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# **LINGNAN UNIVERSITY**

**Department of Marketing and International Business**

## **BUS 331 Business Project**

### **THE MORE THE BETTER?**

**Consumer preference on multifunctional cosmetics**

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## **Abstract**

Multifunctional cosmetics have become more common in the market. They perform more than their basic features. As more features are added to the products, the question is that: Is the more the better? It does not always be. The purpose of this research is to locate the consumer preference on multifunctional cosmetics. It accesses consumers' evaluation on cosmetics products in two different perspectives, brand value and confidence level. In terms of brand value, consumers prefer cosmetics with more existing features or those have new feature. In terms of confidence level, consumers prefer cosmetics with fewer existing feature with detailed information on the new feature. The research help marketers better understand the preference of consumers on cosmetics and provide the insights for product management and development. When deciding how many features the product should have, people should understand the trade-off between brand value and confidence level, which is identified in the research. When considering whether to launch new feature to the existing products, people should understand that new feature contributes to the brand value but does not directly lead to purchase intention. If it is decided to promote a new product feature, detailed information of the new feature should be provided to increase the confidence level of the consumers.

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# **Chapter 1**

## **Introduction**

## **1.1 Rationales**

Cosmetics consists of a wide range of products that can be categorized into skin care, hair care, makeup and fragrances.

Due to the rising affluence and increased appearance consciousness of females, the potential of the cosmetics market in Hong Kong is huge. It is no doubt that physical appearance has become a greater concern of females in Hong Kong. Nowadays, there are more working women in the society than before. They have greater purchasing power and higher self-esteem than in the past. Many of them work in the service sector where they need to have direct communication with customers. Their appearances are important to give customers a good impression. It is believed that appearance has become one of the recruiting requirements. Therefore, females are willing to pay more to buy cosmetics to improve their appearances.

Technological advances have allowed companies to create multi-functional cosmetic products. Multi-functional products are those that perform more than their basic roles, such as cosmetics that contain vitamins or UV protection. Cosmetic companies are competing to launch products with more features to differentiate themselves. Multi-functional products are very popular in Hong Kong because consumers are



placing strong emphasis on value for money in their cosmetics purchases. However, not every company is successful in launching multifunctional cosmetics.

Hong Kong consumers concern both the product image and the product effectiveness as well when choosing cosmetics. Cosmetics companies are therefore keen competing in product development and marketing. While facing keen competition in the cosmetics industry in Hong Kong, marketers are using very different advertising strategies to promote cosmetic products. Instead of traditional advertisings that emphasize the functions of cosmetics, celebrities, spokesmodel and a more professional image are the common practices used to increase the creditability of their products. Marketers tend to promote the image of the product rather than the product itself.

On the other hand, some cosmetics brands that have good image can get loyal customers but need not to advertise their products. Body Shop is a good example. The key is what marketing strategies they are used. It is believed that cosmetics should be differentiated from other brands by unique features, instead of number of features. However, there are plenty of multifunctional cosmetics that carrying numbers of features in the market. What are the genuine preferences of consumers?

## **1.2 Problems**

Cosmetics industry is a great potential market. Consumers are eager to spend more on cosmetics even during the economic downturn. It is valuable to understand consumers' preference and their purchase intention. As companies are competing by adding new features to their products, it is important to question whether more features will affect the purchase intention and if so, how. Features can affect purchase intention in a positive way because they add value to the product. However, it can also affect purchase intention in a negative way because they make consumers uncertain on the product performance. In addition to number of features, the introducing of new features and the availability of detailed information on new feature are the suspect variables that affect consumers' purchase intention.

The main purpose of this research is to locate the consumers' preferences on cosmetics. It can be realized by their evaluation on cosmetics with varying features and their purchase intention. The research accesses the relationship of three main effects on brand value and confidence level, affecting by number of features, the introducing of new feature and the availability of detailed information on new feature. It also investigates the interacting effects among these variables. Finally, it explores the relationship between brand value and confidence level with purchase intention.

### **1.3 Findings & Implications**

The research is about the experiment of six advertisements, which manipulates three independent variables, number of features, existing of new feature, and availability of detailed information on the new feature. It measures perceived brand value, confidence on product performance and purchase intention as dependent variables.

The results are useful for marketers of cosmetics to understand and satisfy the needs of consumers. The research recognizes the trade-off between brand value and the confidence on product performance when manipulating the number of features. It provides reference for marketers to design multifunctional cosmetics products in terms of number of features.

The research identifies that new feature contributes to the brand value but does not lead to purchase intention directly. It provides insights for marketers to make decisions on launching new feature to the existing cosmetics products. The research indicates that it should depend on the current objective of the company, whether it aims at increasing the sales of certain high profit margin products or aims at increasing the total sales of the brand in long term.

The research also concludes that detailed information of the new feature should be provided to increase the confidence of the consumers on product performance. In addition, the detailed information on new feature is more effective when the new feature is added to the product with fewer features, comparing with product with more features. The finding reminds the marketers to be aware the complexities of the multifunctional product features, which will make consumers wonder whether the product can perform all the product features well.

# **Chapter 2**

## **Literature Review**

## **2.1 Market Review**

Cosmetics are regarded as luxury items in the past. Nowadays, cosmetics have been playing an important role among consumer goods in Hong Kong. For consumers, cosmetics have become one of our daily products. Cosmetics are no longer the luxury items, but have become necessities for female consumers instead (Li, 2003). They are no longer just useful and pleasant products, but have become necessities (SPC Asia, 2000). For producers, cosmetics have become one of the most profitable products with a huge and strong market for it.

Hong Kong cosmetics industry is now a strong and vibrant market involving HK\$8 billion. Female customers between the ages of 18-40 have high interest in cosmetics products. Therefore, it was one of the few sectors left unscathed by the economic downturn (Li, 2002). Females aged 18-40 is a high population group, showing the large market size for cosmetics. The cosmetics industry is a strong market as long as they support it. Moreover, the age range of people interested in cosmetics is widening to both the younger and, with the diversified product development, the older.

Hong Kong cosmetics industry is not only a strong market, but also growing in strength year-on-year. According to a survey conducted by the market research firm

Synovate, health and beauty product chains like Mannings, and Cosmopolitan magazine, Hong Kong women have increased their spending on cosmetics by about 10% this year, with average spending rising to HK\$540 a month from HK\$490 last year. It is a high amount of money, which may be a great proportion of their incomes. Some 18% of the respondents, the dominant spending bracket, said they spent over HK\$800 a month on beauty care products (Lee, 2003). This finding was more significant when Hong Kong's deflationary environment was considered.

Hong Kong cosmetics industry still has great potential to have a further growth. Besides women, men are also spending more on this sector. In terms of dollar sales, men's grooming is still a small category, yet most observers believe this previously untapped audience represents additional room for growth (Bittar, 2003). It predicts that men's grooming will have a great impact on the growth of cosmetics industry. The market for men's skin and body care is booming and it represents a major growth opportunity for marketers. They are becoming more interested in skin and body care, yet there still is a lot of room for building awareness (Mason, 2002). There is a potential growth for men's category of cosmetics products in Hong Kong. The survey conducted by Hong Kong Trade Development Council indicates that men are paying more attention to their appearance and become frequent purchasers of men's category

of cosmetics products, such as skin care products, cleansing gel, shaving lotions, hair treatment products and fragrance(HKTDC, 2003). Actually, products offerings for men are moving beyond razors and shaving cream into items such as body wash, hair styling aids, moisturizers and exfoliating scrubs for the face (Bittar, 2003).

Hong Kong has its unique position on the global cosmetics market. Hong Kong enjoyed the position as the premier gateway to China, itself the world's single fastest growing market, coupled with its status as an optimum location in which to do business (SPC Asia, 2001). With the opening of the China market, Hong Kong is able to stay with its significant market position. It shows that Hong Kong is capable to retain its active and competitiveness in the global cosmetics market.

## **2.2 Purchase Intentions**

Besides enhancing their appearances, females purchase cosmetics for different purposes. Fashion and cosmetics are highly related. Cosmetics have long been regarded as part of the fashion. Nowadays, more people are fashion conscious and spend more on cosmetics to look fashionable. It is predicted that fashion consciousness will sustain dynamic value growth of color cosmetics (Discount Merchandiser, 1999). In addition, fashion is one of the factors that influence consumer



tastes and seasonal moods for purchasing cosmetics (HKTDC, 2003). Women's magazines play a role in affecting the fashion trends as well as the cosmetics trends. Therefore, the magazines are deemed as a credible source. They seem to provide more reliable and objective information on the products (Luk, 2003).

Many people purchase cosmetics as they refuse to get old. The most representative population group is the largest one, baby boomers. They are increasingly refusing to get old and placing importance on maintaining a youth appearance (Sanabria, 2000). Cosmetics can help them to maintain the health of their skin. Color cosmetics even allow them to have a younger appearance. Thus, aging population will stimulate the development of age-specific makeup and color cosmetics products, particularly in the facial makeup sectors (Discount Merchandiser, 1999). Ingredients that meet the needs of the aging baby boomer will continue to have an impact (Challener, 2000).

It is no doubt that people purchase cosmetics to look more beautiful. However, the concept of beauty varies across cultures. It can be explained by the concept of scarcity (Luk, 2003). For example, tanned skin is more beautiful in the West as it is a scarcity for the Westerners and white skin is more beautiful in Hong Kong as fairness is a scarcity for Asians. People purchase cosmetics to satisfy their scarcity. As the concept

of beauty is dissimilar between people from different countries, they have diverse preferences on cosmetics features.

### **2.3 Product Features**

Companies are continuously developing new products with innovations in respond to the market needs. A new and popular development in color cosmetics has been the creation of “stay-on” products which are longer lasting (HKTDC, 2003). The “stay-on” benefits have been added to almost all sorts of color cosmetics including lipsticks, eye shadows, mascaras, nail polishes and lip liners. The stay-on products provide consumers with convenience, particularly for those busy businesspersons.

