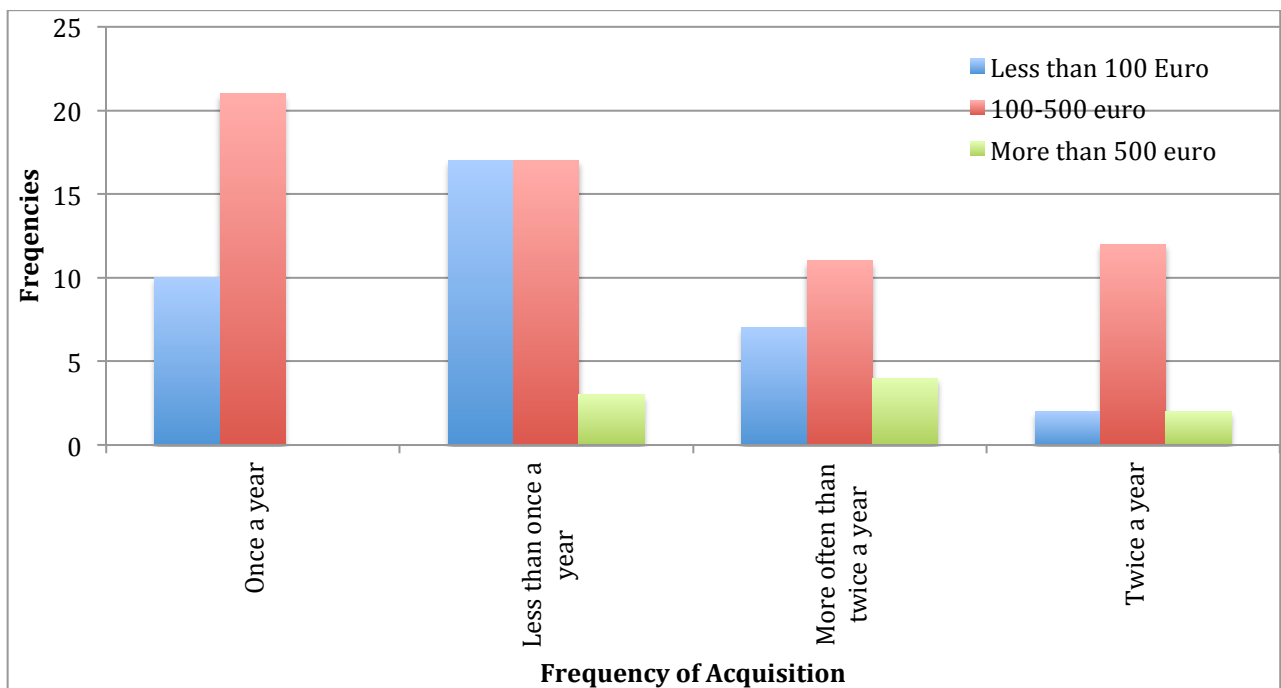
■ Femmina
■ Maschio



Appendix 5. Average Age

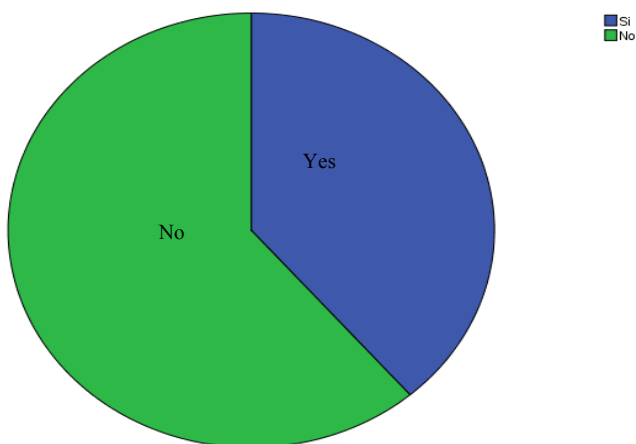
Qual e la sua eta? (What is your age?)		
N	Valid	106
	Missing	0
Mean		33,77

Appendix 6. Relationship Between Expenses for a Bag and Frequency of Acquisition



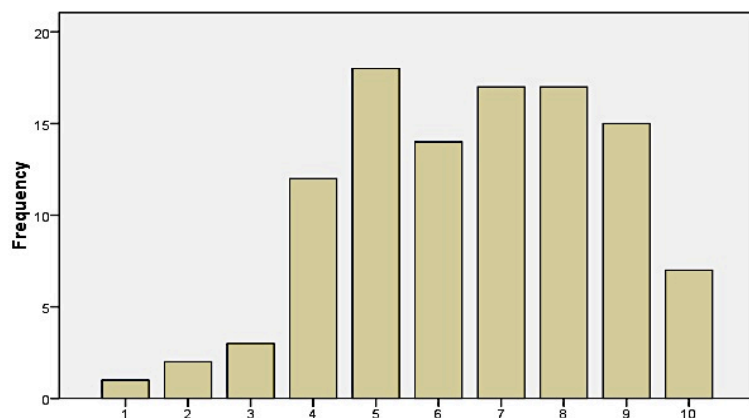
Appendix 7. The Share of People Who Bought Leather Accessories Online

Ha mai provato a comprare qualche accessorio di pelletteria online?



