

# The Strategy of Maybelline to Increase Consumers' Purchase Intentions

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## ABSTRACT

Maybelline is a cosmetics brand with significant influence worldwide. It was created by Thomas Williams in 1991 and it included five primary product lines. Maybelline's brand mission of providing innovative, accessible, and effortless cosmetics for every woman impressed many people. The purpose of this study is to explore how brand image and advertising communication can enhance customers' purchasing intentions in Maybelline's future development. The paper analyzed the theory for brand image and advertising communication and adopted the SWOT analysis method to comprehensively discuss Maybelline's internal and external strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. This research concluded that both the brand image and advertising strategies are two primary factors that influence consumers' willingness; both factors positively affect Maybelline's development and increase consumers' purchasing intentions. Discussing the relationship between consumers and the brand is a necessary process that every brand must go through. It can analyze whether the marketing strategy implemented by the brand can effectively attract more consumers' attention. Lastly, learn about existing problems and threats from SWOT analysis and then improve strategies.

**Keywords:** *Maybelline, cosmetics, SWOT analysis, brand image, advertising communication, purchase intention*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

With the advancement of technology and the availability of more versatile media in America, brands can advertise on many platforms, such as shopping malls, TV and social platforms (YouTube, Instagram, Twitter), elevator advertisements. It goes deep into people's lives, effectively, directly, or indirectly influencing people's choices, and becomes a prevalent marketing means for brands. Therefore, brands use publicity to attract customers to consume their products. Furthermore, with the rapid development of media technology, information is now actively or passively provided to American customers. Customers will use the obtained information to judge the brand and form the brand's reputation. Customers now consider their consumption choices from a broader range of perspectives, including price and product quality and the brand's reputation, image, popularity, product packaging, core culture, activity, etc. Many researchers have done a lot of research on the

impact of social media and celebrity endorsement on Maybelline's brand image. For example, Yuni Lestari, in 2018, analyzed the language function used in Maybelline Advertisements [1]. Rajibul Hasan, in 2021, used survey data to examine how social media data can influence consumers' attitudes towards cosmetic brands based on the case of Maybelline [2]. Pijoh Meliani Caecilia et al. used quantitative research methods to explain the influence of Maybelline social media marketing on consumer purchase decisions in 2017 [3]. The research paper written by Karnila Ali in 2021 used observation, interview, and quantitative methods to determine how television advertising impressions and celebrity endorsement affect the Maybelline cosmetics brand image [4]. Many researchers spend more time researching the influences of advertising communication on different social media platforms on Maybelline's brand image. However, there is a gap between previous research and this paper's primary goal that lacks studies about brand image and advertising communication in the

cosmetic industries. Therefore, this paper focuses on addressing this gap by discussing how brand image and advertising communication can influence the cosmetic field, specifically in what specific solutions Maybelline could adopt to enhance customers' purchase intentions.

With the influx of many creative emerging brands in the beauty industry, the choice of beauty products for customers increases dramatically, and Maybelline is facing a crisis of more competitors at the same time. With the development of the era, Maybelline's continuing consideration of further improving the brand strategy has become one of the most critical points because it will directly affect Maybelline's brand reputation and sales conditions. When Maybelline faces intense competition with many distinctive brands, the paper will conduct a detailed analysis of the relationship between Maybelline's brand image and advertising communication to consumers' purchasing intention. The hypothesis for the report is that brand image directly impacts customers' purchase intention and increases investors' purchase intention; Advertising communication is a medium to increase a brand's exposure in front of more consumers, but it has an indirect effect on consumers' purchase intention. In order to verify whether the hypothesis is correct, the paper chooses to use SWOT analysis to analyze Maybelline's market competitiveness and give practical recommendations. In addition, the paper reviews many theories such as Advertising Exposure Theory, Aristotle's Theory. After the conclusion is reached, the paper will review and summarize the overall process and method used in this research, discuss the limitations of this research study, and plan for future research.