Natural ingredients products of all kinds of cosmetics are still extremely popular throughout Asia. It can be reflected in the exhibitors’ products in the Cosmoprof Asia 2002. Plenty of products focus on their natural ingredients, such as hand-made natural soaps, aloe vera shampoo and conditioner, skin care products that use rich minerals and liposome from the Dead Sea (SPC Asia, 2003). They are differentiated from other products by emphasizing the natural ingredients. Natural ingredient products tend to be more common in the cosmetics market. With a wealth of information available from doctors, advertising, media and word-of-mouth, consumers are more aware of

the side effects of cosmetics (Sanabria, 2000). Marketers aim to answer the consumer's need for products that contain natural ingredients. Most natural ingredients products are claimed that have no side effects as those chemical ingredients products.

Whitening products are still a driving force in the Asian cosmetics industry and there were many on offer (SPC Asia, 2000). According to research conducted by the retail audit for Neutrogena, whitening moisturizers make up 40 percent of the mass market of facial moisturizers (Luk, 2003). Whitening products are especially welcome in Asian countries. As influenced by the Japanese culture, Hong Kong follows the mainstream of fair complexion.

Technological advances have allowed for the creation of multifunctional products. The development of multifunctional products that can be used to provide optimal protection against environmental stress is the focus of the global cosmetics market (Chemical Market Reporter, 2002). There is a rising popularity of multifunctional cosmetics products. According to the seminars held by Marketing Intelligence at the fourth Cosmoprof Asia, it was predicted that emerging trends would be in multifunctional products (SPC Asia, 2000). As the environment of Hong Kong is

getting worse, consumer needs for multifunctional products, which can protect them from environmental stress, are greater.

The aging population in Hong Kong is driving the recent surge in cosmeceuticals. Cosmeceuticals is defined as functional cosmetic products that offer additional therapeutic benefits (Chemical Market Reporter, 2002). These products combine cosmetics with vitamins, herbs and sometimes pharmaceuticals, such as Vitamin-C lotions and tea tree oil-infused cleansers (HKTDC, 2003). Many of these medical beauty products focus on anti-aging skin care function.

## **2.4 Marketing Strategies**

Not all consumers purchase only after they sense their needs. Many have not made any decisions until they are in the store. More than three-quarters of cosmetics decisions are made in the store, higher still in some other individual categories (Grocer, 2002). Consumers respond to what is new in product or even store format (Newman, 2003). Therefore, focusing on consumers and understanding their needs are very important to marketing cosmetics. Indulgence or emotional appeals in retail should not be ignored. In-store promotion can be an effective way to introducing new product features to consumers.

In the current marketplace riddled with economic slowdown and category explosion, innovation is the password to the success of all aspects of the industry, including product development, ingredient formulation and packaging (Newman, 2003). As increasingly sophisticated consumers demand multifunctional products, innovation will be the key contributor to long-term growth in the cosmetics market. The highest proportion of innovations originating in new product development is in the fragrances, makeup and skin care markets (DCI, 1998). Formulation has become increasingly important, as consumers more demand effective functional benefits from products.

Branding is very important for marketing cosmetics in Hong Kong. According to Ron Cromie (1995), managing director for J Walter Thompson China, the key to successful marketing in Asia lies in a sound knowledge of the consumer as well as brand building (Aykroyd, 1995). After having a sound knowledge of the consumers, the next important step is brand building. When a brand has considerable brand equity, consumers want to stick to the brand. If they have moved away because of price increases, any reduction in selling prices can easily bring them back (Kumar, 2003).

Brand equity may not lead to less price sensitive of consumers, but brand loyalty. For example, Body Shop is a good example of strong brand, which never need to advertise. The brand position itself as offering a range of high quality natural skin care

and beauty products, which are environmental friendly. Body Shop has become an international chain selling a wide range of beauty products to an intensely loyal set of consumers who would use Body Shop cosmetics only (Sen, 2003).

There are different opinions about the product line expansion. It was suggested that expansion could gain more consumer awareness. Customers will find products of different brands with quality (Wotapka, 2003). A brand that has more products in line can attract more consumers' attention. However, gaining more consumer awareness does not imply that can attract more customers. It was suggested that line expansion may cause customers to shift to other brands as consumers either flock to cheaper goods or stick with premium brands (Wotapka, 2003). Line expansion may not attract brand choice. In addition, customers may be confused when there are too much products in line for them. For example, they may query about the skin care ranges, the difference in features and the effectiveness. As the products become more finely tuned to specific skin types and ages, consumers are looking for which skin care products most closely meet their needs (Grocer, 2002). When consumers are shifting the brands in the market, it is difficult to attract them to try particular brands.

It is important to develop new, highly differentiated products that provide unique

benefits to the consumers. Consumers are increasingly demanding high performance products that offer mildness and other perceivable benefits (Challener, 2000). There is an increased and marked differentiation of consumer products for skin and hair care. When there is product with new feature, it is important to ensure the additional feature is unique and provide additional benefit to consumers so that the product can differentiate from others. The cognitive commitment suggested that consumers would have persistent preference for their initial brand choice, even in the face of additional information about another brand that provides the same benefits (Muthukrishnan and Kardes, 2001). It suggests that if the new product feature is not significant to consumers, they will not consider it as a choice and persist in their initial choices.

Products should have unique features but need not have too much features. Choices may involve making trade-offs on key attributes. Such choice sets can cause high uncertainty in consumer preferences (Tversky and Shafir, 1992). Marketers should understand and provide the key attribute which consumers place high value on. Instead, some try to provide a product with as much attributes as possible. In such case, even the product performs well, consumers cannot associate the outcome with any specific attributes. (Muthukrishnan and Kardes, 2001). Consumers cannot form the positive association between the performance and the brand.

# **Chapter 3**

## **Theories and Hypotheses**



### **3.1 Research Questions**

Cosmetics is a huge and strong market in Hong Kong, which continue to grow steadily even during the economic recession. Consumers are spending more on cosmetics products. It is important to know what their purchase intentions are so that marketers can better satisfy the needs of consumers.

There are many different product features in cosmetics. Companies tend to launch multifunctional cosmetics that carry a range of features. However, not all multifunctional cosmetics are successful. It is because adding new feature may decrease consumers purchase intention due to uncertainty about the performance. It is important to question that whether more features will affect the purchase intention and if so how.

The performance uncertainty is one of the factors that decrease the purchasing intention of consumers. Effective communication about the new product feature can eliminate the uncertainty of consumers. It is important to know whether providing information on new feature could be used as an effective strategy to convince people about those new features.

## **3.2 Theories**

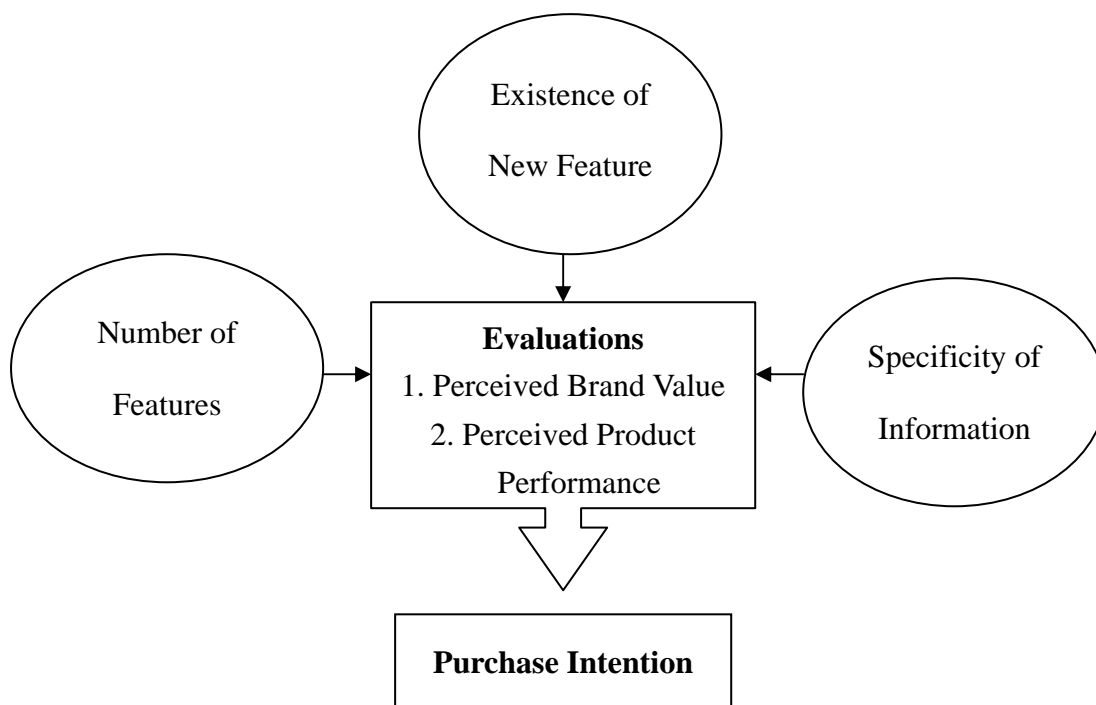
The theory is mainly based on the multi-attribute diminishing sensitivity from the research conducted by Nowlis and Simonson (1995) – factors that moderate the effect of new features on brand choice are examined.

Their hypotheses are derived from two principles – multi-attribute diminishing sensitivity and performance uncertainty. Multi-attribute diminishing sensitivity suggests that a new feature adds more value when it is offered by a relatively inferior product. Performance uncertainty suggests that a new feature has less of an impact on a brand's share when buyers have reasons to suspect that it may not perform as promised (Nowlis and Simonson, 1995). It has concluded that multi-attribute sensitivity has a stronger effect than performance uncertainty.

The research conducted by Nowlis and Simonson tested the product category of sunscreen, microwave ovens, binoculars and cameras which are electronics. Cosmetics are a great market in Hong Kong, which is still growing every year. Technological advancement allows the continuous product development. There are many multifunctional products in the market. This research will test whether the multi-attribute sensitivity and performance uncertainty are applicable to other product

categories, particularly the cosmetics in Hong Kong.

