# Brand Image as A Mediator in The Effect of Celebrity Endorsement on Purchase Intention

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## Abstract:

This paper examines the mediating role of brand image on the relationship between celebrity endorsement and purchase intention. A total of 215 valid questionnaires were collected through a non-probability Snowball sampling technique from female consumers from 18 years old to 54 years old in Egypt. The findings revealed that celebrity endorsement including Perceived Celebrity Attractiveness, Perceived Celebrity Expertise, Perceived Celebrity trustworthiness and Perceived Celebrity Match-up congruence with the brand has a positive significant effect on Brand Image. Second,

Brand Image has a positive significant effect on purchase intention. Third, Celebrity Endorsement has a positive significant effect on purchase intention. Finally, Brand image was found to mediate the relationship between each of (Perceived Celebrity Attractiveness, Perceived Celebrity Trustworthiness, Perceived Celebrity Expertise and Perceived Celebrity -product Match) on purchase intention.

**Keywords:** Celebrity Endorsement, Perceived Celebrity Credibility, Perceived Celebrity Trustworthiness, Perceived Celebrity Expertise, Perceived Celebrity Attractiveness, Perceived Celebrity Match-up congruence with the brand, Purchase Intention, Brand Image.

**الملخص :**

يهدف هذا البحث الى دراسة الدور الوسيط لصورة العلامة التجارية في العلاقة بين الدعم الترويجى من خلال المشاهير ونية الشراء. تم جمع ٢١٥ استبيانًا من المستهلكين الإناث من سن ١٨ عامًا إلى ٥٤ عامًا في مصر. كشفت النتائج أن الدعم الترويجى من خلال المشاهير والذى يشمل (الجدارة بالثقة المدركه للمشاهير، وخبرة المشاهير المدركة، وجاذبية المشاهير المدركة ، التوافق بين المنتج و المشهور) له تأثير إيجابي على صورة العلامة التجارية. كما أظهرت النتائج أن هناك تأثير إيجابي لصورة العلامة التجارية على نية الشراء. بالإضافة إلى وجود تأثير ايجابى للدعم الترويجى من خلال المشاهير على نية الشراء. أخيرًا، اتضح ان صورة العلامة التجارية تتوسط العلاقة بين كل من أن الدعم الترويجى من خلال المشاهيربما في ذلك(الجدارة بالثقة المدركه للمشاهير، وخبرة المشاهير المدركة، وجاذبية المشاهير المدركة ، التوافق بين المنتج و المشهور) على نية الشراء.

**الكلمات المفتاحية:** تأثير الدعم الترويجى من خلال المشاهير،الجدارة بالثقة المدركه للمشاهير، وخبرة المشاهير المدركة، وجاذبية المشاهير المدركة ، التوافق بين المنتج و المشهور، نية الشراء، الصورة الذهنيه للعلامة التجارية.

## 1. Introduction

In today's economy, where consumers face an excessive number of options, companies are increasingly endorsing celebrity endorsements as a strategic method to improve brand image and influence purchase intention. Numerous studies have shown that celebrity endorsements can significantly improve brand image by linking items to the characteristics and lives of prominent individuals (Erdogan, 1999; Ohanian, 1990). Furthermore, the impact of brand image on purchase intention is a significant factor that requires additional investigation. A strong brand image, enhanced by successful celebrity endorsements, can result in heightened consumer trust and an improved probability of purchase (Belch & Belch, 2004). Companies employ celebrity endorsement strategies to cultivate favorable attitudes and enhance purchasing intentions (Lee & Thorson, 2008). Thus, the aim of the study is to examine the mediating role of the brand image on the effect of Perceived Celebrity Endorsement including (Perceived Celebrity Attractiveness, Perceived Celebrity Expertise, Perceived Celebrity Trustworthiness, and Perceived Celebrity Match-up congruence with the brand) on purchase intention. Through the analysis of these processes, we aim to offer significant insights

that can guide marketing strategies and improve the efficacy of celebrity endorsements across diverse markets (Miciak & Shanklin, 1994).

