



Live Streaming Marketing in the Cosmetic Industry: Strategies to Increase Customer Purchase Intentions

Elena Mäkelä

Haaga-Helia University of Applied Sciences

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Abstract

Author(s) Elena Mäkelä
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<p>Since the COVID-19 pandemic, the e-commerce landscape has transformed significantly. Live video streaming has emerged as a powerful marketing strategy, giving online businesses a competitive edge. Live streaming marketing has gained popularity in digital marketing, revolutionizing e-commerce by providing customers with a unique shopping experience. This approach enables streamers or influencers to engage with viewers and provide detailed product information through real-time demonstrations. During the live stream, streamers describe the product and explain its appearance, texture, and scent, which are details difficult for consumers to gauge online. Live shopping not only showcases product usage, tips, and tutorials but also helps consumers make informed purchase decisions, ultimately saving them time as they don't need to research the product independently. Live stream events have enhanced customer interaction, engagement, and increased sales.</p> <p>The aim of this research-based thesis was to explore how live streaming marketing strategies, in terms of content, audience engagement, and promotional tactics, influence consumer purchase decisions in the cosmetic industry. The research employed both quantitative and qualitative methods. The first phase involved a survey with 233 participants who use cosmetics and have engaged with live video shopping. The second phase analyzed current strategies through three popular live stream recordings and included interviews with two professionals from the cosmetic industry. Additionally, the theoretical framework examines the importance of live stream marketing in the beauty sector, alongside theories on consumer purchase intentions and impulsive buying behavior.</p> <p>The results of data analysis revealed that Gen Z and Millennials are the primary users of live streaming platforms such as TikTok and Instagram. As these generations move away from mainstream media, they increasingly favor live stream commerce, appreciating its interactive and authentic approach to beauty product shopping. Live shopping events are especially appealing due to exclusive deals, reliable viewer-streamer interactions through Q&A sessions and real-time comments, and engaging product demonstration experiences. To further enhance the success of live shopping events, brands are advised to focus on delivering authentic, educational content that entertains viewers while integrating real-time interactions and limited-time flash sales linked to viewer engagement milestones.</p> <p>In conclusion, brands are capitalizing on social media creators and influencers for their instant connection with millions of consumers. Leading global brands have embraced live streaming on Chinese platforms like Alibaba's Taobao, where live shopping originated during the pandemic, and have seen substantial profits. This trend has since expanded to the U.S. and Europe, establishing live streaming as an innovative marketing strategy. Recognizing its potential to boost consumer engagement and drive sales is crucial for success in today's highly competitive cosmetic industry.</p>
Key words Live streaming marketing, social media marketing, e-commerce, purchase intention, customer engagement

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1 Introduction

This is a research-based bachelor's thesis for the Degree Program in International Business with a major specialization in Customer Relationship Management and Communication at Haaga-Helia University of Applied Sciences. This chapter introduces the background of the thesis topic, along with its benefits, objectives, and key components. It also defines the research methodology and the reasoning behind the choice of the topic.

1.1 Background

In the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, e-commerce has seen a spike in sales never seen before. With physical stores facing restrictions and consumers turning to online shopping more than ever, businesses have had to innovate rapidly to stay competitive. Many people's habits have transitioned from offline to online. Although the pandemic has now eased and activities have resumed, some technology-driven practices have remained popular due to their convenience and ease of use. Online shopping is one such activity that has continuously grown at a fast pace. (Ardiyanti 2023.) Considering that, new marketing trends have emerged, such as live streaming as a marketing tool, which is also called live streaming commerce (LSC). This trend technique involves the real-time broadcasting of video content over a social media channel, where the brand owner or streamer sells products directly to their audience on the internet to drive higher sales. (Shalabi 2023.)

Live shopping is a contemporary marketing method becoming increasingly popular in digital marketing, and it has transformed e-commerce into a customer-centered online environment (Ardiyanti 2023). By June 2022, 469 million people in China were actively participating as live streamers in the e-commerce sector (Shang, Ma, Wang & Gao 2023). Through live streaming, businesses showcase products, host events, and boost the relationship between the brand and its audience (Shalabi 2023). For instance, customers can interact and ask the brand owner questions while they are promoting products, including using tips and manufacturing processes, leading to more informative purchase decisions (Xu, Wu & Li, 2020).

According to Shalabi (2023), LSC in China has taken over, accounting for 19% of retail e-commerce sales in 2023. In the same year in the United States, live commerce sales reached 50 billion U.S. dollars, highlighting the potential of this rising trend (Statista 2024a). The four dominant social media platforms where viewers purchased products during a live streaming event in 2022 are Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, and TikTok (Statista 2024b). Projections suggest that by 2026, sales from live shopping will increase by 36%, accounting for over 5% of all e-commerce sales in North America. LSC offers unique advantages that connect directly with their customers, such as offering

special deals, creative inspiration, and better decision-making opportunities for consumers. (Statista 2024a.)

Generation Z (Gen Z) also wants cosmetic brands to have a stronger online presence. This demographic prefers live content because they feel more connected to this kind of online presence, which they find more authentic and engaging. This study focuses on the new marketing trend of live streaming used by cosmetic brands for e-commerce, how to implement effective strategies to increase purchase intentions, and its potential across various social media platforms. Consequently, this thesis investigates the strategies shared on the four most used social networks by Gen Z and Millennials for live shopping: Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, and TikTok Live, considering that these platforms also offer the most significant return on investment. (Vogue Business 2024; Statista 2024c.)

Given the limitations of previous studies, exploring the impact of live streaming on the behavior of cosmetic consumers and how beauty brands can produce worthwhile live streams on their social media platforms, this absence in research presents a gap that this study aims to address.

1.2 Research question

This thesis investigates specific strategies within live streaming marketing that can be valuable for e-commerce businesses and significantly increase customer purchase intentions in the cosmetic industry. This study aims to address the following three aspects. First, it aims to identify the factors that motivate beauty consumers to buy cosmetics during or after a live stream. Second, it analyzes the key features of live streaming marketing that are most effective in enhancing customer engagement and purchase intentions for cosmetic brands. This study also considers the diversity and opportunities that each social media platform can offer and how this marketing technique can leverage brand awareness and add value to consumers' lives. Third, it examines the strategies that beauty brands are currently employing to interact with their audience throughout the entire live streaming process.

This study adopts an international approach by examining how cosmetic companies leverage live shopping commerce to engage with global customers across various social media platforms. The primary research includes a survey of participants from different countries to better understand the preferences and purchasing behaviors of an international audience. Meanwhile, the secondary research draws on data from globally operating cosmetics companies and analyzes live shopping events that have attracted widespread attention and participation on a global scale.

This research answers the following research question (RQ): **How do live streaming marketing strategies in terms of content, audience engagement, and promotional tactics influence**

cosmetic consumers to complete a purchase? The research question is divided into investigative questions (IQ) as presented below:

IQ1: What social media platforms and key features of live streaming marketing are most effective in enhancing customer engagement for cosmetic brands?

IQ2: What role do the streamers or influencers play in influencing consumer purchase decisions for cosmetic products during live streams?

IQ3: What strategies are cosmetic companies or influencers currently using to create effective live stream sessions?

Table 1 below provides an overview of the investigative questions, theoretical framework elements, research methods, and corresponding results, organized by each investigative question.

Table 1. Overlay matrix

Investigative Question	Theoretical Framework	Research Methods	Results (Chapters)
IQ1	Fundamentals of live streaming marketing Live stream characteristics Social media platforms	Online survey	4.2
IQ2	Live stream characteristics Impulsive buying behavior Purchase intention	Online survey	4.3
IQ3	The cosmetics industry Live stream characteristics	Secondary qualitative data	4.4

1.3 Delimitation

This thesis focuses on current trends in live streaming videos related to skincare and facial makeup products within the Business-to-Consumer (B2C) digital marketing landscape, specifically on mainstream social media platforms such as Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, and TikTok. The goal is to develop a set of strategies for global companies of all sizes in the beauty industry. By narrowing the scope, this thesis aims to analyze live streaming on online platforms in the cosmetic industry, helping companies optimize their resources in high-potential segments.

However, this study excludes the technological infrastructure and software used to create live streams, as well as the technical challenges involved in live streaming. It does not cover legal and ethical practices for marketers and streamers related to live streaming marketing. Additionally, it does not provide partnership strategies or any monetization factors beyond purchases, such as sponsorships.

1.4 Benefits

This study will be valuable to online professionals, including influencers, content creators, streamers, and digital marketers in the cosmetics industry, as well as to cosmetic brands. With these insights, they will be able to create successful real-time events online on various social media platforms, learn effective ways to present and promote cosmetic products, and ultimately boost sales. Additionally, it will benefit business students, researchers, and employees by aiding in the recruitment of more students at Haaga-Helia University of Applied Sciences and contributing to the literature on consumer behavior and brand management. Finally, it will help the author deepen their understanding of new marketing practices, address changing trends in consumer behavior, and gain valuable knowledge in digital marketing.

1.5 Key concepts

Live streaming marketing or live shopping involves showcasing how products are made and used, with the host or streamer providing various views of the product, smell and texture, answering customer questions in real-time video broadcasting, and incorporating live entertainment to drive immediate purchases such as exclusive deals (Liu, Zhao, Dong & Wang, 2022).

Social media marketing leverages social media platforms, channels, and technologies to develop, distribute, and promote content that provides value to an organization's key parties, such as customers, employees, and partners (Tuten & Hanlon 2022, 32).

E-commerce, short for Electronic Commerce or online commerce, refers to the buying and selling of goods and services over the Internet, where commercial transactions are conducted through electronic devices (Santos, Augusto, Vieira, Bacalhau, Sousa, Pontes 2023, 226).

Purchase intention is a consumer's desire to buy a product or service, shaped by marketing strategies, consumer attitudes, and transaction importance. Meeting customer demands boosts purchase intention, with positive feelings about a product or store increasing the likelihood of buying. (Golalizadeh, Ranjbarian & Ansari 2023.)

Customer engagement refers to the interaction between consumers and a brand across various channels, intending to build brand loyalty and awareness over time (Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick, 2022, 34).

2 Live stream marketing in the cosmetics industry

This section explores the theoretical framework of live stream marketing in the cosmetics industry, organizing it into categories that support the research plan for this thesis. Since the focus is on beauty products, the first section discusses the overview of the cosmetics industry, while the other sections highlight the key characteristics of live stream videos, including consumer behavior during live stream viewing.



Figure 1. Key areas of live stream video

Figure 1 illustrates the key areas of live stream marketing. The first dimension focuses on strategies currently used to capture and maintain audience attention, including video and entertainment quality. The second dimension highlights characteristics that drive purchase intentions. The third dimension examines impulsive buying behavior, a key factor that streamers and sellers leverage. Finally, the fourth dimension explores audience and customer preferences regarding the social media channels that influence their purchasing decisions for cosmetic products.

2.1 The cosmetics industry

The online beauty market worldwide generated approximately 42.5 billion U.S. dollars in revenue in 2022, with projections to double by 2027. About 900 million people bought beauty items online worldwide, with projections indicating this number will exceed 1.2 billion by 2027. (Statista 2024d.)

The cosmetics industry is one of the largest and fastest-growing sectors in the global economy, encompassing everyday personal care items such as skincare, haircare, perfumes, toiletries, and makeup, with skincare being the leading segment (Mondello, Salomone & Mondello 2024, 1). Valued at approximately 460 billion U.S. dollars in 2023, the global beauty industry is projected to reach 580 billion U.S. dollars by 2027, driven by key markets such as China, North America, Asia Pacific, and Europe (The Business of Fashion and McKinsey & Company 2023, 10-50).

Furthermore, cosmetic products are the most frequently purchased category among luxury items, largely due to their accessibility (Bianchi 2022, 70) and the dominance of multinational corporations such as L'Oréal, Unilever, The Estée Lauder Companies, and Shiseido in their production (Statista 2024e). However, in 2023, nearly 9,000 small and medium-sized European companies were also represented in the cosmetics industry (Cosmetics Europe 2023).

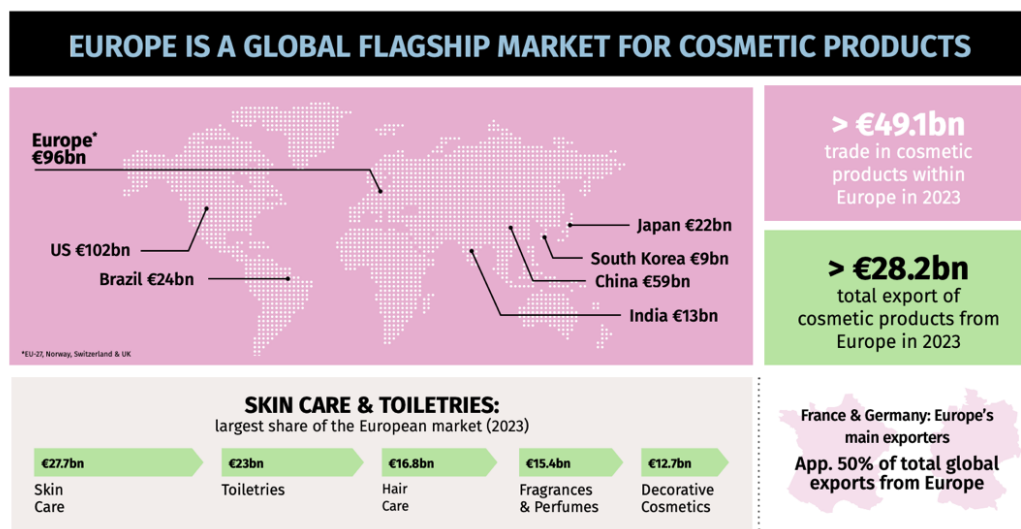


Figure 2. Socio-economic contribution of the European cosmetics industry (Cosmetics Europe 2023).

