

ABSTRACT

This thesis is based on research conducted in a luxury jewellery store in Prague, Czech Republic. Based on the conversations which take place between salespeople and customers when selecting gifts, it analyses the culture of gifting luxury material items in fulfilment of traditional social obligations such as the celebration of birthdays, Christmas or anniversaries. The thesis also examines to how luxury is conceived in the store, where employees' service and the company's marketing use the attributes of gift-giving to sell commodities. Specific examples demonstrate how commodities take on the properties of a gift in an effort to make the commodity exchange more personal and thus more profitable. In the jewellery store, a hybridization of the gift and the commodity takes place, actively created by the salespeople and the marketing of the manufacturer, but also by the customers themselves. Examples of conversations during gift selection provide insight into the social, economic and personal dimensions of gift-giving, as well as the typology of the nature of the gift, the occasion for the gift-giving and the relationship between donor and recipient.

Keywords

gift economy, gift, commodity, consumer research, marketing