Luxury brand value co-creation with online brand communities in the service encounter

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ABSTRACT

A constant challenge for luxury brands is identifying ways to add value to their offering, compensating for the high price charged. Previous research has highlighted that superior value is added when customers and brands collaborate by co-creating and introducing unique experiences to the offering. However, there is limited research on how brands and their customers co-create value in an online context. Online brand community engagement is central to this process. Drawing upon the service dominant logic and the luxury customer value framework, we conduct fifteen in-depth interviews with managers and fifty with customers of a luxury hotel brand, followed by a netnography of its online community. This results in the development of a typology that supports online value co-creation. The results show that the pleasurable/experiential content provides the highest engagement. The study reinforces the benefit of using the experiential approach to build a successful content strategy within online luxury communities.

1. Introduction

In an age of mass-produced products and services, luxury can create value by contributing to a symbolic narrative, adding exclusivity, excellence, and prestige. For this symbolic component of luxury experiences are essential (Wirtz et al., 2020). In the case of luxury services, due to their intangible nature, communicating value can be difficult and greater emphasis should be given to its symbolic nature. This can be achieved by supplementing additional content including still photographs or images, video, stories, memorabilia or souvenirs (Wirtz et al., 2020) by creating unique experiences.

The value of a product does not exist by itself, but it stems from customer perception in the experience they receive from the offering (Plé & Chumpitaz Cáceres, 2010). Previous work has suggested that co-creation can improve perceived value, satisfaction, and loyalty among customers (Mathis et al., 2016; Morosan and DeFranco, 2016; Nam et al., 2011; Rahimi et al., 2017). Consequently, effective methods for promoting customer value co-creation behaviours are critical for gaining competitive advantage and establishing sustainable management strategies in a competitive market like luxury services, in the highly competitive customer services market.

Current marketing and business literature highlights the importance of understanding how actors work together to create value (Bruce et al.,

2019). This is difficult to observe empirically, however actor engagement is observable and thus more likely to be managed. Central to this discussion of actors' engagement in an online environment are brand communities. Rheingold (2000) defines these communities as "social aggregations that emerge from the Net when enough people carry on those public discussions long enough, with sufficient human feeling, to form webs of personal relationships in cyberspace". In online brand communities, customers provide service either to themselves or to others by sharing information. This is because SDL recognizes the role of customers (actors) as operant resources in service settings (Vargo & Lusch, 2004) and social media provides a strong interface for a customer to engage with the brand (Chu et al., 2019).

Recent research has highlighted the benefits for companies in utilising virtual communities, such as the ability to involve their customers in various co-creation activities (Claffey & Brady, 2017) or to establish customer–brand relationships beyond exchange (Yang, Lin, Carlson, & Ross, 2016). Most luxury brands however are still uncertain on how to engage and connect with customers online (Chu et al., 2013), creating a significant disadvantage. Last year, global digital consumption accounted for 12% of the market, with customers increasingly influenced and enabled by digital channels (D'Arpizio et al., 2020). The challenge for marketing departments and their managers is that digital communication has fundamentally changed consumer habits online (Gensler et al.,

2013) and engagement and interaction by consumers on the Internet has created a direct and valuable link to the brand experience (Ramaswamy & Ozcan, 2014). Some luxury brands are now utilising the online environment, engaging in a two-way dialogue with customers (Kim & Ko, 2012; Kretz & Voyer, 2012). However, specifically for luxury brands, this should be carefully orchestrated, since there is a fine exchange between becoming widely available and maintaining the brand's prestige and exclusivity (Bian & Veloutsou, 2007).

Prior research on luxury goods has highlighted that brands need to constantly search for the right balance of image and exclusivity (Kastanakis & Balabanis, 2012). This consistent drive for exclusiveness and prestige as well as a certain belonging has encouraged luxury brands to explore different ways to connect with customers online. Consequently, as Gurzki and Woisetschläger (2016) highlight in their systematic review, understanding how brands can co-create value online with their customers is of great importance.

Even though services are different from goods in several ways, until now there have been few academic studies focusing on luxury services (Thomsen et al., 2020) and the majority of understanding we have for the field comes from a goods-centric approach (Cristini et al., 2017). Further, previous research has investigated how brand-related experiences can support consumer-to-consumer communications (Klein, Falk, Esch, & Goluknovtsev, 2016), how the process of value leads to co-creation (Holmqvist et al., 2020) and how to engage consumers in co-creation (Choi, Ko, & Kim, 2016; Tynan et al., 2010). However, these studies do not focus specifically on the online context. Additionally, Hajli et al. (2017) point out that there has not been any significant research to date in understanding co-creation of value through online communities.

Our study's aim is to understand how luxury service brands and their customers co-create value together, in an online context. To achieve this we employ a multi-method single case study of a global luxury hotel brand that interacts with its customers online. This online community has been created by the brand and is an excellent context to study co-creation, since both the brand and its customers contribute to the content creation. The objectives of the research are to explore what managers and customers find valuable from this interaction and which content brings more engagement. By conducting interviews, observing the exclusive online community, and utilising the SDL and the Tynan et al.'s (2010) luxury value framework, we conclude with a typology of online content that supports online value co-creation. We further present the profiles of the customers that engage in co-creation. Our findings suggest that both managers and customers recognise unique value and value-in-context. Furthermore the pleasurable/experiential content, where customers post about their interaction with the brand (relationship content), creates the highest engagement, supporting the consumer-brand relationship (Fournier, 1998).

With this study we offer three main contributions to luxury research. First, the study contributes to the theoretical knowledge of luxury literature by exploring actor co-creation in an online context (Gurzki & Woisetschläger, 2016). Second, from a methodological perspective this research answers the call for the use of online customer data to understand luxury in a real-life context (Gurzki & Woisetschläger, 2016). Third, from a managerial perspective the study explores how a brand and its customers co-create collaboratively to provide insights on how luxury brands can use new technologies to deliver customer experiences.

The remainder of the article is structured as follows: first, we provide a review of the relevant literature around luxury value and co-creation to formulate the research gaps. Second, we describe our multi-method case study approach. Our findings are organised to reflect the results around the four categories of our content typology. Finally, the discussion elaborates on our findings, expands the three theoretical contributions, and suggests future research directions.

2. Literature review

2.1. Luxury value

Luxury brands are unique compared to other products or services (Ko, Costello, & Taylor, 2019). For a luxury brand to be successful it needs to constantly explore new ways to add perceived value to its product, since customers seek to identify sufficient value, to compensate for the premium price charged (Tynan et al., 2010). This means that value creation is fundamental to understand luxury products. Wirtz, Holmqvist, and Fritze (2020) in their literature review on luxury research identified eleven definitions, the majority of which are goods focused. To compensate for this, they created their own definition for luxury products, defining them as high quality, expensive and non-essential goods, and services "that appear to be rare, exclusive, prestigious, and authentic and offer high levels of symbolic and emotional/hedonic values through consumer experiences" (p.1158).

This definition adapted the Tynan et al. (2010) customer value framework for luxury brands, due to its focus on quality and experience. The framework links value co-creation with the luxury market by considering previous work on luxury and value concepts. Specifically, it assessed the work of Vigneron and Johnson (1999) on the prestige aspect by splitting it into interpersonal and personal effects on consumption. They conclude in five types of perceived value: perceived conspicuous value, perceived unique value, perceived social value, perceived emotional and perceived quality value. Furthermore, they explain that defining luxury value is a difficult process, as luxury brands differ from non-luxury by holding stronger psychological benefits compared to physical. They conclude that luxury products tend to have greater perceived conspicuous, uniqueness, social, hedonic, and quality values. Next, they look at the work of Vickers and Renand (2003) who conceptualise luxury products as symbols of personal and social identity and propose that to differentiate luxury to non-luxury goods, one must look at the dimensions of functionalism, experientialism, and symbolic interactionism.

On the same line, Wiedmann et al. (2009) develop an integrated framework on consumer value and connect economic literature on status signalling (Amaldoss & Jain, 2005) with early work on hedonic consumption (Hirschman & Holbrook, 1982) and on the self-concept (Belk, 1988). The paper proposes four latent luxury values: financial, functional, individual, and social. Next in line, is the work by Holbrook (1999) that developed the dichotomy between hedonic and utilitarian values within the value typology. Utilitarian value is often related to the task-related (rational part of shopping), while hedonic value describes the experiential aspect (emotional part of shopping). Holbrook's work recognised three distinctions or dimensions that classified different types of value: intrinsic vs extrinsic, active vs reactive, and self-oriented vs other-oriented. The combination of the three distinctions in a $2 \times 2 \times 2$ matrix gives rise to eight types of value: efficiency, excellence (quality), play, aesthetics, status, esteem, ethics, and spirituality. They conclude with Smith and Colgate (2007) who indicate how they classify Holbrook's (1999) customer value types in the framework and consult the original typology of consumer value (CCV).

They conclude with a typology that has five categories of value types, four of which are important for the luxury products: the first is the *utilitarian type* that includes excellence (quality) and craftsmanship. The second is the experiential/hedonic which includes pleasure, aesthetics, and experiences. The third value type is the *symbolic/expressive* which is split to outward directed (bandwagon, snob, and Veblen effects) and self-directed (self-identity, uniqueness and authenticity). The fourth type is the *relational* value, which encompasses brand community and consumer–brand relationships. This type of value is unique compared to what has been discussed from prior authors. Finally, the fifth category is *cost/sacrifice*, which is expanded to encompass exclusivity and rarity.

It is important here to discuss further the concepts of experience and exclusivity which play an important role in distinguishing luxury goods

from services as well as luxurious services from ordinary ones (Wirtz, Holmqvist, & Fritze, 2020). Luxury services have been defined as extraordinary hedonic and exclusive experiences that are determined by both objective service features and subjective customer perceptions (Wirtz et al. 2020). Experience and exclusivity are two important concepts that differentiate generic services from luxurious ones. Kapferer and Bastien (2009a, 2009b) explain that exclusivity is essential for luxury and can be even more important than price, while Wirtz et al. (2020) discuss that for luxury services exclusivity is the core of the offering. This is a key value for luxury brands and presents challenges to the management, especially in an online environment. First in luxury services the experience is the core of the luxury offering. Second, in luxury goods exclusivity is mainly linked to price and prestige. In services the element of exclusivity can be social (difficult to gain access) and hedonic exclusivity (difficult to enjoy without prior knowledge).

To conclude, luxury value is an important concept in understanding the reasons behind consumption and value dimensions have been described as characteristics of value that can emerge through a variety of consumer experiences (Vargo & Lusch, 2006, 2014). Luxury brands face a challenge to ensure that customers perceive sufficient value in their goods to compensate for the high price charged (Tynan et al. 2010). This means that it is important for a brand to understand how it can create value to its offerings (Plé & Chumpitaz Cáceres, 2010). Luxury brands need to prioritise authentic experiences that will be the vehicle for value co-creation (Tynan et al. 2010) The value that is created does not exist by itself and always relies on how customers perceive the experiences around a particular good or service (Plé & Chumpitaz Cáceres, 2010).

2.2. Value and value co-creation

The traditional concept of value was believed to stem from the goods tangible attributes. However, more recent research has highlighted the importance of the customer in adding value to the brand. This more recent concept of marketing is SDL (Vargo & Lusch's, 2004; 2008), which is claimed to be a new paradigm of thought since the concept can be applied to both services and goods. SDL is an innovative but already established market approach (Vargo & Lusch, 2016), which explains value creation through exchange among configurations of actors. The theoretical pillars of the theory are the eleven foundational premises (FP):

- FP1: Service is the fundamental basis of exchange.
- FP2: Indirect exchange masks the fundamental basis of exchange.
- FP3: Goods are a distribution mechanism for service provision.
- FP4: Operant resources are the fundamental source of strategic benefit.
- FP5: All economies are service economies.
- FP6: Value is co-created by multiple actors, always including the beneficiary.
- FP7: Actors cannot deliver value but can participate in the creation and offering of value propositions.
- FP8: A service-centric view is inherently customer oriented and relational.
- FP9: All social and economic actors are resource integrators.
- FP10: Value is always uniquely and phenomenologically determined by the beneficiary.
- FP11: Value co-creation is coordinated through actor-generated institutions and institutional arrangements.