Europe plays a pivotal role in the production, innovation, and consumption of cosmetic products, positioning it as a flagship market for the global cosmetics industry. France and Germany lead European exports, collectively accounting for 50% of the region's global cosmetic exports. As shown in Figure 2, Europe's revenue from cosmetics reached 96 billion euros in 2023, placing it second after the U.S. at 102 billion euros, with China in third. (Cosmetics Europe 2023.) This is relevant to the research as the author resides in Europe and aims to provide resources to local beauty brands while exploring the potential growth of live streaming marketing in the region.

Notably, the majority of global retail sales for beauty products were conducted through e-commerce in 2022 (Statista 2023a), with women being the primary consumer group (Statista 2023b). As the main consumer base, women offer significant advantages to cosmetic companies. They are

more active than men in both seeking and giving opinions on social media and are more likely to use these platforms for entertainment purposes. (Bianchi 2022, 69.) Specifically, in 2023, Millennials and Gen Z represent the largest share of global consumers purchasing beauty products online (Statista 2024d).

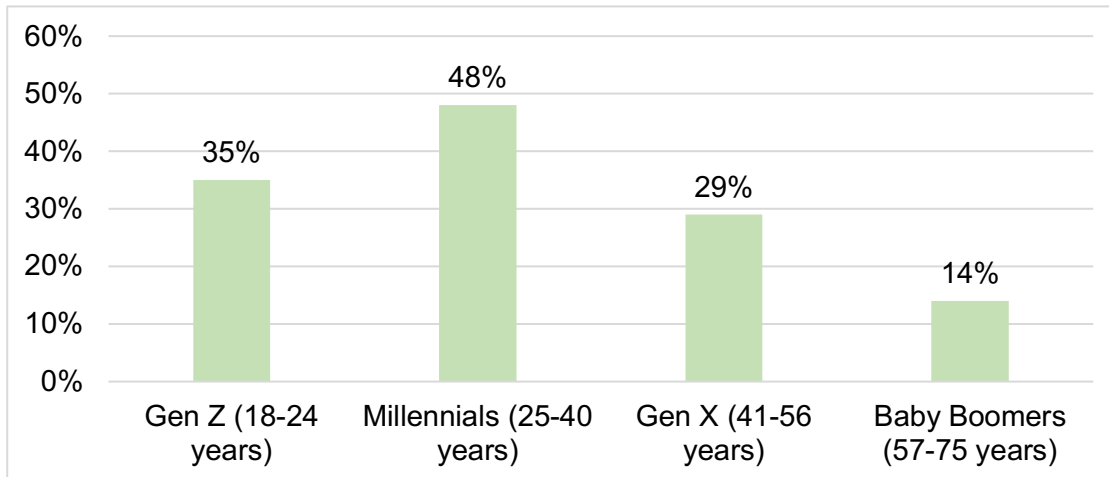


Figure 3. Share of global consumers purchasing beauty products online in 2nd quarter 2023, by generation (adapted from Statista 2024d)

According to McKinsey & Company (2023), the e-commerce beauty market continues to thrive, benefiting from the massive increase in popularity of social media channels such as TikTok, Instagram, and YouTube, which promote cosmetics through social commerce, especially via live sales. As previously reported by Cosmetic Europe (2023), a variety of independent brands have successfully entered the market with ambitions to scale, leading to intensified competition that is likely to compel established brands and retailers to adapt their strategies. 45% of Gen Z respondents stated that they try new brands every two to three months and are willing to experiment with makeup, skincare, and hair products, likely due to the rapid spread of beauty trends on social media. Nevertheless, Gen Z shoppers demonstrate high levels of loyalty, with nearly 60% willing to stick with their favorite brands, compared to around 50% of older generations, making this generation a valuable target for investment. (McKinsey & Company 2023.)

Current trends in the cosmetics industry are worth noting. Statista (2024f) and McKinsey & Company (2023) have identified three notable trends, with the growing demand for sustainable beauty products being the most important factor. Their significance is explained below, and Figure 4 highlights these three major movements.

Sustainable values	Gender-neutral beauty	K-beauty cosmetics
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • environmentally friendly products • ethical practices • ingredients • extensive research prior to purchase 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • genderless skin care • genderless make up line • more inclusive • more men interested in cosmetic products 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • fair-trade philosophy • product ingredients • consumers do extensive research prior to making a purchase

Figure 4. Trends emerged within the cosmetic industry

Due to its continuous global growth and high consumption of natural resources, the cosmetics industry requires a long-term vision to effectively manage sustainability and prioritize a shift toward greener practices (Rocca, Acerbi, Fumagalli & Taisch 2022). Modern consumers, particularly Millennials and Gen Z, are increasingly conscious of environmental and ethical factors, favoring green products and demonstrating an increased awareness of sustainability in their purchasing decisions (Mondello et al. 2024, 1). They consider green cosmetics to be of higher quality, therefore they are willing to pay more for them. These generations are reshaping beauty standards, expanding beyond traditional products to include wellness-oriented items. They seek products that not only enhance their appearance but also promote well-being, valuing unfiltered aesthetics that reflect their demand for authenticity. (The Business of Fashion and McKinsey & Company 2023, 10-50.) For green consumers, the most important criteria for sustainable beauty products are that they are 100% natural, do not contain ingredients harmful to the environment, and are organic (Statista 2024f).

A report by The Business of Fashion and McKinsey & Company (2023, 10-50) highlights that young shoppers are highly concerned about social inclusivity and show a preference for gender-neutral beauty products. Among the early pioneers in avoiding gender-based segmentation is Fenty Skin by Rihanna, which embraced gender inclusivity by featuring both male and female models in the same advertisements. This approach proved highly successful, with the brand generating over 550 million U.S. dollars in annual sales in its first full calendar year, 2018. Other well-known brands, such as Shiseido and Chanel, have also promoted inclusivity by collaborating with trans models like Hunter Schafer and Teddy Quinlivan. Many of these brands not only champion gender inclusivity but also donate a portion of their sales to support LGBTQIA+ communities. (Azuma 2022, 5-7.) Men have shown increased interest in cosmetics (Statista 2024f) and are now more influenced by society's beauty standards, with men in Asia already incorporating makeup products into their daily routines (The Business of Fashion and McKinsey & Company 2023, 10-50).

The latest trend to emerge is the expansion of the Korean beauty (K-beauty) phenomenon. In 2023, South Korea exported cosmetics worth 7.2 billion U.S. dollars to over 160 countries, ranking

second globally after France. (Azuma 2022; Statista 2024f; Statista 2024g.) The appeal lies in the rising popularity of the "glass skin" trend, originating from South Korea, which emphasizes a clear, dewy complexion and aligns with the "clean girl" aesthetic that has gained massive popularity on TikTok and Instagram. K-pop idols and K-drama celebrities have also played a powerful role in endorsing these products. (Beauty Pie 2023; Gorbach 2023, 11-18). Additionally, South Korea is renowned for its high beauty standards, high-quality beauty products, and cultural emphasis on skin-care. Many Koreans regularly engage in various beautification techniques and undergo plastic surgery procedures. This ideology has led people worldwide to seek out K-beauty products in pursuit of similar beauty standards. (Gorbach 2023, 11-18.)

2.2 Fundamentals of live streaming marketing

This sub-chapter explains the concept of live stream marketing. It begins with its origins, provides multiple definitions to comprehensively understand, and outlines the elements that shape live shopping video characteristics and its streamer. It concludes by discussing the advantages of live streaming marketing and some of its associated challenges.

First of all, is crucial to distinguish live streaming commerce from video commerce and social commerce:

- Social Commerce involves product discovery on social platforms (like Instagram or Facebook).
- Video Commerce involves discovering products through video streams, which can be pre-recorded (like on YouTube).
- Live streaming Commerce (LSC), specifically, refers to product discovery through live, real-time video, where viewers watch as the video is created. (Chen 2021.)

According to Chen's (2021) study, LSC is an innovative marketing approach first introduced by the Chinese giant company Alibaba's Taobao in 2016 when an Alibaba product manager sought to make e-commerce feel more like in-store shopping. However, it became widely familiar to the Chinese population during the COVID-19 lockdown in January 2020 (Chen 2021). By December 2020, China had 388 million LSC consumers, with Chinese companies like Alibaba, Kuaishou, and Pinduoduo leveraging this strategy for sales growth. Notably, Taobao Live generated nearly 50 billion U.S. dollars in gross merchandise volume (GMV) that year. (Liu et al. 2022.) GMV refers to the total value of merchandise sold over a specific period through a customer-to-customer (C2C) exchange platform. It is a key metric commonly used to assess the health of an e-commerce business, as revenue is influenced by the gross merchandise sold and the associated fees charged. (Hayes 2024.)

Live streaming is referred to by various terms in the literature. While the basic concept is straightforward and easy to grasp, the applications and technical aspects can make it more complex. Wang, Chen, and Huang (2023) describe LSC as providing a dynamic online shopping experience where consumers can access real-time product information and watch live demonstrations by streamers, engaging them throughout the decision-making process. Liu et al. (2022) define live streaming as a technology-based business model that facilitates two-way communication between streamers and consumers, creating an immersive shopping experience with added emotional value through interpersonal interactions. Similarly, Shang et al. (2023) emphasize that live streaming fosters an interactive, consumer-centered environment where the host presents product information authentically and encourages consumers to share their opinions, ultimately boosting sales and brand visibility.

Through live streaming, consumers can participate in an immersive experience by watching streamers' product presentations, interacting with them, reading consumer discussions, and benefiting from platform discounts. This immersive experience is a great advantage for enhancing consumers' sense of social presence, thus gaining pleasant emotional experiences and better purchasing decisions. (Liu et al. 2022.)

In a traditional purchasing journey, customers typically go through a consideration phase, assessing their needs, comparing products, and making thoughtful decisions. However, live streaming transforms this process by streamlining the path to purchase and creating a sense of urgency and exclusivity, moving customers directly from consideration to action with minimal delay. The fast-paced nature of live streaming allows limited time for comparison between brands, as products can quickly go out of stock. This dynamic taps into the endowment effect, where individuals tend to overvalue items with limited availability, making them reluctant to miss a good deal. Additionally, discounts and bundle offers (e.g., "50% off the second item" or "third one free") stimulate demand, encouraging buyers to purchase more than they initially planned. (Chen 2021.)

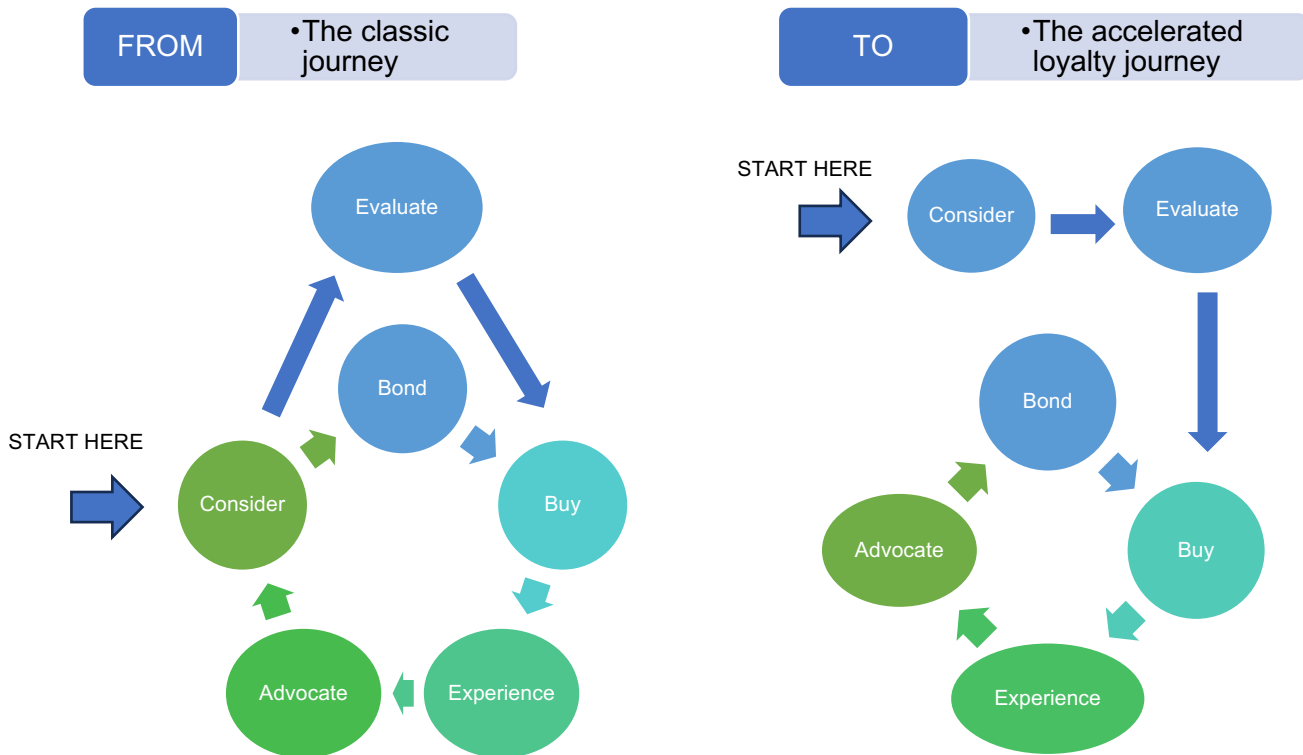


Figure 5. The transformation from the classic journey to the accelerated loyalty journey (adapted from Chen 2021)

This accelerated customer journey benefits companies by boosting sales and exposure, as customers are more likely to make impulsive purchases and share their experiences with others. Additional customer retention strategies include "random red pockets" and "instant kill" product offers on Chinese live platforms. Red pockets contain small cash prizes (e.g., 10 or 20 pockets) randomly distributed among viewers by the hosts. Instant kill offers involve limited selected products sold for just 1 cent by the host, prompting customers to wait eagerly in front of the live stream, ready to purchase the items as soon as they are released. (Chen 2021.)