Appendix 8. E-commerce Tool Convenience

Secondo Lei, quanto è conveniente lo strumento dell'e-commerce (shop-online) per la moda degli accessori di pelletteria



Appendix 9. Brands That Were Typed In

	Frequency
Valid	86
Armani	1
Balenciaga	1
Blu girl	1
Carpisa	1
Felisi	1
Fendi	2
Bottega Veneta, Balenciaga	1
Gianni Chiarini	1
Gucci, Louis Vuitton	1
Jacomo	1
LIUJO	1
Maxmara	1
Miu Miu	2
Piero Guidi	2
Piquadro	1
The Bridge	3
Total	106

Appendix 10. "Furla" Brand Characteristics Evaluation

1. Advertising campaign

La campagna pubblicitaria

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	1	4,8	4,8	4,8
	2	2	9,5	9,5	14,3
	3	1	4,8	4,8	19,0
	4	1	4,8	4,8	23,8
	5	5	23,8	23,8	47,6
	6	5	23,8	23,8	71,4
	7	2	9,5	9,5	81,0
	8	2	9,5	9,5	90,5
	9	1	4,8	4,8	95,2
	10	1	4,8	4,8	100,0
Total		21	100,0	100,0	

2. Service quality

La qualita del servizio

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	1	4,8	4,8	4,8
	5	1	4,8	4,8	9,5
	6	5	23,8	23,8	33,3
	7	1	4,8	4,8	38,1
	8	5	23,8	23,8	61,9
	9	4	19,0	19,0	81,0
	10	4	19,0	19,0	100,0
	Total	21	100,0	100,0	

3. Production quality

La qualità di produzione

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	6	1	4,8	4,8	4,8
	7	2	9,5	9,5	14,3
	8	5	23,8	23,8	38,1
	9	4	19,0	19,0	57,1
	10	9	42,9	42,9	100,0
	Total	21	100,0	100,0	

4. Style, design and characteristics

Lo stile, il design e le caratteristiche della produzione

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	6	1	4,8	4,8	4,8
	7	2	9,5	9,5	14,3
	8	4	19,0	19,0	33,3
	9	4	19,0	19,0	52,4
	10	10	47,6	47,6	100,0
	Total	21	100,0	100,0	

5. Brand image

L?immagine della marca

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	4	1	4,8	4,8	4,8
	5	1	4,8	4,8	9,5
	7	6	28,6	28,6	38,1
	8	2	9,5	9,5	47,6
	9	7	33,3	33,3	81,0
	10	4	19,0	19,0	100,0
	Total	21	100,0	100,0	

6. Price and quality ratio

Il rapporto qualita/prezzo

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	5	2	9,5	9,5	9,5
	6	2	9,5	9,5	19,0
	7	4	19,0	19,0	38,1
	8	3	14,3	14,3	52,4
	9	4	19,0	19,0	71,4
	10	6	28,6	28,6	100,0
	Total	21	100,0	100,0	

Appendix 11. "Braccialini" Brand Characteristics Evaluation

1. Advertising campaign

La campagna pubblicitaria

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	2	3	20,0	20,0	20,0
	4	1	6,7	6,7	26,7
	5	1	6,7	6,7	33,3
	6	3	20,0	20,0	53,3
	7	2	13,3	13,3	66,7
	8	4	26,7	26,7	93,3
	9	1	6,7	6,7	100,0
	Total	15	100,0	100,0	

2. Service quality

La qualita del servizio

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	6	4	26,7	26,7	26,7
	7	2	13,3	13,3	40,0
	8	4	26,7	26,7	66,7
	9	4	26,7	26,7	93,3
	10	1	6,7	6,7	100,0
	Total	15	100,0	100,0	

3. Production quality

La qualita di produzione

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	6	1	6,7	6,7	6,7
	7	1	6,7	6,7	13,3
	8	3	20,0	20,0	33,3
	9	6	40,0	40,0	73,3
	10	4	26,7	26,7	100,0
	Total	15	100,0	100,0	

