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Mindfulness Moderates Consumer Response to Loud vs. Quiet Luxury Advertising: Status by Design

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As demand for “quiet” luxury grows, advertisers face a strategic question: how prominently should brand markers be displayed? Across five studies (N = ~2,000), we show that the effectiveness of brand prominence depends on consumer mindfulness. When mindfulness is low, prominent logos reinforce extrinsic status motives and increase preference for loud luxury. When mindfulness is high, subtle branding aligns with intrinsic, self-congruent motives and increases preference for quiet luxury. The findings offer an actionable targeting principle: match logo prominence to contextual and behavioral signals of consumers’ inward- versus outward-oriented status motives.

Keywords: Brand prominence; luxury advertising; luxury consumption; mindfulness; motivation; status consumption

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INTRODUCTION

Brand prominence in luxury consumption and advertising refers to how visibly brand markings appear and cue recognition (Han, Nunes, and Drèze 2010), ranging from subtle “quiet” cues to overt “loud” signals (Greenberg et al. 2020). For example, Gucci’s understated Horsebit contrasts with its bold double-G logo, illustrating this continuum (Gucci 2025). Traditionally, prominence has been conceptualized as a status cue (Eastman, Goldsmith, and Flynn 1999; Eastman and Eastman 2015), whereby visible branding enables consumers to signal wealth, distinction, and social-standing value (Amaldoss and Jain 2005; Butcher, Phau, and

Management Slants

- **Consumers high in mindfulness value subtlety in luxury branding.** Across five studies, consumers high in mindfulness showed stronger evaluations of subtly branded luxury because quiet cues align with intrinsic, fulfillment-based status motives.
- **Consumers low in mindfulness respond to visible branding.** Consumers low in mindfulness preferred high-prominence executions and were willing to pay more for highly visible logos, reflecting extrinsic, socially driven status motives.
- **Status is not one-size-fits-all.** Prominent logos appeal when social recognition is salient, while understated branding resonates when consumers seek internally meaningful status.
- **Luxury advertisers can target through motivational signals.** Brands can use contextual and behavioral cues, such as wellness-media placement, slow-content engagement, prior preference for discreet versus logo-forward products, and creative A/B testing, to match branding prominence with consumers’ likely motivational orientation.
- **Subtlety can increase perceived value.** For consumers high in mindfulness, low-prominence visuals enhance perceived meaningfulness, translating into more positive brand evaluations.

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Rather than eliminating status concerns, mindfulness redirects them inward, producing opposite responses to loud versus quiet luxury.

Teah 2016; Truong et al. 2008), reflecting comparison-based and recognition-oriented motives (Dubois and Ordabayeva 2015; O'Cass and Frost 2002; O'Cass and McEwen 2004; Podoshen and Andrzejewski 2012). Yet luxury status goals are not exclusively outward-facing. Research increasingly shows that consumers also seek intrinsic value (Wang et al. 2022; Zhang and Zhao 2019), including self-directed pleasure and personal enrichment (Amatulli and Guido 2012; Atkinson and Kang 2022; Guo, Lamberton, and Goldsmith 2024; Petrescu et al. 2025; Truong 2010; Truong and McColl 2011). As fulfillment-oriented motives become more central and luxury audiences more fragmented (Ko, Costello, and Taylor 2019; Massara, Scarpi, and Porcheddu 2020), a critical question emerges for advertisers: when are loud signals most effective, and when does subtle branding better resonate with consumers' underlying motivations? Because luxury advertisers must routinely choose between bold, highly visible branding and subtle, understated cues, understanding when prominence strengthens, or weakens, perceived value is central to effective creative and media strategy.

We propose that consumer mindfulness moderates how brand prominence activates extrinsic versus intrinsic routes to status. Mindfulness, a state of present-focused attention and awareness (Brown and Ryan 2003), influences how consumers make inferences about advertising cues (Errmann 2025). Evidence shows that mindfulness increases alignment with intrinsic interests and reduces endorsement of materialistic rewards (Chang, Huang, and Lin 2015), fostering self-concordant choices that are less driven by social pressure and more guided by personal priorities (Donald et al. 2020). Accordingly, mindfulness shifts how status itself is construed. When mindfulness is low, consumers interpret brand prominence as an external status signal that activates extrinsic motives for social recognition and visibility. When mindfulness is high, attention shifts toward self-congruent, intrinsically gratifying value, making quiet cues more appealing as expressions of personal meaning rather than social display (Amatulli and Guido 2012; Eastman et al. 2018; Pino et al. 2019). Rather than eliminating status concerns, mindfulness redirects them inward, producing opposite responses to loud versus quiet luxury. Consequently, mindfulness should moderate how brand prominence shapes consumers' motivational routes to status and their downstream luxury evaluations.