A major factor driving LSC in China is the use of time-sensitive discounts, such as coupon codes valid for only 30 seconds. However, a key challenge with LSC is that it relies on viewers being available at the same time as the broadcast, limiting the audience compared to pre-recorded videos that can be watched anytime. (Goldberg 2023.)

Furthermore, live streaming faces challenges like counterfeit products and misleading marketing. For instance, Amazon seized 7 million counterfeit items globally in 2023. Both TikTok and Amazon Live utilize technology to monitor and safeguard customer rights while employing human oversight to enhance platform security. (Chen 2021; McLymore 2024.)

2.3 Live stream characteristics

According to Chen (2021), an effective sales strategy is to invite celebrity spokespeople to the live channels. For instance, the cosmetic brand Clinique hired actress Emilia Clarke to host their first live streaming event. While Clarke discussed Clinique products, viewers could see and purchase the items directly, ultimately increasing 60% in sales due to high consumer engagement on live streaming. (Larson 2021.) This is because celebrities have popularity and a large fan base willing to buy endorsed products. Professional hosts in China, such as Viya and Li Jiaqi, are key streaming influencers on the Taobao platform, attracting peak viewership of over 20 million. They sell a range of products, maintain a loyal customer base, and work with reliable suppliers. Another type of host is the supplier themselves, who benefit from using self-managed channels. These hosts offer more time for customer questions and evaluations, providing detailed information about their products. (Chen 2021.)

Moreover, Wang et al. (2023) demonstrated that danmaku (or text overlays), a unique interactive feature allowing viewers to leave real-time comments visible on the screen during a live stream, plays a crucial role in helping the host capture audience attention and influence their buying intentions. Entertainment during these live streams is a key factor in drawing consumer engagement, and part of the reason audiences view or send danmaku is for hedonic value. This aspect is particularly appealing to younger audiences, who appreciate the immediacy of real-time interaction and customized experiences, with Gen Z especially valuing these features as a significant benefit before making purchases. (Statista 2024a; Wang et al. 2023.)

Even though the adoption of live streaming in the U.S. has been slow compared to China, Goldberg (2023) states that there are several reasons that justify viewers being present to watch live stream videos:

Product Scarcity	Deal Scarcity	One to One
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •The product for sale is either limited in quantity, such as collectibles, auction items, and item drops on platforms like NTWRK (live auctions). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Discounts and special offers drive consumer interest. Amazon Live shopping strategy is one example where promotions attract viewers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Sales associates offer one-on-one video appointments for customers who choose not to visit the store in person.

Figure 7. Reasons why audiences in the U.S. watch live stream videos

The three main reasons Americans watch live shopping videos are closely tied to product scarcity, price reductions, and personalized shopping experiences. Firstly, limited supply or unique items, such as collectibles or auctioned vintage products, draw significant attention. Secondly, products that are rarely discounted often generate interest when offered at special prices during live streams. Lastly, one-on-one personal video consultations, which allow customers to “visit” stores virtually from the comfort of their own homes, are expected to become a widely adopted solution for U.S. live streaming. (Goldberg 2023.) In contrast, the key drivers for live shopping in China are the opportunity to gain detailed product information before purchasing and the appeal of attractive price promotions (Yu 2022).

Furthermore, Wang et al. (2023) explored the influence of a streamer or influencer's facial appearance on sales in LSC through the "halo" effect. Their research suggests that the physical attractiveness of streamers significantly impacts sales, with good-looking influencers generally achieving higher sales volumes. This phenomenon often leads beauty consumers to perceive attractive streamers as more intelligent, competent, and sociable. LSC amplifies the impact of appearance, as attractive hosts are more likely to positively influence purchase decisions, especially when promoting hedonic products such as personal care items. (Wang et al. 2023.)

While the "halo" effect highlights the advantages of physical attractiveness, other studies suggest a more nuanced relationship. For instance, Gheorghiu, Callan, and Skylark (2017) found that students rated less attractive professors as better scientists compared to their more attractive counterparts, indicating a potential "ugliness premium." Similarly, Peng, Cui, Chung, and Zheng (2020) identified a U-shaped relationship between appearance and product sales, suggesting that the influence of beauty on sales is not always linear or entirely positive.

As more internet celebrities transition from creating videos to live streaming, a lack of understanding and expertise in the role has introduced significant challenges. This shift has led to issues in customer trust, as some hosts may not fully meet the demands or expectations of live streaming, potentially damaging consumer confidence in the industry. (Chen 2021.) Hence, the brand should choose streamers with strong communication, professional expertise, and excellent sales skills. Streamers must promote products honestly and with quality to build consumer trust. (Yu 2022.)

Research further indicates that influencers are more likely to gain consumer trust when they recommend products in realistic, relatable environments. Therefore, the setting of the live stream plays a crucial role in shaping consumer purchase intentions. For instance, if a host selects a background that aligns with their personal image or simulates a real sales scene, it can positively impact consumers' likelihood to make a purchase. (Shang et al. 2023.)

2.4 Purchase intention

Purchase intention is the desire to buy a product or service, influenced by a company's marketing strategy, consumer attitudes, and perceived importance of the transaction. For online businesses, meeting customer demands can enhance purchase intention, as consumers' positive feelings about a product or store drive their likelihood of buying. Both external factors (like brand presence and store location) and internal factors (such as need fulfillment) impact this intention. Purchase intention is often used to predict consumer behavior and estimate the likelihood of future purchases. (Golalizadeh, Ranjbarian & Ansari 2023.)

Additionally, purchase intention in live streaming shopping is influenced by seven key factors: Product Fit, Consumer Interactivity, Technology of Live Streaming Shopping, Consumer Feels, Relation Between Consumer and Streamer, Consumer Behavior, and Uncertainty.

- Product Fit refers to how well consumers feel a product suits their needs. (Mindiasari, Priharsari, Setiawan, Purnomo 2024, 27-30.) For example, a consumer appreciated a streamer who provided both pros and cons of a laptop, which helped them better understand the product's suitability rather than just hearing positive claims (Wang, Lu, Cao, Chu, Wang & Wattenhofer 2022, 717-718).
- Consumer Interactivity is the communication between viewers and the streamer.
- Technology of Live Streaming Shopping is defined as all the technological elements impacting the live shopping experience.
- Consumer Feels indicate the consumer's emotions during the stream.
- The Relation Between Consumer and Streamer refers to a relationship created during demonstrations.
- Consumer Behavior refers to habits formed from frequent attending streaming.
- Uncertainty is defined as distrust in product quality (Mindiasari et al. 2024, 27-30). More detailed product information decreases uncertainty (Yu 2022).

Meeting the first six factors can enhance customer engagement, which positively impacts purchase intentions and helps predict consumer behavior (Mindiasari et al. 2024, 27-30).

In a study carried out by Yu (2022) involving 200 Chinese beauty consumers familiar with live streaming shopping, when asked why they watched Chinese live streaming sites, the top reason was to obtain detailed product information (68%), followed by price promotions (see Figure 6). Notably, 67% of respondents were from the Gen Z and Millennials age group. (Yu 2022.)

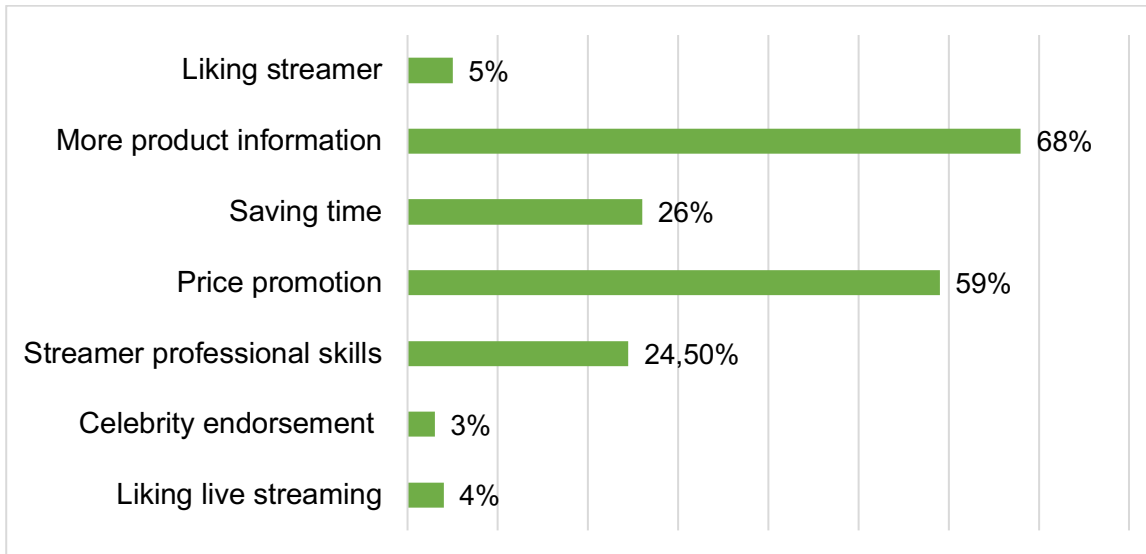


Figure 6. Perceived benefits of live streaming (adapted from Yu 2022)

As highlighted by Mindiasari et al. (2024, 27-30), providing detailed and enriching information during live streaming is essential, as it helps to reduce consumer uncertainty, particularly for products that are new or unfamiliar to viewers. Additionally, price promotions serve as an effective marketing tool to attract new participants and encourage purchase intentions. (Yu 2022.)

Furthermore, positive electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) plays a significant role in shaping purchase intentions, particularly in competitive markets like the beauty industry, due to its higher credibility compared to traditional advertising. Consumers often rely on online reviews, such as comments, likes, ratings, videos, and blog posts, as these forms of authentic user feedback strongly influence potential buyers' decisions. To maximize the impact of eWOM, brands should prioritize attracting viewers to live streams, creating engaging content, and encouraging loyal customers to share positive reviews. Promoting live streaming schedules through social media can further expand reach and enhance engagement. (Akbari, Foroudi, Fashami, Mahavarpour & Khodayari 2022; Yu 2022.)

2.5 Impulsive buying behavior

Impulsive buying is an unplanned, spontaneous purchase driven by an immediate emotional connection to a product. It involves a quick decision, minimal prior thought, and is heavily influenced by the consumer's emotions, leading them to bypass typical planning or rational decision-making processes. (Ardiyanti 2023; Golalizadeh et al. 2023.) According to Chen-Leino (2023, 15-16), consumers often engage in impulsive buying while watching influencer live streams, which online sellers actively encourage to boost sales, with impulsive buys accounting for up to 40% of online shopping revenue.

Personality traits also influence impulsive buying behavior. Research by Parsad, Prashar, and Vijay (2019) highlights that extroversion and neuroticism are positively linked to impulsive buying tendencies (IBT), while conscientiousness has a negative correlation. Extroverted individuals are sociable and prone to impulsive purchases. Neurotic individuals, prone to anxiety and seeking immediate gratification, may engage in impulsive buying as a coping mechanism, whereas conscientious people plan carefully, leading to lower impulsivity. (Parsad et al., 2019.)

Streamer characteristics, including appearance, can increase danmaku activity, enhancing viewer immersion, customer engagement, and purchase intent. While high danmaku activity encourages impulsive purchases, it may also hinder careful decision-making, indirectly affecting sales through increased viewer interaction. (Wang et al., 2023.) Moreover, Chen-Leino (2023) suggests that limited-time offers in live streams can further boost impulsive buying.

2.6 Social media platforms

This sub-chapter identifies the most popular social media channels used for LSC worldwide. The author analyzes only the four leading social media platforms where internet users purchased products during live streaming events in 2022: Facebook Live, Instagram Live, TikTok Live, and YouTube Live. (Statista 2024i.) In the U.S., however, YouTube Live is less popular, with Amazon Live taking its place among the top preferences alongside Facebook, Instagram, and TikTok Live (Statista 2024j). Social media continues to play a vital role in digital marketing, particularly in generating demand for cosmetics (Shopify 2024).

Facebook

Facebook is the app with the largest share of return on investment together with Instagram and is also the world's most well-known social media platform (Statista 2024c). With 3.05 billion active users every month, Facebook appeals to various demographics, with millennials making up the largest group of users (Restream 2024). Facebook Live enables live video recording and broadcasting, allowing instant communication between broadcasters and viewers, who can express opinions in real-time. Most users like its ease of use and only see live streams from people and brands they follow, either through notifications or in their newsfeed, though they can also search streams using Facebook Live Map. Interactions include comments and reactions that float across the screen, providing an engaging, interactive experience for viewers. (Limna, Kraiwanit & Jangjarat 2023.)