4. Style, design and characteristics

Lo stile, il design e le caratteristiche della produzione

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	8	2	13,3	13,3	13,3
	9	6	40,0	40,0	53,3
	10	7	46,7	46,7	100,0
	Total	15	100,0	100,0	

5. Brand image

L'immagine della marca

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	4	1	6,7	6,7	6,7
	5	1	6,7	6,7	13,3
	6	1	6,7	6,7	20,0
	8	3	20,0	20,0	40,0
	9	7	46,7	46,7	86,7
	10	2	13,3	13,3	100,0
	Total	15	100,0	100,0	

6. Price and quality ratio

Il rapporto qualità/prezzo

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	2	1	6,7	6,7	6,7
	3	1	6,7	6,7	13,3
	4	1	6,7	6,7	20,0
	5	1	6,7	6,7	26,7
	6	1	6,7	6,7	33,3
	8	3	20,0	20,0	53,3
	9	4	26,7	26,7	80,0
	10	3	20,0	20,0	100,0
	Total	15	100,0	100,0	

Appendix 12. "Coccinelle" Brand Characteristics Evaluation

1. Advertising campaign

La campagna pubblicitaria

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	3	3,1	3,1	3,1
	2	6	6,2	6,2	9,3
	3	4	4,1	4,1	13,4
	4	10	10,3	10,3	23,7
	5	16	16,5	16,5	40,2
	6	15	15,5	15,5	55,7
	7	13	13,4	13,4	69,1
	8	13	13,4	13,4	82,5
	9	10	10,3	10,3	92,8
	10	7	7,2	7,2	100,0
	Total	97	100,0	100,0	

2. Service quality

La qualita del servizio

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	2	2,1	2,1	2,1
	2	1	1,0	1,0	3,1
	3	4	4,1	4,1	7,2
	4	3	3,1	3,1	10,3
	5	8	8,2	8,2	18,6
	6	15	15,5	15,5	34,0
	7	19	19,6	19,6	53,6
	8	21	21,6	21,6	75,3
	9	13	13,4	13,4	88,7
	10	11	11,3	11,3	100,0
	Total	97	100,0	100,0	

3. Production quality

La qualita di produzione

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	2	2,1	2,1	2,1
	2	1	1,0	1,0	3,1
	3	1	1,0	1,0	4,1
	4	3	3,1	3,1	7,2
	5	7	7,2	7,2	14,4
	6	10	10,3	10,3	24,7
	7	10	10,3	10,3	35,1
	8	19	19,6	19,6	54,6
	9	22	22,7	22,7	77,3
	10	22	22,7	22,7	100,0
	Total	97	100,0	100,0	

4. Style, design and characteristics

Lo stile, il design e le caratteristiche della produzione

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	2	2,1	2,1	2,1
	2	1	1,0	1,0	3,1
	3	1	1,0	1,0	4,1
	4	1	1,0	1,0	5,2
	5	9	9,3	9,3	14,4
	6	10	10,3	10,3	24,7
	7	7	7,2	7,2	32,0
	8	11	11,3	11,3	43,3
	9	32	33,0	33,0	76,3
	10	23	23,7	23,7	100,0
Total		97	100,0	100,0	

5. Brand image

L'immagine della marca

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	2	2,1	2,1	2,1
	2	2	2,1	2,1	4,1
	3	2	2,1	2,1	6,2
	4	7	7,2	7,2	13,4
	5	7	7,2	7,2	20,6
	6	13	13,4	13,4	34,0
	7	13	13,4	13,4	47,4
	8	20	20,6	20,6	68,0
	9	19	19,6	19,6	87,6
	10	12	12,4	12,4	100,0
Total		97	100,0	100,0	

6. Price and quality ratio

Il rapporto qualita/prezzo

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	1	1,0	1,0	1,0
	2	1	1,0	1,0	2,1
	3	2	2,1	2,1	4,1
	4	3	3,1	3,1	7,2
	5	7	7,2	7,2	14,4
	6	11	11,3	11,3	25,8
	7	13	13,4	13,4	39,2
	8	13	13,4	13,4	52,6
	9	23	23,7	23,7	76,3
	10	23	23,7	23,7	100,0
Total		97	100,0	100,0	

Appendix 13. Associations With "Furla" Brand

Quale aspetto Le viene in mente quando pensa alla marca che ha indicato nella precedente domanda?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Il logo della marca (brand logo)	3	14,3	14,3	14,3
	Il negozio della marca (a shop)	3	14,3	14,3	28,6
	Il prodotto iconico della marca (iconic product)	15	71,4	71,4	100,0
	Total	21	100,0	100,0	