According to (Grönroos, 2011) the term value is the process through which the user becomes better off in some respect. On the other hand, value co-creation is used to describe the way that customers actively participate in creating brand values by interacting through marketing encounters such as brand or product-related activities (Payne et al., 2009). Specifically, Vargo and Lusch (2008) define it as "a high order concept including different types of resource integrating practices

among multiple network actors in the perceived value creation process." Following the SDL literature, value is created from experiences and co-created with the customers (Vargo & Lusch, 2004, 2006, 2008, 2014, 2016; Payne et al., 2009; Merz et al., 2018), who are active co-creators rather than simply receiving the value from the brand's actions, while brands are encouraged to identify creative ways to provide facilitation of the value co-creation process (Merz et al., 2018). In SDL value is created dynamically with customers as either value-in use or value-in context (Vargo et al., 2008). Value-in-context encompasses the idea that a customer's interpretation of an experience is attached to the product/service bundles in relation to the context in which they are used. Thus, value-in context is an important dimension of SDL when discussing value co-creation because it frames services with the resources of an entire service ecosystem.

SDL further emphasizes that value co-creation takes place in the context of complex and dynamic network structures or service ecosystems, where engagement through social sharing takes place between actors in the network (e.g., Edvardsson et al., 2011; Vargo & Lusch, 2011). Past research indicates that through consumer engagement behaviour, customers may co-create resources within their own networks, to actors beyond the provider–customer dyad (Nambisan & Baron, 2009; Schau et al., 2009). This indicates that consumer engagement behaviour will affect the value creation process.

Social media networks allow brands to engage with a large volume of consumers and act as platforms for value co-creation (Chang, Song, Lim, & Rha, 2017) through the exchange of knowledge sharing, interaction, and equity (Ranjan & Read, 2016). Many brands use social media to communicate with their customers, however, what still remains unclear is how to take advantage of the potential these platforms offer for co-creation (Okazaki et al., 2020). Additionally, Wang et al. (2010) believe that the ability to feel close to customers through information and a better understanding of their predicted behaviours is important as social networks may be "the most effective way of relationship marketing (RM) since it blurs the lines between customers, allies and partners" (p. 415). Developing a closer relationship with these customers turning them into loyal ones are equally important aspects of marketing.

The growth in businesses interacting on social media has ultimately changed their ability within the service ecosystems (Alaimo et al., 2020). Lusch and Vargo (2014, p. 161) define service ecosystems as: "relatively self-contained, self-adjusting systems of resource-integrating actors that are connected by shared institutional logics and mutual value creation through service exchange". The concept of resource-integrating SDL actors highlights the idea of generic actors that have ownership of, or access to resources. These actors can be viewed as open systems, "effectively depending on the resources of others to survive" (Vargo et al., 2008, p. 149). The consequence is that all actors are fundamentally engaged in similar ways in resource integration processes and actor-to-actor perspective can be described as a static or active actor role. So, in other words, the social media platforms facilitate a service ecosystem, where a brand community can interact.

2.3. Value co-creation with online brand communities

Brand communities are defined as social collectives that share a similar culture and the brand identity is enacted, negotiated or co-created (Kozinets, 2001). In online brand communities members can play the active role of both providers and beneficiaries leading to a value for each individual, the community itself and the company (Pongsakornrungsilp & Schroeder, 2011). Within these brand communities, actors actively contribute by posting. If a brand shares a post in social media with its followers and then the followers "share" or "like", these followers are considered the network of actors that are interacting and co-creating (Belk, 2007). Many brands are currently investing in building their brand communities in order to engage customers in value co-creation process, so identifying the drivers of customer engagement is of utmost importance for both research and practice (Shen et al., 2018).

Lusch and Vargo (2006) have indicated that the SDL foundations still require elaboration and refinement and research on online experience sharing can form part of this on-going work. Consequently, if we take into consideration all the current literature on value co-creation we can conclude that exploring how a brand can facilitate value co-creation through its online brand communities is still an area that needs attention.

Consumers within a brand community have increasingly powerful roles in both creating opportunities and posing threats to companies (Denegri-Knott et al., 2006). This idea is in line with the concept of tribal marketing, where consumers of a brand community form a linked value to co-construct their resistance and consumption (Cova & Cova, 2002). The power of these collective groups is their ability to create value in multi-brand communities (Schau et al., 2009). Various studies of brand communities have focused on collective issues such as reciprocal problem solving (Mathwick et al., 2008). In addition, gift giving has been found to be an important component in virtual communities and online gift economies (Belk, 2013). These studies have found that customers may co-create value by themselves, but the relation between individual roles and the roles within a consumer community are less understood.

Pitt et al. (2006) indicate that people engage in online communities to co-create and innovate, while Muniz and O'Guinn (2001) explain that there are online communities for specific brands that are built for sharing experiences related to the brand. These experiences are created by consumers and marketers and take place inside and outside of the service place. This experiential view of value creation between the company and the customer is an area where little research has focused (Merz et al., 2009; Ramaswamy & Ozcan, 2014). Furthermore, most of the research has focused on the consumer perspective. Consumers are more easily accessible than managers, so very limited research has looked at the managerial perspective. Similarly, studies relating to online brand communities have for the most part addressed a consumer perspective in the creation of value (Cova & Pace, 2006; Cova et al., 2011; Pongsakornrungsilp & Schroeder, 2011).

In this discussion of online brand communities, it is important also to highlight that luxury consumption is often related to status and power and has been deemed a highly communicative act (Leban & Voyer, 2015). Veblen (1899) provided significant contributions towards the understanding conspicuous behaviour and the perceived value related to high priced items like luxury products (Leibenstein, 1950). These products are purchased in order to communicate wealth and achieve social status (Bagwell and Bernheim, 1996). Additionally, customers buy luxury products to signal their social status (Han, Nunes, & Drèze, 2010). This element of luxury consumption plays a significant part in the behaviour and motivation of the members within luxury communities. This phenomenon is of great importance for two reasons. First, member interaction in an online community is highly structured and hierarchical (Muniz & O'Guinn, 2001). Second, consumers can use online communities to develop a feeling of belongingness in the luxury world without having to buy an expensive item, still enhancing self-esteem and perceived power at a lower financial cost (Belk, 2013; Muniz & O'Guinn, 2001).

2.4. Customer engagement

When discussing brand communities, the term "engagement" is used to describe the nature of participants specific interactions and/or interactive experiences. This is how we define engagement within this paper and rely on the interaction within the community and social media presence. However, despite the increasing usage of these terms, marketing scholars have paid relatively little attention to the theoretical development of the "engagement" concept, and of "consumer engagement" in online brand communities to-date (Brodie et al., 2013).

The SDL emphasises the importance of customer engagement and dialogue during the co-creation process. Researchers have explored the role of customer engagement in customer value co-creation (Oyner and

Korelina, 2016; Zhang et al. 2017). Customers depict high levels of engagement when they are affectively and cognitively invested (Brodie et al., 2013). Pansari and Kumar (2017) also recognise that as customers become more engaged in the service process they can experience more of the service products and share their service experience and its information with other customers. Also, when customers depict high engagement, they are likely to refer and recommend the brand to others (Moliner et al., 2018). Social media platforms allow for a natural engagement where active participation of knowledge and option exists (Jahn et al., 2012).

The process of sharing personal relevant information, knowledge, and experiences in an online community through active engagement by the actor contributes and reflects the behavioural and/or cognitive dimensions of consumer engagement (Brodie et al., 2013). Most of engagement research in marketing either explicitly or implicitly assumes that engagement is an actor-specific characteristic and discusses issues such as 'willingness to engage' as part of an actor's disposition. Actors engagement in terms of interfacing and exchanging occurs within shared institutional logics, and simultaneously builds and sustains such logics.

Brodie et al. (2011) show that practicing managers use the concept of engagement in a variety of ways to describe how firms interact with customers. Engagement is used as a synonym for a firm's 'go-to-market' approach: that is, what channels are used to interact with customers, how resource-intensive is the approach (ranging from on-line selling to strategic account management), and what is the process applied to generate exchange and interactions both pre- and post-purchase. Consequently, exploring the active engagement between brands and customers by studying their online interactions can help us understand online value co-creation.

3. Methodology

To explore the research question on how luxury brands and its customers co-create value in an online context, we employed a phenomenological qualitative methodology. Phenomenology is concerned with the investigation of experience from the point of view of the individual, and in this study, it is used in order to understand the brand and customers online interactions. The research design included a multi-method, single case study, qualitative research approach with three stages. We employed these methods for two reasons. First, a qualitative research approach is more appropriate when the research question is exploratory and where there is need for a deeper description and explanation of a multifaceted phenomenon. Second, the qualitative case study methodology allows the researcher to explore individuals or organisations through various phenomena (Yin, 2003). This research studied a specific luxury hotel in an attempt to study real-life phenomena and to understand the value co-creation between the brand and its customers, which lately has been indicated a research priority (Oyner & Korelina, 2016). Specifically, the interviews allowed us to gather experiences and subjective views on the co-created luxury value for both managers and customers, while the netnography allowed us to explore the interactions with the co-create material.

3.1. Context of the study

Fairmont Hotels & Resorts International (FRHI) was selected as the empirical case for data collection and theorising. FRHI is a French owned (Accor Hotel Group) hotel group, which manages over 70 hotels worldwide. FRHI has developed a branded website called Fairmont Moments (FM) that provides exclusive hotel and destination content that reflects the rich history of the brand. The website is dialogue designed to encourage interaction with the customers. These user generated contributions result in online dialogue between the brand and the customer. The engagement on FM results in FRHI learning more about their guest and what they want from staying in a luxury hotel. To
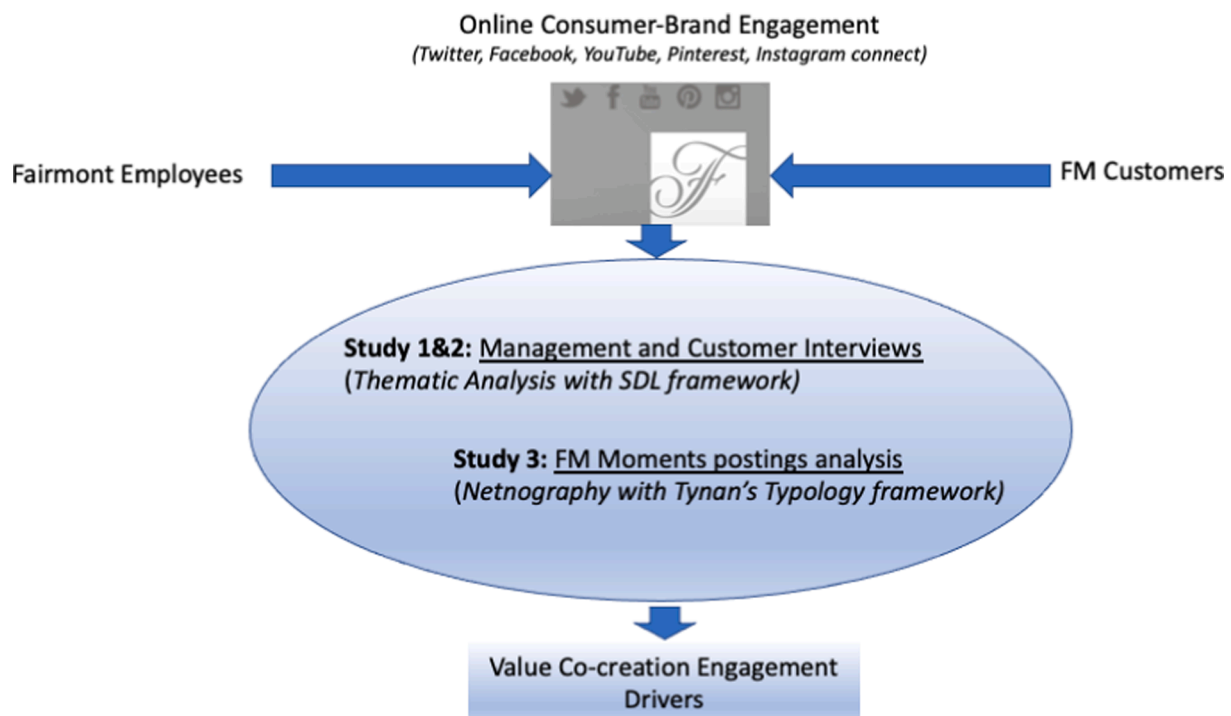
Online Consumer-Brand Engagement
(Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, Pinterest, Instagram connect)

Fairmont Employees

FM Customers

Study 1&2: Management and Customer Interviews
(Thematic Analysis with SDL framework)

Study 3: FM Moments postings analysis
(Netnography with Tynan's Typology framework)

Value Co-creation Engagement
Drivers

Fig. 1. Research Design Framework.

encourage sharing and engagement across social networks, all the content on FM is equipped with Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, Pinterest, Instagram connect, as well as Email, Rate and Comment capabilities. This form of content co-creation site is unique and provided an excellent platform to explore our research question.