## **2. LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.1. Brand image**

Over the past decade, most of the research in consumers' purchase intention pays attention to the influence of a brand image. Brand image has been studied extensively since the 20th century due to its importance in building brand equity. In the increasingly competitive world marketplace, companies need to have a deeper insight into consumer behavior and educate consumers about the brand to develop effective marketing strategies. Purchase intention is a kind of decision-making that studies the consumer's reason to buy a particular brand [5]. Monroe defined purchase intention as a situation where a consumer tends to buy a certain product in certain conditions. A Customer's purchase decision is a complex process. Purchase intention is usually related to consumers' behavior, perceptions, and attitudes. Purchase behavior is a key point for consumers to access and evaluate the specific product [6]. Ghosh et al. stated that purchase intention is an effective tool to predict the buying process. Purchase intention changed under the

influence of price or perceived quality and value [7]. Brand image is an essential cue during consumers' purchase decision-making. According to Park et al., the construction and maintenance of the brand image are prerequisites to brand management [8]. Theoretically, all products and services could be demonstrated by functional, symbolic, or experiential elements, through which brand image is established. Up to now, scholars haven't agreed on the definition of brand image. Throughout prior literature, researchers define brand image mainly from four perspectives: blanket definitions, meanings and messages, personification, and cognitive or psychological elements.

A brand image is defined as the sum of a customer's perceptions about a brand generated by the interaction of the cognitive, affective, and evaluative processes in a customer's mind [9]. In 1991, Dodds, Monroe, and Grewal found that brand image has a positive relationship with perceived quality and value and claimed that a good brand image could positively impact consumers' purchase intention [10]. In 1989, to further study the impact of brand image on consumer purchase intention, Akaah and Korgaonkar stated that consumers are more likely to buy the brand image of famous brand products. A more positive brand image reduces consumers' perceived risk or increases consumers' perceived value [11]. The brand image does have a positive impact on consumers' purchase intention. With the proliferation of brands in the market, consumers make their purchase decisions mainly depending on the brand image rather than the product itself. Moreover, when the brand image is consistent with the consumers' self-concept, the consumers would give a preference to it [12]. According to the self-concept theory, one's self-concept is a collection of perceptions about himself that includes capabilities, characteristics, shortcomings, appearance, and personality [13]. Overall, these studies outline that brand image is people's and society's perception of a brand. Brand image can be divided into many forms, and brand image can positively affect consumers' purchase intention. The above studies have discussed the importance of brand image to consumers' purchase intention from various aspects.

### **2.2. Advertising Communication**

Everyone is familiar with advertising. Many brands use advertising to increase the exposure of their products [14]. So, what is advertising? Throw this question to 100 ordinary people, and you may get 100 answers [15]. Advertisements on TV are advertising; advertising is an art; advertising is creativity; some even say advertising is deceptive. Throw this question to 100 advertisers, and they will give different answers, which is the phenomenon of the current advertising industry. Even the adept in advertising cannot form a unified understanding of advertising. Different perceptions of advertising will

lead to various forms of advertising, and there is no way to develop a standard to define advertising. However, as a social division of labour, advertising undertakes part of the tasks of social operation [16]. It must be a clear role itself, and it should also have an accurate definition and standard. Objectively speaking, advertising is an information dissemination activity to inform and state the advantages. The purpose is to make consumers feel good about their brand or products and then purchase. The role of advertising in society is to promote economic circulation. Grasping what advertising is and its role in society captures the whole of advertising. It also explains advertising from the perspective of the body and the whole. Only in this way will you know how to advertise and the value of what you are doing to the business and society [17]. In the commodity society, more commodities appear. How to make a particular product be recognized and accepted by people? The abundance of commodities in modern society and the fast-paced life of people make it impossible and no time for consumers to shop around and choose products [18]. Advertising provides consumers with information guidance; saves consumers the cost of collecting information; advertising reduces consumers' cognitive risks; advertising has even become a way of life and behavior in modern society. Consumers pay attention to advertisements and make rational purchasing decisions by comparing different advertisement information. Advertising and social, economic development have been in an interactive process. Obviously, in commercial activities, advertising is a product of the commodity economy, which came into being with the continuous development of the commodity economy and developed with the development of the commodity economy [19]. Because of market interest considerations, advertisements only convey product information that is beneficial to the company while avoiding problems with the product itself. This situation has led to the generation of many false advertisements in society and significantly harmed the interests of consumers. Advertising has so many advantages that Maybelline also uses this to attract consumers. "So Bold So Colossal" campaign aimed to take a bold stance with its new range of eye makeup [20]. The objective of the advertising campaign was to spread awareness about the launch of Colossal Eye Makeup. The brand has created a range of bold shades that will offer you gorgeous looks instantly in various ways and are waterproof. Maybelline has established the highest consumer-friendly relationship with its reliable cosmetics. It creates a unique advertising strategy that keeps its customers interested by providing them with new and innovative products to stand out from the competition.