Appendix 14. Associations With "Braccialini" Brand

Quale aspetto Le viene in mente quando pensa alla marca che ha indicato nella precedente domanda?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Il logo della marca (brand logo)	4	26,7	26,7	26,7
	Il negozio della marca (a shop)	1	6,7	6,7	33,3
	Il prodotto iconico della marca (iconic product)	10	66,7	66,7	100,0
	Total	15	100,0	100,0	

Appendix 15. Associations With "Coccinelle" Brand

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Il logo di Coccinelle (brand logo)	40	41,2	41,2	41,2
	Il negozio di Coccinelle (a shop)	23	23,7	23,7	64,9
	Il prodotto iconico di Coccinelle (iconic product)	28	28,9	28,9	93,8
	La pubblicit� di Coccinelle (advertising campaign)	6	6,2	6,2	100,0
	Total	97	100,0	100,0	

Appendix 16. "Furla" Brand Purchase Occasions

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Come regalo per qualcuno (as a present)	3	14,3	14,3	14,3
	Per il cambio di stagione, quando escono le nuove collezioni (seasons change)	9	42,9	42,9	57,1
	Perche e fedele a quel marchio (loyalty)	1	4,8	4,8	61,9
	Quando sente la necessita di rinnovare il look (to refresh the look)	6	28,6	28,6	90,5
	Spontaneamente, per esempio per avere notato la pubblicita (spontaneously)	2	9,5	9,5	100,0
	Total	21	100,0	100,0	

Appendix 17. "Braccialini" Brand Purchase Occasions

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Come regalo per qualcuno (as a present)	3	20,0	20,0	20,0
	Per il cambio di stagione, quando escono le nuove collezioni (seasons change)	4	26,7	26,7	46,7
	Quando sente la necessita di rinnovare il look (to refresh the look)	4	26,7	26,7	73,3
	Spontaneamente, per esempio per avere notato la pubblicita (spontaneously)	4	26,7	26,7	100,0
	Total	15	100,0	100,0	

Appendix 18. "Coccinelle" Brand Purchase Occasions

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Come regalo per qualcuno (as a present)	27	27,8	27,8	27,8
	Per il cambio di stagione, quando escono le nuove collezioni (seasons change)	18	18,6	18,6	46,4
	La fedeltà (loyalty)	1	1,0	1,0	47,4
	Quando sente la necessita di rinnovare il look (to refresh the look)	25	25,8	25,8	73,2
	Spontaneamente, per esempio per avere notato la pubblicità (spontaneously)	26	26,8	26,8	100,0
	Total	97	100,0	100,0	

Appendix 19. Relationship Between Loyalty (rows (10 scale measure)) and "Coccinelle" Products Acquisition (columns Yes and No)

		Ha mai acquistato qualcosa di "Coccinelle"?		
		Sì	No	Total
Lei quanto si ritiene acquirente fedele ad una marca di accessori di pelletteria?	1	5	9	14
		35,7%	64,3%	100,0%
	2	2	4	6
		33,3%	66,7%	100,0%
	3	1	0	1
		100,0%	0%	100,0%
	4	3	3	6
		50,0%	50,0%	100,0%
	5	4	7	11
		36,4%	63,6%	100,0%
	6	7	6	13
		53,8%	46,2%	100,0%
	7	10	4	14
		71,4%	28,6%	100,0%
	8	13	5	24
		79,2%	20,8%	100,0%
	9	14	0	14
		100,0%	0%	100,0%
	10	3	0	3
		100,0%	0%	100,0%

Appendix 20. Respondents' Loyalty (rows) and Shopping Places (columns) Relationship

Lei quanto si ritiene acquirente fedele ad una marca di accessori di pelletteria? * Di solito Lei dove compra una borsa di pelle? Crosstabulation							
Count							
		Di solito Lei dove compra una borsa di pelle?					
		Dovunque, perche compro spontaneamente	In internet	In un negozio monomarca	In un negozio multimarca	In un outlet	Total
Lei quanto si ritiene acquirente fedele ad una marca di accessori di pelletteria?	1	10	0	2	0	2	14
	2	6	0	0	0	0	6
	3	0	0	0	1	0	1
	4	3	0	0	2	1	6
	5	6	0	2	1	2	11
	6	5	1	1	6	0	13
	7	5	1	4	4	0	14
	8	5	2	10	5	2	24
	9	0	4	7	1	2	14
	10	2	0	0	1	0	3
Total		42	8	26	21	9	106