



Logo Mania vs Quiet Luxury: Trend Cycles Created by Instagram and TikTok

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Abstract. This paper examines how Instagram and TikTok use algorithmic platform infra-structures to produce and circulate two competing luxury fashion aesthetic movements—Logo Mania and Quiet Luxury. The study is based on Veblen’s theory of conspicuous consumption and Bourdieu’s concept of cultural capital to examine how digital platform infra-structures impact the symbolic capital production of luxury fashion. Following a qualitative comparative approach integrating platform analysis, brand cases, celebrity and influencers analysis, and an integrative visual-engagement analytical model, the author studies our luxury brands: Gucci and Louis Vuitton (Logo Mania), along with Loro Piana and Brunello Cucinelli (Quiet Luxury). The research findings reveal that TikTok increases conspicuous consumption via viral logic and short-form spectacle, whereas Instagram enhances symbolic distance via curated visuals and lifestyle minimal-ism. At the end of the paper, the author argue that luxury value construction transformed not only from material craftsmanship, but also from algorithmically mediated symbolic capital, wherein visibility and subtlety, in their own way, be-come parallel prestige monies derived from platform logics.

Keywords: Logo Mania, Quiet Luxury, TikTok, Instagram, Algorithmic Culture, Luxury Consumption

1 Introduction

TikTok and Instagram social media have restructured mainly who or what can sell and buy luxury fashion—moving them out of select retail stores and into a less centralized and more distributed ecosystem dependent on display, attention, and platforms. TikTok and Instagram are the top two platforms for fashion trends as defined by what goes in and out (not just reflecting the trends of fashion, but creating them, both in terms of emergence/saturation and phase end). This process is exemplified by two contradictory design approaches. Maximization of visibility appears within an aesthetics of logo mania — big brand names, performances of wearing, etc. Quiet luxury styles form prestige by means of their invisibility, authenticity, and ambiguity, not through blaring visual nameplates. This study analyzes how trend cycles are mediated across platforms and tackles three issues: What role do platform algorithms play in modulating the symbolic visibility of luxury? What is platform-specific patterns in semiotic practices by luxury

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brands across two sites? What patterns in social interaction reinforce the different modes of status performance?

2 Literature Review

Initial research views luxury mostly through the lens of status signaling, especially Veblen's theory of conspicuous consumption, in which visibility and display are at the core of communication of social distinction [1]. With expansion and digitalization of luxury markets, scholars increasingly argue that luxury value is not anymore only produced through material attributes, but rather through mediated visibility and symbolic circulation in the digital environment [2]. This shift pushed scholars to look at how sustainability, ethics, and restraint are also alternatives to status in modern luxury fashion discussions [3,4].

The recent literature even differentiates into the two new luxury orientation: "loud" luxury based on overt brand exposure and recognition, and "quiet" luxury that is understated, discreet, with subtle signals [5]. Although it seems difficult for quiet luxury to make statements about status, knowledge which, according to the studies above, would not erase difference, but recast it in terms of cultural proficiency and interpretation: in line with theories of symbolic differentiation [2,5]. Sustainability discourses reinforce that logic in the sense that they position moral production and durability as new forms of symbolic capital, although there is debate over whether these are truly transformative or just new elite signaling tactics [3,4].

A large number of works also focus on the influence of social and cultural variables such as religiosity or personality and vanity on online luxury buying behavior, emphasizing that luxury signaling differs in different audiences and culture contexts [6,7]. Others are starting to see social media as an important part of the luxury brand ecosystem, where visibility, attention and participation transform the relationship between consumers and brands, such that research suggests that both status consumption and brand equity is being determined as much through platform-based exposure as it is through traditional advertisements [8-11].

Recent research argue that online channels have a direct effect on the value of luxury brands as well as their commitment level and purchase intent by way of algorithms and media type [12, 13]. New developments such as artificial intelligence (AI) in marketing, digital garments or virtual worlds are also complicating the generation of luxury value through a changing notion of authenticity, exclusivity, and symbolic scarcity [14,15]. However, despite this growing literature, there is little explanation in extant work of how various platforms structure their offerings to favor one type of luxury aesthetic over another. It is this lack that inspires our current research, which analyzes how Instagram and TikTok proactively facilitate the co-emergence of both Logo Mania and Quiet Luxury with different algorithmic and visual logic.