### **3. METHOD**

#### ***3.1. Research Design***

In this research paper, the paper decides to use SWOT analysis as the primary method to test this research hypothesis. The SWOT analysis is a powerful method for selecting effective implementation strategies for brands, making product positioning in the market, and formulating marketing strategies. This scientific method can also discuss the advantages and disadvantages, introduce opportunities and threats of certain brands in the external environment, and then choose the right solution. Brooks et al., in 2014, used the SWOT analysis model to demonstrate the competitive knowledge from social media for a small start-up business [21]. The flexibility of using SWOT allows companies to display different combinations that the SWOT matrix consists of, including maxi-maxi, maxi-mini, mini-maxi, and mini-mini [22]. In addition, as Yüksel & Dagdeviren in 2007 pointed out in their paper, SWOT analysis is a supportive tool for decision making and is commonly used as a means to systematically analyze an organization's internal and external environments [23]. Combined with this research research question, the paper can draw practical conclusions about how external factors, such as brand image and advertising communications, affect consumers' purchasing decisions by using SWOT analysis.

#### ***3.2. Maybelline***

In this study, this research research object is Maybelline. Maybelline, one of the most well-known cosmetics firms globally, was created in 1991 by Thomas Williams. With a history spanning more than 100 years, Maybelline is at the forefront of the beauty cosmetics fashion trend [24]. There are five sections of Maybelline's product line: makeup for the eye (includes eye shadow, brow, eyeliner, and mascara), lips products (lip balms, lipsticks, lip liner, and lip gloss), products for the face (including powders, foundation, primer and setting spray), nails section (includes nail colors), and the other accessories for makeup (makeup tools, removers, and brushes) [24,25]. According to L'Oreal official website, Maybelline's brand value is "Diverse, Hardworking, No-hassle," and its brand mission is "to offer innovative, accessible and effortless cosmetics for every woman" [26]. With its brand culture of "innovation" and "novelty," Maybelline improves its products and business and thus becomes one of the world's most successful cosmetic brands [27].

### 3.3. SWOT Analysis

#### 3.3.1. Strength

An organization’s capacity to outperform its competitors and distinctive points that can boost its competitiveness is defined as strength. Maybelline’s first strength is its positive brand image. For starters, Maybelline is one of the world’s few century-spanning cosmetics companies, and it belongs to L’Oreal, the top ten largest cosmetic company in the world [28]. In 2018, the brand had positioned itself as a global leader in the industry by earning a market share of 7.4% (see Table 1) [29]. Therefore, it has a high level of global awareness, and Maybelline will become one of their alternatives when customers want to buy beauty-related items. Furthermore, Maybelline has an excellent reputation in the beauty sector since the company prioritizes the strength of its products and guarantees that the quality of its products is always exceptional. Therefore, Maybelline is well-known for its dependable goods. Due to Maybelline being a top brand aimed at the mass market, it has low prices due to low-cost production [29,30]. Plus, the number of Maybelline’s products is vast and extensive, providing customers with a wide range of alternatives and meeting consumers’ beauty needs. For example, on Amazon (Amazon.com), customers can discover over 1000 pieces of information regarding Maybelline items. Customers can discover things they need, whether novices or experienced professional makeup artists. Whether conservatives or aggressive, Maybelline offers good material support in cosmetics. According to the earlier brand image theory, brand image is an essential cue during consumers’ purchase decision-making [8]. A brand image is defined as the sum of a customer’s perceptions about a brand generated by the interaction of the cognitive, affective, and evaluative processes in a customer’s mind [9]. It does positively impact consumers’ purchase intention [12]. Therefore, Maybelline offers a complete product range, product quality assurance, and praise remarks on Maybelline, all of which have contributed to Maybelline’s positive brand image. The second strength of Maybelline is its solid fan base. Maybelline’s fan base has grown to be incredibly broad and diverse throughout time. Maybelline’s fan base is around 16 to 35 years old [25]. Furthermore, as the need for cosmetics grows, many newcomers learn to apply makeup at a young age. According to the above data, the youngest customer group is about 16. New consumers are also emerging, such as the elderly and males, who also have high cosmetics demands. As a result, Maybelline’s consumer base is growing and broadening.