This work makes three contributions. First, it advances luxury advertising theory by showing that the effectiveness of brand prominence depends on consumers' motivational orientation as shaped by mindfulness. Prior research largely treats status as socially visible and comparison-based, assuming that prominent cues signal prestige and elicit approval (Eastman, Goldsmith, and Flynn 1999; Han, Nunes, and Drèze 2010). We show that this view is incomplete. When mindfulness is low, prominent branding reinforces extrinsic, recognition-based motives and strengthens the link between visibility and status value. When mindfulness is high, intrinsic motives centered on self-congruence and personal fulfillment become more salient, changing how prominence is interpreted and shifting status evaluation toward more internally grounded meaning. Rather than eliminating status concerns, mindfulness alters the motivational basis through which status value is construed. Second, we reconceptualize brand prominence as a psychologically contingent cue rather than a fixed signaling mechanism. Although existing theory assumes prominence reliably communicates wealth or prestige (Dubois and Ordabayeva 2015; Han, Nunes, and Drèze 2010), our findings show that the same visual cue can generate opposite motivational pathways depending on mindful attention. Under low mindfulness, prominence activates extrinsic motivation and need for status through social visibility. Under high mindfulness, subtle branding aligns with intrinsic motivation and internally congruent status valuation. This dual-pathway account integrates attentional states with intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, offering a more nuanced explanation for the appeal of both loud and quiet luxury (Butcher, Phau, and Teah 2016; Meyer and Manika 2017; Pino et al. 2019; Raimondo et al. 2022). Third, we introduce an attention-contingent framework for luxury advertising. Rather than positioning mindfulness as a fixed trait, we show that both chronic (trait) and situationally induced (state) mindfulness (Brown and Ryan 2003; Tanay and Bernstein 2013) systematically shape motivational orientation and responses to prominence. Luxury signal effectiveness therefore depends not only on who consumers are, but also on how

The same visual cue can generate opposite motivational pathways depending on mindful attention.

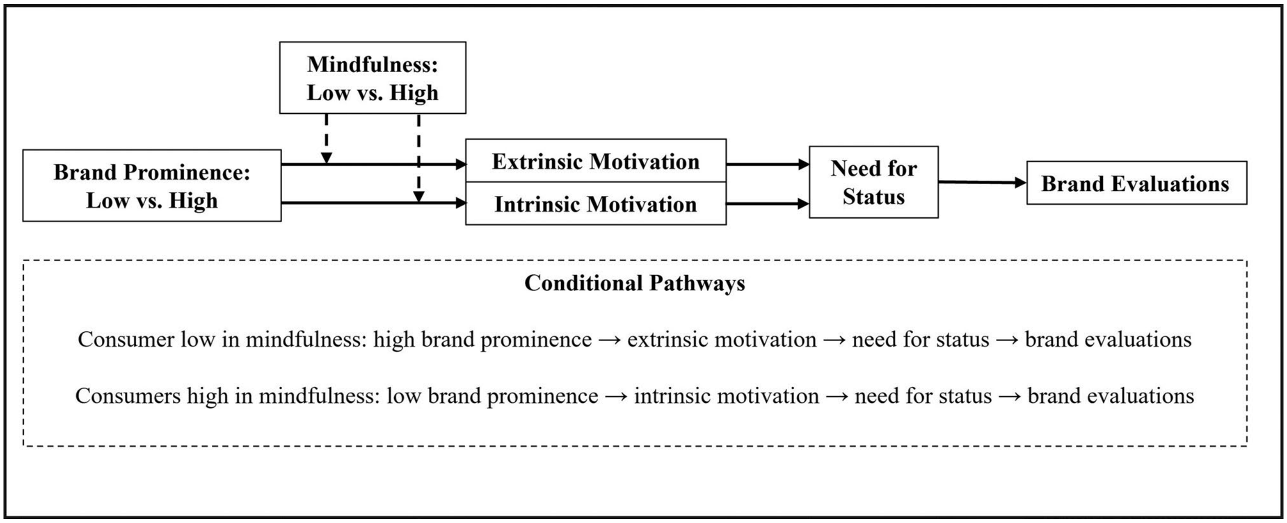

Figure 1 Conceptual model
Note: This figure illustrates the proposed dual-pathway model. Mindfulness moderates how consumers interpret brand prominence cues, producing two distinct motivational routes. For consumers low in mindfulness (top pathway), high brand prominence activates extrinsic motivation, which increases need for status and brand evaluations. For consumers high in mindfulness (bottom pathway), low brand prominence increases intrinsic motivation, which enhances need for status and brand evaluations. Brand evaluations include willingness to pay, brand attitude, and related value-based outcomes measured across studies.

Luxury signal effectiveness therefore depends not only on who consumers are, but also on how they are attending in the moment.

they are attending in the moment. By clarifying when loud versus quiet executions are most effective, this research offers actionable guidance for aligning creative strategy with attentional context.

Across five studies, we test this framework using advertising-realistic stimuli. Study 1a (trait mindfulness) shows that mindfulness moderates the effect of brand prominence: consumers high in mindfulness prefer low (vs. high) prominence, whereas those low in mindfulness prefer high (vs. low) prominence. Study 1b replicates this effect with a different luxury product and introduces a state-based mindfulness manipulation. Studies 2a–2b extend these findings to dynamic, smartphone-native video (ad/app) formats, showing that brief mindfulness cues produce the same crossover pattern: under high mindfulness, low-prominence ads outperform high-prominence ads, while the opposite occurs for viewers low in mindfulness. Study 3 (integrated luxury ad) tests the full moderated mediation model, revealing two motivational pathways: for consumers high in mindfulness, intrinsic motivation drives status needs and responses under low prominence; for consumers low in mindfulness, extrinsic motivation drives status needs under high prominence. Figure 1 presents the conceptual model.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Brand Prominence and Status Cues

Brand prominence refers to how visible brand markings appear (Han, Nunes, and Drèze 2010). In advertising, prominence can vary widely: some brands use bold, logo-forward executions that dominate the visual space (often placed in high-attention areas such as the top-left entry point of the viewer's gaze), while others rely on minimal or near-invisible branding. As a visual cue, prominence typically helps consumers infer a brand's prestige and the social standing of its owner (Greenberg et al. 2020; Zhang and Liu 2022). Two related but distinct concepts underlie this process. Conspicuous consumption concerns the visible display of luxury goods to signal wealth, while status consumption reflects a broader desire for prestige that can be fulfilled privately or publicly (Amaldoss and Jain 2005; Dubois and Ordabayeva 2015; Meyer and Manika 2017; Truong et al. 2008). Whereas conspicuous consumption emphasizes outward visibility, status consumption encompasses self-oriented and socially oriented prestige motives (O'Cass and McEwen 2004).