3.2. Research design

Fig. 1 presents our research design framework. We collected data for a period of four years utilising several methods of data collection including in-depth interviews with senior managers and customers and a longitudinal netnography of the brand's website to explore which dimensions attract more engagement and thus contribute to greater value co-creation. Netnography has adapted the traditional in person participant observation technique to study communication patterns in an online context. Digital technologies and social media networks have enabled access to these online communities, so netnography is an update to ethnographic research to the digital era (Kozinets, 2010). This unobtrusive, naturalistic method of enquiry permits the investigation of the groups without the researcher's participation or interference (Kozinets, 2010; Cova and Pace, 2006). The importance of netnography is increasingly recognized by marketers due to consumers discussing products and brands online (Muniz and O'Guinn, 2001). These online communities also provide new opportunities for market-oriented consumer interaction and allow marketing researchers to study the tastes, desires and needs of consumers interacting in online communities. In this research the data collection methods and the data sources were also triangulated along with theory (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). Our findings resulted in useful managerial and consumer insights.

In stage one we undertook fifteen in-depth semi-structured interviews with managers executives, all experts familiar with the firm's marketing strategy and the development of the FM co-creation website. The participants were selected by the hotel's Marketing Director who advised on the best candidates to be interviewed based on their role and contribution to the FM community website. There were two employee designations in our study. The first group of 7 individuals interviewed held positions that involved closely managing the day-to-day operations

of the FM website. The second group of 8 individuals were involved both in the FM website and the overall marketing strategy at the Fairmont. Although both groups have direct involvement in the FM website the second group had greater insight in the development of strategy and a closer understanding of company messaging. In order to gain a holistic and detailed understanding for this study, it was important that all the candidates had direct involvement and experience with the FM website. All participants had responsibilities in tactical or strategy level marketing in their current or previous roles. Table 1 includes the information of all the participants. The interviews lasted 30 min on average and focused on 6 areas of SDL relative to the value these areas contribute to the company (FP1, FP6, FP7, FP9, FP10 and FP11). Table A1 of the Appendix includes the management interview guide. An opening question was used to set the premise of the interview and establish rapport with the respondent (Fontana & Frey, 1994). Further questions followed which were structured around the various areas of SD Logic resulted in a probing interview that successfully gathered information from the interviewees (Berg, 2004). Purposeful sampling was used which produced rich data with a meaningful contribution to the research question (Mason, 2005). The data collection took place on Skype, since the interviewees were based in Toronto and Geneva. Wutich et al. (2015) have supported this type of interview as the researcher has time to reflect on the answers and maintain continuous contact when questions arise. Skype interviews and the ease of video conference technology helps to create trust and rapport like conducting a face-to-face interview.

In stage 2 we conducted fifty customer narrative interviews (Pace, 2008). These interviews were based on customers that have used the Fairmont Hotel more than once and are aware of the FM website either to post or to view content. Table 2 includes the customer participant profiles. These customers were deemed low to moderate users and were moderate to highly aware of the brand. To recruit the participants, snowball sampling was used. Previous work has identified that snowball sampling can be effectively applied as a method to reach a target population and can be viewed as a response to overcoming the problems associated with sampling concealed populations (Hendricks et al., 1992). The interviews followed a semi-structured interview guide (see Table A2 in the Appendix) based on questions relative to online search

Table 1
Management participants and their details (gender, age, position, number of years).

Interview Number	Sex	Age	Position	Number of Years with Position Held	Number of Years with the Brand
1	F	30–40	Director of Social Media & Community, FRHI Hotels & Resorts	4	6
2	F	20–30	Manager of Brand Marketing, FRHI Hotels and Resorts	3.7	7
3	F	20–30	Manager of Social Media & Communication, FRHI Hotels & Resorts	1.5	1.5
4	M	20–30	Manager of Electronic Customer Relationships Management, FRHI Hotels & Resorts	3	6
5	M	30–40	Director of Digital Marketing for Europe, Russia & Turkey, FRHI Hotels & Resorts	6	6
6	M	20–30	Manager Digital Marketing, FRHI Hotels & Resorts	1	6
7	F	30–40	Executive Director of Analytics Marketing and Consumer Insights, FRHI Hotels & Resorts	1	3.5
8	M	30–40	Director of Public Relations, FRHI Hotels & Resorts	3	15
9	M	40–50	Senior Vice President of Marketing, FRHI Hotels & Resorts	1	13
10	F	30–40	Director, Brand Experience, FRHI Hotels & Resorts	3	21
11	F	50–60	Director of Partners Marketing, FRHI Hotels & Resorts	10	10
12	M	30–40	Director of Integrative Marketing, FRHI Hotels & Resorts	1	8
13	F	30–40	Manager, PR & Partnerships, Marketing & Sales, FRHI Hotels & Resorts	1.5	1.5
14	M	30–40	Director of Product Innovation, FRHI Hotels & Resorts	2	2
15	F	40–50	Director of Loyalty of Marketing, FRHI Hotels & Resorts	2.5	2.5

Table 2
Customer participants and their details (gender, age, education engagement with the FM website).

Interviewee	Education	Gender	Age	Engagement with the FM website
1	Masters	F	20–30	Poster
2	BA University	M	40–50	Lurker
3	High School	F	20–30	Poster
4	Masters	F	30–40	Lurker
5	BA University	M	30–40	Lurker
6	Professional (PhD)	F	30–40	Poster
7	BA University	M	50+	Lurker
8	BA University	F	50+	Lurker
9	BA University	F	30–40	Lurker
10	BA University	F	50+	Lurker
11	Masters	M	50+	Poster
12	High School	F	50+	Lurker
13	High School	M	50+	Lurker
14	BA University	M	30–40	Lurker
15	BA University	F	40–50	Lurker
16	BA University	F	30–40	Poster
17	Masters	F	40–50	Lurker
18	High School	M	40–50	Lurker
19	BA University	F	50+	Lurker
20	BA University	F	40–50	Lurker
21	Masters	M	50+	Lurker
22	Masters	F	30–40	Poster
23	Professional (PhD)	M	40–50	Lurker
24	Professional (PhD)	F	30–40	Lurker
25	Professional (PhD)	M	30–40	Lurker
26	Masters	M	40–50	Lurker
27	BA University	F	20–30	Poster
28	BA University	F	30–40	Lurker
29	BA University	F	40–50	Lurker
30	High School	F	50+	Lurker
31	BA University	M	50+	Lurker
32	Professional (PhD)	F	20–30	Poster
33	BA University	F	20–30	Poster
34	Masters	F	50+	Lurker
35	High School	M	50+	Lurker
36	BA University	F	20–30	Poster
37	High School	F	20–30	Poster
38	BA University	F	20–30	Poster
39	Masters	F	20–30	Lurker
40	BA University	F	20–30	Poster
41	Masters	F	20–30	Lurker
42	Masters	F	20–30	Lurker
43	BA University	M	20–30	Poster
44	Masters	M	30–40	Lurker
45	BA University	M	30–40	Lurker
46	BA University	M	40–50	Lurker
47	BA University	M	40–50	Lurker
48	BA University	M	40–50	Poster
49	BA University	F	40–50	Lurker
50	BA University	F	40–50	Lurker

behaviours and preferences, value in a company's website and online community awareness and use. These questions were again based on the SDL FPs, related to value, service, resources and co-creation focus and how they evolve into a broader area of customer value and their experience with the brand. Questions ranged from an initially broad non-directive approach (McCracken, 2011) with questions such as "how are you today" or "how is the weather in XXX today" to create an open environment for the conversation. Following this, demographic questions were asked followed by the specific questions surrounding hotel online search, valuable information, brand loyalty, and online engagement. The interviews were also conducted on Skype and each interview was recoded and transcribed.

The last stage involved the online observations, where we gathered data from the FM website. Following Kozinets's (2010) indications for

netnography, we focused on language and interactions (in terms of comments, likes, and sharing of said posts) with the company's and customers' posts. Working with archival online data resulted in a naturalistic analysis where our role was purely observational and requiring us to become specialized types of lurkers. This "lurking" is an important step to deepen the understanding of the researchers (Kozinets et al., 2014). To control reliability and validity and to achieve data triangulation we observed the community over a long period and gathered data at two times; once in 2016 and once in 2020. Heinonen and Medberg (2018) highlighted the importance of undertaking longitudinal netnography, since they offer the possibility of capturing and understanding changes in customers' processes. At the second time of data collection in 2020 the website had been active for ten years and the community had a core of approximately 12,000 users. Within this user

Table 3
Coding Manual following SDL.

Thematic Coding	Definition
Co-created Value	Shared Content Online. Customers and hotel can decide what is important to each through posting content in the form of photos and comments.
Unique Value	Involves distinct, non-replicable product and service. Comments related to history or services etc.
Value-in-Context	The company offering, loyalty programmes, (brand partnerships like BMW bikes, Reebok runners with Fairmont Fit), online photo contests. Comments and photos in the FM Website
Actors	Employee & Customers
Operand Resources	Technology (hardware), Hotel (building)
Operant Resources	Skills & knowledge of employees

Table 4
Coding Manual following Tynan et al. (2010) Typology.

Thematic Coding	Definition
Cost/Sacrifice	Exclusivity, Package offering (Spa/Hotel), Partner Products Opportunity
Experiential/Hedonic	Beautiful photos of customers at hotel pool, property, spa, restaurants. Shared experiences about an adventure or holiday moment.
Relational	Consumer brand relationship, thanking staff
Symbolic/Expressive: Nostalgia	Memories and nostalgia toward previous experiences at the Fairmont hotels surrounding anniversary, birthdays, holiday trips.
Symbolic/Expressive: Outer	Status, esteem, hashtags, self interest
Utilitarian	Awards or excellence of staff, Craftsmanship of facilities or properties, Educating, Storytelling, Recipes
Cost/Sacrifice	Exclusivity, Package offering (Spa/Hotel), Partner Products Opportunity

base, around 400 members were characterised as active (posts monthly) with an overall of approximately 3000 posts. The content volume of the posts was roughly 40–60 between the brand and its customers. We decided to gather overall 200 posts to keep it to a manageable level (Kozinets, 2010). We were conscious to choose participants who had posted at different time periods over several years on the FM website. These posts are in a similar vein to purposive sampling in market-oriented ethnography (Wallendorf & Belk, 1989; Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

3.3. Data analysis and interpretation

The interviews were audio-recorded, transcribed verbatim and analysed using thematic analysis to identify patterned meanings emerging from the data to provide insight into the RQs (Braun & Clarke, 2006). To generalise the findings beyond the particular online community we employed researcher triangulation with both researchers being involved in the analyses of the data. Themes from the literature were used to analyse both the interviews and the netnography data based on a priori theoretical frameworks (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; Combe et al., 2012). The a priori themes were those anticipated to be present in the interview texts based on the theoretical frameworks. Table 3 provides the full coding manual. Both researchers followed a six-stage process of data familiarisation, data coding and theme development and revision to identify key themes (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The initial stage of the qualitative analysis was to become familiar with the data, which entailed reading and re-reading the transcripts. This final stage of this coding and analysis utilized a process of pattern coding (Miles et al., 2013).