Instagram

Instagram (IG), known as the influencers' platform, has over 2 billion users and is an excellent choice for video content creators. IG Live allows users to invite other streamers to join a live

stream or broadcast exclusively to paid subscribers. Additionally, the live chat feature includes moderation tools that hide offensive comments, making it a safer and more user-friendly channel. (Mileva 2024; Restream 2024.) In 2020, Instagram introduced its live video feature as part of Instagram Stories, with live videos marked in the Stories tray and easily discoverable in the Explore tab. Users can comment, like, and view streams from accounts they follow, and safety controls allow hosts to manage comments and viewers. Live videos disappear immediately after the stream ends, promoting spontaneous interactions. These updates aimed to make Instagram a more authentic, pressure-free space, encouraging users to share more moments from their daily lives. (Chaykowski 2016.) Today, Instagram provides users with the ability to save live broadcasts, share replays, or access them through the Live Archive on their profile. This feature enables followers who missed the live stream to catch up at their convenience. (Meta 2024; Mileva 2024.)

YouTube

YouTube is a widely popular on-demand video platform and one of the most universal live streaming platforms, boasting an impressive 2.7 billion users. However, its vast size and the overwhelming number of creators pose a significant challenge, making it difficult for individual live videos to gain visibility and stand out. Besides that, the live platform has a wide range of quality features that appeal to both viewers and streamers, including 4K streaming, the ability to embed videos on the creator's website, monetization options, and chat functions for audience interaction, to name a few. (Restream 2024). YouTube allows individuals and companies to upload large-size videos without compromising quality (Rodela, 2024).

TikTok

Finally, TikTok, the world's most widely used social platform, has experienced remarkable growth. Launched in 2019, TikTok Live allows creators to connect with viewers in real-time. However, the true game changer has been the integration of TikTok Shop, which enables viewers to make purchases directly during live streams without leaving the app. (Ariffin, Fikry, Shobri & Ilias 2024; Krings 2024; TikTok Creator Networks s.a.; TikTok 2023.) As of early 2024, the platform recorded over 900.7 million active users worldwide (Krings 2024). Known for its discoverability and trusted for authentic reviews, TikTok Shop sold over 370 million beauty and personal care products worldwide in 2023. In the U.S., health and beauty products were the top-selling items, making up 85% of TikTok Shop sales. (Statista 2024h.) Moreover, TikTok users are 1.5 times more likely to buy a product they discover on the platform compared to other social networks. Gen Z, in particular, is highly drawn to TikTok Live due to its high engagement levels. (Shopify 2024.) To improve its live platform, TikTok developed TikTok Live Studio, a desktop streaming software that allows streamers to broadcast directly on TikTok (Krings 2024).

3 Research Methods

The research methods chapter of this thesis provides a detailed overview of the approach used to investigate the research question. This chapter explains the research methodology, presenting and justifying the research design, data collection, and data analysis methods used. It establishes the credibility and validity of the research while offering insight into the author's thought process, decision-making, and problem-solving.

3.1 Research design

Understanding research design is essential because it forms the basis for conducting effective research. It defines the methods for data collection and analysis, serving as a critical planning stage that outlines the steps required to answer the research question and achieve the study's objectives. (Burns & Bush 2013, 98.)

This research adopts a descriptive research design to examine live stream characteristics and trends in the cosmetic industry, answering the questions about who, what, where, when, and how, making it valuable for understanding customer demographics, shopping habits, and product discovery methods (Burns & Bush 2013, 104-105). A mixed-methods approach is used, incorporating both qualitative and quantitative data collection methods. According to Creswell & Creswell (2023, 253), the integration of these methods offers a deeper understanding of the research problem.

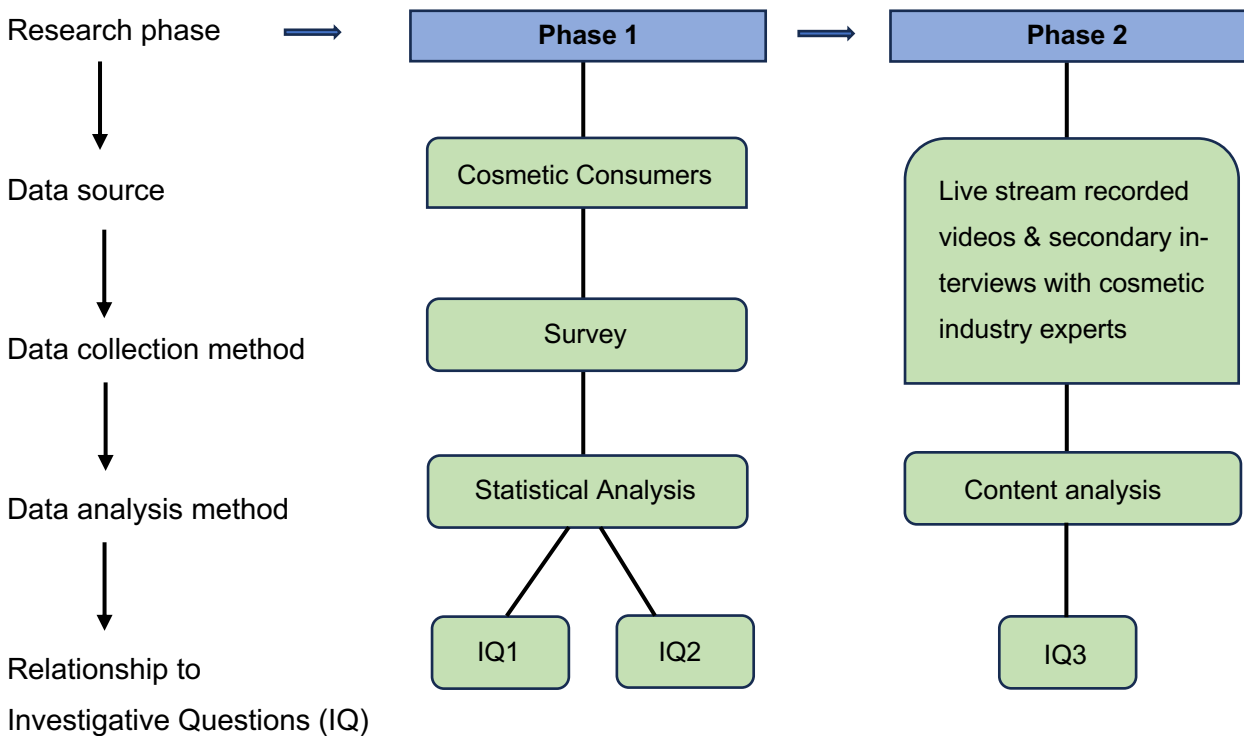


Figure 7. Research design

Figure 7 outlines each phase of the research and its relation to the investigative questions.

3.2 Population and sample

This study employed a nonprobability sampling method called purposive sampling, where the researcher used their judgment to select and identify the most suitable participants. This method allowed for the selection of individuals likely to provide valuable insights relevant to the study's purpose. (Burns & Bush 2013, 254-256.) Participants qualified if they used skincare or makeup products and engaged with cosmetic live streams on social media platforms, such as TikTok, Instagram, YouTube, or Facebook Live. Two initial screening questions at the beginning of the questionnaire confirmed eligibility, directing those who did not meet the criteria to the end page of the survey. The survey was conducted online with Webropol and it was open for responses from November 7th to November 14th, as clearly stated on the introduction page.

3.3 Data collection

As stated earlier, this research utilizes both primary and secondary methods. Specifically, primary research involves directly collecting original data. (Sutherland 2021, p. 14.) The author conducted an Internet survey, as questionnaires are popular due to their generally lower costs, reduced intrusiveness, and ability to target specific populations. Survey research offers a quantitative overview of population trends, attitudes, or opinions by examining a sample. It involves cross-sectional and longitudinal methods, using questionnaires or structured interviews to collect data, with the intent of generalizing findings to the broader population. However, the author acknowledges survey challenges such as lower response rates and difficulties in obtaining a representative sample. (Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick, 2022, p. 479; Creswell & Creswell 2023.)

The survey was shared through various mobile applications with the author's network, including international students, friends, and ex-colleagues, in group chats on WhatsApp and Telegram. It was also distributed on LinkedIn, where the author has 400 connections; on Instagram to over 1,100 followers; on Facebook to over 1,100 connections; and in international groups on Facebook such as "Expats in Helsinki," "Italiani a Helsinki," "International Working Women of Finland," and "Internationals in Jätkäsaari." In addition, the author printed the survey's QR code on posters and placed them at key locations, including Helsinki's Central Railway Station, Pasila Station, Oodi Library, Konepaja Adult High School, and Haaga-Helia University of Applied Sciences, where there was significant foot traffic. To increase response rates, the author offered an incentive: participants had the chance to win one of three €10 gift cards to Kicks or Sephora, two of the most renowned cosmetic stores in Europe.

The survey aimed to collect data on the most effective social media platforms and essential features of live streaming marketing for enhancing customer engagement (IQ1), as well as the influence of streamers on cosmetic purchase decisions during live streams (IQ2). By gathering insights from a broad audience, cosmetic brands can design successful live shopping events that resonate with a wide range of consumers. The survey participants provided a representative sample of a larger population, offering valuable insights into consumer behavior, preferences, and the international reach of individuals (Creswell & Creswell 2023).

On the other hand, qualitative secondary research involves analyzing data previously gathered by others, making it more suitable for the third investigative question (IQ3) regarding how cosmetic brands are currently leveraging live streaming marketing and what strategies are in place (Sutherland 2021, p. 14). The qualitative research approach aims to preserve and analyze the specific form, content, and experience of social actions rather than subjecting them to mathematical transformations. Unlike quantitative data, qualitative data is expressed in words rather than numbers. (Chesebro & Borisoff 2007, 6.)

This study adopts a dual approach to examine live streaming marketing strategies in the cosmetics industry, providing insights into their effectiveness and applications. First, it analyzed three recorded live shopping videos on social media platforms. Next, it examined interviews with industry experts from previously collected data to avoid oversaturation on the internet. Since the survey revealed that Instagram Live is the platform where beauty consumers most frequently watch live shopping events, the author aimed to identify an appropriate video by conducting a Google search using the key term “cosmetic IG live.” On November 14, 2024, the top results were live videos uploaded on YouTube, prompting the author to use YouTube as a search engine. Given that live streams on Instagram are not automatically saved, YouTube proved to be the most suitable platform for finding recorded videos from beauty companies’ profiles. Moreover, YouTube features a Live tab that archives all past live sessions.

The initial analysis centered on a recorded Instagram Live session hosted by English celebrity Holly Willoughby in collaboration with Beauty Pie. The session was later saved and uploaded to Beauty Pie's YouTube profile. (Beauty Pie, 27 April 2023.) This video was chosen for its authenticity, as the host, despite having minimal expertise in the makeup field, boasts a substantial fan base of 8.3 million Instagram followers, significantly surpassing Beauty Pie's 475 thousand followers as of 14 November 2024 (Beauty Pie s.a.; Hollywilloughby s.a.).

The second video analyzed was from Nordstrom's YouTube channel, known for its numerous recorded live streams that allow viewers to catch up on missed live events. Nordstrom, one of the oldest department stores in the United States, was founded in 1901 and operates 360 retail stores

nationwide, offering luxury clothing, accessories, and beauty products (Nordstrom 2023; Nordstrom 2024a; Investopedia 2024). The chosen beauty live session stood out due to its high viewership during the live broadcast, attracting nearly 3,000 viewers (Nordstrom, 19 July 2023).

The last video analysis focused on a live video by Jeffree Star on TikTok, one of the top influencers in cosmetics (Forbes s.a.), with 7 million followers on TikTok and 13.5 million followers on Instagram (Jeffree Star s.a.a; Jeffree Star s.a.b). He initially gained online popularity in the early 2000s as a man who wore makeup, which eventually led him to launch his own cosmetic company, Jeffree Star Cosmetics. Currently, he is highly active on TikTok Live, achieving a record 70 million likes during a single stream. (Bee Better 6 April 2024; Jamie, R. 20 May 2024.)

These three live stream reviews provided a strong foundation for the IQ3 research, allowing for a comparison of three distinct approaches: a celebrity endorsement by a fast-growing company in the United Kingdom, a campaign by an established U.S. luxury retailer, and one led by an American influencer and entrepreneur within the cosmetics industry.

The second approach involved analyzing data from two interviews with industry professionals. These interviews, conducted with decision-makers in the cosmetics industry, focused on marketing practices related to live stream shopping events. Candidates were selected based on their professional expertise in marketing and the strong market presence of the cosmetic companies they represent. Furthermore, the author collected only information that aligned with the study's objectives. To provide varied insights, the German beauty retailer Douglas, an early adopter of live commerce ventures, and L'Oréal Paris, introducing live streaming marketing strategies in Asian countries, were selected.

3.4 Reliability, validity and relevance

When conducting the research and reporting the findings, the author ensures that the results are presented honestly and accurately to reflect reliable and valid research. According to McGivern (2022, 19), validity ensures the accuracy of the research measures, emphasizing credibility and soundness, while reliability focuses on the consistency of results, ensuring replicability. Both principles are essential for establishing trustworthiness in quantitative and qualitative research.

The survey included both open and closed questions, carefully designed to minimize bias and ambiguity. The questions and response options were structured to be as clear and straightforward as possible, utilizing a fully labeled 5-point Likert scale to ensure more reliable responses (McGivern 2022, 416). To avoid influencing respondents, the scope and order of the questions were thoroughly considered. Moreover, the author tested the survey on four participants and refined it based on their feedback. All survey responses were kept completely anonymous.

When utilizing existing data for qualitative research, the author considered factors such as quality, relevance, and potential misinterpretation (McGivern 2022, 20). To address these concerns, the author reviewed the data objectively and cross-verified it with multiple sources to ensure its validity and alignment with the research objectives. The author also meticulously implemented the screening questions outlined in the preceding sub-chapter.