**Table 1** Maybelline’s global market share in 2018

Brand	Company Name (GBO)	Data Type	2018
Maybelline	L’Oreal Groupe	Retail Value RSP	7.4
L’Oreal Paris	L’Oreal Groupe	Retail Value RSP	5.0
Mac	Estee Lauder Cos Inc.	Retail Value RSP	4.0
Lancôme	L’Oreal Groupe	Retail Value RSP	2.6

#### 3.3.2. Weakness

Weakness means a firm lacks or performs poorly, or conditions place the company at a disadvantage. Maybelline’s first weakness is that its brand is neither unique nor valuable enough. Maybelline has always employed a low-price approach to attract customers’ consumption; it dominated the market with a low-price and high-quality product strategy [30]. Maybelline’s makeup remover, for example, costs only \$7.6 for 150 ml, which is relatively cost-effective for customers, considering Maybelline’s makeup remover is quite potent and has a solid reputation among fans. Maybelline’s brand image positioning is cost-effective and close to people. However, Maybelline became a mass brand with few unique characteristics and values while getting closer to customers. First, Maybelline did not build a strong trend culture exclusive to the Maybelline brand. Although Maybelline promoted the concept of “beauty freedom,” “innovation,” and “novelty,” Maybelline did not make this trend concept the first and unique label of Maybelline [26]. Furthermore, Maybelline is not particularly good at putting this concept into practice, which makes the cultural power of the Maybelline core not special and powerful enough. Maybelline’s second weakness is its packaging design. Maybelline did not pay enough attention to the external packaging of their products, which resulted in the product packaging becoming outdated and making customers feel backward and cheap. It lacks competitiveness among the emerging brands, such as Perfect Diary, Glossier, and Florasis. These new companies have gorgeous product packaging, and they also have prices and quality comparable to Maybelline. When all other criteria are equal, such as price and quality, people prefer new cosmetic brands with appealing external packaging. Maybelline’s third weakness is its advertising communication. Maybelline’s advertising performance is inadequate because it has not developed distinct brand characteristics in video advertising. Compared to Maybelline, brands such as Gucci, Chanel, YSL, these brands have different advertising features that

demonstrate the brand's unique value and high-level sense, which can add brand value to their brand image. In general, the three aspects mentioned above make Maybelline's brand image and advertising weak, which harms Maybelline's brand image and affects customers' consumption choices.

### 3.3.3. Opportunity

Opportunities are external environmental factors that can bring organization advantages for further development. Maybelline's first macro opportunity is dramatically improving different numbers of targeted audiences. With enhancing people's quality of life, more people, not only young women, spend more attention on external maintenance. More people are willing to spend money on beauty products and skincare products. As Roberts in 2021 mentioned in her article, there is a rapid expansion of the beauty industry from \$483 billion in 2020 to \$511 billion in 2021, and it's predicted to exceed \$716 billion by 2025 [31]. According to the report published by Allied Market Research, the global male beauty and skincare market is expected to exceed 166 billion in 2022 [32]. Topics and keywords such as "male makeup" are also becoming popular in the cosmetic industry and the internet search engine. Therefore, broadening products for various customer bases is one of the main opportunities for Maybelline in the future. Secondly, not only the beauty market, the trend of the entire FMCG industry is shifting towards products personalization and creating differentiation with other brands. Just as everyone is unique, everyone's needs for beauty products are also various. Nowadays, products and brands that provide customized services can effectively arouse consumers' purchasing desire and open their wallets for them. The customized service Maybelline can utilize writing the customer's name or the phrase they would like to write on the product description and choosing the color of the product's outer packaging. It would be a creative external opportunity for Maybelline in the whole industry. With the advent of the era of social networks and big data, the last external opportunity the papaer wants to notice is that Maybelline can ensure the brand has a large amount of exposure on major social media platforms. For example, it can open online shops on Instagram and TikTok to expand consumers' purchase channels.