To gather the netnography data it was decided to "lurk" and read the discussion posts and collect data covertly to obtain honest and true data from the members dialogue. Researchers that are interested in a product

or service may "lurk" on a social network to familiarise themselves with the operating culture of that network before actively contributing. Revealing yourself as a researcher has potential impact upon the level and type of data obtained. It can be more disruptive to enter a social network and reveal yourself as a researcher than it is to remain "invisible" (Paccagnella, 1997). Thus the decision and permission given by the Fairmont to use the data allowed us to remain hidden since covert studies of online communities are preferable and provide a truer picture of the community (Langer & Blackman, 2005).

We followed the guidelines of ethical procedures recommended for netnography and online ethnography (Kozinets, 2015). Data collected were archival (already published), however to further respect anonymity and confidentiality, user names were not recorded, and we used anonymous numbering to record the posts. This specific research poses no more than minimal risk to participants who are pseudonymously post conversational material to a public forum. The posts of content is made in a closed network requiring a log-in to the website.

The contents of the 200 posts were recorded and words were coded based on the dimensions of value from the Tynan et al.'s (2010) typology. Table 4 provides the full coding manual. Similar to the interviews, the netnography data were interpreted using thematic analysis. After the first round of coding, we generated more complex second-order codes following hermeneutics which is an iterative method where a piece of qualitative data is interpreted and then reinterpreted with respect to the 'whole' (Kozinets, 2010). In this regard, it is worth noting that although analytic coding and hermeneutic interpretation are sometimes considered different approaches (Spiggle, 1994), it is advised to use both to provide a more sensitive interpretation (Kozinets, 2010: 120). The information gathered from the website provided a rich detail of content to further investigate the themes and topics discussed on the co-creation website, so the researchers also used data condensation process described by Miles et al. (2013).

The application of these techniques made it possible to triangulate the data across different methods, which informed my final interpretations. By using in-depth interviews and netnography, we were able to examine the phenomenon of customers experiences from different viewpoints, cross-check our results and facilitate a more comprehensive understanding (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005).

4. Findings

This study set out to explore how luxury services and its customers co-create value in an online context. In order to achieve this, our research analysed an online luxury service community of FRHI named FM. We first set out to explore what managers and customers found useful from this online experience. Following this and since value co-creation is difficult to observe empirically, we decided to understand the phenomenon by identifying the content that delivers more engagement within this co-created online community. A high level of sharing on social media results in higher levels of interaction and thus more customer engagement. By conducting interviews, observing the FM community and utilising the SDL and the Tynan et al.'s (2010) luxury value framework we present a conceptual framework for online co-created value of luxury services (Fig. 2) and a typology for online content that supports online value co-creation (Fig. 3).

We further developed profiles of the customers that engage in co creation. The results suggest that both managers and customers recognise the unique value and the value in-context. Further to this the pleasurable/experiential content provides the highest numbers for most engaged posts. The study reinforces the notion that exclusive experiences are important for services as well as highlighting the benefit of using an experiential approach to build a successful content strategy within online luxury communities.

It is important to highlight that in a single community post, there could be multiple value categories that apply. This was expected given the personal and expressive nature of the brands community website
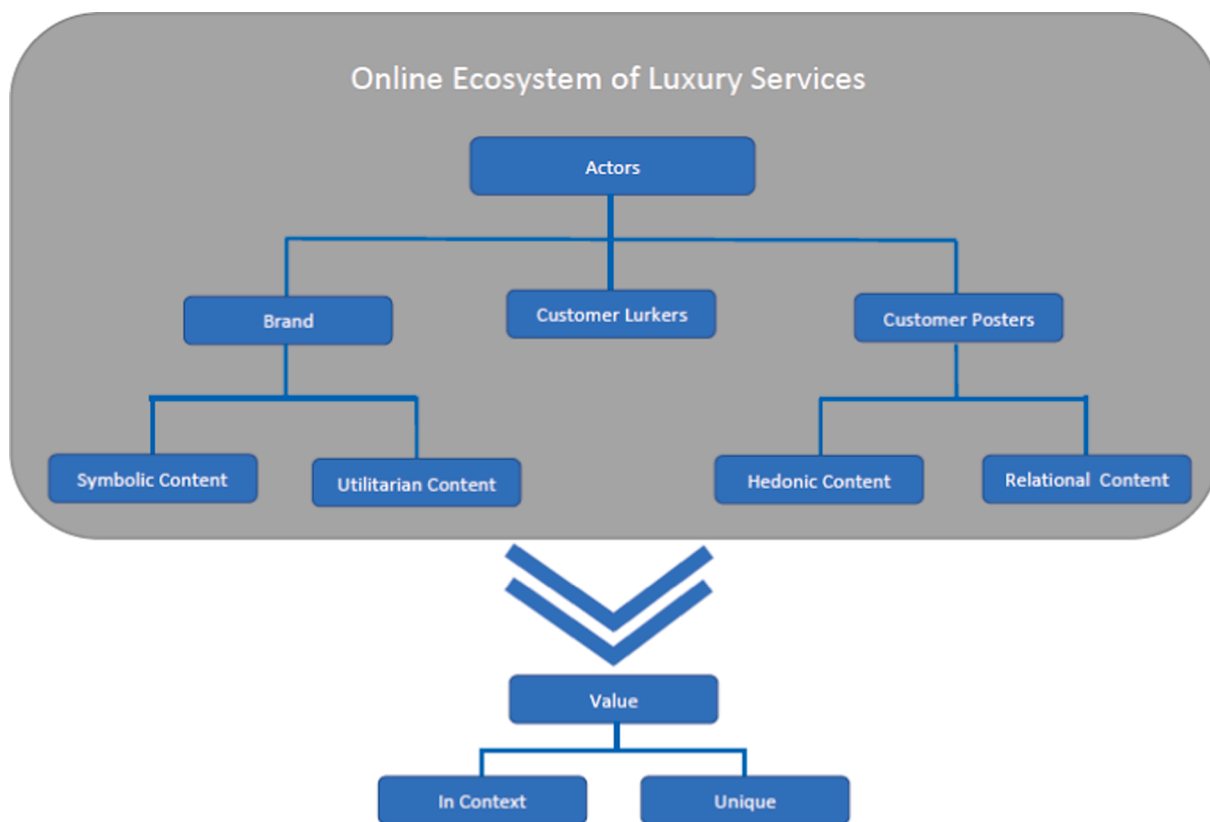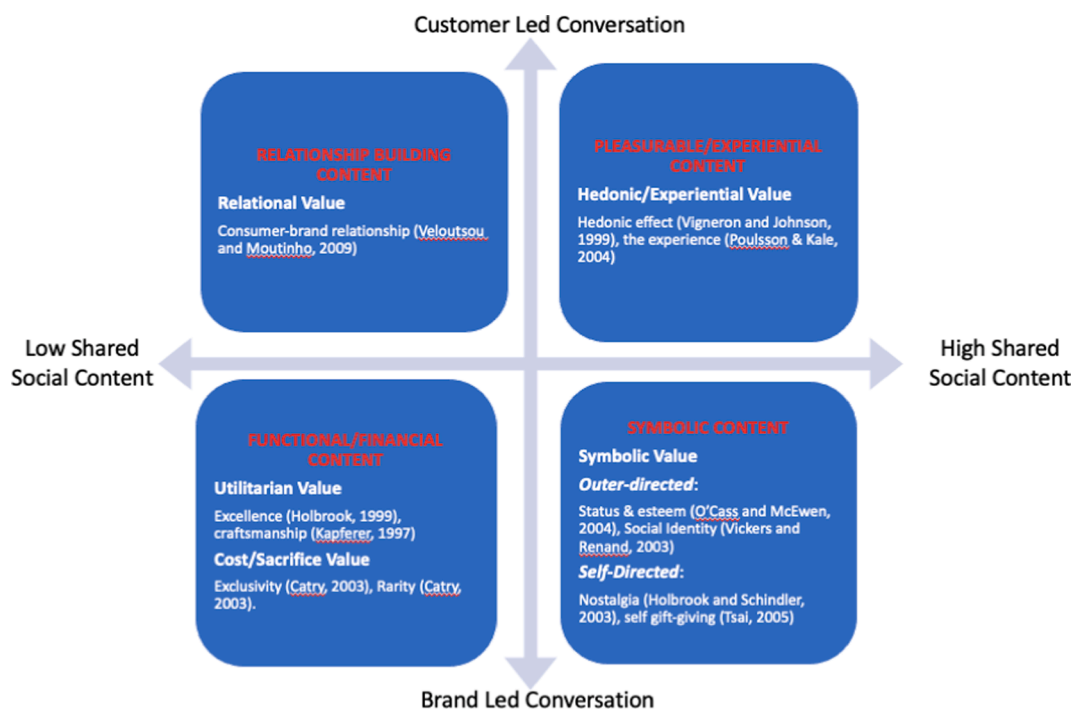
Fig. 2. Conceptual Framework.

Fig. 3. Typology of Co-Created Social Sharing Content based on Luxury Value.

containing image and text posts. In other value frameworks or typologies, like Holbrook and Woodside's (2008) value typology, multiple value categories can be chosen; the value is not mutually exclusive. In Tynan et al.'s (2010) framework, one post may possess the value for multiple value categories. As an example, a single post can have both outer and self-directed symbolic/expressive value. However, for the purposes of categorising the social sharing the most prevalent typology was recorded. Table 5 presents the volume of social sharing based on the luxury value typology.

Table 5
Social Sharing volume based on Luxury Value Typology.

Value	Dimension Theme	Number	Social Shares
Pleasurable Experiential			
	Hedonic effect	19	77 Facebook, 2 Tweets, 3 Pin, 1 Google +, 15 Website Comments
	The experience	100	668 Facebook, 15 Instagram, 10 Tweets, 27 Pinterest, 9 Google +, 17 Website Comments
Symbolic			
Outer-directed	Status/esteem: Hashtags/shared experience	15	13 Facebook, 7 Instagram, 1 Pin, 13 Website Comments
	Prestige – Wedding/Engagement	6	56 Facebook, 8 Instagram, 7 Tweets, 4 Google +, 8 Website Comments
Self-directed	Self-gift giving	2	12 Tweets, 3 Instagram
	Nostalgia	6	38 Facebook, 9 Tweets, 5 Pins, 18 Website
Relationship Building			
	Consumer-brand relationship: Thanking Staff	25	15 Facebook, 1 Instagram, 2 Tweets, 3 Website Comments
	Feel like I belong here	6	5 Facebook, 1. Tweet, 2 Website Comments
	Part of the Fairmont Family, our home away from home	8	3 Instagram, 3 Website Comments
Functional/Financial			
	Exclusivity: Offer – Spa, Hotel, Partner Products	7	11 Instagram, 1 Pinterest
	Rarity (Honey Bee Programme)	1	
	Excellence: Awards of Staff	5	1 Instagram, 11 Tweets
	Craftsmanship: Architecture	5	1 FB
	Educate - Storytelling	7	1 Google Plus
	Recipes	2	

4.1. Drivers of value

The management interview questions were shaped around the axioms of value, service, resources and actors. The importance of value could be recognised in the desire for the Fairmont management to co-created value.

"We can learn about what's important to the guests" (managerial interview 3)

They also highlighted the importance of technology, employee skills, storytelling, memories, partnerships and customer experience and the customer was recognised as the key driver of co-created value.

"We are always learning from our guests and gaining insights. Innovation and continual adoption of technologies is imperative especially in our line of business – hotels, we are an information rich business and need to stay on top of what the information means to continual innovation." (managerial interview 6)
"Either before the guest steps on the property, during the stay or after the stay, guests are logging on and sharing their experiences and learning from staff. Staff knowledge and the ability to touch guests in a memorable way is the key to great guest experiences." (managerial interview 2)
"I think part of FM fills a void that Trip Advisor doesn't. FM is very different because it's more storytelling – like a customer review. That extra voice you need. You'll use TripAdvisor to check the rating but use EAO to shape your trip and what you do." (managerial interview 9)

The customer was seen as a key driver of the co-created content and co-production of the content from the customer was important in creating unique value, and value-in-context with original stories and memories being shared. The management also recognised that the drivers of engagement was a continual need for the co-created value, that should be based on the brands proposed value (contests, brand partnerships) between the brand and the customers in this online environment.