Historically, high brand prominence strengthens the social visibility of luxury cues and activates extrinsic motives such as comparison and recognition (Han, Nunes, and Drèze 2010; Raimondo et al. 2022). Consumers who seek prestige or external validation are more likely to prefer overt logos because they help display group standing (Eastman, Goldsmith, and Flynn 1999). For these consumers, the product becomes a public marker of identity, used to affirm status and garner admiration (Petrescu et al. 2025; Truong et al. 2008). Extrinsic motivation, defined as the pursuit of outcomes tied to external approval, commonly underlies the preference for visible luxury and heightens the desire for public recognition (Dubois, Jung, and Ordabayeva 2021; Nelissen and Meijers 2011). Displaying high-status products helps consumers project achievement and gain admiration, even when such display entails higher costs (Balabanis and Stathopoulou 2021). High brand prominence therefore functions as a reliable extrinsic status cue: it elevates perceived prestige, increases brand evaluations, and satisfies social-validation motives (Butcher, Phau, and Teah 2016; Podoshen and Andrzejewski 2012; Sivanathan and Pettit 2010).

This baseline pathway, in which visible logos heighten perceived value through extrinsic motivation and the need for status, is established in luxury research. Consistent with this, we ran preliminary studies to replicate the effect (Web Appendix, Studies 1–2): high (vs. low) prominence increases willingness to pay by strengthening extrinsic motivation and status needs (Amatulli and Guido 2012; Pino et al. 2019).

However, this perspective assumes that status is primarily socially construed and outwardly displayed. Emerging research is showing that consumers differ in how they interpret prominence cues. Consumers also rely on luxury goods for self-expression, self-actualization, and experiential value (Atkinson and Kang 2022; Bian and Forsythe 2012; Vigneron and Johnson 2004). These internal motives show that status-driven consumption can be both self- and other-oriented (Amatulli and Guido 2012; Eastman, Iyer, and Babin 2022).

Mindfulness, Personal Fulfillment, and Status Cues

Luxury consumption increasingly reflects personal fulfillment rather than public display. Consumers often purchase luxury for self-directed pleasure and emotional reward (Truong and McColl 2011). Empirical work on "new luxury" shows that intrinsic experiential value, personal fulfillment, self-directed pleasure, and values can predict engagement (Atkinson and Kang 2022). Fulfillment-oriented luxury also offers meaning, self-connection, and psychological enrichment (Petrescu et al. 2025). Classic work distinguishes internal and social motives (Vigneron and Johnson 2004), while more recent research conceptualizes internal motives as encompassing identity expression, experiential value, and self-congruence (Wang et al. 2022). Thus, contemporary scholarship highlights the rise of personal fulfillment derived from personal development rather than material display (Zhang and Zhao 2019). Because these motivational orientations shape how consumers construe luxury value, they are also likely to influence multiple downstream responses (Ko, Costello, and Taylor 2019). In addition to willingness to pay, luxury advertising may affect brand attitudes (Kim et al. 2012), purchase-related intentions (Hung et al. 2011), and evaluative behaviors (Atkinson and Kang 2022). We therefore conceptualize consumer response broadly as value-based reactions to luxury cues, which we operationalize as brand evaluations (see Section 3).

Mindfulness offers a strong psychological basis for this shift toward fulfillment-oriented luxury. Mindfulness is defined as present-focused, non-judgmental attention and awareness (Brown and Ryan 2003; Kabat-Zinn 2013). It is conceptualized as a continuum ranging from relatively low to high levels of attentional awareness and can operate both as a stable dispositional trait and as a temporary situational state (Brown and Ryan 2003; Tanay and Bernstein 2013). Low mindfulness does not imply an absence of attention; rather, it reflects a more automatic and externally oriented mode of processing, whereas high mindfulness reflects a more reflective and internally oriented attentional stance (Brown, Ryan, and Creswell 2007). Across both trait and state operationalizations, mindfulness supports autonomy, self-regulation, and basic psychological-need fulfillment (Donald et al. 2020; Ryan, Donald, and Bradshaw 2021). It increases alignment with personal interests and reduces reliance on materialistic and comparison-based goals (Baer, Smith, and Allen 2004; Lueke and Gibson 2015). Mindfulness also promotes self-concordant decision-making guided by personal values rather than social pressure (Sedighi Arfaee and Tabesh 2022). Critically, mindfulness shifts how consumers construe status. Individuals higher in mindfulness prioritize internal meaning, self-connection, and authentic reward while showing reduced susceptibility to external validation (Brown, Ryan, and Creswell 2007; Hafenbrack and Vohs 2018). These mechanisms align closely with fulfillment-driven luxury values of self-directed pleasure, intrinsic experiential value, and personal enrichment (Atkinson and Kang 2022; Petrescu et al. 2025; Truong and McColl 2011).