**Figure 1. The framework of the theories**



The framework of this research is shown in Figure 1. It accesses the effects of the number of features, existence of new feature and specificity of product information on consumers' evaluation. Consumers evaluate product in different perspectives, this research focuses on the perceived brand value and the perceived product performance. After studying how the factors affecting the product evaluation, the effect of the product evaluation on purchase intention is examined. Since cosmetics have a wide range of product varieties, the research will focus on color cosmetics, which is the major area of cosmetics.

### 3.3 Hypotheses

*H1a: Number of features has a positive effect on the perceived brand value*

It is hypothesized that number of features has a positive effect on the perceived brand value. Hence, the greater the number of product features, the better perception on the brand value consumers would have.

*H1b: Number of features has a negative effect on the degree of certainty on product performance*

This hypothesis is based on the principle of performance uncertainty. It is hypothesized that number of features has a negative effect on the degree of uncertainty on product performance. Hence, the greater the number of product features, the fewer the consumers believe that the product could perform as promised.

*H2a: Within the same product, additional new features have positive effect on the perceived brand value*

This hypothesis is based on the principle of multi-attribute sensitivity. It is hypothesized that an additional feature had positive effect on the perceived brand value. Hence, the perceived brand value of a product increases when there is an additional product feature.

*H2b: Within the same product, additional new features have negative effect on the confidence level of product performance*

It is hypothesized that additional new features have negative effect on the confidence level of product performance. When a product launching new features, consumers will wonder whether the product can perform as promised, including the claim of the new feature.

*H3a: For products with new feature, detailed information on the new feature has a positive effect on the perceived brand value.*

It is hypothesized that detailed information on the new feature has a positive effect on brand value.

*H3b: For products with new feature, detailed information on the new feature has a positive effect on performance certainty.*

It is hypothesized that detailed information on the new feature has a positive effect on performance certainty. It is presumed that detailed information can give more support evidence to the outcome of the new feature, so that consumers will more believe the effectiveness of the new feature.

*H4a: The number of existing features and the introducing of the new feature have an interacting effect on brand value*

It is hypothesized that the numbers of existing features and the introducing of the new feature have an interacting effect on brand value.

*H4b: The number of existing features and the introducing of the new feature have an interacting effect on confidence level*

It is hypothesized that the numbers of existing features and the introducing of the new feature have an interacting effect on confidence level.

*H5a: Number of features and detailed information on new features have interactive effect on the brand value*

It is hypothesized that the numbers of existing features and the detailed information of the new feature have an interacting effect on the perceived brand value.

*H5b: Number of features and detailed information on new features have interactive effect on confidence toward the product*

It is hypothesized that the numbers of existing features and the detailed information of the new feature have an interacting effect on the confidence level.

### **3.4 Variables**

There are three types of variables, including consumption preferences, consumption patterns, and demographics. The consumption preference of cosmetics buyers towards product features is the experimental part of this research. In order to test the multi-attribute sensitivity, performance uncertainty and the moderating factors of them, the independent variables are the number of features, the existing of new features and the information specificity. The research moderates these variables to test the significant differences of outcomes caused by them.

The dependent variables are the brand perception and the perceived benefits. Brand perception is defined as the impression of the customer holds with the product. It is measured by the perceived quality, brand value, price, and purchase intention. Perceived benefit is defined as the perceived ability of a product to perform its functions as promised. It is measured by the perceived effectiveness of product features, confidence on the product features and the certainty on the product performance.

In order to understand the consumption pattern of cosmetics buyers, the research identifies how often and where they purchase cosmetics, how much they spend on

cosmetics per month, and their purchase intention. The information of the demographics of cosmetics buyers is collected, which includes their gender, age, education level, occupation and monthly income.



# **Chapter 4**

## **Research Methodology**

## **4.1 The Sample**

This research interviewed the females about their preferences of cosmetics with using questionnaires. The sample was randomly selected in shopping malls, namely Tuen Mun Town Center, Festival Walk and Tai Koo Plaza. These malls were located in different districts in Hong Kong. The purpose was to reduce the geographical bias.

The research took survey from a random sample of 10% from the sampling frame. In other words, one was asked to fill in the questionnaire in every tenth. When the interviewee refused to provide information, another tenth person was invited to be interviewed. The process continued until getting enough samples.

The survey collected 180 questionnaires and the response rate was about 80%. The sample size was the same as targeted. There were six types of advertisements given to respondents to rate on and 30 interviewees should be asked to rate one advertisement. Thus, 180 was the minimum number of interviewees required for the research.

## **4.2 The Survey**

The questionnaire is attached in Appendix I. The questionnaire was divided into three

parts. Part I was about the consumer preference on product features. It measured consumer preference in terms of brand value, confidence level and purchase intention with using the hypothesized advertisements. The six types of advertisements are summarized in Table 1 and the layout can be found in Appendix II. Each interviewee was asked to evaluate one of the six advertisements.

**Table 1. The six types of advertisements with sample numbers**

	High Number of features	Low Number of features
No new feature	30	30
With new feature	30	30
With specific information on new feature	30	30

Part II is about the consumption pattern for cosmetics. It measured consumers' monthly purchase frequency and expenditure. It also explored their purchase intentions and general opinions on cosmetics. Part III is about the demographics of the sample. It collected information of their gender, age, education level, occupation and personal monthly income.

# **Chapter 5**

## **Results and Analysis**

## **5.1 Sample Characteristics**

Hong Kong female cosmetics buyers are the target sample for the survey. As there are six types of advertisements and thirty subjects are needed for each group, the target number of questionnaires to be collected is 180. Face-to-face interviews are conducted with 180 females in shopping malls in January 2004.

Demographic variables are some of the factors that affect consumers' preferences on cosmetics. They include gender, age, education, occupation, and income. As this survey target on female cosmetics buyers, all subjects are females. Hence, gender is a constant variable. The results of other variables are in Table 2. Income is one of the most important factors affecting consumer behavior. Other variables including age, education, and occupation are related with income. Therefore, income is used as the base to analyze the demographic variables in the table.

**Table 2. Demographic variables**

Personal Monthly Income	\$0 - \$5,000	\$5,001 - \$10,000	\$10,001 - \$15,000	\$15,001 - \$25,000	> \$25,000	% of total
Sample	46	67	37	24	6	
% of Total	26%	37%	21%	13%	3%	100%
<b>Age</b>						
0 – 17	15%	0%	0%	0%	0%	4%
18 – 35	76%	42%	22%	25%	0%	43%
36 – 50	0%	40%	68%	50%	0%	36%
> 50	9%	18%	11%	25%	100%	18%
<b>Education</b>						
Primary School	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	1%
Secondary School	67%	72%	35%	13%	0%	53%
University	28%	24%	57%	88%	100%	43%
Other	4%	3%	8%	0%	0%	4%
<b>Occupation</b>						
Student	83%	3%	0%	0%	0%	22%
Service Sector	11%	63%	35%	58%	83%	44%
Industrial Sector	0%	0%	3%	0%	0%	1%
Business Sector	2%	33%	49%	13%	0%	24%
Other	4%	1%	14%	29%	17%	9%

Respondents who are aged in the range of 18-35 and 36-50 are 43% and 36% respectively, which make up 79% of the sample. These two age groups are the main consumer groups. However, the high-income group those in the age of fifty onwards, which is only 18% of the sample. It shows that the major profit of cosmetics may come from a small group of people.

Education level is also related with income. People who have a higher education level tend to have a higher personal monthly income. Hence, people who get a higher education level tend to have higher purchasing power on cosmetics. While most of the respondents completed secondary school or higher education, only one respondent said she had primary school education level. Generally, the purchasing power of Hong Kong females is quite good.

The occupation is also correlated with income. The high-income group are mainly those who working in the service sector. There are about 44% of the respondents working in the service sector and 24% working in the business sector. About 22% of respondents are students and their personal monthly incomes are low. The 84% of the total sample respond that their personal monthly incomes are less than \$15,000.

Apart from the demographic variables, it would be interesting to know the consumption pattern of the sample. Their purchase frequency, expenditure per month, and reasons for buying cosmetics are explored in the survey. The results are shown in Table 3.

**Table 3. Descriptive Statistics on Consumption Pattern**

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean
<u>Purchase Reasons*</u>				
As necessities	180	1	7	5.46
Enhance appearance	180	2	7	5.28
Self confidence	180	2	7	5.21
Work requirement	180	1	7	4.94
<u>Consumption Habits</u>				
No. of Purchase/Month	179	0	8	1.35
Expenditure/Month	179	0	5000	\$439.16

\*(Measured in a 7-points scale: ranging from 1 = strongly disagree to 7 = strongly agree)

There are some major reasons for the sample to purchase cosmetics. Their belief that cosmetics are the necessities is the major reason. It shows the importance of cosmetics for females. They regard cosmetics as one of their essential daily consumption. In addition, many of them buy cosmetics to enhance their appearance and self-esteem. The work requirement is also one of the reasons for them to buy cosmetics. It may be because most of them are working in the service sector such as retailing.

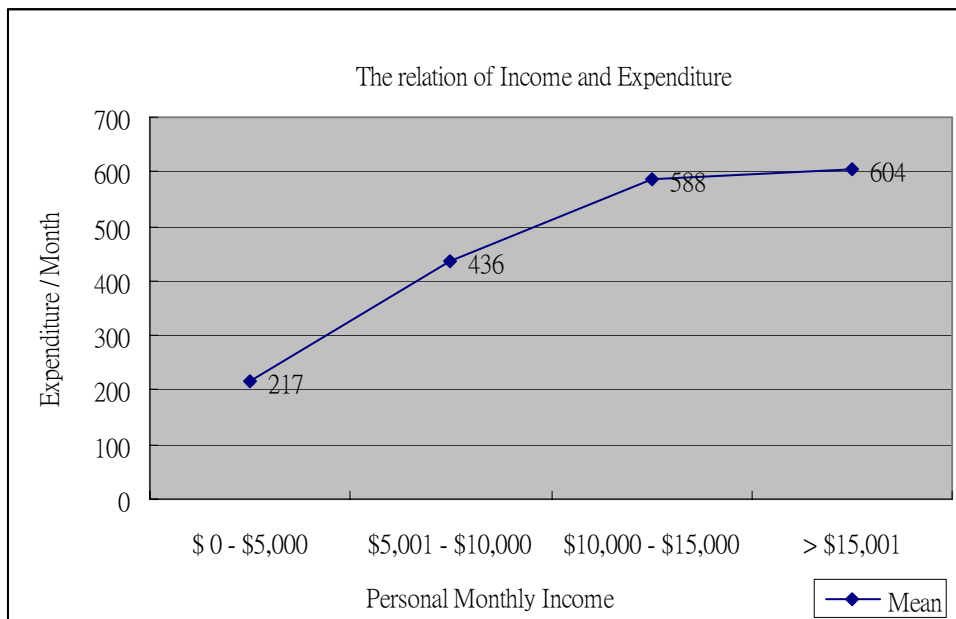
For the consumption habits, people usually go to purchase cosmetics 1.35 times every month in average. It reflects the purchase cycle of cosmetics. The promotion of the absence of preservative and freshness of the cosmetics encourages shorter product



cycle. The individual monthly expenditure on cosmetics is ranging from \$0 to \$5000, and the total expenditure of the sample is about \$440 in average.