"Co-creation around content is critically important. Both by the nature of our brand and because we have a very experiential product. Consumers are willing to share their experiences, their photos and video about experiences and memories ..which ultimately drives more engagement and usage of our website." (managerial interview 13)

In the customer interviews the questions were structured to determine the key elements the customers use within co-creation websites. Most customers were aware of the FM website and expressed that they like to use it for recipes search, to recreate dishes and cocktails and to view other peoples' photos as well as post their own from Instagram and Facebook. Table A3 in the Appendix contains illustrative quotes from managers regarding value co-creation.

4.1.1. Value-in-context

A focus on value co-creation between the customer and the brand is a source of interaction and connection; it forms a two-way online dialogue and highlights content of interest. This results in value-in-context for the customer, which is one of the main reasons the customer, would engage with the website. Value-in-context can be identified within online content, where the brand tries to engage the customer in online dialogue on a social networking channel. Value-in-context is a service-centred view that is inherently customer oriented and relational and will generate more "likes" and "shares", and hopefully draw customers to the hotel for future business (Table A4 in the Appendix contains illustrative quotes from both managers and customers regarding value-in-context). The following quotes from the manager for the FM highlight this:

"It's like having 10's of thousands of stories where people are writing endorsements for your company." (managerial interview 3)
"We need to utilize our best marketing efforts to capture and enhance the conversation online…we are in the best position to provide the platform and can be involved in the communication, not necessarily controlling but involved and helping to shape it." (managerial interview 3)

Value-in-context encompasses the idea that a customer's interpretation of an experience is attached to the product/service bundles in relation to the context in which they are used (Vargo & Lusch, 2008). Comments from the customer interviews unveil that connection with like-minded people, online trip planning, sharing recipes and other interesting content all showed examples of value-in-context.

"I've visited before, and I've contributed. It's a nice touch, it's not hardcore marketing. It's real and staff are responding to any communication. When I have time waiting for a flight, I often go on those sorts of websites." (customer interview 2)

Specifically, the interviews provided insight into the type of information that the traveller is searching for online, and the importance of the hotel to staying up to date with the latest methods to connect with the customer online. From the customer discussion, various ideas of online search and information gathering were revealed to help shape trip plans:

"I like some of the photos and to check out others' activities at certain hotels before I go is use full – to see some of the dishes at a Fairmont restaurant for example." (customer interview 16)

"Ease of use, also social media, even just the real people, you can look up peoples Instagram account. You're not going to hashtag Fairmont unless you like the brand. Authentic content, travel bloggers that I respect." (customer interview 27)

"I like a place that is trying to engage and has interesting content I would like to read, not necessarily post myself though." (customer interview 14)

Several customers mentioned finding the recipes from Fairmont restaurants interesting and valuable for content searches. An example:

"I would definitely be interested in the recipes, and to engage with other customer, what type of people are staying there, and engaging with them makes it feel more personal." (customer interview 41)

All these discussions are consistent with the creation of value between the customer and company as co-creators of value (Cova et al. 2011). From a marketing perspective this indicates that creating relationships through memorable experiences whether they are online, offline or both (Smith & Wheeler, 2002; Ballantyne and Varey, 2006) is important.

4.1.2. Unique value

The uniqueness of the FM website is clearly recognised by the managers (see Table A5 – Panel A for all the comments from managers around the unique value of FM). One interviewee recognised the importance the site plays for customers finding properties.

"Social media gives an opportunity for guests to read and get inspiration on our properties. It's very engaging. It's underutilised to drive traffic… Just as the traveller wants to go to one of the prosperities – user content of our guests is far more appealing for potential guests to read than prefabricated marketing stuff the brand creates." (managerial interview 6)
"It's a unique platform and very interaction. It's a place where they can share memories and know they fit into." (managerial interview 9)

They also have realised the value that the FM website plays for showcasing the brand's unique experiences.

"Co-creation around content is critically important. Both by the nature of our brand and because we have a very experiential product. Consumers are willing to share their experiences, their photos and video about experiences and memories … which ultimately drives more engagement and usage of our website." (managerial interview 14)

Unique value is experienced by Fairmont customers whose treasured memories and special moments can be shared online. This sense of irreplicable experience creates a competitive advantage. The brand receives value when these customers share, like or hashtag online, with the overall goal for the Fairmont to showcase these customer stories and create an online connection.

Comments from the customer interviews suggested that memories, history beautiful hotels, online posts of photos and viewing of recipes all showed examples of unique value. Particularly the "usefulness" of the community. Several customers have used the website because they wanted to enter contests, find a recipe or become aware of different hotels with "fun, like-minded, people":

"I have been on Fairmont moments and have found it interesting and useful but often I find I don't have much time for entering contests or searching recipes. I feel like I know the hotel and what to expect that unless I'm looking for something specific like – I want a few more photos of the Dubai Fairmont as I haven't stayed there before,… I probably wouldn't spend much time on a website without a real purpose." (customer interview 34)

"My daughter may like to post photos and share some of the gorgeous pool scenes. When we were in Monaco the pool roof is just incredible so I can see why people post it's just not something I would do but the Fairmont needs to find ways to connecting to new and next generation customers and I think they're doing the right thing by starting early, staying abreast with the technologies and really committing to the customers online." (customer interview 21)

The hotel encourages customers to communicate on the website through the "experience" and "memories" headings showcasing the hotel's value of the online experience. Tying in a website community directly with the linking of memories and using photos and videos to capture those moments is a marketing strategy the brand has consistently been communicating to the customer. An example is a quote from a customer interview mentioning the memory creation linked to the hotel.

"I recognise the heritage. A CP rail hotel, locations as a result of this the buildings are normally centrally located in cities that is perfect. As a result of a historical sense, the results carry my allegiance to Fairmont Internationally. For me Fairmont is comfortable, heritage, feels like home and I know what to expect" (customer interview 38)

By utilising the SDL framework, the management and customer interviews highlighted uniqueness and context as important drivers for value co-creation. More is needed however to better understand what kind of online content supports the luxury services online value co-creation.

4.2. Drivers of engagement

The following four categories emerge from our netnography study, and we illustrate each one with data from our interviews and observations. Table 5 presents the social sharing volume by luxury value, while Fig. 2 summarises the categories of content. Table A6 in the Appendix provides illustrative comments of the key drivers of content engagement that facilitate value co-creation.

4.2.1. Pleasurable/experiential high-shared content

The overall experience of the customer's personal interpretation and individualistic joy or hedonic effect (Poulsson & Kale, 2004) represents the key values within the community. Many of the posts contained experiential and hedonic value. Weddings and engagements are frequently discussed on the website. These events are often associated with high costs, so it reflects favourably on the hotel when consumers are very pleased with the results. Given these events are highly emotional, they are perfect for posts on a social media platform. Other themes like "memories", "amazing beauty", "celebrate", were noted as popular themes amongst the photos and comments. Within the hedonic experiences, guests are mentioning their good times and interactions with hotel and staff that aided in their overall experience.

"I visited this beautiful hotel when I was a kid and had wonderful memories. I was excited to return and make more memories with my own kids. We spent a beautiful spring weekend at the Empress enjoying the pool, walking the beautiful grounds full of blooming tulips, and celebrating with a wonderful Easter brunch at the hotel." (post by a customer in FM platform)
"Imagine a day spent floating on Houhai Lake. Then, after a day of restaurants, bars and lounging on the water come back to Fairmont a bridge and treat yourself to a famous Relaxing massage at our Willow Stream Spa. @fairmonthotels @willowstreamspa #spa #houhai #beijing #fairmont #willowstreamspa #summer #sun #china #tour #tourism #hotel #hospitality #lake #boat #cruise #fun # massage #zen #relax #luxury" (post by the brand in FM platform)

"If it was for a personal trip then yes, I would and share with others so yes I would post and yes I would be interested in viewing other peoples photos." (customer interview 8)

A further example where the memory creation linked to the hotel, is reflected in the following quote from a customer interview.

"I've visited Fairmont Moments before and I've contributed. It's a nice touch, it's not hardcore marketing. It's real and staff are responding to any communication. When I have time waiting for a flight, I often go on those sorts of websites." (customer interview 2)

4.2.2. Symbolic high-shared content

Luxury branding and services rely heavily on symbolism as an important way to set their brand apart from other brands. Symbolism can be viewed in two distinct ways to interpret the meaning surrounding – either outer directed or self-directed. We found that it was difficult to separate the self-directed and outer directed posts, as many posts had mentioned both values within a single one. Within the outer-directed, a stronger sense of status or esteem (Holbrook, 1999), social identity (Vickers and Renand, 2003) and uniqueness (Ruvio, 2008) along with authenticity (Beverland, 2006) were the characteristics that prevailed in this community. Mentioning the hotel brands name in the posts, or other brands associated with the post as well as hashtags within the text also linked to a strong expressive message being directed to the community, linking to the poster's identity.

"In honour of National Flip Flop Day, the only pair of @ipanemausa that came with us on our trip last weekend. #ipanemausa #panemabossa" (post by the brand in FM platform)
Along with this comment was a photo with a woman at the Fairmont in flip flops.

Another very important way to deliver interesting and relevant content to the consumer was through partner brands. Currently BMW bikes, Reebok, Nobu, and the Willow Stream spa brand are all high-profile consumer names connected with the Fairmont brand. However, new and engaging content is key in engaging retaining on-going online interest. In the "experience economy" (Pine & Gilmore, 2013), customers are constantly looking for trusted and exciting new product introductions. Recent programs like "Fairmont Fit," where guests are provided with Reebok fitness clothing and shoes are well received by both business and leisure guests.

"The Fairmont's partner spa brand, Willow Stream, is a major contributor to the FM website, providing a variety of online content including promotional "wellness" packages and products to "help make life easier." (managerial interview 3)
"Pick your favorite color! We now have several different colors of travel size OPI polish to play with! #WillowStreamSpa #WillowStreamMaui #NailPolish #Travelsise" (post by the brand in FM platform)

Self-gift giving (Mick & DeMoss, 1990) and nostalgia (Holbrook & Schindler, 2003) linking to charitable actions is something that was reflected in several posts. One mentions the charity's name and where they have participated by paying for a suite at the Fairmont called the Teddy Bear Suite where proceeds go to specific charities.

"As this hectic time of year, I have taken a "time-out" with a visit to The Fairmont Olympic Hotel in Seattle… One of the Olympics' community projects is the Teddy Bear Suite. They invite children of all ages to view a Fairmont suite decorated with dozens of Teddy Bears of all sizes. This is also a benefit for Seattle Children's Hospital. Definitely a different experience from visiting Santa Claus – though I hear he has his own following and makes even me feel like a kid again!" (post by a customer in FM platform)

As well as high profile guests, the hotel group has a rich heritage

based on historical events that have taken place within the hotels, such as the drafting and signing of the United Nations Charter at San Francisco's Fairmont in 1945. Similarly, the hotel is one of two buildings to survive the 1906 San Francisco earthquake. With the history of the Fairmont hotels a natural fit offline has created momentum online when consumers are interested in sharing stories. An important goal of the hotel's website FM was to provide an easy place for consumers and the company to share memories.

"Fairmont has FM because of its history and legacy – The London Savoy, Banff Springs, Lake Louise – our hotels are a must see for people and the content is a repository for stories and history of the various properties." (managerial interview 8)

4.2.3. Relationship building low-shared content

Many of the posts were focusing on the relationships built between the customer and staff during the stay at a hotel (Veloutsou & Moutinho, 2009). A great deal of customers wanted to thank staff at specific hotels for making their experience so wonderful. Others shout out staff names and describe what made their trip so memorable.