## 2. **Theoretical Background**

### *Celebrity Endorsement*

Celebrity endorsement is an important component of marketing communications strategy for firms in today's competitive environment (Milford & Nwulu, 2015). Schiffman et Kanuk, (2010) claimed that celebrity endorsers are an effective means of communicating in corporations in which they can communicate positive messages to customers about the company and its products, its contribution to society and corporate competency. According to Ohanian, (1990) celebrity endorsement includes three key dimensions that contribute to the effectiveness of endorsements: celebrity attractiveness, expertise and trustworthiness. In addition, Research indicates that consumers anticipate a match between the image of a celebrity endorser and the brand they are promoting (O'Mahony and Meenaghan, 1997).

### *Celebrity Attractiveness*

Arshad et al., (2017) stated that celebrity attractiveness can be presented as the sum of a celebrity's physical appearance, etiquette, beauty, dress and accessories, elegance, manners, and

sexual appeal. Research by Ing and Furuoka (2007) demonstrates that celebrity attractiveness positively influences the perceived brand image. Moreover, Lomboan (2013), Fitri et al. (2018) and Chan et al., (2021) has stated that effective endorsement by an attractive celebrity has the potential to enhance brand image.

### *Perceived Celebrity Expertise*

Erdogan (1999) defined expertise as 'the extent to which a communicator is perceived to be a source of valid assertions and refers to the knowledge, experience or skills possessed by an endorser. Dissanayake and Ismail, (2015) argued that celebrity Expertise is highly correlated with Perceived Brand Attitude which is a key aspect of Brand Image. Although this result is not consistent with other scholars' results as Mudzakir , 2018; Yeo et al. 2019 and   Alawadhi and Örs ,2020) who argued that there is no positive relationship between expertise of celebrity and the brand image. However, prior research has demonstrated comparable results that underscore the influence of Perceived Celebrity Expertise on Brand Image (Lomboan, 2013; Fitri et al., 2018; Adiba, 2020 and Chan et Selvakumaran, 2021).

### *Perceived Celebrity Trustworthiness*

Charbonneau and Garland, (2005) also claim that trustworthiness refers to the endorser's perceived dependability, reliability, and sincerity. Evan et al., (2021) argued that

celebrity's trustworthiness has a significant effect on consumer's purchase intention. Some scholars claimed that there is a relationship between celebrity trustworthiness and Brand image dimensions. For instance, Ibidunni et al., (2018) argued that perceived celebrity trustworthiness has an influence on brand association which is a main dimension of Brand Image.

### *Perceived Celebrity Match-up Congruence*

The concept of Perceived Celebrity Match-up Congruence emphasizes the importance of aligning the personality traits of celebrity endorsers with the characteristics of the brands they promote (Jamil & Rameez-ul-Hassan, 2014). A harmonious match can create a positive emotional response, while a mismatch might lead to confusion and diminished interest in the product (Fleck, Korchia, & Le Roy, 2012). Therefore, brands should carefully select celebrities whose personalities resonate with their image to maximize the effectiveness of their endorsements (Bergkvist, Hjalmarson & Mägi, 2016).

Studies indicate that when consumers perceive a congruence between their self-image and the celebrity's persona, their attitudes toward the advertisement improve, leading to a higher likelihood of purchase (Choi & Rifon, 2012). As such, brands should prioritize finding celebrities whose characteristics complement their messaging and existing associations, as this

strategic fit can be instrumental in driving consumer engagement and sales (Thwaites et al., 2012).

### *Brand Image on Purchase Intention*

Brand image plays a crucial role in shaping consumer purchase intentions, as it encompasses the perceptions and associations that consumers hold about a brand. A positive brand image can enhance consumer trust and loyalty, making individuals more likely to choose that brand over competitors. Research indicates that when consumers perceive a brand positively—through attributes such as quality, reliability, and social status—they are more inclined to purchase its products (Aaker, 1991). Conversely, a negative brand image can diminish purchase intentions, as consumers may associate it with poor quality or unfavorable experiences. Ultimately, brands that effectively manage and cultivate a positive image can significantly enhance their appeal and drive consumer behavior, leading to increased sales and long-term success in the marketplace.

### *Mediating Role of Brand Image*

Research shown that celebrity endorsements can significantly enhance brand image by leveraging the popularity and credibility of the endorser, which in turn influences consumer perceptions and behaviors (Erdogan, 1999). When a celebrity is perceived as a good fit for a brand, they can enhance the brand's overall image, making it more appealing to consumers (Till & Busler, 2000). This enhanced brand image can

mediate the effects of celebrity endorsements by creating positive associations that lead to increased purchase intentions (Choi & Rifon, 2012). Thus, the interplay between celebrity endorsement and brand image has garnered attention in marketing literature. It is hypothesized that celebrity endorsements influence brand image, which in turn affects purchase intention.