The interaction between the income and expenditure is shown in Figure 2. It demonstrates that people have higher income tend to spend more on cosmetics, but the growth is more steadily as income increases.

**Figure 2. The relation between income and expenditure**



## 5.2 Manipulation Check

In order to get information on consumers' preferences on cosmetics with different features, there are six advertisements for subjects to rate on. The product features of

each advertisement are manipulated to ensure the reliability of the research. The six types of advertisements are summarized in the Table 4. There are three main types of manipulation. Overall, the manipulation is successful; only one set of comparison is insignificant.

**Table 4. Six hypothesized advertisements**

	Less feature	More feature
No new feature	Ad 1	Ad 4
New feature without detailed description	Ad 2	Ad 5
New feature with detailed description	Ad 3	Ad 6

### 5.2.1 More feature vs. Less feature

With the aim of differentiating the advertisements into two groups – products with more features (Ad 4, Ad 5 & Ad 6) and products with less features (Ad 1, Ad 2 & Ad 3) – the number of features in each advertisement is manipulated, which is two features versus six features. The perceived relative number of features for each advertisement is measured by a 7-points scale rating on the statement “The product has many features”. To hold other factors constant, the advertisements are compared two by two in Table 5.

**Table 5. Dependent variable: How much the product is perceived as having many features (T-Test)**

No. of features	Ad	N	Mean	t	Sig. (2-tailed)
Less	1	30	2.97	-4.246	.000
More	4	30	4.53		
Less	2	30	3.13	-6.026	.000
More	5	30	4.73		
Less	3	30	3.87	-5.032	.000
More	6	30	5.27		

(Measured in a 7-points scale: ranging from 1 = strongly disagree to 7 = strongly agree)

Comparing the mean score of the advertisements in pairs, all the “more features” advertisements get a significant higher score than the “fewer features” advertisements. The significant differences show that the manipulation of the number of features is successful.

### 5.2.2 With new feature vs. Without new feature

Besides the number of features, the existing of the new feature is manipulated. With the aim of differentiating the advertisements into two groups – products with new features (Ad 2, Ad3, Ad 5 & Ad 6) and products without new features (Ad 1 & Ad 4) –

the new product features in each advertisement are manipulated, which is with new feature versus without new feature. The perceived product features for each advertisement is measured by a 7-points scale rating on the statement “The product has new feature”. To hold other factors constant, the advertisements are compared two by two in Table 6.

**Table 6. Dependent variable: How much the product is perceived as having new features (T-Test)**

Product features	Ad	N	Mean	t	Sig. (2-tailed)
Without new feature	1	30	2.60	-2.717	.009
With new feature	2	30	3.53		
Without new feature	4	30	4.23	-.707	.483
With new feature	5	30	4.53		

(Measured in a 7-points scale: ranging from 1 = strongly disagree to 7 = strongly agree)

In the less feature group, the mean score for Ad 1 and Ad 2 are 2.60 and 3.53 respectively. Ad 2 get a significant higher score than Ad 1. The significant differences show that the manipulation on product feature is successful on these two advertisements.

In the more feature group, the mean score for Ad 4 and Ad 5 are 4.23 and 4.53 respectively. Ad 5 gets a higher score than Ad 4 but the difference is not significant. It may be because people less notice the new feature when there are many existing product features already. However, when asking people whether they perceive the product have a new feature by answering “yes” or “no”, the result is significant and shown in Table 7. The result indicates that most people successfully perceive Ad 2, Ad 3, Ad 5, and Ad 6 as having new product feature and Ad 1 and Ad 4 are not. According to this table, the manipulation of product feature is successful.

**Table 7. Dependent variable: Whether the product has new feature (Chi-square Test)**

Chi – square Tests		Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
		112.046	100	.000

Statistics		New Feature (Perceived)		Total
New Feature (Manipulated)	Adv	No	Yes	
No	1	28	1	30
Yes	2	3	27	30
Yes	3	3	27	30
No	4	21	9	30
Yes	5	2	28	30
Yes	6	1	29	30
Total		58	121	180

### 5.2.3 With detailed information vs. Without detailed information

With the aim of differentiating the advertisements into two groups – products with detailed information on new features (Ad3 & Ad 6) and products without detailed information on new features (Ad 2 & Ad 5) – the information provided in each advertisement is manipulated. One group of advertisements is given the detailed descriptions on new features, while another group of advertisements is not. A 7-points scale rating on the statement “There is detailed information on new product feature” measures the perceived information of product feature for each advertisement. To hold other factors constant, the advertisements are compared two by two in Table 8.

**Table 8. Dependent variable: How much the product is perceived as having detailed information (T-Test)**

Detailed Information	Ad	N	Mean	t	Sig. (2-tailed)
No	2	30	2.57	-5.230	.000
Yes	3	30	4.47		
No	5	30	3.00	-4.284	.000
Yes	6	30	4.53		

(Measured in a 7-points scale: ranging from 1 = strongly disagree to 7 = strongly agree)

In the less feature group, the mean score for Ad 2 and Ad 3 are 2.57 and 4.47 respectively. Ad 3 gets a significant higher score than Ad 2. The significant differences show that the manipulation on information of new feature is successful on these two advertisements.

In the more feature group, the mean score for Ad 5 and Ad 6 are 3.00 and 4.53 respectively. Ad 6 gets a significant higher score than Ad 5. The significant differences show that the manipulation on information of new feature is successful on these two advertisements.

### **5.3 Hypothesis Testing**

There are five hypotheses to test the multi-attribute sensitivity and the performance certainty. Three hypotheses deal with the main effects of number of feature, new feature, and detailed information. Another two hypotheses deal with the interaction effects of the main effects on brand perception and confidence level.

#### **5.3.1 Hypothesis 1**

The number of features of cosmetics products varies in a large range. Some may have

only a few features focusing on certain function. Some may have many features performing many functions. It is hypothesized that the number of feature will have an effect on consumers' evaluation.

*H1a: Number of features has a positive effect on the perceived brand value*

It is hypothesized that number of features has a positive effect on the perceived brand value. It is believed that product with different features holds different attributes for consumers. Those product attributes can contribute to the brand value. Hence, the greater the number of product features, the better perception on the brand value consumers would have.

**Table 9. Dependent Variable: Brand Value (T-Test)**

No. of features	N	Mean	F	Sig.
Less	85	3.55	17.300	.000
More	87	4.21		
Total	172	3.89		

(Rating with the 7-points scale: ranging from 1 = lowest to 7 = highest)

This hypothesis is supported. Table 9 shows the effects of the number of features on the perceived brand value. The mean score of the perceived brand value for cosmetics



with fewer features is 3.55, and which for cosmetics with more feature is 4.21. The difference between the two is significant. The effects of the number of features on brand value are identified. People have a higher evaluation on the brand that have more cosmetics features.

*H1b: Number of features has a negative effect on the degree of certainty on product performance*

This hypothesis is based on the principle of performance uncertainty. People normally believe that cosmetics with more features should be always better. However, the performance uncertainty suggested that people would feel uncertainty on the product performance when there were many features. It is hypothesized that number of features has a negative effect on the degree of uncertainty on product performance. Hence, the greater the number of product features, the fewer the consumers believe that the product could perform as promised. They have lower confidence level on the product performance.

**Table 10. Dependent Variable: Confidence Level (T-Test)**

No. of features	N	Mean	F	Sig.
Less	90	4.06	28.782	.000
More	87	3.07		
Total	177	3.57		

(Rating with the 7-points scale: ranging from 1 = lowest to 7 = highest)

The result in Table 10 supports this hypothesis. The mean score of the confidence level for cosmetics that have fewer features is 4.06, which is significantly higher than that for cosmetics that have more features, which is 3.07. It shows that increasing number of features will decrease the confidence level. The performance uncertainty is applicable to cosmetics products. It means that people will have less confidence toward cosmetics with many features, as people will wonder whether the product could perform as promised.

### **5.3.2 Hypothesis 2**

Launching new feature is one of the most popular marketing strategies to get customers' attention. It is no doubt that new feature can attract customers' awareness on the product. However, it is questionable that whether new feature has any impact on consumers' decision-making. It is hypothesized that additional new feature will

have an effect on consumers' evaluation.

*H2a: Within the same product, additional new features have positive effect on the perceived brand value*

This hypothesis is based on the principle of multi-attribute sensitivity. The multi-attribute sensitivity suggested that people had their own value on different product attributes. While new feature is added to a product, the more attributes the product can provide for the consumers. Consumers will have a more positive perception toward the product and the brand. It is hypothesized that an additional feature had positive effect on the perceived brand value. Hence, the perceived brand value of a product increases when there is an additional product feature.