"September evening views from my balcony. Thank you to the wonderful staff especially Jackie Kearns for her hospitality. Love this property!" (post by a customer in FM platform)

Through these posts were not highly shared, they give the brand the opportunity to show their appreciation to the customer which builds a stronger brand-customer connection.

"Great connection with the brand, it shows them we enjoy their Fairmont Moments. I think it drives that connection." (managerial interview, 7)

This has also been well perceived from the customers.

"I have checked in and posted a photo on Fairmont Moments through my Instagram account on our last trip to Banff Springs Spa. I know the hotel re-posted the image to their Facebook feed, which is kind of cool, they must have liked my photos." (customer interview 30)

Consumers create their experiences around the Fairmont hotel through membership in this virtual community and by sharing posts on their own social media. Scott and Lane (2000) suggest that the brand can participate by purposively managing its activities to foster a strong brand experience in order to create an identity construction. Other community members may not choose to post themselves but are happy to read other posts e.g., recipes or the magazine articles which appear on this brand community site.

The online experience is obviously different, but I still feel a sense of comfort and enjoy reading others' posts and seeing what community members are getting up to at the hotel. To me the online community is an extension of the brand and the personalities of the concierge continue online. I also enjoy reading the articles of the magazine, it's well done. And yes I post and enter contests through my Instagram account to try to get free night stay – but haven't won yet." (customer interview 35)

4.2.4. Functional/Financial Low-Shared content

Posts within the utilitarian value criteria discussed the excellence of the products or services (Holbrook, 1999), at the hotel and with staff. Strong craftsmanship (Kapferer, 1997) was also mentioned in relation to the hotel's buildings, history, and surroundings.

"Married in a location that epitomized the history and grandeur of Boston… Congratulations on your wedding! What made you decide on having your wedding with us at Fairmont?" (post by the brand in FM platform)

Luxury brand images have now developed to include brand heritage, quality, artistic value, and customer relationships (Kim & Ko, 2012). Within this study, the customers have often mentioned in the interviews

the high level of customer service, brand heritage, quality of hotel buildings (history and architecture, pool and spa).

> *"I want a brand I find interesting, I'm tired of boring cookie cutter hotels. If I'm travelling for leisure, I want history or culture or something going on with my hotel."* (customer interview 39)

The brand's own digital communication strategy helps to the quality of the customer experience with the brand. For example, food that can be found in Fairmont hotels is one example of what the brand posts frequently.

> *"I'm sure you know the website – but food and drinks – a great repository for food and recipes, a place to go and get inspiration for their home life's well. Hosting a party or a cocktail, they can serve these at home to their friends."* (managerial interview 3)
> *"Yes, I have been in FM and have found it interesting and useful to pull up recipes of meals I have had in some of the restaurants"* (customer interview 4)

Customers are also interested in identifying the rare attribute the brand has to offer.

> *"I like looking at what they are doing. I'm kind of an environmentalist type. I like to know what they're doing with the herb gardens on the roofs. I choose to eat there for the food if I can afford it. I think I saw also they have bees for the honey. Some of them have gardens where they grow the vegetables."* (customer interview 44)

The posts in this category although not highly shared, provide an important reason as to why customers engage with the brand in the first place.

4.3. Customer profiles engaging in co-creation

In order to identify the customers that bring greater value to the brand we split the customer participants of the study into two distinct profile categories – posters and lurkers – based on their relative responses.

Posters are those who are posts and sharing their photos or related content from onsite the hotel's properties. This is usually in relation to a proposed photo contest by the Fairmont with an economic incentive tied in which is utilitarian value connected. One user said:

> *"I am always interested in winning a hotel stay at the Fairmont. I love their hotels but have just started working and the Royal York is usually out of my price range."* (customer interview 3)

In other cases, photos are posted for self-interest, where more hedonic pictures are posted through the shared social feeds. A more hedonic in nature photo would be posted by a respondent saying:

> *"Social media is fun, I like connecting to the Fairmont Moments because it is easy to share and I stay at the Banff Springs regularly for work conferences. It's so beautiful, hard not to post amazing pictures."* (customer interview 32)

Those customers that are posts photos or engaging in dialogue is trying to better the brand or improve the experience among like-minded members. They also tend to remain attached and engaged in the Fairmont (posting a few times a year). They are seeking the experience and are directly engaging in content consumption of photos of other users or photos of the hotel properties/features.

On the other hand, *lurkers* are more interested in reading the content but not sharing or posts their own images. These users find the content interesting and valuable to inspire new trip ideas and gather information about the nearly 100 properties before a stay. These users also found value in the hotel restaurant and cocktail menu to recreate these recipes at home. Lurkers are not interested in contributing content themselves, but instead they find value and are interested to read posts and content

of other customers.

For example:

> *"I like to use FM to plan a trip, to be inspired by new hotel locations and the recipes at the properties so I know what I can expect. The posts seem more relaxed and authentic from other users, that's why I like it. I don't post photos myself, it's just not my thing. My children would but not me."* (customer interview 35)

These users were found to be predominantly of the age grouping 40–50+. Table 2 provides a taxonomy of the interviewees based on this profiling. Several of those interviewed mentioned that although they would not post on the website, the younger generations would. The phase "my children would post" was used in a few instances. Many in the age range of 40–50 and 50+ mentioned that their children would post content onto social feeds, but they would not. This raises an important question of how a lurker will become a poster. Prior research has indicated that this can happen through external stimuli, usability improvement, encouraging information (a welcome statement, introduction of reward rules, explicit comments, support for browsing and praise from the moderator) and guidance for newcomers (Sun et al., 2014). Fairmont has been so far utilising all these strategies. As one manager has indicated in their interview:

> "Most posts are done when the guest is enjoying our properties, on location, we are also awarding customers who are tweeting about an upcoming stay. Two ways really for the customer to engage – pre trip and on trip." (management interview 3)

Looking at our data, apart from age we also had an indication that positive experiences in the hotel created an enhanced effect for lurkers to become posters. For example, one customer that does not post often mentioned:

> "Yes, I think for me personally, if you've had a good experience, and you're being offered the opportunity to return." (customer interview 42)

Other customers that are nor posts often also highlighted that time is an issue for them to engage with the brand. This means that brand should find ways to ease the process of posts for customers.

5. Discussion

This study explored how a luxury service brand and its customers co-create value together in an online context. With access to an exclusive online brand community of a luxury hotel we explored which online content brings more engagement. To analyse this we employed a multi-method, single case study and developed a typology of online content that supports online value co-creation. Our findings make several contributions.

5.1. Theoretical and methodological contributions

The study holds the following five theoretical contributions: First, this work contributes to the theoretical knowledge of luxury literature by exploring actor co-creation in an online context (Gurzki & Woisetschläger, 2016). We found that within this context certain posts create more engagement, leading to an increase in online value. Pleasurable/experiential content creates the most engagement, followed by symbolic content posts. This is followed by content related to relationship building and functional/financial posts. The study supports prior findings which highlight and confirm that experiences are instrumental to deliver the essence of luxury (Tynan et al., 2014).

Second, the findings contribute towards the SDL literature by extending the discussion of the value-in-context on the experiential nature of value; the idea that a customer's interpretation of an experience is attached to product/service bundle in relation to the context in

which it is used (Vargo & Lusch, 2008). Value-in-context is an important dimension of SDL when discussing value co-creation because it frames service and the resources of an entire service ecosystem. If a brand shares a Facebook post with its fans, and fans then "share" and "like" the posts, this can be viewed as a network of actors that are interacting and finding the online context valuable, as they are co-creating exchanges in the ecosystem of the Facebook platform (Belk, 2009).

Third, the study answers a call in the service literature by extending value creation and value-in-use (Vargo et al., 2015). In line with previous service literature (McColl-Kennedy et al., 2015) the study demonstrates the importance of value creation among several actors (hotel staff and customer) and the importance of multi-actor interactions in luxury services (Holmqvist et al., 2020).

Fourth, the research contributes to the concept of luxury service exclusivity by highlighting the importance of the social exclusivity concept (Wirtz et al., 2020). The context of this research was a luxury hotel brand website, which was created by the brand provide access to exclusive content and offer photo contests involving Fairmont travel experiences. This type of "exclusive club" delivers value to service by making participants feel unique. Specifically, unique value was one of the two drives of value that was highlighted in our exploration for what managers and customers find valuable in an exclusive online experience.

Fifth and in line with the previous contribution this study adds to the conversation of online brand communities, by demonstrating that community members can create trustworthy experiences for other customers, inspire interactivity, and improve brand attitudes (Gu & Kim, 2016). The study supports the notion that experiential marketing can encourage content co-creation by providing customers with material to participate and engage in brand communities (Klein et al., 2016).

Besides these 5 theoretical contributions the study extends the luxury research from a methodological and managerial perspective. From a methodological one this research answers the call for the use of online customer data, to understand luxury in a real-life context (Gurzki & Woisetschläger, 2016). The study utilizes netnography to better understand these "real online social groups and thus have consequential effects on many aspects of behaviour, including consumer behaviour" (Muniz & O'Guinn, 2001, p.366). From a managerial point of view, the study explores how a brand and its customers co-create collaboratively to provide insights on how luxury brands can use new technologies to deliver customer experiences. This plays an important role as luxury brands are always trying to enhance the online luxury experience.

5.2. Managerial implications

For luxury brands that are seeking to optimize their online customer co-creation strategy this study provides several implications. Our findings highlight that luxury brands should carefully choose the dimensions of value they post to get the most value from the co-creation process. Storytelling and creating emotional ways of connecting with customers is a vital element of marketing, especially luxury marketing (Chandon et al., 2017; van Laer et al., 2019). Posts about cost/sacrifice value, for example Spa packages, or promotion upcoming holiday offerings might not be the best type of value to focus on for brand originating posts. Instead, the marketing management could provide facts of the luxury hotel's history, talk about the famous people and historical moments that have happened in the various hotels. As an example, The Fairmont's Savoy Hotel in London had the artist Claude Monet as the first "artist in resident" in 1901. This cultural content is interesting to the luxury brand community – interesting facts and lesser-known stories helps build a connection and conversation through storytelling (Gurzki & Woisetschläger, 2016).

Online content is viewed, shared, liked, and commented on when the customer finds it of interest and value. Storytelling about Fairmont history, Canine Ambassador Programs, The Fairmont Fit partnership with Reebok and the Rooftop Bees are all posts that generate interest among the customer actors in sharing, liking, and commenting. Another

important factor that influences website marketing is the continued development and proliferation of smart phones, and tablet hardware. The ease of use and access to these handheld devices has made it easy and convenient for consumers to quickly submit a review or share photos. Digital platforms and social media channels such as Connect on Facebook or Instagram allows one submission to create multiple posts on various social media platforms. This evolving digital environment requires the company to stay abreast of the latest technology and the integration of online software.

Online communication is an important way to "stay in touch" and connect with the customer, and utilise video, photo and audio content. Fendi, the luxury goods brand, has found that there is an 80 percent overlap between its off-line and online customer (Socha, 2015). Hermès CEO Axel Dumas described digital and physical stores as complementary to one another (Socha, 2015). Brands are also continuing to experiment in order to find new ways to improve the consumer experience. For example, Dior added Snapchat to its social media platforms with the cruise 2016 show near Cannes, France (Socha, 2015). As digital technologies continue to expand and grow, brands must adapt and continually evolve to connect with their audiences online.

In our post Covid-19 society, consumption within online communities can contribute to the feelings of joy and happiness (Knowles, 2020). Given the unknown post-Covid-19 social distancing required with continued outbreaks predicted, luxury brands should consider improving their online dream value, showcasing, and developing technologies to enhance the customers' online experience. Experiential and hedonic content should remain the focus for the brand to continue the practice of providing memorable and engaging experiences with the customers (Schmitt, 2003) in the hotels.

Last, current research also highlighted that incentivizing or rewarding customers for their participation in collaborative programs, such as posts photo contents online, could be viewed as volunteer or customer participation that is intrinsically rewarding. In the Fairmont's case, entering of a contest with a monetary valued hotel stay was incentive enough to increase customer posts of content. The introduction of contests is an important call to action for the hotel to increase content on the community.