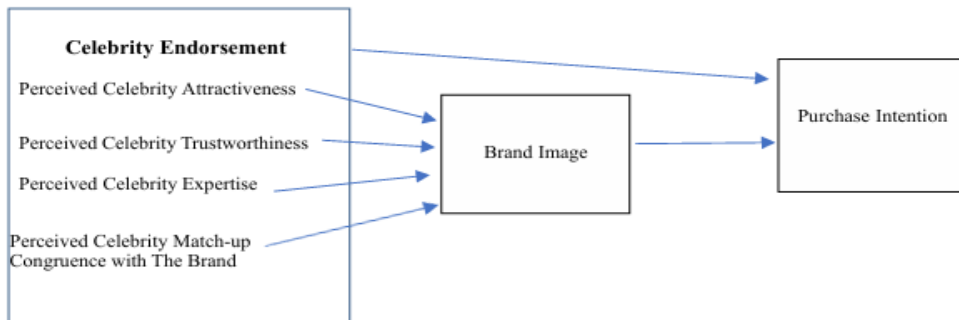## 3. Research Model and hypotheses



**Figure 3.1. Conceptual Model: The Mediating role of Brand image on the effect of celebrity endorsement on purchase intention.**

## RESEARCH HYPOTHESES:

H1: Brand Image mediates the relationship between celebrity endorsement and purchase intention

**H1.a:** Brand Image mediates the relationship between perceived celebrity attractiveness and purchase intention

**H1.b:** Brand Image mediates the relationship between perceived celebrity expertise and purchase intention

**H1.c:** Brand Image mediates the relationship between perceived celebrity trustworthiness and purchase intention

**H1.d:** Brand Image mediates the relationship between perceived Celebrity Match-up Congruence with the Brand and purchase intention

H2: Brand Image has a significant effect on purchase intention

H3: Celebrity endorsement has a significant effect on purchase intention

## 4. **Research Methods:**

This research is classified as cross-sectional, utilizing a structured online survey to collect quantitative data from female consumers aged 18 to 54 in Egypt, focusing on their interest in fashion wear. Employing a deductive method, the study tests established theories with clear hypotheses, targeting a demographic identified through a pilot study as relevant to celebrity Menna Shalaby. Due to the lack of a sample frame, snowball sampling is used, starting with an initial group of respondents from personal networks, who then refer others fitting the criteria. A total of 215 respondents are selected to ensure statistical validity and data integrity.

## 5. Data Analysis:

## 5.1. Descriptive statistics for Dependent Variables

**Table 5.1. Descriptive Statistics for dependent variables**

|  | cv | Mean | Std. Deviation |
|---|---|---|---|
| CT1 | 25.50 | 3.47 | .885 |
| CT2 | 24.36 | 3.37 | .821 |
| CT3 | 26.36 | 3.16 | .833 |
| CT4 | 22.80 | 3.32 | .757 |
| CT5 | 24.50 | 3.22 | .789 |
| CT1_5 | 20.19 | 3.3079 | .66802 |
| CE1 | 27.33 | 3.60 | .984 |
| CE2 | 28.16 | 3.20 | .901 |
| CE3 | 27.73 | 3.21 | .890 |
| CE4 | 23.35 | 3.79 | .885 |
| CE5 | 24.47 | 3.38 | .827 |
| CE1_5 | 20.64 | 3.4353 | .70899 |
| CAT1 | 19.88 | 4.09 | .813 |
| CAT2 | 24.08 | 3.85 | .927 |
| CAT3 | 17.54 | 4.11 | .721 |
| CAT4 | 23.94 | 3.76 | .900 |
| CAT5 | 21.41 | 3.89 | .833 |
| CAT6 | 28.05 | 3.48 | .976 |
| CAT7 | 23.55 | 3.69 | .869 |
| CAT1_7 | 18.91 | 3.8392 | .72618 |
| PC1 | 32.86 | 2.87 | .943 |
| PC2 | 23.01 | 3.59 | .826 |
| PC3 | 31.13 | 3.09 | .962 |
| PC1_3 | 22.87 | 3.1853 | .72839 |
| BI1 | 21.76 | 3.80 | .827 |
| BI2 | 20.08 | 3.87 | .777 |
| BI3 | 23.91 | 3.71 | .887 |
| BI4 | 18.99 | 3.95 | .750 |
| BI5 | 21.49 | 3.70 | .795 |
| BI1_5 | 18.40 | 3.8037 | .70006 |
| PI1 | 22.32 | 3.84 | .857 |
| PI2 | 22.58 | 3.87 | .874 |
| PI3 | 26.49 | 3.70 | .980 |
| PI1_3 | 22.29 | 3.8031 | .84769 |
| AT1 | 17.75 | 4.13 | .733 |
| AT2 | 21.95 | 3.90 | .856 |
| AT3 | 23.87 | 3.64 | .869 |
| AT4 | 22.64 | 3.79 | .858 |
| AT5 | 25.23 | 3.67 | .926 |
| AT6 | 20.24 | 3.81 | .771 |
| AT1_6 | 17.14 | 3.8240 | .65561 |
| Valid N (listwise) | 215 |  |  |