3 Methodology

This research uses a comparative research design. It aims to investigate Instagram and TikTok as shaping factors for the Logo Mania and Quiet Luxury trends in the luxury fashion context. The research aims to inform how each platform's algorithmic recommendation models, influencer cultures, and visual storytelling tactics support (and ultimately overshadow) the popularity or unpopularity of the two opposing trends. The author focuses on the way luxury brands walk the delicate boundary between overt, conspicuous branding and subtle elusiveness on the two platforms, adapting their message to the nuances of each medium.

The methodology integrates three components:

1. **Visual and Engagement Analysis:** The holistic approach assesses both the visual appearance (e.g., the exposure of the logo, types of depicted contents) and the level of audience engagement (e.g., popularity, shares, comments) to examine the impact of various ways of visualization and audience engagement on luxury consumption behaviors.
2. **Brand Case Study:** Here, the author concentrates on lead brands (Louis Vuitton and Gucci represent Logo mania) on this subject and examine how they pivot their semiotic strategy to the unique visual and interaction flow of each platform.
3. **Platform Design:** It includes studying the content design, recommendation policies, and interaction mechanisms of Instagram and TikTok, and how they influence the emergence of trends.

The overall purpose of the study is to learn how Instagram and TikTok serve as cultural mediators and build the visibility and desirability of luxury in differentiated yet mutually reinforcing ways. Because of the comparative design, the differences and similarities in how Logo Mania and Quiet Luxury are engineered, and how brands respond to algorithms' logics on each platform and users' behavior, become more understandable.

4 Findings and Analysis

4.1 Visual and Engagement Analysis

The author's visual engagement analysis indicates the significance difference in perception and amplification of luxury signals on each platform in accordance with the distinctive spatial, temporal, algorithmic architecture of each platform. The most successful videos on TikTok are almost always fast-moving, visually arresting, and instantly identifiable (within the first second of view) due to the platform's preference for kinetic, shot-scaled videos. This suggests there is some influence on the aesthetics of Logo Mania, including how bright, sharp monograms, stark pattern, and icon brand motifs are a proximate visual signal for people to see and have an immediate understanding of what the brand is. Fast-fashion change videos, unboxing rituals, dances or movement-based challenges, as well as sound-synced montages, can produce greatly improved activity rates. Sharing, with one-click likes, shares, duets, and remixing,

expresses how Tik-Tok's logic of participation converts a luxury logo's visibility into viral effects. In the case of TikTok, the velocity and frugality of sharing enable one to create a logic in which logos-loaded visual content not only can be widely circulated but also establishes the meme effects as performative markers of following the trends.

Instagram, however, fosters quite another logic of engagement. It is slower viewing and appreciation through thoughtful visual scrutiny. Quiet, restrained color palettes, gentle lighting, tactile materials, and lifestyle composition are all rewarded with greater engagement. The Instagram values for visual aesthetics — neutrality of color, color consistency and accuracy of color grading, and beautifully atmospheric settings — constitute the natural home for Quiet Luxury. Interest is sparked not by viral elements but by feeling, aesthetics, and the person viewing the content is able to better interpret the clues towards quality. Close-ups of the materials and showcasing specific textures, as well as less obvious product placements, are more likely to give people the perceived authenticity of high-quality items. This suggests that Instagram's engagement ecology rewards visual nuance over visual density, rendering it well-suited to brands relying on implicit status cues like craft quality, heritage and lifestyle imagery, rather than brand naming and explicit messaging.

4.2 Brand Case Study Findings

A qualitative comparative brand analysis of Louis Vuitton, Gucci, Loro Piana, and Brunello Cucinelli shows that luxury brands will tactically adapt their semiotic vocabulary to the expectations of the platforms. Louis Vuitton and Gucci, two brands designed to embody Logo Mania, execute an ad hoc two-platform approach that serves up spectacle and refinement based on context. In TikTok, their campaigns foreground speed-to-recognition: what they call in-house custom-made bold monogram; over-the-top color schemes; celebrity appearances, choreographed sequences, ready to be reworked or appropriated. Their involvement in the viral challenge, the out-fitting change-over and the sound meme enable their logos to be seen fast and incorporated within platform cultures. This not only addresses cultural relevance, it also gives logos the ultimate cultural passing car experience by frequent viewing, since they are still high velocity culture.

Meanwhile, on Instagram, these very brands all adopt a much more controlled, editorial, and curatorial mode of representation in which their posts adopt controlled compositions, muted color palettes, and aspirational lifestyle narratives. The logos all still exist, they just don't carry the foregrounded emphasis they do in the Facebook ads, giving them a legitimacy and artistic pedigree that they hope will capture a more elite consumer's eye. This duality allows to remain culturally salient while securing a longer-term symbolic utility.