### 3.3.4. Treats

Threats refer to external factors that can negatively influence an organization's expansion. The primary threat Maybelline should confront is the brutal competition brought by many direct and indirect competitors and substitute brands. According to the ranking of the Zoominfo website, the top competitors of Maybelline include Revlon, Shiseido, Kolmar Laboratories, etc. [33]. In addition to these popular public

competitors, some well-reputed luxury brands such as Estee Lauder, Chanel, YSL have always been strong adversaries of Maybelline. These competitors will compare and contrast the product qualities between each other and analyze the pricing and publicity strategies from other brands. The second essential macro-environmental threat that Maybelline needs to face is that under the influence of Covid-19, the global economy is showing a downward trend, companies are at risk of bankruptcy. Many people have lost their jobs which will directly affect the customers' purchasing power, and others decide to reduce the cost of non-essential items such as beauty products. The next threat is that people are more willing to accept and try new things with the rapid spread of social information. In the saturated beauty market, customers' choices and decisions are the potential threats that determine whether a brand can survive in the industry. Faced with Maybelline's relatively weak marketing strategies, it will be tough to retain certain customers to stick to Maybelline when other brands launch unique products and packaging. The last point the paper wants to focus on bringing a bad reputation and negative impact for Maybelline's improvement is its products kept tested on animals. Animal Testing means many cosmetic companies try their products on animals before applying for humans [34]. The brutal process and imagery have caused many consumers to give up purchasing these brands and choose to purchase more eco-friendly products.

## 4. RESULT

This article divides the research results into three parts: brand image, price, and advertising. This article will discuss these three issues.

For Maybelline, nearly a hundred years of brand history is enough to establish an irreplaceable image in the minds of consumers. According to research, consumers at Maybelline bases have become diversified, ranging from 16 to 35 years old. People of this age account for most of the beauty market. Most people choose Maybelline's brand image to maintain high quality. This phenomenon also proves that the product needs to maintain a positive brand image.

Price also accounts for a crucial part of customers' product considerations. In addition to its long history, Maybelline's most prominent feature is that its products are very cheap. Mascara and eye shadow have always been masterpieces of high quality and low price. According to the survey, the low price has made Maybelline a "die loyal fan."

Maybelline is famous because of its high-quality and low-cost products and because many celebrities have enforced its advertisements. Maybelline beauty ads like to hire supermodels as spokespersons. Therefore, every time people can find models with exquisite makeup in

Maybelline's advertisements, this reflects the brand's sense of fashion to a large extent and attracts the favour of many people who pursue fashion.

## 5. DISCUSSION

According to the above SWOT analysis of Maybelline, there are many things that Maybelline could do to better expand on its strengths and opportunities and avoid its weaknesses and threats.

Firstly, this paper will discuss the advantages that Maybelline can expand and complement. While most global brands enter the Chinese high-end market, Maybelline uses a brand line with more convenient purchase channels and amiable prices. This paper suggests Maybelline needs further to strengthen the convenience of channels and price affinity. Maybelline can make its brand image more abundant by investing heavily in advertising and building counters in shopping malls. Maybelline can design a distinct product image, and a convenient display combination is also necessary. More importantly, Maybelline needs more active after-sales service and sales recommendations. In addition, due to historical reasons, Maybelline, as early as 1995, has appeared in the eyes of Chinese consumers, and its product positioning has been difficult to change from time to time. The paper suggests that Maybelline should give up further high-end market positioning, adhere to the mass of product positioning, and let more consumers have the Maybelline products.