Integrating these streams suggests that mindfulness determines which motivational route brand prominence activates. Under low mindfulness, prominent logos are interpreted as external status signals that cue extrinsic motives for recognition and social approval (Dubois, Jung, and Ordabayeva 2021; Nelissen and Meijers 2011). In this externally oriented state, status is socially evaluated and tied to visibility-based prestige (Eastman, Goldsmith, and Flynn 1999; Han, Nunes, and Drèze 2010). Under high mindfulness, attention shifts inward toward personally meaningful and self-endorsed reasons for consumption (Brown and Ryan 2003; Ryan, Donald, and Bradshaw 2021). Mindfulness increases alignment with intrinsic interests and reduces reliance on comparison-based goals (Baer, Smith, and Allen 2004; Lueke and Gibson 2015), promoting self-concordant choices guided by internal values (Levesque and Brown 2007). In this state, luxury is evaluated through intrinsic motives such as authenticity, self-congruence, and personal reward (Atkinson and Kang 2022; Petrescu et al. 2025). Importantly, status may be construed differently. Under high mindfulness, highly prominent branding can reduce perceived status because overt prestige signals conflict with intrinsically motivated consumption. Rather than reflecting outward display, value under high mindfulness is grounded in internally validated self-alignment. In contrast, low prominence aligns more closely with intrinsic reward processes and produces stronger status responses through internally grounded meaning rather than social display (Amatulli and Guido 2012; Eastman et al. 2018; Pino et al. 2019):

> **Hypothesis 1:** Mindfulness will moderate the effect of brand prominence on luxury brand evaluations, such that high (vs. low) brand prominence will increase evaluations among consumers low in mindfulness, whereas low (vs. high) brand prominence will increase evaluations among consumers high in mindfulness.

> **Hypothesis 2:** The effect of brand prominence on brand evaluations is mediated by distinct motivational pathways. Under high mindfulness, low (vs. high) brand prominence will increase intrinsic motivation, which enhances status valuation and leads to more favorable brand evaluations. Under low mindfulness, high (vs. low) brand prominence will increase extrinsic motivation, which enhances status valuation and leads to more favorable brand evaluations.

OVERVIEW OF STUDIES

Studies 1a–1b establish the core moderation using product-level logo prominence (logo on the product): 1a leverages trait mindfulness and 1b manipulates state mindfulness with a different product/brand to replicate the effect. Studies 2a–2b then shift to message-level prominence (logo in the ad): 2a uses an app-style video (same footage, logo size only on the end card) and adds a native behavioral intention (wishlist intention), while 2b uses a Calm-style sponsored video (mindfulness vs relaxation) and tests the same pattern and brand attitude; both include a craftsmanship salience check to rule out the information processing alternatives. Study 3 (also message-level prominence) tests the full moderated serial mediation model (mindful path via intrinsic motivation; low mindfulness path via extrinsic motivation) in an integrated ad context. Across studies, brand evaluations are operationalized using the most ecologically valid outcomes for each context, including willingness to pay (Studies 1a, 1b, 2a, 3), wishlist intention (Study 2a), and brand attitude in a sponsored-content format without a specific product/price anchor (Study 2b; *e.g.*, Atkinson and Kang 2022; MacInnis, Moorman, and Jaworski 1991). Because Study 2b manipulates message-level logo prominence but measures overall brand attitude, we interpret this study as evidence that prominence cues in sponsored advertising can spill over to broader brand evaluations. See Table 1 for details.

Study 1a

The purpose of Study 1a is to provide initial evidence for Hypothesis 1 by testing whether consumers naturally differ in their responses to brand prominence as a function of their dispositional mindfulness. Using static product imagery and trait mindfulness, the study captures naturally occurring variation in how consumers respond to quiet versus loud luxury. Specifically, it examines whether consumers dispositionally higher in mindfulness systematically prefer subtle (low prominence) branding, whereas consumers dispositionally lower in mindfulness prefer highly visible (loud) branding.

Design and Procedure. A total of 400 participants from the US (49.4% female, M*age* = 36.21, SD = 12.02) were recruited via CloudResearch Connect. Participants viewed product imagery of Gucci sunglasses retrieved from the brand's website. The stimuli were designed to vary the visibility of the logo on the product while keeping the overall product design similar. As Study 1a relied on naturally occurring differences in logo prominence, no formal manipulation check was included; subsequent studies incorporated explicit prominence manipulation checks. Participants were randomly assigned to one of two brand prominence conditions: low vs. high brand prominence. In the high-prominence condition, participants viewed a product advertisement featuring Gucci sunglasses with a highly visible and prominent logo and were asked to rate the product. In the low-prominence condition, participants viewed an advertisement for Gucci sunglasses with a logo that was less visible and less identifiable (Han, Nunes, and Drèze 2010; see Web Appendix for stimuli for this study and all subsequent studies).

Participants then reported their willingness to pay for the sunglasses using a sliding scale ranging from US$0 to US$1,000. Higher scores indicated greater willingness to pay. They