3.5 Data analysis

Quantitative data typically consists of closed-ended responses and covers a larger sample size than qualitative data, as it uses statistical methods to derive meaningful insights about a population (Creswell & Creswell 2023). The survey results were analyzed using Excel, which provides a variety of tools for efficient data manipulation and interpretation, alongside Webropol's, comparison tool for clearer evidence.

Qualitative data analysis involves systematic organization and intellectual interpretation, aiming to uncover underlying meanings, patterns, and connections within participants' beliefs and social contexts. This approach focuses on data such as text, recordings, or images. (McGivern 2022 284.) In this study, content analysis was employed to review live streams on social media platforms, and the selection of interviews aimed to identify key similarities and differences aligned with the theoretical framework. Significant sections were transcribed, live stream methods were analyzed, and strategies were highlighted to support the research objectives.

4 Collected data and results

This chapter presents the findings from both primary and secondary research.

4.1 Introduction to respondents

The author specifically targeted the survey at individuals who use cosmetic products and have some familiarity with cosmetic LSC. Out of the 233 respondents who participated in the survey, 147 passed the two screening questions and completed it. The first screening question asked participants whether they use cosmetic products, with 96% responding yes. The second question asked if they had ever purchased a cosmetic product as a result of watching a live shopping video, disqualifying individuals who had never watched it. Among the respondents, 43% indicated they had purchased at least once, compared to 21% who had watched but never made a purchase.

After passing the screening questions, the majority of participants were Millennials, accounting for the highest percentage (57%), followed by Gen Z adults aged 18 to 24 (35%). This outcome is likely due to the survey being distributed primarily within the author's network, which predominantly consists of Millennials and Gen Z.

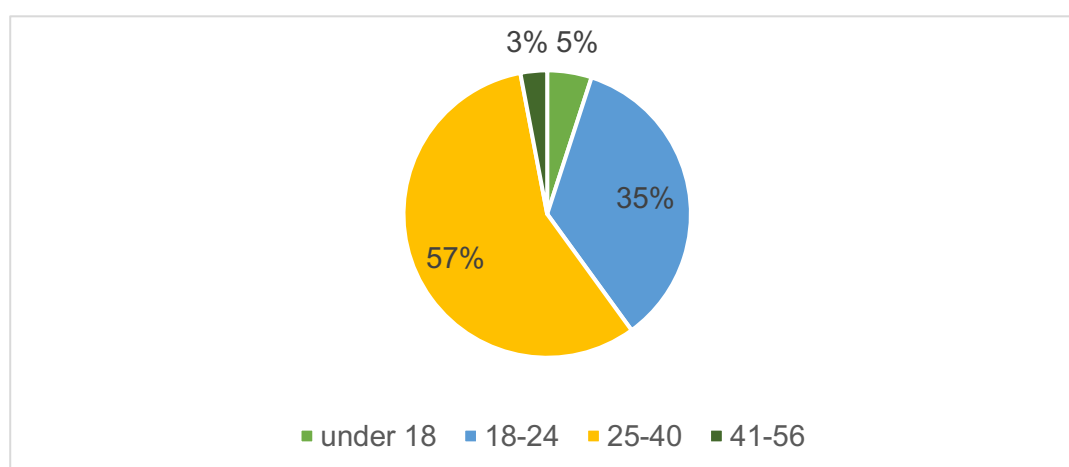


Figure 8. Age distribution of respondents (=147)

Additionally, it came as no surprise that 93% of respondents were female, as women are typically the dominant consumer group for cosmetic products. Among the respondents, the largest nationality group was from Finland (25%), followed by the U.S. (23%). The remaining 48% of respondents represented a diverse range of countries, including Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Australia, Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, China, Colombia, Estonia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, India, Iran, Italy, Kenya, South Korea, Kosovo, Lithuania, Malaysia, Mauritius, Morocco, Myanmar, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Pakistan, Philippines, Poland, Romania, Russia, Spain, Sri Lanka,

Sweden, Thailand, United Kingdom and Vietnam. Given the diverse international representation of respondents, this study can be considered to have a global perspective.

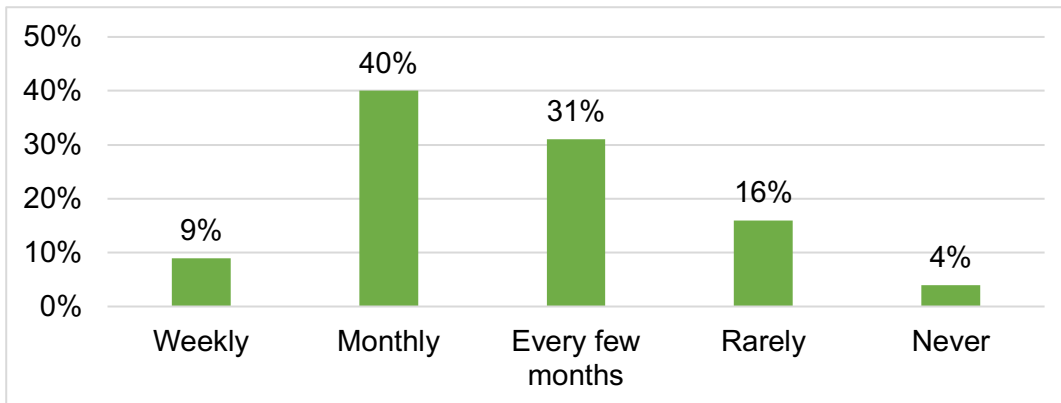


Figure 9. Respondents' purchasing behavior toward cosmetic items (=147)

This figure illustrates respondents' answers to the question, "How often do you buy cosmetics online?" The majority reported purchasing cosmetics monthly (40%), followed by every few months (31%) and rarely (16%). These results show that 80% of respondents are regular online cosmetic buyers.

4.2 Key features and platforms of live streaming marketing

To address IQ1, the author posed a set of questions, starting with which social media platforms respondents use to watch cosmetic live stream events. Respondents were asked to select all the platforms they use.

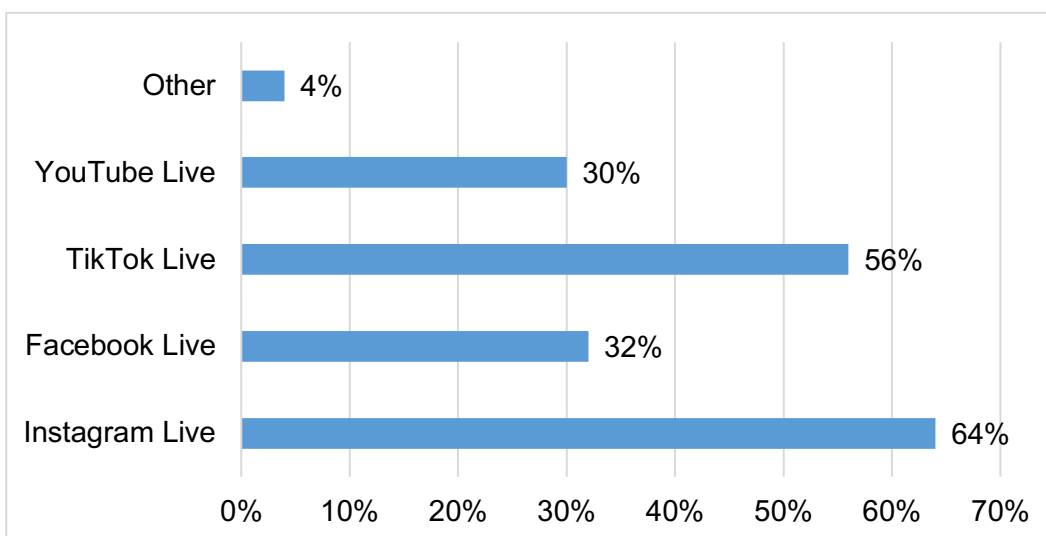


Figure 10. Respondents' platforms of choice for watching cosmetic live shopping events

273 were the answers selected, Instagram (64%) and TikTok Live (56%) emerged as the top choices, followed by Facebook Live (32%) and YouTube (30%) with only a 2% difference, suggesting a near-even split in user preference. Respondents who selected “Other” were asked to specify their answers, revealing platforms such as Taobao, Twitch, Kuaishou, and Little Red Book (or Xiaohongshu). Predictably, three of these platforms are Chinese, reflecting the participation of respondents from China, the leading country in live stream shopping.

Table 2 below illustrates the significance of live streaming features in enhancing engagement for cosmetics-focused content. Participants were asked to rate their opinions using a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from “not important” to “very important,” to identify the key areas influencing their engagement during live shopping events.

Table 2. Importance of live streaming features for cosmetics engagement

Construct	Importance	Average Value
Streamer or influencer’s characteristics	Appearance	3.3
	Personality	3.9
Real-time features	Q&A with the streamer	3.4
	Product demonstrations	4.3
Video characteristics	Customer reviews shown live	4.0
	Quality of production	4.0
Knowledge and price factors	Exclusive deals and discounts	4.1
	Product use, tips and tutorials	4.1
Appeal factors	Celebrity as a guest	2.6
	Entertainment	3.2

Product demonstrations during a live stream emerged as the primary factor in boosting engagement, with an average rating of 4.3. Knowledge and price were identified as the highest-rated factors, with respondents agreeing they are most engaged when the host demonstrates product usage and offers special deals (both rated 4.1). Notably, celebrity involvement was the least impactful factor (2.6), despite studies showing that celebrity endorsements can increase sales and brand recognition, as mentioned by Larson (2021) and Chen (2021) in Chapter 2. Beauty consumers also

value high-quality video and audio and actively read reviews from other consumers in the comments section during real-time video shopping (both with average ratings of 4.0).

Furthermore, when considering the motivations that lead consumers to watch cosmetic live streams, 70% of the 147 respondents cited “learning about new products” as the primary reason, followed by “accessing exclusive discounts” as the second most common motivation (46%). In the figure 11 below, participants were given 6 options and allowed to select up to 2 answers.

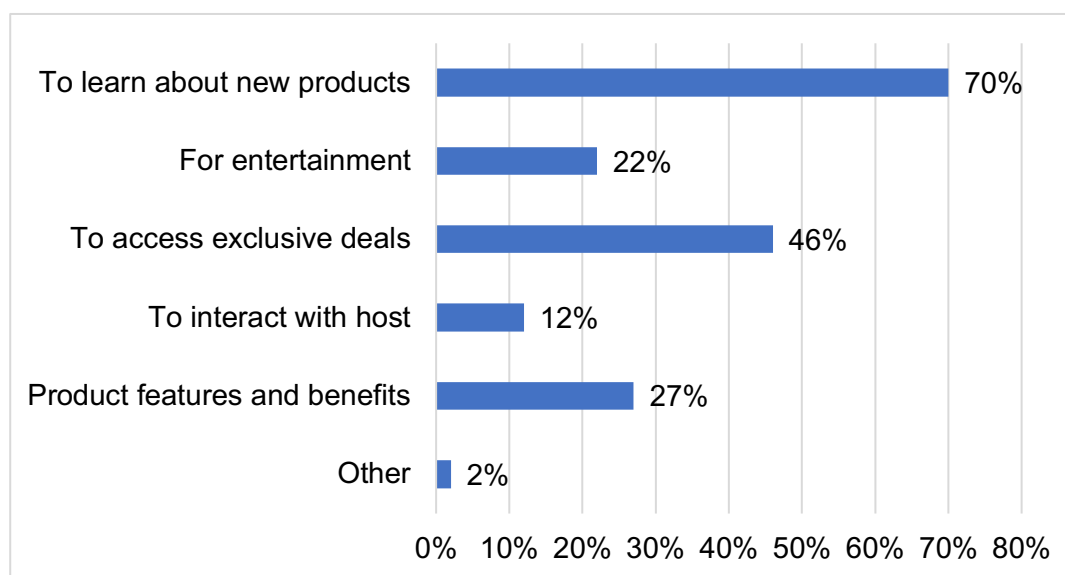


Figure 11. Respondents’ reasons to watch live streams showcasing cosmetics products

Respondents who selected “Other” emphasized tips and tutorials about the product, along with the ability to relate to the influencer, as key factors. These findings also align with the research conducted by Yu (2022) in Chapter 2.

4.3 Role of the streamer or influencer in persuading beauty consumers’ purchase intentions

In this section, the results regarding the host’s impact during live streams are presented (IQ2). Respondents were asked how likely they were to buy a cosmetic product recommended by their favorite influencer or streamer (Figure 12). On a 5-point Likert scale ranging from “very unlikely” to “very likely,” the top two responses were nearly evenly split, with 39% remaining neutral and 40% indicating they were likely to purchase. Interestingly, 14% of respondents selected “very likely,” suggesting a stronger intent to buy. On the other hand, a small percentage of participants expressed hesitation, with 4% choosing “unlikely” and only 3% selecting “very unlikely.”