However, as for the disadvantages of Maybelline, it is difficult to further improve its brand image due to its adherence to popular product positioning. Mainstream consumers with strong spending power are no longer willing to use the same cosmetics as little girls or working girls. And Maybelline represents a relatively single color, and quality is fairly ordinary. With the change of the era, the relatively rare middle and low-end cosmetic products have gradually failed to meet the needs of more capable consumers. At this stage, it is almost impossible for Maybelline to sell higher-end products in the Chinese market, but that would be against the company's better growth. In other words, Maybelline must find its way through this contradiction. Therefore, this paper believes that Maybelline should develop unique, proprietary, and distinctive products and explore the Chinese market further in the future.

Next, for Maybelline's external opportunities, this paper believes that Maybelline's products need to adopt a new concept of consumption and pay more attention to the consumption demands of young people, especially college students. Maybelline can specifically launch a series of products that meet the needs of college students according to their age and consumption concepts, which is more acceptable to younger consumers. As college students have strong word-of-mouth communication

ability, Maybelline needs to pay more attention to product quality, packaging, and after-sales service.

Finally, this paper also analyzes the threats of the Maybelline with the following suggestions. Maybelline's main threat is from several powerful competitors. To solve this problem, the paper thinks Maybelline needs more promotions. Maybelline can roll out a few new products every year, guide consumers to use, develop the domestic color makeup market step by step, and get consumers' identity slowly. Maybelline can go to colleges and universities and look for opportunities to communicate with its key consumer groups to get this message across. For example, Maybelline can let brand managers, chief makeup artists, and trainers tell stories about the beauty of its products to young female college students. It is worth mentioning that the Chinese cosmetics market is not as mature as European countries and America, and consumers need counters to do more promotion work to explain and publicize. Plus, Maybelline's counter consultants have professional training on product knowledge and business skills, which can greatly enhance its brand image.

Using SWOT analysis to analyze Maybelline and comparing it with the previous literature review, this paper finds that the conclusions of the methodology part are consistent with the viewpoints mentioned in the literature review. First, in the literature review, this paper defines the advantages of advertising for broadcast and finds that Maybelline has established the highest consumer-friendly relationship with its reliable cosmetics. It created unique advertising strategies that stand out from the competition by offering new and innovative products to keep customers interested. Secondly, for brand image in the literature review, this paper defines the value of the brand image. This paper finds that brand image has a positive impact on consumers' purchase intention. With the proliferation of brands in the market, consumers' purchasing decisions are largely based on the brand image rather than the product itself.

## 6. CONCLUSION

Figures and tables should be placed either at the top or bottom of the page and close to the text referring to them if possible. In general, the study object of this paper is Maybelline, a cross-century worldwide brand. The paper investigates how Maybelline can enhance consumers' buy intention in the face of modern technology and multimedia, as well as the danger of emerging brands. As a result, the hypothesis of this paper is: Brand image has a direct impact on customers' purchase intent, and it is determined to increase investors' purchase intent; advertising communication is a medium to increase brand exposure in front of more consumers, but it has an indirect effect on consumers' purchase intent. Many academics have conducted studies on social media

and celebrity endorsements on the Maybelline brand image. However, the paper discovered a gap between past research and the main purpose of this article, which is a scarcity of research on brand image and advertising communication in the cosmetics business. To investigate this issue, this paper reviews previous literature and theories about brand image and advertising communication, analyzes Maybelline's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats using SWOT analysis, and investigates the impact of these four factors on customers' willingness. The discussion section follows, which is an extension of the SWOT analysis. The first phase provides four ideas to Maybelline: how to grow the benefits better, how to avoid the drawbacks better, how to have better chances, and how to prevent risks. Then, the second phase is verified using theory in the literature review. It is discovered that the theory is correct, and the final result is compatible with the hypothesis. The main contribution is that, when it comes to Maybelline, the paper combined previous research on Maybelline, identified gaps in the research, and proposed a new hypothesis: brand image and advertising communication are the two major factors that influence customers' willingness. In addition, the paper uses brand image and advertising communication theories and SWOT analytical research tools to investigate consumers' intention to buy cosmetics. These research techniques can also be directed at various study objects, and this research can serve as a point of reference. However, the preceding study is based on the authors' analysis, and the information utilized is restricted, with subjective effect and restrictions, and belongs to unique ideas and evaluations. In the future, It's hoped that certain academics will be able to investigate further and validate hypotheses and ideas, give additional empirical support, and put theories into practice.

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