Table 1 Overview of studies and primary findings

Study	Prominence placement	Mindfulness type	Study purpose	Hypotheses	Result
1a (n = 400)	On product	Trait (dispositional measure)	Show dispositional preference (trait mindfulness) using existing market product-level logo prominence.	H1	Mindfulness moderated the effect of brand prominence on willingness to pay. Consumers high in mindfulness (+1 SD from the mean) showed a higher willingness to pay for low-prominence (quiet) luxury, whereas consumers low in mindfulness (–1 SD from the mean) showed a higher willingness to pay for high-prominence (loud) luxury.
1b (n = 400)	On product	State (breathing exercise)	Replicate 1a with state mindfulness and different product.	H1	Mindfulness moderated the effect of brand prominence on willingness to pay: consumers high in mindfulness preferred low-prominence (quiet) luxury, whereas consumers low in mindfulness preferred high-prominence (loud) luxury.
2a (n = 400)	In message	State (ad text)	To test the effect of state mindfulness (via ad text) on responses to message-level brand prominence in a real-world ad context, including willingness to pay and wishlist intentions.	H1	Mindfulness moderated the effect of brand prominence on both willingness to pay and wishlist intentions: consumers high in mindfulness preferred low-prominence (quiet) luxury, whereas consumers low in mindfulness preferred high-prominence (loud) luxury.
2b (n = 400)	In message	State (app exercise)	To test whether a state mindfulness induction influences responses to message-level brand prominence in a second real-world execution without a specific product shown.	H1	Mindfulness moderated the effect of brand prominence on brand attitude: consumers high in mindfulness preferred low-prominence (quiet) luxury, whereas consumers low in mindfulness preferred high-prominence (loud) luxury.
3 (n = 400)	In message	State (in video)	To test the full dual-pathway model by examining whether state mindfulness (via video) shifts consumers toward a low-prominence ⟶ intrinsic motivation ⟶ status ⟶ WTP pathway, while consumers low in mindfulness follow a high-prominence ⟶ extrinsic motivation ⟶ status ⟶ WTP pathway.	H1 + H2	The moderated serial mediation model was supported: consumers high in mindfulness followed the low-prominence ⟶ intrinsic motivation ⟶ status ⟶ willingness-to-pay pathway, whereas consumers low in mindfulness followed the high-prominence ⟶ extrinsic motivation ⟶ status ⟶ willingness-to-pay pathway.

subsequently evaluated the perceived luxury and quality of the sunglasses on 7-point scales (1 = strongly disagree, 7 = strongly agree), adapted from Seo, Septianto, and Ko (2022). These measures were used to ensure that any differences were not driven by differences in perceived luxury or quality.

Next, participants completed the 15-item dispositional mindfulness scale (*e.g.*, "I normally find it difficult to stay focused on what's happening in the present," reverse-coded; Brown and Ryan 2003; see Appendix for the full scale for this study and all subsequent studies). Responses were recorded on a 7-point scale (1 = almost always, 7 = almost never; $\alpha = .91$), and items were averaged so that higher scores reflected greater trait mindfulness. Finally, participants provided demographic information and were debriefed.

Results. Willingness to pay We conducted a moderation analysis using PROCESS Model 1 (Hayes 2017), with brand prominence (low = −1, high = 1) as the focal predictor, trait mindfulness (mean-centered; 1 SD +/− mean) as the moderator, and willingness to pay as the dependent variable. The analysis revealed a significant main effect of brand prominence (B = 93.79, $t(396) = 6.39$, $p < .001$), a significant main effect of mindfulness (B = –10.64, $t(396) = –2.12$, $p = .034$), and, consistent with H1, a significant interaction between brand prominence and mindfulness (B = –29.00, $t(396) = –5.78$, $p < .001$).

A spotlight analysis at ±1 SD of mindfulness showed the predicted crossover. Among consumers low in mindfulness, willingness to pay was substantially higher for high-prominence (M = $148.61) compared to low-prominence products (M = $60.33;

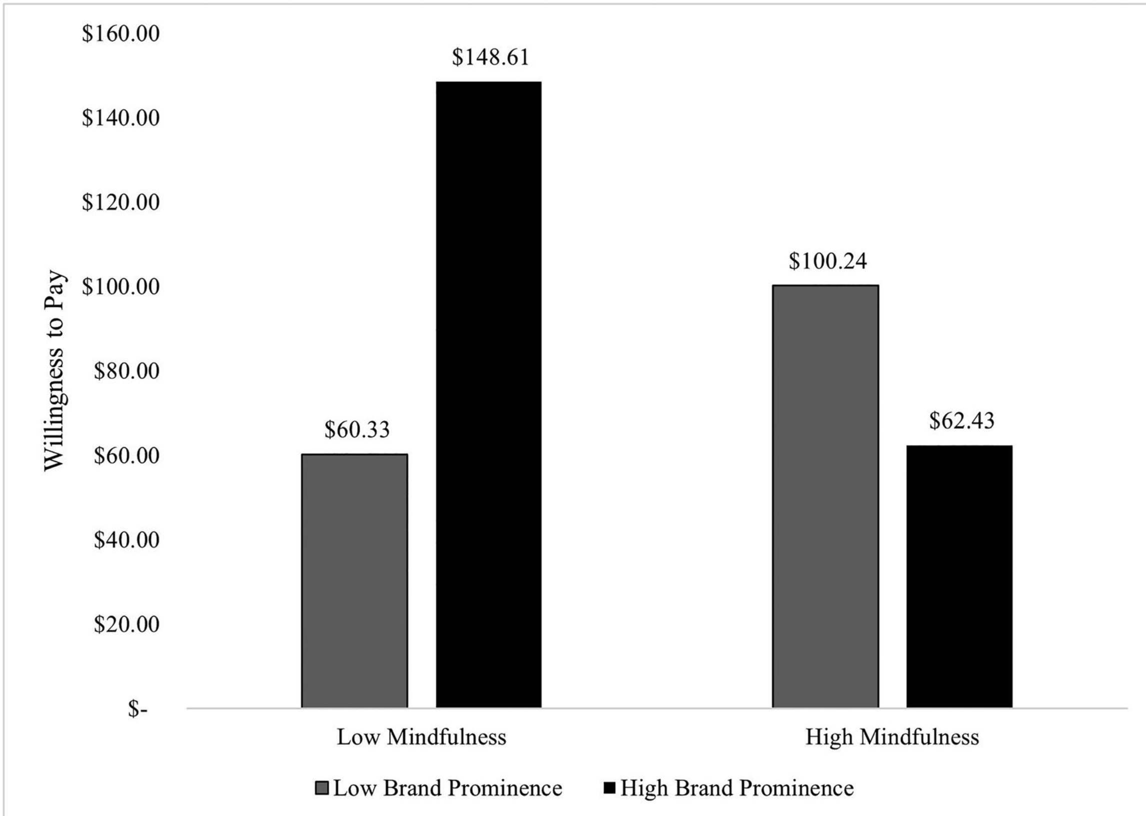

Figure 2 Interaction of brand prominence and mindfulness on willingness to pay

B = 44.14, $t(396) = 6.00$, $p < .001$). In contrast, among consumers high in mindfulness, willingness to pay was higher for low-prominence (M = \$100.24) compared to high-prominence products (M = \$62.43; B = –18.91, $t(396) = –2.41$, $p = .016$). See Figure 2.

