the survey participants choose products or services based on photos and videos from users, 79.7% rely on reviews, and 58.7% use ratings and ratings.

As for the frequency of interaction with UGC when buying, 14.6% of respondents always do it, 47.9% – often, and only 8.3% almost never resort to it. For 58.3% of the respondents, UGC is of significant importance when making a purchase decision, while only 4.2% noted that it does not affect their choice. In general, respondents most often encounter UGC on social media. Among the advantages of using UGC, respondents highlight the opportunity to see the real use of a product or service (77.1%), increase brand confidence (70.8%), and obtain more objective information about the product (70.8%).

The biggest disadvantage of UGC for 83.3% of respondents is the inability to verify the reliability of reviews and ratings.

The study examined key aspects of the use of user generated content in marketing strategies. UGC has been proven to increase brand trust and audience engagement, but it requires mechanisms to verify the accuracy of information. The main strategies for its effective application include personalized promotions, collaboration with micro-influencers, automated feedback monitoring, and the creation of educational content.

The relevance of the topic is due to the growth of digital platforms, where user generated content plays an important role in marketing communications. Based on the analysis carried out, recommendations are proposed for deepening personalization, expanding presence on new platforms and enhancing interaction with the audience, which will allow companies to strengthen their image and form an active community around the brand.

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SEMIOTICS OF CARE COSMETICS PACKAGING (USING THE EXAMPLE OF ESTÉE LAUDER, L'ORÉAL AND KANS COMPANIES)

The modern skincare industry demonstrates rapid growth, accompanied by increased competition among brands. In a saturated market, packaging becomes a crucial element

that defines the perception and attractiveness of a product to consumers.

A. M. Pyatigorsky notes that "in the 21st century, with the rapid development of information technologies, there has been a special interest in studying theoretical issues of communication processes. The applied field of communication design extends to both the aesthetic aspect of crafting messages and the establishment of new communication channels" [19, p. 41].

The primary objective of this study is to examine the semiotic tools used in skincare packaging, focusing on their role in consumer communication and their influence on purchasing decisions.

This study is grounded in the concept of semiotics, defined as "an interdisciplinary field of research studying signs and sign systems that store and transmit information" [30, p. 4]. As Yu. Lotman points out, packaging can be seen as a text that consumers interpret based on their cultural and social experiences. In this context, packaging becomes not only a physical container but also a carrier of meanings that reflect the brand's philosophy and market positioning.

The research results indicate that packaging is a complex system comprising visual, textual, and symbolic elements:

Visual elements include color schemes, shapes, images, and graphics that attract attention and create the first impression of the product. For example, Estée Lauder's minimalist design emphasizes its premium nature, while L'Oréal employs bright colors for a dynamic and modern image.

Textual elements, such as product names, fonts, and slogans, convey key product benefits and usage features. L'Oréal's large and legible fonts highlight accessibility and universality, whereas Estée Lauder uses more sophisticated textual solutions to emphasize elegance.

Symbolic elements, including logos, cultural codes, and symbols, build associations with the brand. Kans emphasizes Eastern symbolism, appealing to the traditions and culture of its target audience.

In the practical part, research was conducted to identify both successful and less effective packaging examples and determine which semiotic codes are most effective in skincare packaging design.

The study involved a survey of 100 female respondents aged 20 to 55. The target audience was chosen due to the fact that skincare products are predominantly marketed toward women. The age range was defined based on the assumption of the most active purchasing behavior within this demographic.

During the survey, respondents were asked key questions about their attitudes toward brands and perceptions of cosmetic packaging. The results confirmed the significant role of packaging design in choosing cosmetic products. On average, respondents rated the importance of price (4.3 out of 5), brand image (3.8), and packaging design (3.7). These findings indicate that packaging plays a significant role in purchase decisions, second only to pricing factors.

Environmental aspects of packaging are also becoming increasingly important — 65% of respondents highlighted the importance of eco-friendly and sustainable materials.

The level of trust in brands was distributed as follows: 70% of respondents expressed the highest trust in Estée Lauder, reflecting the high quality and thoughtful design of its packaging.

The importance of product composition information on packaging varied: only 35% of respondents reported always or often checking the composition, while the majority (55%) did so only occasionally, indicating the secondary significance of this element.

Among packaging design elements, color and shape were deemed the most critical for perception, while textual elements were considered less important.

Comparative analysis revealed that Estée Lauder utilizes semiotic codes more effectively to create an attractive and memorable image, as evidenced by survey results and its market position. L'Oréal and Kans employ more universal approaches, which do not always achieve the same level of effectiveness in attracting the target audience.

The findings confirm the importance of carefully designed packaging and the purposeful use of semiotic codes to achieve success in the competitive cosmetics market. Semiotics of packaging significantly influences consumer perception of a product. Skillful use of visual, textual, and symbolic elements allows brands to stand out among competitors, communicate effectively with their target audience, and build customer loyalty.

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PLAYING WITH REALITY: PUBLIC PERCEPTION OF USING FILTERS IN INSTAGRAM STORIES AND POSTS

Instagram filters are digital image processing tools that enable users to modify the visual appearance of their photographic and video content within the platform environment. These filters enhance visual characteristics by modulating parameters such as color saturation, luminance, and overall aesthetic tone, with the aim of increasing content appeal and viewer engagement. By adjusting these elements, filters can significantly transform an image and create eye-catching effects [1]. Instagram filters are a big deal in today's world because they are used in many ways such as to let people make their pictures and videos look better by playing with colors and contrast, which makes the content more attractive to watch. In addition, using similar filters in all posts helps create a consistent look for a user's profile, building a recognizable style. Filters also provide a space for creativity, allowing people to play with different effects and show off their