According to Descriptive statistics in table 5.1., it can be concluded that:

- Regarding the independent variables, the most homogeneous variable is: Perceived Celebrity Attractiveness with coefficient of variation (18.91%).
- Regarding the mediator variable (Brand Image), the mean is (3.8037) with coefficient of variation (18.4%).
- While the independent variable (Purchase Intention) the mean is (3.8031) with coefficient of variation (22.29%).

## 5.2. Reliability and validity

The internal consistency was assessed by computing Cronbach's alpha. As the Cronbach's alpha becomes closer to 1, this means that the internal consistency reliability is high. Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) is employed to assess the degree to which the observed variables accurately reflect the underlying constructs. Construct validity was examined through convergent and discriminant validity (Hair *et al*., 2010).

| Constructs | Items | Estimate λ | t-test | CR | AVE | HTMT |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Perceived Celebrity Trustworthiness | 1 | .615 | - | 0.877 | 0.592 | 0.890 |
| | 2 | .808 | 9.687 | | | |
| | 3 | .781 | 9.300 | | | |
| | 4 | .775 | 9.407 | | | |
| | 5 | .848 | 10.023 | | | |
| Perceived Celebrity Expertise | 1 | .596 | - | 0.847 | 0.532 | 0.882 |
| | 2 | .854 | 9.386 | | | |
| | 3 | .850 | 9.341 | | | |
| | 4 | .554 | 7.427 | | | |
| | 5 | .739 | 8.543 | | | |
| Perceived Celebrity Attractiveness | 1 | .845 | - | 0.946 | 0.717 | 0.954 |
| | 2 | .863 | 16.181 | | | |
| | 3 | .853 | 16.220 | | | |
| | 4 | .867 | 15.240 | | | |
| | 5 | .907 | 17.798 | | | |
| | 6 | .665 | 11.093 | | | |
| | 7 | .900 | 11.607 | | | |
| Perceived Celebrity Match-up Congruence with The Brand | 1 | .572 | - | 0.709 | 0.454 | 0.743 |
| | 2 | .631 | 7.459 | | | |
| | 3 | .797 | 8.730 | | | |
| Brand Image | 1 | .844 | - | 0.915 | 0.686 | 0.924 |
| | 2 | .901 | 17.476 | | | |
| | 3 | .845 | 15.931 | | | |
| | 4 | .800 | 14.658 | | | |
| | 5 | .744 | 13.123 | | | |
| Purchase Intention | 1 | .888 | | 0.931 | 0.819 | 0.933 |
| | 2 | .925 | 21.482 | | | |
| | 3 | .902 | 20.211 | | | |
| Attitude Towards Brand | 1 | .611 | - | 0.866 | 0.524 | 0.890 |
| | 2 | .648 | 11.869 | | | |
| | 3 | .661 | 8.089 | | | |
| | 4 | .870 | 9.535 | | | |
| | 5 | .809 | 9.202 | | | |
| | 6 | .710 | 8.376 | | | |

**\*\*\* Significant level less than (0.001).**

- As a result of Squared Multiple Correlations; the average variance extracted (AVE) for all latent constructs is (0.721). This shows that the latent variables had a high convergent validity.