Alternative explanations T-tests showed no significant differences in perceived luxury ($t(398) = .83$, $p = .403$) or perceived quality ($t(398) = .46$, $p = .640$). Further, the interaction on willingness to pay remained significant when all variables were entered as covariates.

Study 1b

The purpose of Study 1b is to replicate the effect observed in Study 1a using a state-based mindfulness manipulation and a different luxury product/brand. This allows us to test whether experimentally induced mindfulness replicates the effect found in Study 1a; that consumers high in mindfulness prefer low (vs. high) brand prominence, whereas consumers low in mindfulness prefer high (vs. low) prominence. Full statistical tables are provided in the Web Appendix for this study and all subsequent studies.

Design and Procedure. A total of 400 participants from the US (51% female; M_{age} = 41.05, SD = 13.52) were recruited via CloudResearch Connect, with ten failing the attention check, resulting in 390 valid participants. Participants were randomly assigned to a 2 (brand prominence: low = −1 vs. high = 1) × 2 (mindfulness: low = −1 vs. high = 1) between-subjects design.

Participants first completed one of two randomly assigned audio exercises. In the high mindfulness condition, they listened to a one-minute focused-breathing body scan recorded by a mindfulness instructor (Errmann, Seo, and Septianto 2022). In the low mindfulness condition, participants listened to a one-minute recording about travel writing narrated by the same speaker. Participants then viewed a product image of a Louis Vuitton backpack. In the high-prominence condition, the logo was large and highly visible; in the low-prominence condition, the logo was more subtle and less identifiable (see Appendix). Images were drawn from the Louis Vuitton website to ensure aesthetic consistency. Participants next indicated their willingness to pay for the backpack using a slider from US\$0 to US\$10,000.

Next, participants completed two manipulation checks. First, they responded to a brand prominence check using two items adapted from Han, Nunes, and Drèze (2010): "How prominently does this product display its trademark?" and "To what extent would this product be recognizable as a Louis Vuitton product?" (1 = not at all,

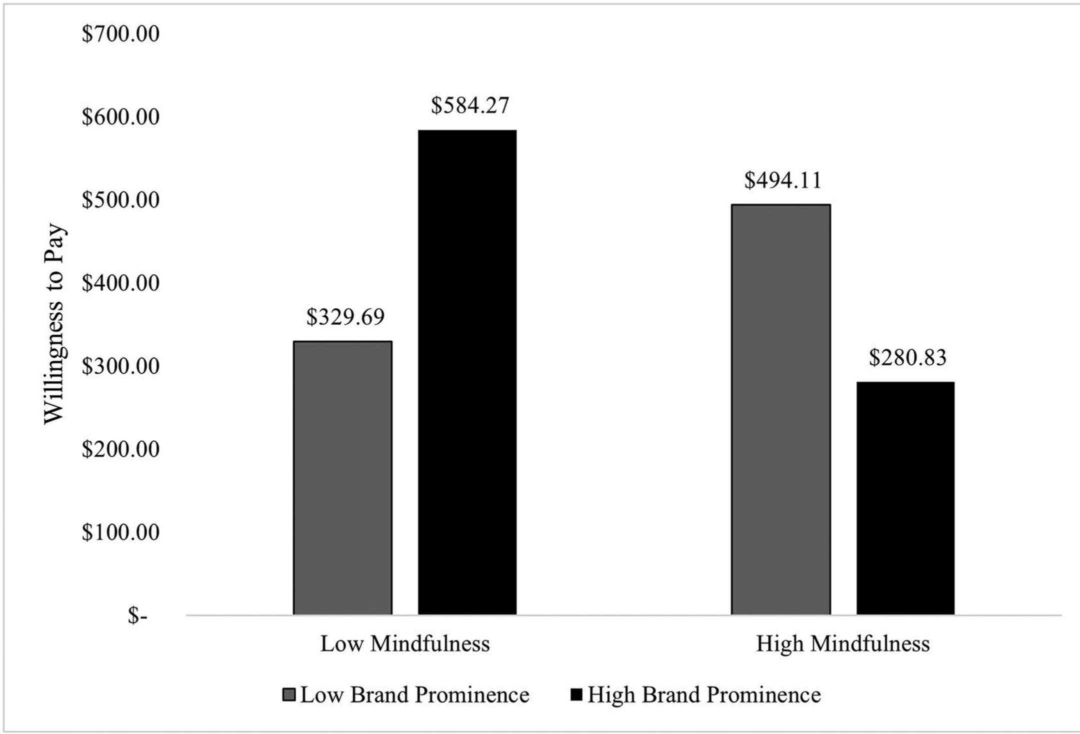

Figure 3 Interaction of brand prominence and mindfulness on willingness to pay

7 = extremely; $\alpha = .89$). Second, they completed the 21-item state mindfulness scale (Tanay and Bernstein 2013), which assesses present-moment awareness experienced during the task (*e.g.*, "I actively explored my experience in the moment"; 1 = strongly disagree, 7 = strongly agree; $\alpha = .93$). Participants then completed the same luxury and quality control measures used in Study 1a, along with checks for visual preference (shape, color, and brand liking (adapted from Shimul, Phau, and Lwin 2019; 1 = dislike, 7 = like) to ensure no systematic preference for the stimuli. They then completed an attention check, provided demographic questions, and were debriefed.