On the contrary, the analysis of Loro Piana and Brunello Cucinelli is more limited. Even though their marketing practices are markedly distinct from those of LV and Gucci, the present analysis lacks the similarly grounded case-based data for these Quiet Luxury brands. Without more visible examples of their campaigns, advertising tactics, or Instagram content formats, readers might struggle to better compare their strategies to those of the Logo Mania brands, to understand better how Instagram's visual and narrative affordances contribute to the construction of Quiet Luxury. Such a

comparative study at the level of individual visuals, design motifs, or marketing activities (on Instagram) would better illuminate the comparison and refine the process of how Quiet Luxury is articulated online.

4.3 Platform Design Analysis

Platform design indicates that variations in luxury trend making are not merely matters of fashion—it is how TikTok’s and Instagram’s platforms were designed. The For You Page is the foundation of TikTok’s platform, consisting of endless ranked feeds of short-form videos intent on grabbing attention in the first second. These metrics—watch-through rate, shareability, duet rate and sound repeat—feed directly into the algorithm’s recommendations. This elevates the conditions so that the most lucrative luxury content must be direct, legible, and instantly replicable. Strong logos act as algorithm-friendly cues for the viewer’s immediate classification and engagement with the content. This focus on velocity and virality turns luxury branding from in-exclusiveness toward pop-cultural relevancy and renders the luxury logo to memetic commodity. In this way, TikTok naturally fosters the emergence of Logo Mania because it incentivizes maximum visibility.

In contrast, Instagram’s design prioritizes the curation of a stable visual layout and a foregrounding of aesthetics and attention to composition and, within this system, has incentivized creators and brands to stick to a certain color palette, rhythmic visual arrangements, and maintain cohesive narratives as content is displayed in a grid format. Discovering content via the Explore Page is slower and intent-driven, where creators and brands with posts that create sustained (as opposed to immediately spike) engagement are rewarded. This is an emergent structural logic that lifts quiet visual coherent content—which is exactly the type of content that Quiet Luxury espouses. Rather than being visible through repetition, Instagram is designing a platform whereby content will be visible through a sense of aesthetic ‘depth’, seeking photos that can sustain eyeballs, and infuse emotions and senses.

Together, these platform designs reveal that Instagram and TikTok are not neutral channels; they act as active cultural mediators. They shape how luxury is communicated, interpreted, and valued. They also demonstrate that modern luxury is co-produced by brand identity and algorithmic environment. TikTok constructs luxury through spectacle and circulation, while Instagram constructs luxury through atmosphere and distinction. These parallel systems explain why both quiet and loud luxury can rise simultaneously—and why brands must adjust to the platform rather than expect the platform to adapt to them.

5 Discussion

This work’s findings demonstrate that the distinctions between Logo Mania and Quiet Luxury are not just the outcome of varying consumer preferences or taste in fashion. Rather, these two forms of luxury are significantly determined by how and why Instagram and TikTok are configured and function. The technical architecture, visual layout,

and modes of interaction for each platform directly affect how one can dress and perform a luxury item. This is part of a more general shift in the luxury industry: symbolic value is created not only via materials or the work of craftsmanship, but also as to how well a brand aligns with the logic of a given platform.

An important takeaway from the results is that Logo Mania succeeds on Tik-Tok not only because people like yelling brand name but because the rapidly recurring, highly reproducible format of Tik-Tok rewards that brand display. Tik-Tok rewards fast, highly reproducible content. The For You Page has a fast rhythm, in which we found people scroll past content much faster than the 3-second maximum allowed by the platform. Content must achieve recognizability within one second, facilitate easy repetition across short-form videos, and align with the rapid, scrolling nature of the For You Page. Large logos and iconic patterns are fit for this purpose: They are easily distinguishable in a second, they can be easily repeated in the video and are attractive to the fast and scrolling nature of the For You Page. Contrast Quiet Luxury, which succeeds on Instagram because Instagram promotes slower viewing, and more care and precision in the expression of emotions. Since users tend to spend more time gazing at and reacting to pictures on Instagram (rather than scrolling past them), slow details and more subtle visual signals like texture, color harmony, and mood are appreciated. Instagram's visual design is aligned with this slower and more deliberate visual rhythm and is therefore ideal for a slower form of status signaling.