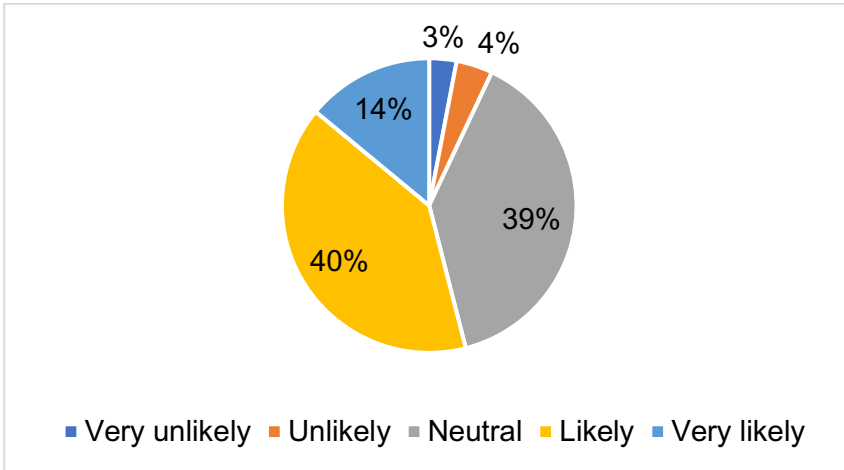


Figure 12. Respondents' purchase decisions influenced by streamers (=147)

The second question assessed the influence of streamers on respondents' purchasing confidence when providing detailed product demonstrations. A significant portion of beauty consumers responded positively, with 47% stating that streamers have a substantial impact on their confidence and 42% indicating they somewhat increase confidence in purchasing decisions. Notably, 11% of respondents reported no change in their confidence, while none indicated that it made them feel less confident (Figure 13).

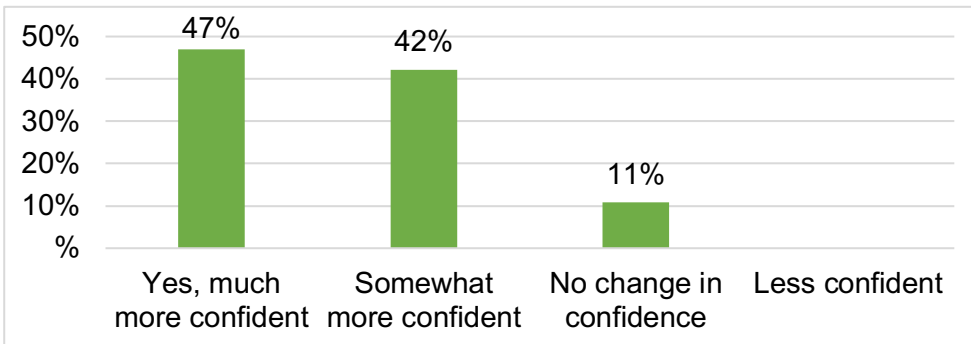


Figure 13. Impact of streamers' product demonstrations on purchasing confidence (=147)

In the subsequent question about the main characteristics of a streamer that increase viewers' purchase intentions during a live stream featuring cosmetic products, participants were given seven options and allowed to select up to three. The author included an "Other" option for respondents to specify their answers in a text field in case none of the given options aligned with their opinions. However, no one added any further comments in the text field.

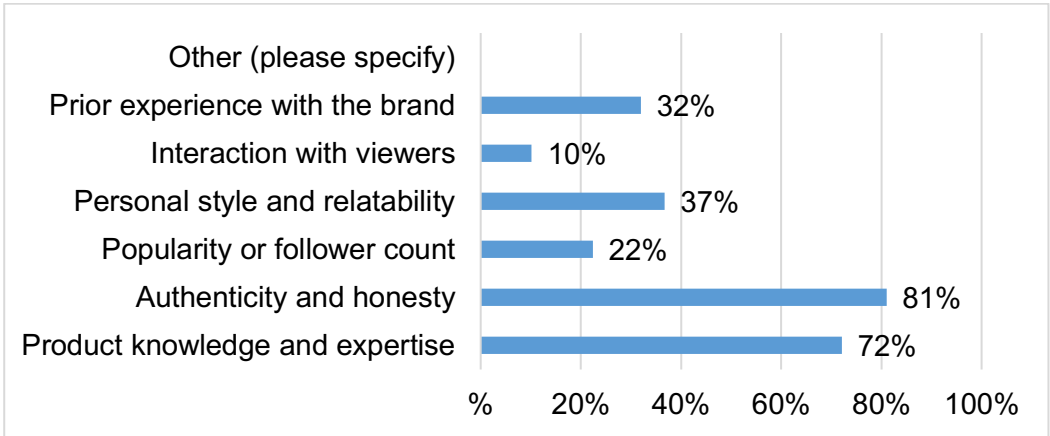


Figure 14. Key characteristics of streamers that influence purchase intentions during cosmetic live streams

Unsurprisingly, most respondents selected "Authenticity and honesty" (81%), with 119 out of 147 respondents confirming these as key factors driving the popularity of live shopping, as discussed in earlier chapters. The second most popular answer was "Product knowledge and expertise" (72%), chosen by 106 respondents, highlighting the importance of adequately training the host before going live.

Moreover, the study specifically aimed to determine how often beauty consumers make purchases during or immediately after watching a cosmetic live shopping event. The figure below illustrates the participants' shopping behaviors and attitudes.

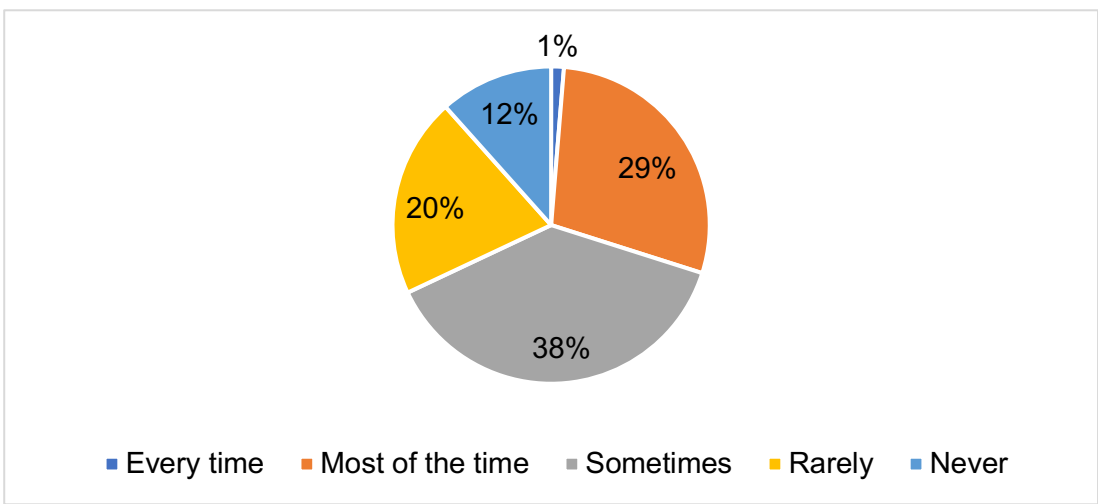


Figure 15. Frequency of purchases during or immediately after cosmetic live shopping events

The results revealed that viewers do not consistently complete a purchase after watching a live shopping event. Only 1% of respondents selected "every time," while the highest responses were "most of the time" (29%) and "sometimes" (38%).

When asked about the cosmetic products they are most likely to purchase during a live stream, participants indicated a preference for skincare (39%), followed by makeup (29%), haircare (18%), fragrance (7%), beauty tools and accessories (6%), and other products (0.7%).

The final question was open-ended, asking respondents what improvements would make them more likely to purchase during a live shopping event. A thorough analysis revealed that viewers value factors such as authenticity, professional product demonstrations, exclusive discounts, interaction with viewers, access to product samples, a trustworthy platform, and an engaging event atmosphere. Prioritizing these aspects could greatly enhance the success of live shopping events in the cosmetics industry.

What stood out is the fact that many cosmetic viewers distrust scripted and overly edited content. Authentic, detailed product demonstrations were identified as crucial in building viewer confidence by showcasing how a product works and meets their needs. Additionally, offering customers the chance to try products before purchasing, such as through gifts or giveaways, can reduce hesitation and increase the likelihood of conversions.

4.4 Strategies cosmetic companies currently employ

This section examines strategies gathered from secondary research, focusing on three recorded live streams retrieved from YouTube, one of the biggest platforms for sharing video content (Barolome & Niu 2023). YouTube was chosen because it is often challenging to find recorded live streams on Instagram or TikTok, as most live streams are not saved due to their length or large file sizes, making them difficult to trace unless saved and uploaded by the host or a participant. However, the live sessions analyzed were originally recorded from different platforms, one from TikTok and another from Instagram (Table 3). Furthermore, the section delves into insights gathered from secondary interviews with two industry professionals: one representative from Douglas and another from L'Oréal.

Table 3. Live stream video characteristics

Video #	Views (thousands)	User Followers (K = thousands) (M = millions)	Social Media platform	Live stream GMV (thousands of dollars)	Total Unit Sold (thousands)
#1	8.2	8.3 M	Instagram Live	-	-
#2	2.8	164 K	YouTube Live	-	-

#3	14.4	7.2 M	TikTok Live	673.3	130.0
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Live shopping video #1

Live shopping video #1 (Appendix 1) is a 40-minute session initially streamed on Instagram Live on April 27, 2023. English television presenter Holly Willoughby hosted it in collaboration with Beauty Pie. The “Holly-Day Makeup Edit” event highlights Holly’s collection of Italian-made makeup products for the coming summer. During the session, Holly engages the audience by demonstrating the products, sharing her honest feedback about how the makeup feels on her skin, and describing her experience after completing the look. Notably, the live stream takes place in an authentic setting, in the bathroom of her house, enhancing its relatability. At the end of the live, a discount code was shared with viewers, offering a 60% discount on the featured items via Beauty Pie’s website. (Beauty Pie 27 April 2023.) Authenticity and honesty are appreciated factors by viewers.

While it is evident from the video that the audience interacted with Holly via comments in the chat, these interactions are not visible in the recorded version uploaded to YouTube. Despite that, the celebrity refers to and answers viewer questions during the session, indicating active engagement. Similarly, the viewer count shown in the YouTube version reflects post-event views and not the actual number of live viewers on Instagram. (Beauty Pie 27 April 2023.) Additionally, data on the number of units sold during or after the live session remains unavailable, as it was not disclosed by Beauty Pie. The number of followers (8.3 million) listed in Table 3 reflects the users on Holly’s Instagram profile, as the live session was streamed on her Instagram Live (Hollywilloughby s.a.). Meanwhile, the view count reflects the number of people who watched the recorded event on Beauty Pie’s YouTube channel (Beauty Pie 27 April 2023).

Live shopping video #2

Live shopping video #2 (Appendix 2) is a 36-minute online event streamed on YouTube Live on July 19, 2023. It was hosted by renowned makeup artist Trish McEvoy, founder of the luxury cosmetics and fragrance line Trish McEvoy. (Nordstrom 19 July 2023; Trish McEvoy 2024.) The session, titled “Beauty Founder Chats,” focused on sharing expert advice and demonstrated a variety of products. Trish co-hosted the session with a younger woman referred to as her “friend Coco.” Although it was implied that Coco is associated with the brand, her specific role was not mentioned. Notably, this was the only live session analyzed that included a live chat replay, enabling viewers to revisit audience interactions. However, the author observed that customers’ questions were not addressed during the session, nor by Nordstrom, which actively participated in the chat by posting purchase links for the featured products. (Nordstrom 19 July 2023.)

They also held giveaways for three of the featured product sets, announced at the end of the video, encouraging viewers to stay until the end of the live shopping event. Nevertheless, the giveaway process felt slightly disappointing as the way winners were chosen was not explained. For instance, one of the winners, Megan, was addressed by Trish with the comment: “*Megan, thank you so much for being our client for so long,*” implying that the winner was selected from existing clients among the viewers rather than randomly. Despite that, as a professional makeup artist, Trish brought credibility and depth to the live session, presenting the products with clarity and confidence, which likely resonated well with the audience. (Nordstrom 19 July 2023.) Product knowledge and expertise were clearly demonstrated in this live session. Similar to the previous video, information on the number of units sold during or after the live session is unavailable.

Live shopping video #3

Live shopping video #3 (Appendix 3) is an 8-hour-long live shopping event hosted by Jeffree Star, a beauty influencer and founder of Jeffree Star Cosmetics, alongside fellow influencer and co-host Barbs. The host promoted the event several days in advance on his TikTok profile, emphasizing flash sales, giveaways, and discounts on Jeffree Star Cosmetics products. (Jeffree Star 28 May 2024.) The author analyzed two recorded segments, totaling 136 minutes, of this live stream originally broadcast on May 30, 2024. The stream utilized the TikTok Shop feature and was later uploaded to YouTube by a viewer. (Tttea 31 May 2024a; Tttea 31 May 2024b.) TikTok Shop has a dedicated shopping tab, and like TikTok Live, both are integrated into the same TikTok app, allowing inventory to be synced from platforms such as Shopify, Amazon, and more (TikTok Shop 2024).

The main strategies employed by Jeffree Star to keep viewers engaged included offering flash sales on specific categories of cosmetics, with discounts exceeding 60% off the original price, and conducting giveaways for every additional million likes during the live stream (Tttea 31 May 2024a, min 42–43). The founder aimed to make his products accessible to everyone and created an interactive shopping experience supported by a dedicated team working behind the scenes. This team monitored comments and responded to participants' questions. For example, if viewers joined late and missed a flash sale on Jeffree Star's lipsticks but requested it to be relaunched, the team would activate the flash sale again for a shorter period to meet demand during the live stream. Consumers also received a full-size espresso body lotion as a complimentary gift for every 100 U.S. dollars spent on the platform. (Tttea 31 May 2024a; Tttea 31 May 2024b.)