Results. Brand prominence Participants rated the product as more prominently branded in the high-prominence than in the low-prominence condition. (*Mhighprominence* = 6.14, *SD* = 1.16 vs. *Mlowprominence* = 4.95, *SD* = 1.95, $t(388) = -7.32$, $p < .001$).

State mindfulness Participants in the high mindfulness condition reported higher state mindfulness than those in the low mindfulness condition (*Mhighmindfulness* = 5.50, *SD* = .99 vs. *Mlowmindfulness* = 5.11, *SD* = 1.11, $t(388) = -3.66$, $p < .001$).

Willingness to pay A 2 (mindfulness) × 2 (brand prominence) ANOVA revealed a significant interaction, $F(1, 386) = 8.76$, $p = .003$, $\eta_p^2 = .022$. Participants in the low mindfulness condition were willing to pay significantly more for high-than low-prominence products (*Mhighprominence* = 584.27, *SD* = 80.07 vs. *Mlowprominence* = 329.69, *SD* = 79.24, $F(1, 386) = 5.10$, $p = .024$, $\eta_p^2 = .013$). The pattern reversed in the high mindfulness condition: participants were willing to pay significantly more for low than high-prominence products (*Mlowprominence* = 494.11, *SD* = 78.83 vs. *Mhighprominence* = 280.83, *SD* = 78.04, $F(1, 386) = 4.69$, $p = .040$, $\eta_p^2 = .010$). See Figure 3.

Alternative explanations T-tests showed no significant differences in perceived luxury ($t(388) = .80$, $p = .427$) or perceived quality ($t(388) = 1.54$, $p = .125$). The two conditions also did not differ on brand liking ($t(388) = -.19$, $p = .850$), preferred shape ($t(388) = -0.42$, $p = .672$), or preferred color ($t(388) = 0.79$, $p = .432$). Thus, participants did not show systematic differences in any visual-preference or brand-related controls across prominence conditions. Further, the interaction on willingness to pay remained significant when all variables were entered as covariates.

Study 2a

Studies 2a and 2b extend the investigation to a realistic advertising context using short, app-style video ads (<30 seconds). These studies test whether embedding a brief state-mindfulness cue within an ad alters responses to message-level brand prominence (the size and visibility of the logo in the ad). Whereas Studies 1a–1b varied prominence on the product itself, Studies 2a–2b shift the manipulation to the ad execution, isolating prominence as a message feature. All videos used the same footage, pacing, visuals, audio, and brand (Louis Vuitton), varying only the mindfulness cue and the final-frame logo size. Study 2a uses a brief attentional text cue, and Study 2b uses a realistic app-style mindfulness prompt. Together, they provide two ecologically valid demonstrations of how subtle mindfulness cues in digital advertising shape responses to quiet versus loud prominence.

Study 2a serves three purposes. First, it tests Hypothesis 1 in a dynamic, mobile-native video format. Second, it examines whether a short mindfulness cue at the start of the ad moderates responses to logo size, predicting that high mindfulness (vs. low mindfulness) viewers show higher willingness to pay and greater wishlist intention for low- versus high-prominence executions, with the reverse pattern for low mindfulness viewers. Third, it enhances ecological validity by including both a behavioral willingness to pay measure and a platform-native measure (wishlist intention). We also include a brief craftsmanship salience check to ensure effects are not driven by mindful viewers simply paying more processing attention to details.

Design and Procedure. A total of 400 participants from the US (49.8% female; *Mage* = 39.26, SD = 12.04) were recruited via CloudResearch Connect and randomly assigned to a 2 (mindfulness: low = –1 vs. high = 1) × 2 (brand prominence: low = –1 vs. high = 1) between-subjects design. The study was embedded in a short, app-style mobile video advertisement created to mimic a shopping or Instagram experience. All four videos were exported in a vertical 9:16 format and were built from the same recent Louis Vuitton advertisement featuring a woman in Paris.

Two elements varied by condition. First, the opening text card (≈2–3 seconds) contained either a neutral prompt in the low mindfulness condition ("Pause. Think about what's next. Look around. Keep going.") or a brief mindfulness cue in the high mindfulness condition ("Pause. Take a full breath in. Feel your fingers. Feel your toes"), adapted from research used to induce mindfulness in ads (Errmann 2025). Second, brand prominence was manipulated only in the final end-card (≈1–2 seconds): the low-prominence condition displayed a small LV logo in the bottom-right corner, whereas the high-prominence condition displayed a large, centered LV logo. All four videos were rendered from a single master timeline so that only the opening cue, background music supporting the intended attentional state (slower for mindfulness vs. neutral pacing), and logo size differed, consistent with research showing music tempo can influence attentional states (Diaz 2013). Immediately after viewing the video, participants reported their willingness to pay for the featured product using a continuous slider (US\$0–\$10,000). They then completed a context-native behavioral intention measure that visually mimicked a mobile shopping wishlist ("Do you want to add this product to your wishlist?", 1 = definitely not, 7 = definitely yes).

Participants next completed the manipulation checks: (a) the two-item brand prominence check assessing perceived logo visibility from the prior study (α = .75), and (b) the state-mindfulness scale assessing present-moment awareness (Tanay and Bernstein 2013; α = .91). To rule out the alternative explanation that mindfulness simply increased attention to product details, participants completed a craftsmanship item (*e.g.*, "I noticed the craftsmanship/design details"). Finally, participants completed brand liking items from previous studies, an attention check, demographics, and a debriefing.