5.3. Future research directions

Scholars building upon our findings might further the knowledge of luxury theory and strengthen the validity of the findings if they replicate the netnography in different contexts. Specifically, as this study focused on luxury services, it would be very interesting to explore whether the results are similar for luxury goods. Comparing the results would have meaningful implications for luxury fashion brand marketers. Another angle for future research would be to identify how passive customers can be converted to co-creators. Leban et al. (2020) in their recent paper studied Instagram consumers and identified lurking practises of luxury consumption on visual social media. It would be of great importance for luxury brands to understand how lurking practices can translate into real-world customer co-creation behaviours, by looking at what content can turn lurkers into co-creators. Another interesting area of research would be to identify the kind of content that brings disengagement from a luxury service. For example, prior research has identified that negative emotions on social media have been associated with disengagement (Berger, 2013; Aalbers et al., 2019). In some cases, posts could create these feelings in members of a community and thus drive them to disengagement. Last future research could investigate further the concept of unique value and how it can bring social exclusivity in luxury services.

5.4. Conclusions

To date luxury literature has rarely focused on how luxury service brands and its customers co-create value together in an online context.

Based on the context of a luxury hotel brand community we have identified pleasurable/experiential content as the key factor which creates customer engagement and thus supports value co-creation. Using a multi-method case study, we identified the importance of each value dimension for content sharing. This approach captures an overlooked methodological approach in luxury theory research. To further evolve the research field there is a need to utilise online customer data to understand luxury preferences and consumption patterns in real life context (Gurzki & Woisetschläger, 2016). Thus, this research, provides a promising new route in exploring interactions between a luxury brand and its customers.

CRediT authorship contribution statement

Alexis Chapman: Conceptualisation, Data Curation, Writing – original draft, Writing – review & editing, Investigation, Formal

Analysis, Methodology, Resources, Software. **Athina Dilmperi:** Conceptualisation, Data Curation, Writing – original draft, Writing – review & editing, Investigation, Formal Analysis, Methodology, Resources, Project administration.

Declaration of Competing Interest

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

Appendix A

See Tables A1–A6.

Table A1
Management Interview Guide using SD Logic Perspective (Vargo & Lusch, 2004, 2008, 2016).

Introduction by the interviewer and explanation about the study. Pleasantries and demographic questions are asked regarding employee title, length of time at company, in position, age bracket.
FP1: Service is the fundamental basis of exchange. In SD Logic, service is the exchange through use of operant resources or the employee's knowledge and skill. *Interview Question (1) Please explain how the employee's knowledge and expertise are incorporated into the Fairmont Moments (FM) website?*
FP6: Value is created by multiple actors, always including the beneficiary. *Interview Question: How does Fairmont enhance or engage with the customer experience on FM?*
FP7: The enterprise cannot deliver value, but can participate in the creation and offering of value propositions. (The value proposition increases competitive advantage specially when considering that value is determined by the beneficiary within a context (value-in-context) (Vargo & Lusch, 2016). *Interview Question: Why is engaging with customers and fans online an important marketing tool for FRHI? Please can you give me some examples?*
FP 9: All social and economic actors are resource integrators: expertise (brand operant skills), control, physical capital, risk taking, psychic benefits, and economic benefits influence customers' motivation, desire and amount of participation (Vargo & Lusch, 2008). *Interview Question: Why is the hotel in the best position to provide this platform and manage the co-creation online?*
FP10: Value is always uniquely and phenomenologically determined by the beneficiary (Vargo & Lusch, 2008). *Interview Question: How does the Fairmont provides a valuable service experience with the customer?*
FP11: Value cocreation is coordinated through actor-generated institutions and institutional arrangements (Vargo & Lusch, 2016). *Interview Question: How do you think engaging customers and Fairmont value partners such as Reebok and BMW Bikes offers value?*

Table A2
Customer Interview Guide.

Characteristics of the respondents:
1. Please state your age: (20–30/30–40/40–50/50–60/60+)
2. Gender M/F
3. What level of education have you completed: High school/University/Masters/Professional designation.
Interview Questions
4. Is online information an important part of your hotel stay/choice? If yes, what kind of information is most important or valuable to you?
5. What do you value in a company's website or online blogging, FM website?
6. What makes you choose one hotel brand over another?
7. What makes you return to the Fairmont?
8. Do you think Fairmont is engaging with customers – online particularly well (and if so how)?

Table A3
Manager Coding regarding the Value Co-Creation of FM.

Illustrative quotes	First-order codes	Second-order themes	Third-order Themes
"I think part of FM fills a void that Trip Advisor doesn't. FM is very different because it's more storytelling – like a customer review. That extra voice you need. You'll use TripAdvisor to check the rating but use EAO to shape your trip and what you do."	Storytelling, trip planning	Storytelling	Co-creation
"We are always learning from our guests and gaining insights. Innovation and continual adoption of technologies is imperative especially in our line of business – hotels, we are an information rich business and need to stay on top of what the information means to continual innovation."	Guest learning, technology adoption	Co-created learning	Co-created value
"We can learn about what's important to the guests"	Social media insight	Co-created learning	Co-created value
"Co-creation around content is critically important. Both by the nature of our brand and because we have a very experiential product. Consumers are willing to share their experiences, their photos and video about experiences and memories ..which ultimately drives more engagement and usage of our website. "	Engagement online	Co-created experiences	Unique value

Table A4
Manager and Customer Coding regarding the Value-in-Context of FM.

Panel A - Manager Comments			
Illustrative quotes	First-order codes	Second-order themes	Third-order Themes
It's like having 10′s of thousand of stories where people are writing endorsements for your company."	Stories Endorsements	endorsement	Value-in-context
"FM is a company strategy and is important and will continue to grow – engaging guests in the story and marketing."	Engaging guests Storytelling	Engage guests	Value-in-context
"Either before the guest steps on the property, during the stay or after the stay, guest are logging on and sharing their experiences and learning from staff. Staff knowledge and the ability to touch guests in a memorable way is the key to great guest experiences."	Staff knowledge Memorable	Memorable ways	Value-in-context
"We need to utilize our best marketing efforts to capture and enhance the conversation online…we are in the best position to provide the platform and can be involved in the communication, not necessarily controlling but involved and helping to shape it."	Brand shaping experience	Brand value	Value-in-context

Panel B - Customer Comments			
Illustrative quotes	First-order codes	Second-order themes	Third-order Themes
I like some of the photos and to check out others activities at certain hotels before I go is use full – to see some of the dishes at a Fairmont restaurant for example. It's not hardcore marketing. It's real and staff are responding to any communication. When I have time when I'm planning a trip, I often go on those sorts of websites."	Photos Planning a trip	Social media	Value-in-context
Ease of use, also social media, even just the real people, you can look up peoples Instagram account. You're not going to hashtag Fairmont unless you like the brand. Authentic content, travel bloggers that I respect.	Hashtag Fairmont	Social media	Value-in-context
I like a place that is trying to engage and has interesting content I would like to read, not necessarily post myself though.	Engage Interesting content	Social media	Value-in-context
I would definitely be interested in the recipes, and to engage with other customer, what type of people are staying there, and engaging with them makes it feel more personal.	Recipes Engage customer	Content, recipes	Value-in-context
I've visited before and I've contributed. It's a nice touch, it's not hardcore marketing. It's real and staff are responding to any communication. When I have time waiting for a flight, I often go on those sorts of websites.	Not hardcore marketing Real life	Real-life marketing	Value-in-context

Table A5
Manager and Customer Coding regarding the Unique Value of FM.

Panel A - Manager Comments			
Illustrative quotes	First-order codes	Second-order themes	Third-order Themes
"Social (media) is big. All properties have social – dedicated twitter feeds; we want to make sure the loop is closed and keeping business in our own channels. Guests and potential guests close rather than going to a third party platform for booking. I think it's a part of the entire brand strategy."	Social (media) Property's dedicated feeds	Digital importance	Unique value
"Digital marketing is at the helm of everything we do and every customer touch point today…it ties in to the distribution strategy, technology, data and insight, b to b, service strategy – everything"	Digital marketing Importance	Marketing strategy	Unique value
"It's a ton of value to us – it's trust."	Trust value	Trust-Value	Unique value
"We're always looking at different technologies to make things easier"	Technologies ease of use	Technology	Unique value
"Fairmont fits in, the brand itself lends to experience and marries – because we are a historic brand people have experiences they don't forget. Hence the Fairmont Moments name. It means each property is a unique place…as an overall marketing campaign this is essentially a celebration of this."	Brand experience, History, Marketing memories	Memories	Unique value
"It's a unique platforms and very interaction. It's a place where they can share memories and know they fit into."	Unique platforms, Customer and brand actors	Memories unique value	Unique value
"Social media gives an opportunity for guests to read and get inspiration on our properties. It's very engaging. It's underutilised to drive traffic…Just as the traveller wants to go to one of the prosperities – user content of our guests is far more appealing for potential guests to read than pre fabricated marketing stuff the brand creates."	User content of our guests Real-life marketing	Individual value	Unique value
"They (customer) are looking for the experiences and service they have come to expect. And out partnership with Reebok is a great case in point to create a positive experience through the positive shared values."	Positive experience, Shared values	Unique experiences	Unique value
"Fairmont has FM because of its history – Banff Springs, Lake Louise – our hotels are a must see for people and the continent is a repository for stories and history of the various properties."	History and heritage	History driven	Unique value
"Fairmont – moments and memories, Raffles – more street luxury, Swisshotel – green eco-friendly business traveller. FM fits into memories and moments reflection of the brand and allows us to showcase this."	Memories and moments	Memory creation	Unique value
"I think we enhance the customer experience through well-run and managed platforms and content that users want to see."	Customer experience , online strategy	Customer experience	Unique value
"Co-creation around content is critically important. Both by the nature of our brand and because we have a very experiential product. Consumers are willing to share their experiences, their photos and video about experiences and memories ..which ultimately drives more engagement and usage of our website. "	Brand and customer engagement of experience	Moments	Unique value
"So far we are pleased with our Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and FM but we can't sit on our past proficiencies, we need to always be looking forward to new ways to engage and better ways to enhance the experience."	Social media, new engagement	Online engagement	Unique value
	Impress, show off culture		Unique value,

Table A5 (*continued*)

Panel A - Manager Comments			
Illustrative quotes	First-order codes	Second-order themes	Third-order Themes
"I think it's part of human nature to want to one-up another. I think people are interested in trying to impress and it's natural for humans to want to show off. I think that what drives it.		Personal motivation	
I love love love the contests! I actually am really lucky, usually with contests. I also like to see beautiful colourful photos. I like to check out the spa and pool area as well on photos.	Contents as incentive	Brand propositions	Proposed value
"Co-creation around content is critically important. Both by the nature of our brand and because we have a very experiential product. Consumers are willing to share their experiences, their photos and video about experiences and memories ..which ultimately drives more engagement and usage of our website. "	Brand and customer content together	Co-created content	Unique value

Panel B - Customer Comments			
Illustrative quotes	**First-order codes**	**Second-order themes**	**Third-order Themes**
"I recognise he heritage, A CP rail hotel, locations as a result of this the buildings are nornally centrally located in cities that is perfect. As a result of a historical sense, the results carry my allegiance to Fairmont Internationally. For me Fairmont is comfortable, heritage, feels like home and I know what to expect	Brand heritage, home	Personal experience	Unique value
I have been on Fairmont moments and have found it interesting and useful but often I find I don't have much time for entering contests or searching recipes. I feel like I know the hotel and what to expect that unless I'm looking for something specific like – I want a few more photos of the Dubai Fairmont as I haven't stayed there before,… I probably wouldn't spend much time on a website without a real purpose.	No incentive of contest	Personal motivation	Unique value
I have checked in an posted a photo on Fairmont moments through my Instagram account on our last trip to Banff Springs Spa. I know the hotel re-posted my image to their Facebook feed which is kind of cool, they must have liked my photos. But anyway, yes I don't use the site often but have used it once or twice.	Brand reposting	Social engagement	Unique value
My daughter may like to post photos and share some of the gorgeous pool scenes. When we were in Monaco the pool roof is just incredible so I can see why people post it's just not something I would do but the Fairmont needs to find ways to connecting to new and next generation customers and I think they're doing the right thing by starting early, staying abreast with the technologies and really committing to the customers online.	Online brand connection	Lurker value,	Unique value

Table A6

Key Drivers of Content Engagement that Facilitate Value Co-Creation.