Moreover, the live stream was conducted in a professional setting at TikTok's headquarters in Los Angeles, with excellent video and audio quality. The product demonstrations by the host and co-host were dynamic, authentic, and effectively conveyed the features of the products. The co-host

provided a live walkthrough on how to make purchases on the TikTok Shop, catering to first-time users. The host's deep knowledge of his own products, stemming from his role as their designer, allowed him to articulate the specific problems these cosmetic items are intended to solve. For the entire live shopping event, Jeffree Star mentioned the free shipping feature of TikTok Shop (Ardiyanti 2023) to buyers and conducted back-to-back randomly selected giveaways. (Tttea 31 May 2024a; Tttea 31 May 2024b.) During this specific live shopping event, Jeffree Star Cosmetics experienced a significant surge in sales (Appendix 4), with a total of 1.4 million viewers and a live stream GMV of 673.3 thousand U.S. dollars (FastMoss 2024).

Overall, live sessions #1 and #3 exhibited more spontaneous interactions between the streamer and the viewers, while live stream #2 had significantly less audience engagement despite its title, "Beauty Founder Chats." In contrast, live stream #3 was the only session that did not include product usage tutorials but instead demonstrated product application on the skin, describing color and texture, which may have made the event feel repetitive and monotonous for viewers during its 8-hour duration. Despite this, Jeffree Star's most strategic promotional tactic was the use of short-lived flash sales, which effectively captured the audience's attention and prompted swift action to secure discounts before products sold out – some items sold out within minutes or even seconds (Tttea 31 May 2024b, min. 3:10–4:10). This tactic was used only by Jeffree Star and aligns with strategies employed by Chinese streamers, as discussed in Chapter 2 (Chen 2021).

The combination of all three live streams provides valuable insights for beauty companies and streamers. Video #1 presents product advice from a customer's perspective in an authentic and home-like setting. Video #2 focuses on professional application tips and expert knowledge. Video #3 emphasizes exclusive offers and interactive audience engagement. Nevertheless, the absence of visible chat interactions in the recorded versions of two live events made it difficult to fully analyze audience engagement.

L'Oréal's live streaming marketing strategy

L'Oréal, founded in 1909 in Paris by chemist Eugène Schueller, reported sales of 45.5 billion U.S. dollars in 2023 and manages a portfolio of 37 global beauty brands (Vaughan 2024). L'Oréal's Chief Digital and Media Officer, Fabian Prasetya, shared insights into the brand's live commerce strategy in Indonesia, home to the world's largest TikTok user base. At the beginning of the interview, Prasetya revealed that L'Oréal dedicates 24 hours of live streaming across its three core brands: L'Oréal, Maybelline, and Garnier. (Statista 2024k; Lim 2023.) He also elaborated on how the live streaming trend originated, particularly during the pandemic.

Before the pandemic, our stores had beauty advisors and experts, like in the luxury division with Kiehl's. These people possess in-depth knowledge of our products, and their usage and provide recommendations and consultations. During the pandemic, when offline interactions were limited, we utilized their expertise to connect with consumers online. We introduced e-commerce and used WhatsApp to help consumers purchase products. The live streaming trend also emerged during the pandemic, which changed the ecosystem. (Lim 2023.)

To meet the growing demand for live streaming, the company initially built six in-house studio offices in Jakarta, which quickly expanded to 14 rooms. Some of these studios are dedicated to hosting live streams on TikTok, while others cater to local platforms such as Shopee, Tokopedia, and Lazada. (Lim 2023.) Fabian Prasetya emphasizes the importance of product demonstrations.

We focus on selling products through live streaming and prioritizing connecting with our consumers. Being there for them is crucial, providing the correct product information, recommendations, and usage guidance. By offering holistic knowledge about our product range, we enhance the live streaming experience. The sessions allow us to connect with consumers on a deeper level and build stronger relationships with them. (Lim 2023.)

Unlike its competitors, L'Oréal relies on the expertise and knowledge of its staff in skincare, makeup, and beauty products, rather than endorsing celebrities and influencers for live sessions. The company invests in continuous training and development programs to further enhance the capabilities of its employees.

We aim to provide consumers with concrete educational information when they ask questions during live streams. Our vision as a company is to create beauty that moves the world, so it's essential to offer comprehensive knowledge to consumers. Today, these experts play a crucial role in live streaming, not just for selling products but also for answering questions from viewers. The live streaming format allows viewers to connect with them directly. If viewers have skincare concerns or need product recommendations, they can get immediate responses and purchase products now on platforms like TikTok. (Lim 2023.)

According to Prasetya, viewers on e-commerce platforms frequently look for additional product information to make informed purchasing decisions. Live streaming not only provides this information but also helps reassure potential buyers about their choices. Furthermore, it allows brands to meet consumer needs, respond to their inquiries, and foster stronger connections with their audience.

We've been successfully engaging in 24-hour live-streaming events for our consumer product division brands, specifically Maybelline, L'Oreal, and Garnier. These brands have fully embraced the concept of live streaming to connect with their audience and showcase their products effectively. However, not every brand has fully adopted it as a strategy. Nonetheless, we

continue to explore and implement live streaming as an essential tool for brand communication and consumer engagement. (Lim 2023.)

Lastly, Prasetya highlights that each brand within L'Oréal has a distinct value proposition and its own unique approach to engaging and communicating with beauty consumers. In addition, he confirms that an effective live streaming strategy for brands involves creating anticipation for flash sales. By linking the sale to a specific number of likes or viewers, brands can encourage participants to share the live session, resulting in a substantial increase in interactions. (Lim 2023.) This strategy was effectively employed by Jeffree Star during his live stream, where giveaways were offered for every additional one million likes, driving a massive spike in engagement that reached 7 million likes within two and a half hours of streaming (Tttea 31 May 2024b, min. 27–28).

Douglas' live streaming marketing strategy

The interview with Douglas' Director of International Social Media, Data Management & Innovation, Yassin Hamdaoui, offers insights into live shopping strategies and the Douglas Live initiative. With over six years of experience at Douglas, Hamdaoui offers an in-depth perspective on the company's approach. Founded in 1821 in Germany, Douglas has a long-standing history as a multinational cosmetics chain. (Douglas Group s.a.; Douglas marketing solutions 2021.) The company reported sales of 4.1 billion euros during the financial year 2022/2023 (Douglas Group 2024). Hamdaoui begins by outlining the goals and concept behind Douglas Live.

Our primary goal is to combine standard online shopping with the entertainment factor. We are now a platform with over 130,000 items available in our shop. This overwhelming range of items means the customer alone can no longer get to grips with our offering. We therefore needed a format that also inspired the customer and enabled impulse purchases. With live shopping, you can address a lot of customers at once while also providing support with things like how to achieve certain looks. Customers can learn from us first-hand and see what products they need to achieve the look they want. They can communicate with our protagonists in a way that feels very close and authentic, and shop for the products directly as soon as they see them. (Douglas marketing solutions 2021.)

Similar to L'Oréal, Douglas utilizes live streams as a platform to provide valuable information combined with an entertainment factor, aiming to retain viewers and encourage them to visit the website. Instead of solely prioritizing sales, Douglas focuses on fostering direct interaction by enabling customers to chat with streamers during live sessions, which are hosted weekly. Hamdaoui highlights the significance of streamers presenting beauty authentically and passionately, while also emphasizing the versatility of different formats within Douglas Live.

We separate formats internally and conceptually so that we can be clear on what our focus is on: sales, education, entertainment, highlights/trends. We also have “deals” formats, which involve us offering a good discount that is actually only available during the respective stream. At our masterclasses with professional makeup artists or a famous person, customers can ask questions about the respective products and looks that are being presented during that stream. We are also still providing the “Ask Douglas Live” format, complete with themes from the stores. As part of this format, beauty experts from our stores address particular themes and inform customers about new products or go through the store and advise them on various products. (Douglas marketing solutions 2021.)

Not surprisingly, the “deal” format remains the most popular, followed closely by educational segments. Although certain products, such as fragrances, are often preferred to be experienced in-store, Douglas live sessions featuring fragrances have been particularly successful due to the high level of trust beauty consumers have in the company. As Yassin Hamdaoui explains, these products can be effectively sold during live streams when presented by knowledgeable experts. He also reported that the cosmetics retail company Douglas was among the first in Europe to adopt live streaming marketing ventures.

Currently, there are hardly any rival formats in Germany, and there are only very few across Europe. In the Asian region, on the other hand, live shopping is a very hot topic and already accounts for 20% of online business over there. We believe this trend will hit Europe’s shores soon too, as live shopping is, quite simply, a lot more fun. You can watch various shows, and in the future, you might also be able to follow your favorite live streamer, with customers being informed when the streamer is next live. We firmly believe that the live shopping format will maintain a presence even after the coronavirus crisis has come to an end. We will present social commerce as a new sales channel and offer it in such a way that it makes sense to be a part of it, especially from a live streamer’s perspective. (Douglas marketing solutions 2021.)

Finally, Yassin Hamdaoui shared that DOUGLAS LIVE has achieved remarkable success, reporting double-digit conversion rates and a steadily growing audience. Livestreams now attract thousands of viewers consistently on their platform, reinforcing the belief that live shopping is becoming a regularly visited and watched channel. Customer data further supports this, showing that participants in live shopping sessions return more frequently than typical customers. These viewers are consistently inspired by the engaging content, leading to frequent and reliable purchases. Nevertheless, Yassin emphasizes the importance of integrating TikTok to expand the reach and visibility of their live streams. (Douglas marketing solutions 2021.)

The findings from the two interviews revealed that L’Oréal and Douglas employ strikingly similar live streaming marketing strategies.

5 Conclusions

This chapter concludes the study by summarizing its key findings and offering actionable recommendations for cosmetic brands. It critically examines the research process in terms of validity, reliability, and relevance while acknowledging its limitations. Furthermore, it includes the author's reflections on the overall thesis journey.

5.1 Key findings

This thesis aimed to address the research question of how beauty companies utilize live streaming marketing strategies to boost purchases, guided by three investigative questions. The data collected revealed that Instagram and TikTok are the most commonly used platforms for watching live streams. Nevertheless, TikTok emerged as more effective in driving customer purchases of cosmetic products due to its ability to track viewer engagement and its seamless integration of a shopping tab within the app. Additionally, the findings highlighted that Gen Z and Millennials are the primary audiences participating in live shopping events and purchasing cosmetics online. A key motivator for viewers to watch live shopping events is the opportunity to discover new products. Moreover, product demonstrations provide an enhanced experience compared to simply viewing images or videos, making them a significant factor in engaging audiences.

The first investigative question examines social media platforms and identifies the key features of live streams that are most effective in engaging cosmetic customers. Survey results indicate that users prefer Instagram and TikTok for cosmetic live stream events. Respondents highly value product demonstrations (average rating of 4.3), exclusive discounts, and product usage tutorials (both averaging 4.1) as essential features of live streams. This primary research aligns with the theoretical framework discussed in Chapter 2, highlighting that the key reasons viewers watch live streams include the opportunity to gain detailed product information before purchasing and the appeal of attractive price promotions (Yu 2022).

Conversely, the second investigative question examines the role of streamers in influencing beauty consumers to make purchases during live shopping events. A majority of survey respondents expressed a strong intent to buy when their favorite influencer or streamer recommended a cosmetic product. Moreover, detailed product demonstrations by streamers were shown to significantly enhance consumer confidence in making purchase decisions. The most appreciated characteristics of a streamer are authenticity, product expertise, and relatability. These findings align with Yu's (2022) study, which emphasized that streamers must promote products honestly to build trust with the audience and demonstrate professional expertise (Chapter 2).

Finally, the third investigative question employed a secondary research approach to identify the current strategies used by cosmetic influencers and companies. Insights from video analysis and interviews with industry professionals revealed that the most effective strategies include product demonstrations combined with limited-time flash sales and giveaways. Additionally, building anticipation for promotional price offers, such as tying a discount to reach a specific number of viewers or likes, was identified as a successful approach. Importantly, the findings also highlighted the critical role of a knowledgeable host during live sessions. Such hosts foster trust with viewers by creating honest and engaging interactions, ultimately encouraging more frequent purchases.

5.2 Recommendations

This section provides recommendations for cosmetic companies based on the data and findings gathered. The following suggestions aim to support those seeking to host effective live shopping events while also addressing potential challenges.

Beauty consumers prefer live streams that are perceived as authentic, educational, and entertaining. They seek a sense of community and value shared experiences and reviews. Therefore, companies should actively engage with viewers through real-time interactions and conversations during broadcasts. To attract the right audience and avoid redundancy, live shopping events should feature themed topics repeated multiple times a week to accommodate various viewer schedules. Additionally, brands should incorporate tryouts and short-lived flash sales, linking deals to specific viewer milestones or interactive virtual games to enhance engagement. Furthermore, companies should prioritize utilizing beauty experts and well-trained sales assistants over relying solely on famous influencers or celebrities for live sessions, as this approach has been shown to achieve higher engagement rates. Nevertheless, celebrity endorsements can attract a large initial audience and significantly enhance brand awareness.

Lastly, choosing TikTok as the primary live shopping platform can likely prove to be a profitable investment, as Gen Z and Millennial beauty consumers spend the most time on this channel. The platform's seamless in-app shopping experience is unmatched. It is recommended to incorporate tips and tutorials to optimize product use while creating an engaging and enjoyable demonstration. Research suggests that detailed product showcases boost viewers' confidence, enhance purchase intentions, and lead to more informed buying decisions. (Liu et al. 2022; Xu, Wu & Li, 2020; Yu 2022).