**Table 11. Dependent Variable: Brand Value (T-Test)**

New features	N	Mean	F	Sig.
No	57	3.36	21.960	.000
Yes	115	4.15		
Total	172	3.89		

(Rating with the 7-points scale: ranging from 1 = lowest to 7 = highest)

The result in Table 11 supports this hypothesis. Each subject is asked to rate the

perceived brand value on one of the six advertisements. The mean score of the perceived brand value for those advertisements that have no new feature is 3.36, and which for those advertisements that have new features is 4.15. The difference between two types of advertisements is significant. It shows that additional cosmetics features can increase the brand value. The multi-attribute sensitivity is applicable to cosmetics. Consumers perceive cosmetics with new features having higher brand value.

*H2b: Within the same product, additional new features have negative effect on the confidence level of product performance*

It is hypothesized that additional new features have negative effect on the confidence level of product performance. When a product launching new features, consumers will wonder whether the product can perform as promised, including the claim of the new feature.

**Table 12. Dependent Variable: Confidence Level (T-Test)**

New features	N	Mean	F	Sig.
No	58	3.68	.606	.437
Yes	119	3.52		
Total	177	3.57		

(Rating with the 7-points scale: ranging from 1 = lowest to 7 = highest)

This hypothesis is not supported. Table 12 shows the confidence level of product performance. The mean score of the confidence level for product that have no new feature is 3.68, and which for products that have new features is 3.52. Though products with new features have a lower score on confidence level, the difference between two types of features is not significant. It shows that additional cosmetics features cannot affect the confidence level.

### **5.3.3 Hypothesis 3**

When there is new feature added to the product, there are different ways to promote the new feature as well as the product. Some introduce the new feature by image while some others introduce the new feature by its effect. For those emphasizing on the product effects, they often provide supplementary information on the new feature in order to convince consumers. It is hypothesized that the detailed information on new feature will have an effect on consumers' evaluation.

*H3a: For products with new feature, detailed information on the new feature has a positive effect on the perceived brand value.*

It is hypothesized that detailed information on the new feature has a positive effect on brand value. Whenever there is a new feature, consumers are curious to know more

about the new feature. They often want to know the ingredients for the new feature and its effectiveness. Product with high brand equity should consider such consumer needs and provide information on the new feature.

**Table 13. Dependent Variable: Brand Value (T-Test)**

Detailed Information	N	Mean	F	Sig.
No	58	4.07	.771	.382
Yes	57	4.22		
Total	115	4.15		

(Rating with the 7-points scale: ranging from 1 = lowest to 7 = highest)

The hypothesis is not supported. Table 13 shows the effect of the detailed information of new feature on the brand value. The mean score of the perceived brand value for cosmetics without detailed information on new feature is 4.07, and which for cosmetics with detailed information is 4.22. Cosmetics with detailed information on new feature have a higher confidence level, but the difference between the two is not significant. The detailed information of new features does not have an effect on brand value.

*H3b: For products with new feature, detailed information on the new feature has a positive effect on performance certainty.*

It is hypothesized that detailed information on the new feature has a positive effect on performance certainty. It is presumed that detailed information can give more support evidence to the outcome of the new feature, so that consumers will more believe the effectiveness of the new feature.

**Table 14. Dependent Variable: Confidence Level (T-Test)**

Detailed Information	N	Mean	F	Sig.
No	60	3.17	9.772	.002
Yes	59	3.87		
Total	119	3.52		

(Rating with the 7-points scale: ranging from 1 = lowest to 7 = highest)

The hypothesis is supported. Table 14 shows the effect of the detailed information of new feature on the confidence level. The mean score of the confidence level for cosmetics without detailed information is 3.17, and which for cosmetics with detailed information is 3.87. The difference between them is significant. The effect of the detailed information of new feature on confidence level is identified. People will have a higher confidence on the product that has detailed information on the new feature.

### 5.3.4 Hypothesis 4

The previous hypotheses have tested the main effect of the number of feature, new feature and the detailed information on new feature. It is hypothesized that there are some interaction effects of them. Hypothesis 4 will test the interaction effect of the number of feature and the new feature.

*H4a: The number of existing features and the introducing of the new feature have an interacting effect on brand value*

Hypothesis 1a supports that the number of feature has positive effect on the perceived brand value. Hypothesis 2a supports that the introducing of the new feature also has positive effect on the perceived brand value. The interaction of the two factors is going to be tested. It is hypothesized that the numbers of existing features and the introducing of the new feature have an interacting effect on brand value.

**Table 15. Combined effect of the number of feature and the new feature on brand value**

<b>Brand Value</b>	Less feature	More feature	Total
No new feature	3.01	3.73	3.36
Have new feature	3.83	4.44	4.15
Total	3.55	4.21	3.89

(Rating with the 7-points scale: ranging from 1 = lowest to 7 = highest)



The combined effect of the two factors is shown on Table 15. It shows that cosmetics with more features are always better than cosmetics with fewer features, regardless of whether the new feature exists. In other words, cosmetics with new feature are always better than cosmetics without new feature, regardless of the number of features.

**Table 16. Interacting effect of the number of feature and the new feature on brand value**

**UNIVARIANT OF VARIANCE**

Dependent Variable: Brand value

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	41.293(a)	3	13.764	14.274	.000
Intercept	2148.099	1	2148.099	2227.670	.000
No of feature	16.763	1	16.763	17.384	.000
New feature	22.406	1	22.406	23.236	.000
Interaction	.101	1	.101	.104	.747
Error	161.999	168	.964		
Total	2802.280	172			
Corrected Total	203.292	171			

a. R Squared = .203 (Adjusted R Squared = .189)

Table 16 shows the interacting effect of the number of feature and the new feature on brand value. The significant coefficients for the number of features and the new feature both are .000, which smaller than .05. The significant coefficient for the interaction effect of the two factors is .747, which is larger than .05. It indicates that

though the two factors had absolute significant effects on brand value, the interacting effect of them on brand value is not significant. Hypothesis 4a is not supported.

**Figure 3. Interacting effect of the number of feature and the new feature**

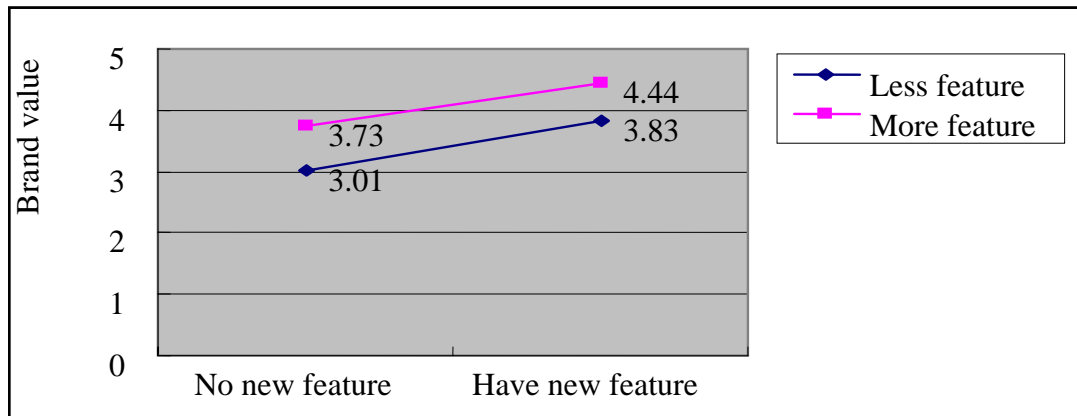


Figure 3 shows the positive relationship between brand value and the existing of new feature. The line representing cosmetics with lesser features and the line representing cosmetics with more features are nearly parallel. It indicates that cosmetics with new feature tend to have a higher brand value, regardless the number of features.

*H4b: The number of existing features and the introducing of the new feature have an interacting effect on confidence level*

Hypothesis 1b supports that the number of feature has negative effect on the confidence level. Hypothesis 2b shows that the introducing of the new feature does

not have any effect on the confidence level. The interaction of the two factors is going to be tested. It is hypothesized that the numbers of existing features and the introducing of the new feature have an interacting effect on confidence level.

**Table 17. Combined effect of the number of features and the new feature on confidence level**

	Less feature	More feature	Total
No new feature	4.12	3.21	3.68
Have new feature	4.03	3.00	3.52
Total	4.06	3.07	3.57

(Rating with the 7-points scale: ranging from 1 = lowest to 7 = highest)

The combined effect of the two factors is shown on Table 17. It shows that cosmetics with fewer feature always gets a higher confidence score than cosmetics with more feature, regardless of whether the new feature existed. In other words, cosmetics without new feature always get a higher confidence than cosmetics with new feature, regardless of the number of features.

**Table 18. Interacting effect of the number of feature and the new feature**

**UNIVARIANT OF VARIANCE**

Dependent Variable: Confidence Level

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	44.099(a)	3	14.700	9.752	.000
Intercept	2007.466	1	2007.466	1331.801	.000
No_feature	36.184	1	36.184	24.005	.000
New_feature	.912	1	.912	.605	.438
Interaction	.146	1	.146	.097	.756
Error	260.768	173	1.507		
Total	2561.500	177			
Corrected Total	304.867	176			

a R Squared = .145 (Adjusted R Squared = .130)

Table 18 shows the interacting effect of the number of feature and the new feature on confidence level. The significant coefficient for the interaction effect is .756, which is larger than .05. It indicates that the interacting effect is not significant. Therefore, hypothesis 4b is not supported.

**Figure 4. Interacting effect of the number of feature and the new feature on confidence level**

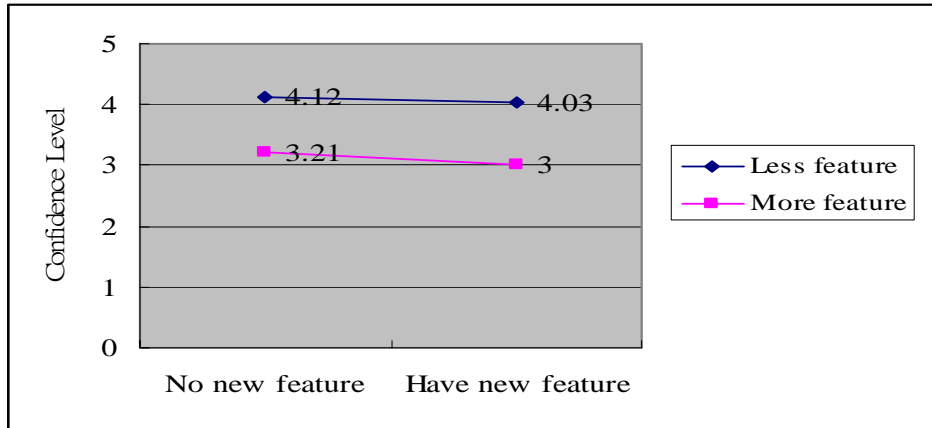


Figure 4 shows the negative relationship between confidence level and the existing of new feature. The line representing cosmetics with lesser features and the line representing cosmetics with more features are nearly parallel. It indicates that cosmetics with new feature tend to have a lower confidence level, regardless the number of features.