## 5.3. The Goodness of Fit Indices for the Confirmatory Factor Analysis

Chi-Square = 5801.104, Degree of Freedom=561, Level of Significance= 0.001, Normed Chi-Square = 10.351, Root Mean Square Residual (RMR)=0.043 Goodness of Fit Index (GFI) = 0.875, Adjusted Goodness of Fit Index (AGFI)=0.842, Normed Fit Index (NFI)=0.908 , Relative Fit Index (RFI)=0.890, Incremental Fit Index (IFI)= 0.988, Tucker Lewis Index (TLI)=0.985, Comparative Fit Index (CFI)=0.987, Root Mean Square Residual Approximation (RMSEA)= 0.026.

To conclude, All the goodness of fit measures of the model indicates that all indicators at acceptable limits or greater than cut-off values, especially GFI, AGFI, NFI, RFI, IFI.TLI, and CFI close to one and Normed Chi-Square with cut-off values less than (5). The fit measures indicate the goodness of fit of the structural model and its ability to measure the effect of celebrity endorsement on purchase intention with brand image as a mediator variable.

## 5.4. Pearson correlation matrix

Pearson correlation matrix to measure a significant linear relationship between the constructs of Perceived Celebrity Attractiveness, Perceived Celebrity Expertise, Perceived Celebrity Trustworthiness, Perceived Celebrity Mtach up, Brand Image and Purchase Intention.

**Table 5.3. Pearson correlation matrix to measure a significant linear relationship between the constructs of Perceived Celebrity Attractiveness, Perceived Celebrity Expertise, Perceived Celebrity Trustworthiness, Perceived Celebrity Mtach up, Brand Image and Purchase Intention.**

| Constructs | Perceived Celebrity Trustworthiness | Perceived Celebrity Expertise | Perceived Celebrity Attractiveness | Perceived Celebrity Match-up Congruence with The Brand | Brand Image | Purchase Intention |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Perceived Celebrity Attractiveness | 1 | | | | | |
| Perceived Celebrity Expertise | .749*** | 1 | | | | |
| Perceived Celebrity Trustworthiness | .690*** | .796*** | 1 | | | |
| Perceived Celebrity Match-up Congruence with The Brand | .689*** | .713*** | .754*** | 1 | | |
| Brand Image | .757*** | .831*** | .832*** | .813*** | 1 | |
| Purchase Intention | .791*** | .807*** | .802*** | .809*** | .900*** | 1 |

**\*\*\* Significant at a level less than (0.001).**

## From table 5.3. the researcher revealed that:

- **There is positive correlation between the independent variables** of Perceived Celebrity Attractiveness, Perceived Celebrity Expertise, Perceived Celebrity Trustworthiness and Perceived Celebrity Match-up Congruence with The Brand and dependent variable (Purchase Intention) at a significant level less than (0.001).

- **There is positive correlation between the mediator variable of** (Brand Image) and dependent variable (Purchase Intention) at a significant level less than (0.001).
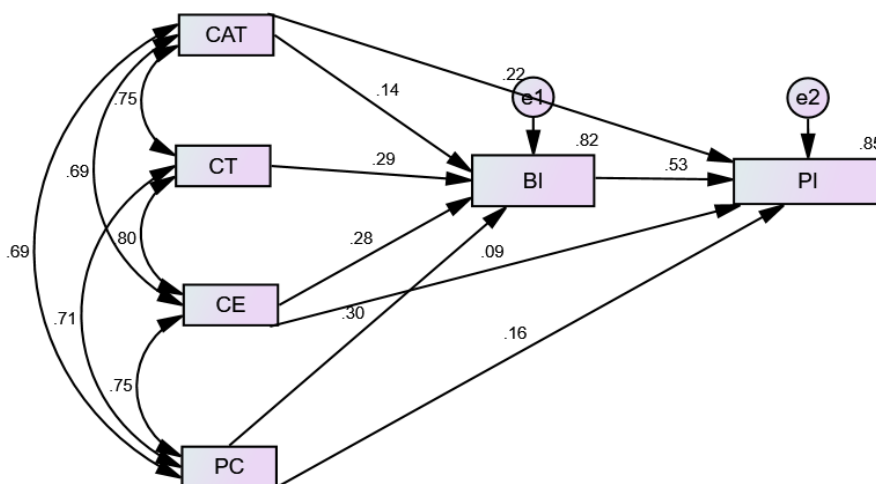