The brand cases also illustrate that luxury houses have a new problem, and that they must now manage divergent identities across platforms. Brands such as Louis Vuitton and Gucci, we see, take a *laissez-faire* approach, being loud on Tik-Tok but refined on Instagram. Brands such as Loro Piana and Brunello Cucinelli remain almost only on Instagram because their values – soft aesthetics, calm lifestyles, material quality – do not translate well onto Tik-Tok's loud and fast ecosystem. This illustrates how luxury brands are now asked to behave as adapt-able communicators, responding in platform contexts to how they communicate themselves to fit algorithm pressures and platform expectations.

Finally, these results illustrate part of a broader process by which digital platforms are transforming cultural markets. Rather than simply delivering luxury content, Instagram and Tik-Tok are shifting what is at once and what counts as luxury, foregrounding specific visual tropes. In this way they serve new roles as cultural gatekeepers. That Logo Mania and Quiet Luxury can coexist suggests that luxury now serves a multiple prestige economy, one in which different status expressions are endorsed by distinct algorithms.

6 Conclusion

Value creation has thus moved beyond a locus on material provenance to a dual system in which algorithmic authority gains the determining power. Platform infrastructures are not content to exacerbate trends, but they generate a symbolic order through the algorithmic allocation of visibility, engagement rewards, and aesthetic value-judgment systems. Tik-Tok transferred logos into currency through mechanisms of symbolic

repetition and active mimicry. By translating the subtle into the different capital, Instagram rewards minimal editing and holistic narrative, so the luxury brand can only function as multi-semiotic cultural mediators, translating luxury into alternative visual languages according to platform logic. But rather than being merely two poles of opposite consumer psychologies, Logo Mania and Quiet Luxury are two simultaneous, platform-facilitated symbolic markets in which both public visibility and conscious non-visibility can be status-seeking competitive strategies. Understanding this economy explains why the next generation of luxury is likely to manifest under algorithmic regulation and how brands seeking to thrive in both mass and elite visibility might market their wares.

A final limitation of our method is that our decision to feature Loro Piana and Brunello Cucinelli as the exemplars of Quiet Luxury only emphasizes the atypicality of the kinds of brand success we studied on Instagram, both as particularly old, heritage-focused houses that accrue market power by virtue of accumulating symbolic capital across decades of existence, tightly managed distribution, and customers predisposed to interpret very faint visual signs as indications of value. In these instances, their performance may be significantly impacted not only by features of the platform, but by the cultural literacy their audiences already bring to interpreting the relationship between content and significance of design. This undermines the conclusion that the digital success of Quiet Luxury is attributable to the platform design *per se*: it is impossible, at least based on the results presented here, to tell whether an aesthetic style that reifies “silence” as a sign of status reflects a genuine platform affordance, or if such popularity stems instead from these two brands’ position as exponents of visual languages for “quiet luxury”—such as muted color palettes, tactile imagery, lifestyle minimalism—that reward this kind of visual language via the platform’s incentive structure. In turn, this over-generalization reduces our ability to establish validity—whether platform-based affordances significantly contribute to the success of Quiet Luxury brands or not—and requires that future research repeat our methodology, applying to a much broader spectrum of quiet-luxury brands: and in order to fully elucidate the ways in which the dynamics we have identified here facilitate or hinder success in this category, this expansion should incorporate brand selections with more varied levels of popularity or with retail reach more concentrated at the regional level.

Further research should explore the concepts of “loud” and “quiet” luxury using more focused qualitative research methods, such as interviewing individuals one-on-one or doing ethnographic study. Qualitative methods would offer a window on how different user groups experience this luxury aesthetics, and how the nature of individual platforms shapes these experiences. As studies focused on real-world people’s experiences, subsequent research could identify not only how users understand the trends, but also how they go along with them or react against them. Longitudinal user diary studies could also show what experiences or types of content make people feel positively or negatively about their place in society or its current aesthetic. This would offer more nuanced framing of how particular platforms affect new conceptualizations of the luxury lifestyle.

Additionally, other studies may contribute comparative investigations that examine in what ways luxury brands will evolve across digital platforms (e.g., the platform comparisons of Xiaohongshu, WeChat channel, Instagram, and TikTok in this study). Since

Instagram and TikTok have different visual and interactivity properties to those of Xiaohongshu or WeChat channels. This approach could identify how luxury brands adjust their messages to accommodate platform-specific infrastructure like algorithms, user engagement practices, and the specific cultural platforms, respectively. Researchers can collect more solid evidence on how brand messages (e.g., visual style, using influencers, and storytelling techniques) are adjusted for displaying in various digital platforms to explore which works.

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