### 5.3.5 Hypothesis 5

Hypothesis 1 has supported that the number of features has an effect on both brand value and confidence level. Hypothesis 3b has supported that detailed information has positive effect on confidence level. It is going to test the interacting effect of the numbers of existing features and the detailed information on new features.

*H5a: Number of features and detailed information on new features have interactive effect on the brand value*

Hypothesis 1a supports that the number of feature has positive effect on the brand value. Hypothesis 3a does not support that the detailed information of the new feature has any effect on the perceived brand value. The interaction of the two factors is going to be tested. It is hypothesized that the numbers of existing features and the detailed information of the new feature have an interacting effect on the perceived brand value.

**Table 19. Combined effect of the number of feature and the detailed information on brand value**

	Less feature	More feature	Total
Without information	3.69	4.43	4.07
With information	3.98	4.46	4.22
Total	3.87	4.44	4.15

(Rating with the 7-points scale: ranging from 1 = lowest to 7 = highest)

The combined effect of the number of feature and the detailed information on brand value is shown on Table 19. It shows that cosmetics with more features always get a

higher perceived brand value than cosmetics with fewer features, regardless of whether the detailed information is provided. In other words, cosmetics with detailed information always get a higher brand value than cosmetics without detailed information, regardless of the number of features.

**Table 20. Interacting effect of the number of feature and the detailed information on brand value**

UNIVARIANT OF VARIANCE					
Dependent Variable: Brand Value					
Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	11.977(a)	3	3.992	4.882	.003
Intercept	1967.778	1	1967.778	2406.381	.000
No_feature	10.767	1	10.767	13.167	.000
Detail_info	.774	1	.774	.946	.333
Interaction	.476	1	.476	.582	.447
Error	90.768	111	.818		
Total	2079.600	115			
Corrected Total	102.746	114			

a. R Squared = .117 (Adjusted R Squared = .093)

Table 20 shows the interacting effect of the number of feature and the detailed information on brand value. The significant coefficient for the interaction effect is .447, which is larger than .05. It indicates that the interacting effect is not significant. Therefore, hypothesis 5a is not supported.

**Figure 5. Interacting effect of the number of feature and the detailed information on brand value**

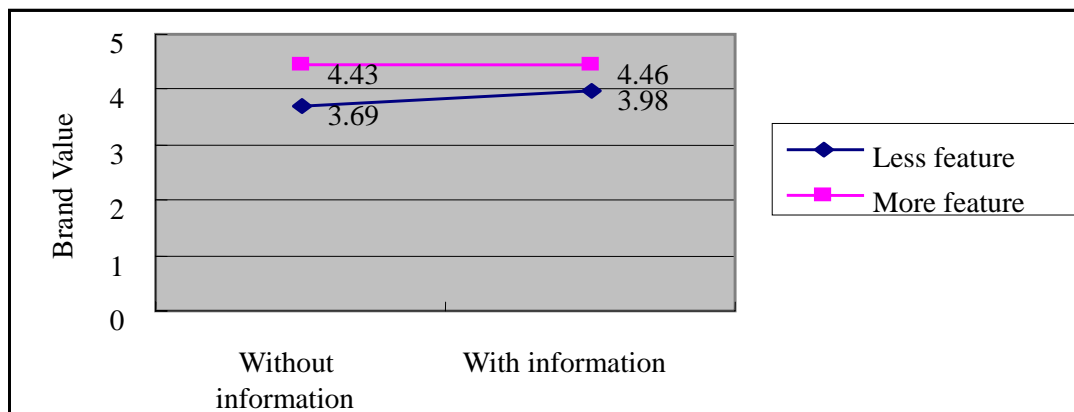


Figure 5 shows the positive relationship between brand value and the existing of detailed information. The line representing cosmetics with lesser features has a steeper slope while the line representing cosmetics with more features has a gentler slope. It indicates that there is some interacting effect of the number of feature and the presence of detailed information on brand value. However, the effect is not significant.

*H5b: Number of features and detailed information on new features have interactive effect on confidence toward the product*

Hypothesis 1b supports that the number of feature has negative effect on the confidence level. Hypothesis 3b supports that the detailed information of the new



feature also has positive effect on the confidence level. The interaction of the two factors is going to be tested. It is hypothesized that the numbers of existing features and the detailed information of the new feature have an interacting effect on the confidence level.

**Table 21. Combined effect of the number of feature and the detailed information on confidence level**

	Less feature	More feature	Total
Without information	3.47	2.87	3.17
With information	4.58	3.14	3.87
Total	4.03	3.00	3.52

(Rating with the 7-points scale: ranging from 1 = lowest to 7 = highest)

The combined effect of the two factors is shown on Table 21. It shows that cosmetics with fewer features always get a higher confidence score than cosmetics with more features, regardless of whether the detailed information is provided. In other words, cosmetics with detailed information always get a higher confidence than cosmetics without detailed information, regardless of the number of features.

**Table 22. Interacting effect of the number of feature and the detailed information on confidence level**

UNIVARIANT OF VARIANCE

Dependent Variable: Confidence Level

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	51.043(a)	3	17.014	13.835	.000
Intercept	1468.826	1	1468.826	1194.393	.000
No of feature	31.109	1	31.109	25.297	.000
Detailed information	14.324	1	14.324	11.648	.001
Interaction	5.314	1	5.314	4.322	.040
Error	141.423	115	1.230		
Total	1664.250	119			
Corrected Total	192.466	118			

a. R Squared = .265 (Adjusted R Squared = .246)

Table 22 shows the interacting effect of the number of feature and the detailed information on confidence level. The significant coefficient for the interaction effect is .040, which is larger than .05. It indicates the interaction effect of the two factors on confidence level is significant and hypothesis 5b is supported.

**Figure 6. Interacting effect of the number of feature and the detailed information**

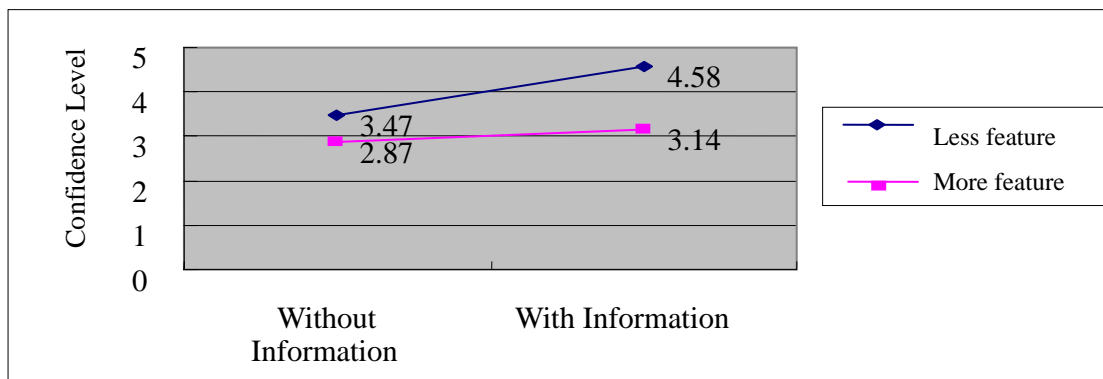


Figure 6 shows the positive relationship of the confidence level and the detailed information. Though the positive relationship is true for both products with less features and products with more features, the slope of the line representing the cosmetics with fewer features is much steeper. It indicates that the detailed information of new feature is more effective for the cosmetics with fewer features.

### **5.3.6 Purchase Intention**

The previous hypotheses have tested both the main effects and the interacting effects of the variables. The independent variables of the hypotheses are the number of features, the new feature, and the detailed information. The dependent variable of multi-attribute sensitivity is the perceived brand value and which of the performance uncertainty is the confidence level. There is one more important variable – purchase intention.

**Table 23. The effect of brand value and confidence level on purchase intention**

<b>REGRESSION</b>			
	Sum of Squares	F	Sig.
Regression	129.749	16.685	.000(a)
Residual	211.909		
Total	341.658		
Standardized Coefficients			
	(Beta)	t	Sig.
Number of feature	-.232	-2.430	.017
New feature		-.775	.440
Detailed information	.086	1.099	.274
Perceived brand value	.402	4.481	.000
Confidence level	.287	2.972	.004

a Predictors: Number of feature, New feature, Detailed information, Perceived brand value, Confidence level

b Dependent Variable: Purchase intention

The regression table (Table 23) further illustrates the effects of brand value and confidence level. The significant level of the brand value is .000 and which of the confidence level is .004. It indicates that the effect of brand value is greater than the effect of the confidence level on purchase intention. In addition, the significant level of the number of feature is .017, which is less than .05. Hence, it is also a predictor for purchase intention.