**Figure 5.1. Shows the mediating role of Brand Image on the effect of celebrity endorsement on Brand image**

## 5.5. Testing Hypotheses using SEM
### Table 5.4. Regression weights according to Maximum Likelihood Estimates

| Path | | | Standardized estimate | S.E. | C.R. | SIG. |
|------|---|-----|------|------|------|------|
| BI | ---> | CAT | .113 | .037 | 3.039 | .002 |
| BI | ---> | CT | .234 | .043 | 5.394 | *** |
| BI | ---> | CE | .232 | .044 | 5.222 | *** |
| BI | ---> | PC | .227 | .036 | 6.286 | *** |
| PI | ---> | BI | .568 | .063 | 9.037 | *** |
| PI | ---> | CAT | .188 | .036 | 5.269 | *** |
| PI | ---> | CE | .079 | .044 | 1.779 | .075 |
| PI | ---> | PC | .131 | .039 | 3.394 | *** |

**\*\*\* Significant at a level less than (0.001).**

- According to the table (5.4.), it was revealed that there is a significant positive effect of the constructs of Celebrity Endorsement in including Perceived Celebrity Attractiveness, Perceived Celebrity Expertise, Perceived Celebrity Trustworthiness and Perceived Celebrity Match-up Congruence with the Brand on Brand Image at a significant level less than (0.05).
- Moreover, there is a significant positive effect of Brand Image on purchase intention and there is a significant positive effect of Celebrity endorsement on purchase intention.

**Table 5.5.  Standardized Regression weights according to Maximum Likelihood Estimates**

|    |      |     | Estimate |
|----|------|-----|---------:|
| BI | <--- | CAT | .141 |
| BI | <--- | CT  | .292 |
| BI | <--- | CE  | .278 |
| BI | <--- | PC  | .298 |
| PI | <--- | BI  | .531 |
| PI | <--- | CAT | .219 |
| PI | <--- | CE  | .088 |
| PI | <--- | PC  | .160 |

**Table 5.6. Standardized Indirect Effects - Two Tailed Significance (BC)**

|     | PC   | CE   | CT   | CAT  | BI  |
|-----|------|------|------|------|-----|
| **BI** | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... |
| **PI** | .007 | .005 | .005 | .015 | ... |

- It was revealed from the previous tables (5.4., 5.5., 5.6.) that there is a significant indirect standardized effect of Celebrity Endorsement on Purchase Intention through Brand Image as a mediator variable at a significant level less than (0.05), by using the possible sampling method for (215) Number of Bootstrap Samples.

**From the previous data, it was revealed that the first main hypothesis (H1) including the sub hypotheses H1a, H1b, H1c and H1d, the second hypothesis (H2) and the third hypothesis (H3)  are accepted.**

## 6.  Conclusion:

In conclusion, this research underscores the pivotal role of brand image as a mediator in the relationship between celebrity endorsement and consumer purchase intentions within the apparel and fashion industry. The findings revealed that celebrity endorsement including Perceived Celebrity Attractiveness, Perceived Celebrity Expertise, Perceived Celebrity trustworthiness and Perceived Celebrity Match-up congruence with the brand has a positive significant effect on Brand Image. Second, Brand Image has a positive significant effect on purchase intention. Third, Celebrity Endorsement has a positive significant effect on purchase intention. Finally, Brand image was found to mediate the relationship between each of (Perceived Celebrity Attractiveness, Perceived Celebrity Trustworthiness, Perceived Celebrity Expertise and Perceived Celebrity -product Match) on purchase intention.

Based on these findings, several recommendations emerge for industry practitioners. First, brands should prioritize the alignment of celebrity attributes with their core values and target demographics to create authentic connections with consumers.

Conducting thorough market research to understand consumer preferences can aid in selecting the right celebrity endorsements. Additionally, brands should focus on cultivating and maintaining a positive brand image through consistent messaging and engagement across various platforms. Finally, evaluating and measuring the effectiveness of celebrity partnerships regularly will optimize their influence on consumer purchase intentions and foster long-term brand loyalty in an increasingly competitive market.

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