5.3 Reliability, validity and relevance

The author ensured high reliability of the primary data by aligning the survey questions with the theoretical framework outlined in Chapter 2 and distributing them among respondents who shared

similar attitudes. The questions were purposely designed to be concise and straightforward, following a structured order that emphasized distinct aspects of the research. Moreover, 147 individuals who passed the initial screening questions participated in the survey, ensuring the target sample was reached. Nonetheless, a larger sample size would strengthen the validity of the results. Additionally, the research incorporated in this thesis included trustworthy sources, academic papers, and theses from other students at the bachelor's and master's levels. The author also relied on recent articles and data published within the last five years to ensure the research was current and relevant.

The secondary data for the research was meticulously selected and thoroughly analyzed to address the research question. The study relied on recorded live streams and pre-existing interviews with marketing professionals to gain insights into current practices in the cosmetics industry. Although this approach limited the scope of the research, direct interviews with the professionals could have yielded more specific and detailed responses, enhancing the validity of the data.

5.4 Limitations and future research

This thesis lays a foundation for future research but has limitations, particularly in the demographics of the survey respondents, with the majority being Millennials (57%) and Gen Z (35%). While previous studies have confirmed that these two generations are the most active on social media, particularly Millennials, who purchase cosmetics online at significantly higher rates, a larger and more varied participant pool could enhance the robustness of this study. Additionally, the research was constrained by the author's network and connections, underscoring the importance of including a broader and more diverse sample in future studies, encompassing other generational groups. Another limitation was the reliance solely on an online survey for primary data collection. Future studies could benefit from conducting one-on-one interviews with live stream viewers and hosts to gain deeper insights.

Ultimately, attending live shopping events in person as part of secondary data collection would allow researchers to directly observe participant interactions in live chat comments and evaluate streamers' strategies for engaging viewers and driving purchases.

5.5 Reflection on learning

Throughout this thesis process, the author gained valuable experience in project management and deepened her understanding of emerging marketing trends. The relevance of the topic in the digital era not only fueled her passion but also strengthened her enthusiasm for the subject. Although initially unfamiliar with the chosen topic, selecting a contemporary issue provided an opportunity to both assist cosmetic companies and explore a relatively unexamined research area.

Despite these benefits, the research journey was not without its challenges. Constructing a solid theoretical framework for live streaming marketing proved difficult, as it remains a relatively new concept with limited coverage in traditional marketing literature. To address this, the author analyzed over 80 sources, including prior research papers, books, and articles, to create a robust foundation. Another challenge was locating relevant recorded live shopping videos, especially on platforms like Instagram, which lack search filters for live content, unlike TikTok. Furthermore, the early-stage development of LSC in Europe made it complex to find interview candidates, leading to a reliance on existing research and interviews.

Overall, this experience provided invaluable insights into various aspects of marketing and will undoubtedly benefit the author's future career in the field. As an online cosmetic consumer herself, the topic resonated on a personal level, especially given her firsthand experience with real-time shopping on a Chinese platform. Given her ambition to pursue a professional career in the beauty industry, this curiosity became a driving force that motivated her to explore the research problem in greater depth.

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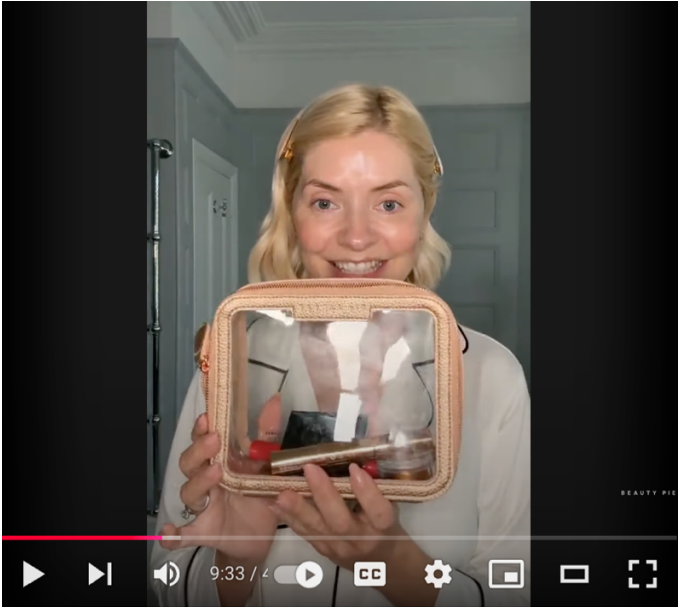
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Appendices

Appendix 1. Live shopping video #1



Beauty Pie x Holly Willoughby INSTAGRAM LIVE

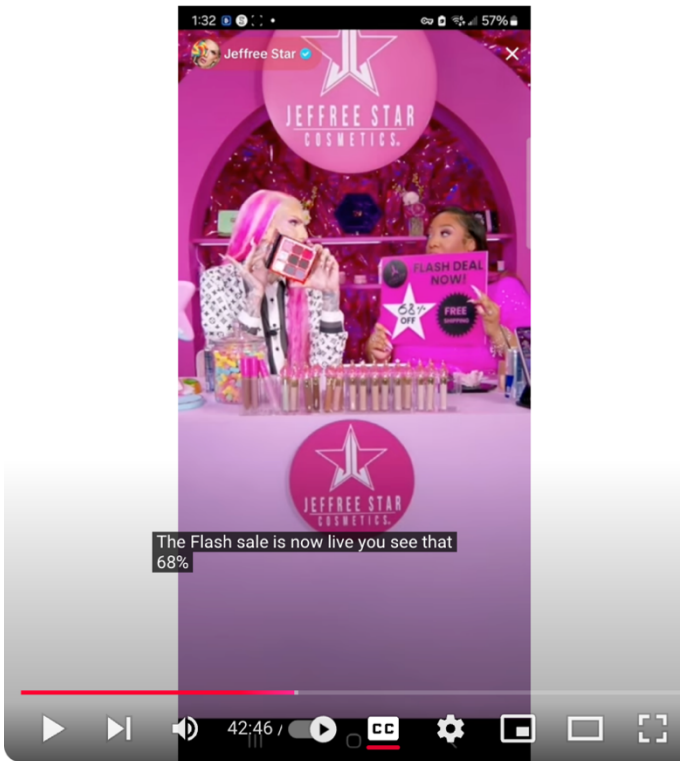
Appendix 2. Live shopping video #2



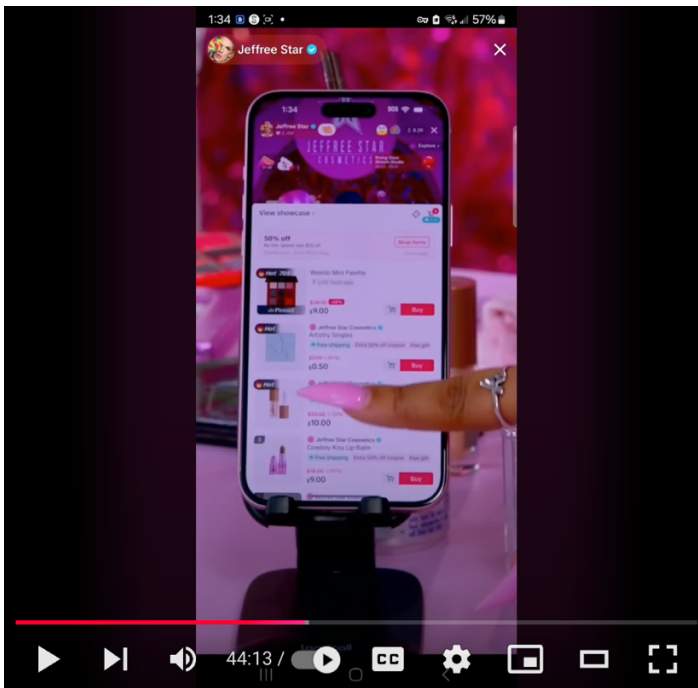
Show chat replay

Trish McEvoy | Beauty Founder Chats

Appendix 3. Live shopping video #3



Jeffree Star doing giveaways and more on TikTok live 30/05/2024



Jeffree Star doing giveaways and more on TikTok live 30/05/2024


Appendix 4. Live data from FastMoss

The screenshot displays the FastMoss TikTok Analytics interface. At the top, there's a search bar and navigation options like 'Black Insight', 'Special Offer', and user ID 'FD9042232'. The main content area features a profile for 'Jeffree Star' with 7.2m followers and 305 live videos. Below this, a 'LIVE Data' section provides key metrics: 1.4m Total Viewers, 14.4k Peak Viewers, 219 Followers Gained, 0.02% Engagement Rate, 130.0k LIVE Total Units Sold, and \$673.3k LIVE GMV. A sidebar on the left offers navigation for various analytics categories.

Category	Value
Start Time	24-5-30 13:50 (UTC-5:00)
End Time	24-5-30 22:28 (UTC-5:00)
LIVE Duration	08:38:38
Followers	7.2m
No. of LIVES	305
LIVE Views	231.9k
Avg. LIVE Units Sold	1.0k
Total Viewers	1.4m
Peak Viewers	14.4k
Followers Gained	219
Engagement Rate	0.02%
LIVE Total Units Sold	130.0k
LIVE GMV	\$673.3k

Appendix 5. Survey

Survey on Customer Engagement and Purchase Behavior in Cosmetic Live Stream Shopping

 Mandatory questions are marked with a star (*)

Hello! This survey is for a research type of a Bachelor's thesis for the International Business degree program at Haaga-Helia UAS. This study examines how live streaming marketing strategies—such as content, audience engagement, and promotional tactics—influence purchase decisions among cosmetic consumers.

This survey is for individuals who currently watch or have watched live shopping events featuring cosmetic products on platforms like TikTok Live, Instagram Live, YouTube Live, or Facebook Live, and who use and buy cosmetics, including skincare, haircare, personal care, and makeup.

Live shopping events are especially popular in Asia and are expanding in the U.S. and Europe, where cosmetic brands often partner with influencers and celebrities to showcase products and boost sales. These events frequently include tutorials with options to buy products directly from the video.

The deadline for completing this survey is 14 November 2024. Your responses are anonymous, and all data collected will be used solely for this thesis. The survey takes about 3-5 minutes to complete. As a thank you, you'll have a chance to win one of three €10 gift cards to one of your favorite cosmetic stores, Kicks or Sephora, which will be awarded randomly upon completing the survey. For any questions, please contact me at elena.makela@myy.haaga-helia.fi.

Thank you for your participation!

Do you use cosmetic products? (e.g. skincare, makeup, haircare, fragrances etc.) *

- Yes
 No

Have you ever made a cosmetic purchase as a result of watching a live streaming event? (during or after the live stream) *

- Yes, I have purchased at least once
 No, I have watched but never purchased
 I have never watched a live shopping event/video online

Next

What is your age? *

- Under 18
- 18-24
- 25-40
- 41-56
- Over 57

What is your gender? *

- Female
- Male
- Non-binary
- Prefer not to say

Which country are you from? *

- Type a key word or select from list -

Which social media platforms do you primarily use for watching live streaming events for cosmetics? (Select all that apply) *

- Instagram Live
- Facebook Live
- TikTok Live
- YouTube Live
- Other (please specify)

You can select from 1 up to 5 options
Selected options: 0

How often do you buy cosmetics online? (e.g. skincare, makeup, haircare, fragrances etc.) *

- Weekly
- Monthly
- Every few months
- Rarely
- Never

Please select how important are these features in enhancing your engagement during a live shopping event for cosmetics: *

	Not important	Slightly important	Moderately important	Important	Very important
Streamer or influencer's appearance *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Streamer or influencer's personality *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Exclusive deals and discounts *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Real-time Q&A with the streamer or influencer *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Customer reviews shown live (in the comments or via Q&A) *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Real-time product demonstrations *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Entertainment *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Product use, tips and tutorials *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Quality of production (video and audio quality) *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Celebrity as a guest	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

What is the main reason you watch cosmetic live shopping events on your preferred platform? (select up to 2) *

- To learn about new products
- For entertainment
- To access exclusive discounts
- To interact with streamers/influencers
- Other (please specify)
- Product features and benefits

You can select from 1 up to 2 options

Selected options: 0

How likely are you to purchase a cosmetic product if it is recommended by a favorite influencer or celebrity during a live stream? *

- Very unlikely
- Unlikely
- Neutral
- Likely
- Very likely

Do you feel more confident purchasing a product if the streamer provides a detailed demonstration? *

- Yes, much more confident
- Somewhat more confident
- No change in confidence
- Less confident

What characteristics of a streamer or influencer increase your likelihood of purchasing a product during a live stream? (Select up to 3) *

- Product knowledge and expertise
- Authenticity and honesty
- Popularity or follower count
- Personal style and relatability
- Interaction with viewers
- Prior experience with the brand
- Other (please specify)

You can select from 1 up to 3 options
Selected options: 0

Few more questions... You're almost there!

When considering staying engaged throughout the live stream, what matters the most? (select up to 2) *

- More information about the product
- Price promotion
- Authentic review of the product
- Liking streamer professional skills
- Celebrity endorsement
- Saving time (no need to research myself)
- Other (please specify)

You can select from 1 up to 2 options
Selected options: 0

How often do you make a purchase during or immediately after watching a cosmetic live shopping event? *

- Every time
- Most of the time
- Sometimes
- Rarely
- Never

What type of products are you most likely to purchase during a live stream for cosmetics? *

- Skincare (cleanser, moisturizer etc.)
- Makeup (mascara, eyeliner etc.)
- Haircare (shampoo, hair mask etc.)
- Fragrance
- Beauty tools and accessories
- Other (please specify)

Last question!

What improvements would make you more likely to purchase during a live shopping event for cosmetics? *

Please enter your favorite cosmetic store, Kicks or Sephora, and provide your email address if you'd like a chance to win one of three €10 gift cards. I will use a randomizer to select three winners. <3