Illustrative quotes	First-order codes	Second-order themes	Third-order Themes
"Pick your favorite color! We now have several different colors of travel size OPI polish to play with! #WillowStreamSpa #WillowStreamMaui #NailPolish #Travelsise"	Spa promotion	proposition	Cost/Sacrifice
Good times are even better when they're shared. This spring, celebrate with your friends and loved ones in a Fairmont suite, then relax and #findyourenergy in our luxurious #spa. Get Social @willowstreamspa - Tag your #spaselfie #spasocial #spaday' '	Brand promotion	proposition	Cost/Sacrifice
#WellnessWednesday Tip: Feel like you're floating on water with the "wave table" at our Willow Stream Spa. This unique treatment table moves with the soft, rhythmic motions of the therapist, creating a deeply relaxing escape. #findyourenergy #willowstreamspamaui'	WellnessWednesday promotion	proposition	Cost/Sacrifice
"'Father's Day is right around the corner! Why not treat dad to a day at the spa? The Willow Stream Spa is now offering $25 off any regular priced spa experiences through Wednesday, June 18, just for dads! He'll be happy you did! Call 808.875.2229 for details and reservations. #Maui #willowstreamspa #FathersDay'"	Father's day incentive	proposition	Cost/Sacrifice
"Business trips can be full of temptations to indulge and let exercise fall by the wayside—but you don't have to let things slide while you're away."Maintaining a fitness routine while traveling is tough, but often key to making sure healthy habits aren't completely jettisoned by business timetables," says Brian Richardson, Vice President, Brand Marketing & Communications at Fairmont Hotels & Resorts.Let your hotel make it easier. If you're a member of Fairmont President's Club, check out Fairmont Fit (a service that is free for premier and platinum members). It provides Reebok workout apparel and shoes delivered to your room, along with an MP3 player loaded with music, a yoga mat and stretch bands."	Fairmont fit promotion	Partner products	Cost/sacrifice
"Writing how I feel in the sand staying at Fairmont the palm Dubai and jumping for joy .. HAPPY :-)"	Property beauty showcased	experience	Experiencial/Hedonic
"Our Dental Office enjoyed a week at the Fairmont in Wailea , Maui. Fabulous location, we enjoyed the villa, the beach and all that this beautiful location had to offer."	Property beauty showcased	Experience	Experiencial/Hedonic
""'Like' if this is what you had in mind for Cocktail Hour.' by Instagram user fairmontpacific."	Property restaurant	Hedonic	Experiencial/Hedonic
"Just had an exceptional experience at the Fairmont, Beijing. Had a cocktail in the Champagne Bar before eating in restaurant Cuts. The service in the bar was exceptional with an unbelievably helpful Bar Tender who helped me with local knowledge as well as serving the perfect cocktail…….All in all, one of the best dining experiences I have had in years. Cannot recommend enjoying this experience yourself enough if you are in Beijing. A restaurant and staff that Fairmont can be very proud."	Restaurant showcase	Experiential	Experiencial/hedonic
"Happy Birthday, @francess135!!! Thank you, Chef Miko, for creating this beauty! 👐🥗🍵☕🍶JP🎀'"	Hashtag birthday cake restaurant	Experience/thank you	Experiential/Hedonic & Relational

Table A6 (*continued*)

Illustrative quotes	First-order codes	Second-order themes	Third-order Themes
"Arriving at the Chateau Frontenac is like walking into a fairy tail. On the breathtaking waterfront of the Saint Lawrence River, I took in the old world charm and the smell of crepes before entering this majestic castle, which is the icon of all of Quebec.I was made to feel like royalty throughout the visit. Magical."	Magical beauty of property	Experience	Experiential
"Imagine a day spent floating on Houhai Lake. Then, after a day of restaurants, bars and lounging on the water come back to Fairmont a bridge and treat yourself to a famous Relaxing massage at our Willow Stream Spa. @fairmonthotels @willowstreamspa #spa #houhai #beijing #fairmont #willowstreamspa #summer #sun #china #tour #tourism #hotel #hospitality #lake #boat #cruise #fun # massage #zen #relax #luxury"	Fairmont Spa	Experiential	Experiential/Hedonic
"Matte pink Lamborghini Aventador parked at Fairmont Pacific Rim, spotted the other night. Follow us and use our hashtag #vancouverEL … @mmdesign_car_wrap' by Instagram user vancouverexoticluxury."	Sports car out front Fairmont	Experiential/ Hedonic	Experiential/Hedonic
"Dog sledding in Montebello #fairmont #montebello #winter #dogsled #chateaumontebello' by Instagram userinstamelsa."	Dog sledding in Montebello	Fairmont experience	Experiential/Hedonic
"Staying at Fairmont Makati in the metro gives us the ease of mind of having a feeling of home away from home. And need I mention that you get to experience the world-famous Filipino hospitality that foreign tourists come to love? Our third day of staycation, we asked the concierge what famous place in the Philippines they would recommend and they gladly told us Boracay is the perfect place! ….Fairmont Makati and Boracay are out perfect weekend getaway!"	Filipino hospitality at Fairmont hotel	Strong service culture	Relational
"September evening views from my balcony. Thank you to the wonderful staff especially Jackie Kearns for her hospitality. Love this property!"	Thank you to staff	Thank you	Relational
"A beautiful getaway to the island of Bermuda! Thank you for the warm sunshine and hospitality!"	Thank you to staff	Thank you	Relational
"A young guest lost his stuffed animal buddy named, "Fluffy Bear" and our Housekeeping team was called to assist. After finding the bear, we called the young guest's parents to advise them that fluffy bear was found, but would like to wash him if possible. We gave the bear a "bath" and returned him to the guest. Accompanying Fluffy Bear was a stuffed lion and a note that read, "I am sorry I was not with you last night. I went on an adventure with my new friend, Roy. I hope we can make him part of our family? Your friend, Fluffy bear." Also included were a few photos of their "adventures" around the hotel. It's the little things we can do for each other that make the biggest differences. We are all about turning moment into memories at The Fairmont Royal York."	Staff created photo surprise for guest who lost bear	Customer-brand relationship	Relational
"Unfogetable experience at Fairmont…gorgeous sea view from our Deluxe, stunning sunrays on the high terrace overlooking Montecarlo and the sea while having the delicious breakfast at l'Horizon, fireworks accompanying a full moon reflected on the sea surface while having dinner, beautiful shops and smart staff & personnel… in few words, everything you could wish for a perfect (even though short) vacation. Thank you to all of U! Ester & Erinda"	Unforgettable experience and thank you	Thank you	Relational
"Staying at Fairmont Makati in the metro gives us the ease of mind of having a feeling of home away from home. And need I mention that you get to experience the world-famous Filipino hospitality that foreign tourists come to love? Our third day of staycation, we asked the concierge what famous place in the Philippines they would recommend and they gladly told us Boracay is the perfect place! ….Fairmont Makati and Boracay are out perfect weekend getaway!"	Fairmont feels like home	Belonging	Relational
"My husband and honeymooned in the Fairmont Banff Springs in 1998. We had booked the honeymoon suite but when we arrived the previous documented decided on an additional night…but the hotel upgraded us to an amazing suite! …It was unbelievable! We are now celebrating out 16th anniversary with our extended Fairmont family today!"	Anniversary celebration	Belonging	Relational
"I have just had one of the best weekends of my life! My mom, sister and I went to #banffspringshotel…We spent hours in the #willowstreamspa….It truly feels like we belong here! Everything about this place promotes #natural healing for both the #bodyandsoul."	Belong at the spa	Belonging	Relational
"My daughter and I spent the weekend of July 14th at the Plaza. We were so happy with the way we were treated during our stay. All departments gave us service that was extraordinary.The concierge attendants arranged for our use of the BMW bikes and even adjusted the seats for us. A welcoming letter was sent to us ahead of our stay and I mentioned that the stay was a belated birthday for my daughter and a cake was delivered to our room. Wow, she was thrilled and surprised. This stay will always be a favorite travel memory!"	BMW experience	Consumer-brand relationship	Relational
"My husband and I honeymooned at the Fairmont Banff Springs in 1998. We had booked the honeymoon suite, but when we arrived the previous occupants had decided to stay an additional night so the hotel upgraded us to an amazing suite just down the steps from the concierge. We had a guest bathroom, living room, bedroom with a huge bathroom and a sitting area under a glass skylight that looked over the golf course. It was unbelievable! One evening we were sitting in the wine bar and we were introduced to Vin de Glace, or Ice Wine. We are celebrating our 16th anniversary this May and are still drinking Ice Wine. Those are some of our most cherished memories."	Honeymoon return	Nostalgia/memories	Symbolic/Expressive: Nostalgia
"Welcome to my day! #willowstream #gym #relaxation"	Photo with beautiful photo	hashtags	Symbolic/Expressive: Outer
"In honour of National Flip Flop Day, the only pair of @ipanemausa that came with us on out trip last weekend. #ipanemausa #panemabossa"	National Flip Flop Day	Hashtag, symbolic	Symbolic/Expressive: Outer-directed
"As this hectic time of year, I have taken a "time-out" with a visit to The Fairmont Olympic Hotel in Seattle… One of the Olympics' community projects is the Teddy Bear Suite. They invite children of all ages to view a Fairmont suite decorated with dozens of Teddy Bears of all sizes. This is also a benefit for Seattle Children's Hospital. Definitely a different	Relax at Fairmont, self care	Self gift giving, time out	Symbolic/Expressive: Self-gift giving

(continued on next page)

Table A6 (*continued*)

Illustrative quotes	First-order codes	Second-order themes	Third-order Themes
experience from visiting Santa Claus – though I hear he has his own following and makes even me feel like a kid again!"			
"I visited this beautiful hotel when I was a kid and had wonderful memories. I was excited to return and make more memories with my own kids. We spent a beautiful spring weekend at the Empress enjoying the pool, walking the beautiful grounds full of blooming tulips, and celebrating with a wonderful Easter brunch at the hotel."	Memories	Nostalgia	Symbolic/Expressive
"Married in a location that epitomized the history and grandeur of Boston… Congratulations on your wedding! What made you decide on having your wedding with us at Fairmont?"	Married at Fairmont	Educate - storytelling	Utilitarian
Ingredients Yield: 4 4 oz. Kula greens 4 oz. ahi block 2 tsp. volcano spice 2 tsp. cottonseed oil 2 oz. orange wasabi vinaigrette 1/2 oz. carrot, julienne 1/2 oz. daikon, julienne 1/2 oz. ogo (seaweed) 1/2 oz. daikon sprouts Orange Wasabi Vinaigrette 2 tbsp. wasabi powder 1/2 cup orange juice 1 1/2 cup chop-chop dressing 1 1/2 tbsp. soy sauce"	Fairmont drink recipe	Recipe	Utilitarian
"Joglo is a traditional vernacular house of Javanese people. In a structured Javanese society and tradition, Joglo also reflect Javanese social status; this type of building is only reserved for palace (keraton), official residence, government estate, and the house of nobles (ningrat). Originally commoners are not allowed to construct this kind of house as their residence. A pair of these joglos are located at our Lobby Lounge."	Educate on local culture	Craftsmanship	Utilitarian
"Staying at Fairmont Makati in the metro gives us the ease of mind of having a feeling of home away from home. And need I mention that you get to experience the world-famous Filipino hospitality that foreign tourists come to love? Our third day of staycation, we asked the concierge what famous place in the Philippines they would recommend and they gladly told us Boracay is the perfect place! ….Fairmont Makati and Boracay are out perfect weekend getaway!"	Home away from home	Belonging	Relational

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