**Figure 7. The relationship of brand value and confidence level on purchase intention**

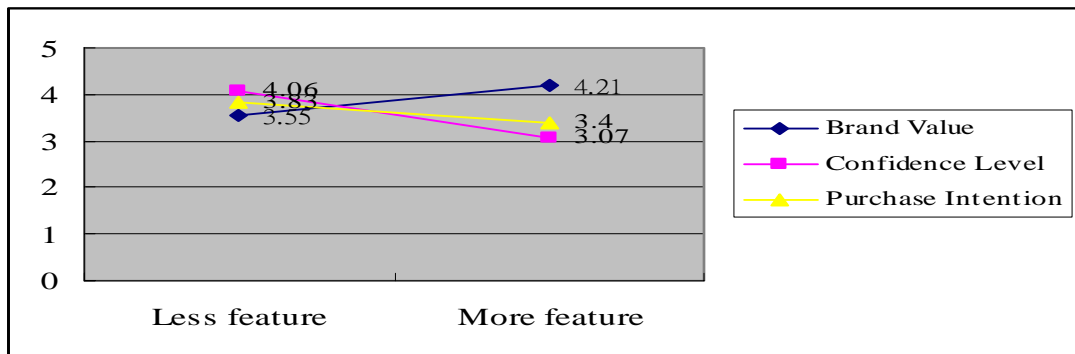


Figure 7 shows the effect of the number of features on perceived brand value, confidence level and purchase intention. The number of feature has positive effect on perceived brand value and negative effect on confidence level. It indicates the trade-off between the brand value and confidence level. In other words, when a product increases its feature in order to increase its perceived brand value, the decrease in confidence level on product performance is the cost. Besides, the purchase intention falls between the brand value and the confidence level.

**Figure 8. Summary of the effects**

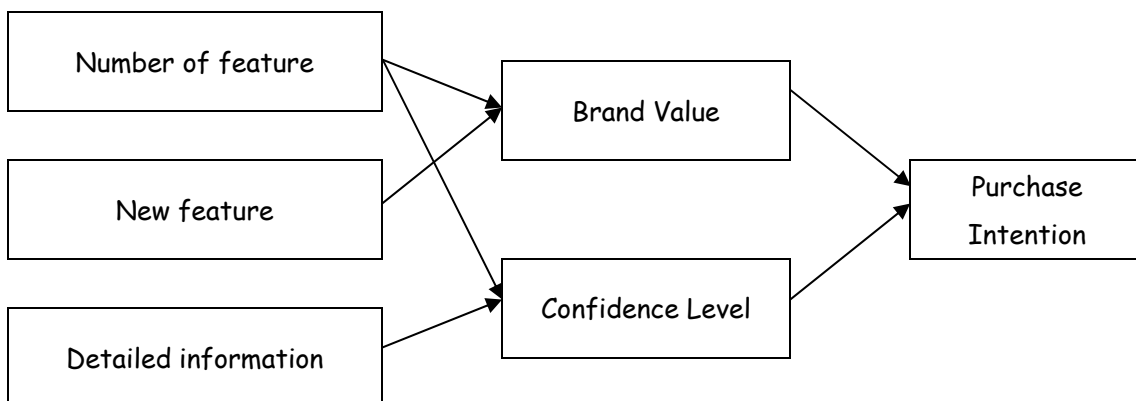


Figure 8 summarizes the hypotheses and the effects on purchase intention. The effects can be explained by the ABC Model, which suggested that behavior was affected by both attitude and cognition. The figure shows that the purchase intention is affected by both the brand value (attitude) and confidence level (cognition).

# **Chapter 6**

## **Discussion**

## **6.1 Conclusion**

The research examines the three main effects and two interaction effects of the independent variables, which are number of features, existence of new feature and the availability of information on new feature, on brand value and confidence to the product performance.

The effect of the number of features is first to be tested. It finds that the number of features has a positive effect on brand value, but it has a negative effect on confidence to the product performance. Then the effect of the existence of new feature is tested. It finds that the new feature has a positive effect on brand value and has no significant effect on confidence. In addition, the new feature grabs more awareness when it is added to products with less existing features. Finally, the effect of the information on the new feature is tested. It finds that the information has no significant effect on brand value and has positive effect on confidence.

After examining the main effects of the variables, the interaction effects of them are investigated. There are two findings on the interaction effects. First, the number of feature and the new feature has no significant interaction effects on both the brand value and the confidence. Second, the number of feature and the availability of



information has no significant interaction effect on brand value, but it has positive interaction effect on confidence. It indicates that the detailed information of new feature leads to greater increase in confidence for the cosmetics with fewer features, compared to cosmetics with more features.

The research studies the principals of the multi-attribute sensitivity and the performance uncertainty. The findings on multi-attribute conclude that both the number of features and the new feature had positive effect on the brand value, but the two factors have no interacting effect. The findings on the performance uncertainty conclude that the number of feature have negative effect on the confidence level while the detailed information had positive effect on the confidence level. There is positive interacting effect of the two factors. The research finds that both the brand value and the confidence level have the significant positive effect on purchase intention. In addition, brand value has a larger effect than confidence level.

## **6.2 Limitations and Suggestions**

This research tests on several variables of the product features, but it does not manipulate an important factor – price. Price is the factor that has a vast influence on consumers' evaluation toward the product and the brand. Consumer normally will

evaluate the product performance base on the comparison of price and effect, which are their cost and benefits. However, the advertisements used in the research do not specify the price for consumers as reference. Different consumers perceive the product price according to their cognition or impression. It varies among different consumers and is difficult to be controlled.

The target sample is focus on females only. Actually, the male cosmetics products are becoming popular in Hong Kong and contributing to the profit growth for cosmetics companies. Their preferences and opinion may be significant to the market.

The advertisements can be further well designed. The advertisements can in better quality to stimulate consumers' attention and purchase intention. The price should be included in the manipulation to ensure the reliability of the research.

The further study of consumer preference on cosmetics should have a wider target segment, for instance, include male and enlarge the target number of samples. It can increase the relevance and the reliability of the research.

This research explored some effects of the multi-attribute sensitivity and performance

uncertainty toward cosmetics. Further study can be conducted to explore the applicability of the principles on other consumer products.

### **6.3 Practical Implications**

The research findings show the consumer preference on cosmetics. People have different evaluation in two different perspectives, brand value and confidence level.

There are some contradictions and some overlapping. In terms of brand value, consumers prefer cosmetics with more existing features and new feature. In terms of confidence level, consumers prefer cosmetics with fewer existing feature with detailed information on the new feature. It should notice that the effect of the brand value is larger than the confidence level when measuring their purchase intention. It may because cosmetics are some luxury items that brand value worth.

There are some implications for product management and development. First, it is important to decide how many features the product should have. There is trade-off between brand value and confidence level in this consideration. The greater number of product features increase the brand value but decrease the perceived product performance in consumers mind. On the way to maximize the benefits of product features, we should balance the advantage and trade-off of the brand value and

confidence level. We should notice the optimal number of product feature. According to this research, it should be three features approximately.

Second, launching new product feature can increase the brand value. Introducing new feature is one of the common marketing strategies. How effective is this strategy? The research finding shows that new feature may not increase the purchase intention of consumers. Though purchase intention of consumers is very important as it lead to the sales finally, the brand value should not be undervalued. The brand value is the overall perception of consumers toward the products in line with the brand. Though it may not lead to the purchase intention of the certain product, it can affect consumers' evaluation on other products under the same brand. Comparing to the purchase intention, the effect of the brand value is more long term. Therefore, considering whether to launching new feature to the existing products depends on the current objective of the company. If its objective is to increase the sales of certain high profit margin products, adding new feature may not help. Alternatively, if its objective is to increase the total sales in long term, adding new feature to existing products can facilitate the goal.

Third, when it is decided to promote a new product feature, detailed information of

the new feature should be provided to increase the confidence level of the consumers. Though the information does not lead to purchase intention directly, its effect on confidence level has some effect on purchase intention. It can increase the perceived performance effectiveness of the product and contribute to the purchase intention indirectly. In addition, the detailed information on new feature is more effective when the new feature is added to the product with fewer features, comparing with product with more features. However, detailed information should be provided especially for those cosmetics with more features. It is because consumers already have lower confidence level on those cosmetics. It is important to increase their confidence by giving more information on the new feature.

Fourth, the research gives some insights to market cosmetics. After understanding the effects of the feature factors on the product evaluation, marketers can manipulate those factors to boost the purchase intention. Advertising in magazine and TV are the major marketing strategies for cosmetics products. For magazine advertisements, where allow providing more information, the advertisements should focus on a few major functions of the cosmetics and highlight the new feature with information provided. It is especially true when the advertisement want to promote the new feature that is added to the cosmetics with many existing features already.

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## Appendix I Questionnaires

### 香港消費者對化妝品的喜好問卷調查

各位女士：

我們每天都會接觸到不少美容用品，它們已成為我們生活的一部分，企業推出的產品功效層出不窮，為了提供更好的產品素質給消費者，企業必須了解消費者對化妝品的喜好，我們希望您能協助回答本問卷中 52 個問題，需時約 30 分鐘。您提供的資料將會被嚴格保密，且僅用於與其他消費者進行比較。

嶺南大學工商管理系三年級學生

問題的答案沒有對錯之分，只作比較之用，除特別註明外，每條問題只能選擇一個答案。

#### 第一部分（廣告部份）

下列問題與**廣告**相關，首先請仔細閱讀問題，然後圈出與您感受最一致的序號。

1. 我看的是： 廣告一  廣告二  廣告三   
廣告四  廣告五  廣告六

1=非常不同意<----- 4=中立(不置可否) -----> 7=非常同意

2.	廣告能提供產品的相關信息	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3.	廣告的信息很清楚	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4.	廣告很吸引	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5.	廣告能引起對產品的興趣	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6.	我很喜歡這個廣告	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7.	我會對廣告留下印象	1	2	3	4	5	6	7



第二部分 (產品部份)

下列問題與廣告**產品**相關，請仔細閱讀廣告的內容，留意產品的**功效**，然後圈出與您感受最一致的序號。

1=極差 <----- 4=中立(不置可否) -----> 7=極好

我對這個產品品牌的印象：

8.	低劣	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	優秀
9.	不喜歡	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	喜歡
10.	低質量	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	高質量
11.	落後	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	先進
12.	不值得	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	物有所值

1=非常不同意<----- 4=中立(不置可否) -----> 7=非常同意

13.	這產品有很多功效	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
14.	這產品推出新功效	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
15.	這產品有詳細介紹新功效	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
16.	我很欣賞這產品的功效	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
17.	我覺得這產品的功效很適用	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
18.	我對這產品的功效很有信心	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
19.	我認爲這產品可以做到所述功效	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
20.	我認爲這產品值得購買	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
21.	我會去搜尋有關這產品的資料	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
22.	我會嘗試這產品	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

23. 這產品有沒有推出新功效? 有  沒有

如有, 請回答下列問題: (如沒有, 請跳到第 26 題)

24.	我很欣賞這產品的新功效	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
25.	我認為新功效對產品幫助很大	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

### 第三部分 (消費習慣)

以下問題與廣告無關, 請細閱問題, 然後根據**個人意見、喜好或習慣**來回答問題。

26. 您最近有購買下列美容用品嗎? 請在裡加上✓, 可選擇多於一項。

護膚品  化妝品  理髮用品  香水

27. 您平均一個月購買多少次美容用品? \_\_\_\_\_次

28. 您通常在哪裡選購美容用品? 請排列次序並於填上 1-4。(最經常 = 4)

百貨公司櫃台  專門店  零售店  其他

29. 您每月用於美容用品上的開支大約多少? \$\_\_\_\_\_

請細閱問題, 然後圈出合適的序號。

1=非常不同意<----- 4=中立(不置可否) -----> 7=非常同意
--

我購買美容用品, 因為:

30.	美容用品是必需品	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
31.	美容用品使我的形象更入時	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
32.	美容用品可以改善我的儀容	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
33.	我的朋友都很講究外表	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

34.	我的外表會影響我的自信	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
35.	個人形象可以表達自己	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
36.	我的工作需要我注重儀容	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

1=非常不同意<----- 4=中立(不置可否) -----> 7=非常同意

我認為美容用品:

37.	多功效的較少功效的有更高質素	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
38.	我較喜歡多功效的	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
39.	少功效的較多功效的有更佳效果	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
40.	市面上所推出的新功效一般不算「新」	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
41.	新功效一般對產品質素幫助不大	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
42.	新功效代表產品效果會更好	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
43.	有詳細介紹的新功效比沒有介紹的更可信	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
44.	沒有詳細介紹的新功效缺乏說服力	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

45. 您最常在什麼地方看到美容用品廣告? 請排列次序並於□填上 1 - 5。(最經常 = 5)

報紙  雜誌  電視  互聯網  店舖

46. 您最常在什麼地方認識美容用品的新功效? 請排列次序並於□填上 1 - 5。(最經常 = 5)

廣告  朋友  售貨員  宣傳品  其他

47. 有關美容用品的新功效的介紹, 您覺得下列哪一項最為可信?

請排列次序並於□填上 1 - 5。(最可信 = 5)

廣告  朋友  售貨員  宣傳品  其他

第四部分 (個人資料)

以下個人資料絕對保密，請在加上✓。

48. 性別： 男  女

49. 年齡： 0 - 17 歲  18 - 25 歲  26 - 35 歲   
36 - 50 歲  50 歲以上

50. 最高學歷： 小學畢業  中學畢業   
大學畢業  其他：  請註明：\_\_\_\_\_

51. 職業： 學生  服務業  工業   
商業  其他：  請註明：\_\_\_\_\_

52. 個人月收入：  
\$0-\$5,000  \$5001-\$10,000  \$10,001-\$15,000   
\$15,000-\$20,000  \$20,001-\$25,000  \$25,000 以上

～ 問卷完畢，多謝閣下抽空提供寶貴的意見 ～

## Questionnaire about preferences on cosmetics of Hong Kong consumers

Dear ladies:

We are in contact with many cosmetics products everyday. They have become part of our daily lives. Cosmetics companies launch products with many different features. In order to provide better product qualities for consumers, it is necessary for companies understand the preferences of consumers. We hope you can assist in filling in the questionnaire, which has 52 questions and need about 30 minutes. All the information is confidential and used for comparing with other consumers only.

Year 3 BBA student of Lingnan University

The answers have no right or wrong. They are used for comparing purpose only. You can choose **only one answer** for each question except those stated.

### Part I (Advertisement)

The following questions are related to the **advertisements**. Please read the statements carefully and circle the ranking that most appropriate to your feelings.

1. I read the:

- Advertisement 1      Advertisement 2      Advertisement 3     
 Advertisement 4      Advertisement 5      Advertisement 6

1=Totally Disagree <----- 4=Neutral (No comment) -----> 7=Totally Agree

2.	The ad can provide relevant information about the product.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3.	The information provided by the ad is very clear.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4.	The ad is very attractive.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5.	The ad can increase the interest to the product.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6.	I like this ad.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7.	I will have impression on the ad.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Part II (Product)

The following questions are related to the **product**. Please read the statements carefully and pay attention to the product **features**, then choose the ranking that most appropriate to your feelings.

1=Worst <----- 4=Neutral (No comment) -----> 7=Best

My impression towards the brand is:

8.	Bad	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Good
9.	Dislike	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	like
10.	Low quality	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	High quality
11.	Outdated	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Updated
12.	Worthless	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Valuable

1=Totally Disagree <----- 4=Neutral (No comment) -----> 7=Totally Agree

13.	This product has many features.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
14.	There is new feature.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
15.	There is detailed information on the new feature.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
16.	I appreciate the product features.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
17.	The product features are suitable for me.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
18.	I have confidence on the product features.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
19.	I think this product can perform all the features.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
20.	I think this product is valuable to purchase.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
21.	I will search more information about this product.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
22.	I will try this product.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

23. Does this product have new feature? Yes  No

If yes, please answer the following questions. (If no, please skip to question 26)

24.	I appreciate the new product feature.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
25.	I think the new feature is very beneficial for the product.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Part III (Consumption Pattern)

The following questions are not related to the advertisement. Please read the questions carefully, and then answer the questions according to your **personal opinion, preference or habit**.

26. Have you purchased the following cosmetics items recently? Please put ✓ in the , you may choose more than one answer.

Skin care products  Color cosmetics  Hair Care products  Fragrance

27. How many times do you purchase cosmetics per month? \_\_\_\_\_times

28. Where do you often purchase cosmetics? Please rank the following items with 1 to 4. (Most frequently = 4)

Department Store  Specialty  Retailing Shop  Other

29. How much do you spend on cosmetics per month? \_\_\_\_\_

Please read the following statements, and then circle the most suitable rankings.

1=Totally Disagree <----- 4=Neutral (No comment) -----> 7=Totally Agree
---

I purchase cosmetics because:

30.	cosmetics is the necessity.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
31.	I can be more fashionable.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
32.	cosmetics can enhance my appearance.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
33.	my friends are appearance oriented.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

34.	my appearance will affect my confidence.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
35.	my personal image can express myself.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
36.	my work require me to have make-up.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

1=Totally Disagree <----- 4=Neutral (No comment) -----> 7=Totally Agree

I think cosmetics are:

37.	Cosmetics with more features are better than those with less features.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
38.	I prefer cosmetics with more features than those with less features.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
39.	Cosmetics with less features are more effective.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
40.	The new features in the current market are not so new.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
41.	The new feature cannot improve the product.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
42.	New feature means the product is more effective.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
43.	New feature with information is more believable.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
44.	New feature without information is lack of persuasion.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

45. Where do you often see cosmetics advertisement? Please rank the following item with 1 to 5. (Most frequently = 5)

Newspaper  Magazine  TV  Internet  Shop

46. Which one do you most get information of new cosmetics product feature? (Most frequently = 5)

Ad  Friend  Salesperson  Promotional items  Other

47. Which one do you think is most trust-worthy for new product feature? (Most trust-worthy = 5)

Ad  Friend  Salesperson  Promotional items  Other



48. Gender: Male  Female
49. Age: 0-17  18-25  26-35   
36-50  above 50
50. Education: Primary school  Secondary School   
University  Other  Please specify: \_\_\_\_\_
51. Occupation: Student  Service Sector  Industrial Sector   
Business  Other  Please specify: \_\_\_\_\_
52. Personal monthly income:  
\$0-\$5,000  \$5001-\$10,000  \$10,001-\$15,000   
\$15,000-\$20,000  \$20,001-\$25,000  \$25,000 以上

~ The end ~

Thank you very much for your valuable opinions

## Appendix II Hypothesized Advertisements

### Advertisement 1

**BEAU**

CREAM FOUNDATION 修護濕粉

修護保濕·兩大功效

- 1 高度保濕，能持續滋潤乾燥肌膚
- 2 去黃美白功效，可改善膚色

Advertisement 2



**BEAU**  
CREAM FOUNDATION 修護濕粉

**新**  
新加植物成份可有效預防雀斑、色斑

修護保濕 · 兩大功效

- 1 高度保濕，能持續滋潤乾燥肌膚
- 2 去黃美白功效，可改善膚色

So Intentional  
Multi-Cosmetics  
Moist  
Tint  
Foundation  
SPF 2

# BEAU

CREAM FOUNDATION 修護濕粉

新

新加植物成份可有效預防雀斑、色斑



## 什麼是新植物成份?

最新研製獨有的有效新植物成份—「新斑芍藥精華」，能阻截紫外線對肌膚的刺激及抑制黑色素形成對細胞的損害，可更有效預防雀斑、色斑的產生。

## 修護保濕·兩大功效

- 1 高度保濕，能持續滋潤乾燥肌膚
- 2 去黃美白功效，可改善膚色

## Advertisement 4



**BEAU**

**CREAM FOUNDATION 修護濕粉**

**修護保濕 · 六大功效**

- 1 高度保濕，能持續滋潤乾燥肌膚
- 2 去黃美白功效，可改善膚色
- 3 質感輕柔貼薄，有效修飾肌膚
- 4 高效修護受損DNA
- 5 防曬功效避免肌膚曬傷
- 6 防水、防油，令妝容更持久

So Intensive  
Anti-Damage  
Moist  
Tint  
Multi-Step  
SPF 8



**BEAU**  
CREAM FOUNDATION 修護濕粉

**新**  
新加植物成份可有效預防雀斑、色斑

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新

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## 什麼是新植物成份?

最新研製獨有的有效新植物成份—「新斑芍藥精華」，能阻截紫外線對肌膚的刺激及抑制黑色素形成對細胞的損害，可更有效預防雀斑、色斑的產生。



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