Results.

Brand prominence Participants rated the ad as more prominently branded in the high-prominence than in the low-prominence condition. (*Mhighprominence* = 6.15, *SD* = .92 vs. *Mlowprominence* = 5.85, *SD* = 1.32, $t(398) = -2.55$, $p = .011$).

State mindfulness Participants in the high mindfulness condition reported higher state mindfulness than those in the low mindfulness condition (*Mhighmindfulness* = 4.80, *SD* = .94 vs. *Mlowmindfulness* = 4.52, *SD* = 1.04, $t(398) = -2.88$, $p = .004$).

Willingness to pay A 2 (mindfulness) × 2 (brand prominence) ANOVA revealed a significant interaction, $F(1, 396) = 13.97$, $p < .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .034$. Participants in the low mindfulness condition were willing to pay significantly more for high-than low-prominence ads (*Mhighprominence* = 1,315.26, *SD* = 126.81 vs. *Mlowprominence* = 822.12, *SD* = 126.81, $F(1, 396) = 7.56$, $p = .006$, $\eta_p^2 = .019$). This pattern reversed in the high mindfulness condition: participants were willing to pay significantly more for low than high-prominence ads (*Mlowprominence* = 1,287.64, *SD* = 128.07 vs. *Mhighprominence* = 823.01, *SD* = 130.72, $F(1, 396) = 6.45$, $p = .012$, $\eta_p^2 = .016$). See Figure 4.

Wishlist A 2 (mindfulness) × 2 (brand prominence) ANOVA on wishlist addition also revealed a significant interaction, $F(1, 396) = 13.78$, $p < .001$, $\eta_p2 = .034$. Participants in the low mindfulness condition added more to their wishlist for high-than low-prominence ads (*Mhighprominence* = 3.54, *SD* = .20 vs. *Mlowprominence* = 2.82, *SD* = .20, $F(1, 396) = 6.60$, $p = .011$, $\eta_p2 = .016$). The pattern again reversed in the high mindfulness condition: participants added more to their wishlist for low than high-prominence ads (*Mlowprominence* = 3.97, *SD* = .20 vs. *Mhighprominence* = 3.21, *SD* = .21, $F(1, 396) = 7.18$, $p = .008$, $\eta_p2 = .018$).

Alternative explanations A t-test showed no difference in perception of craftsmanship (*Mhighmindfulness* = 5.47, *SD* = 1.36 vs. *Mlowmindfulness* = 5.35, *SD* = 1.49), $t(398) = -.85$, $p = .395$, indicating that the effects of mindfulness on responses to brand prominence were not driven by differences in attentional processing. This

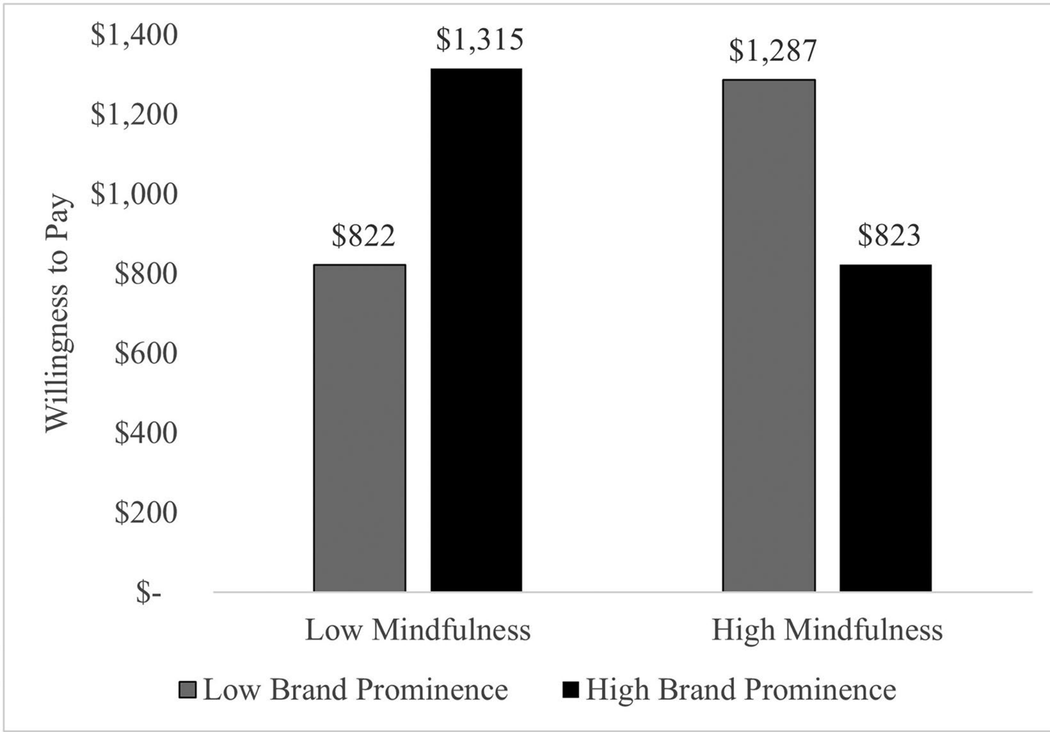

Figure 4 Interaction of brand prominence and mindfulness on willingness to pay

suggests that differences in willingness to pay or wishlist intentions reflect motivational alignment rather than greater attention to product details. There were likewise no differences in perceived luxury ($M_{highmindfulness}$ = 6.04 vs. $M_{lowmindfulness}$ = 5.91), $t(398) = -1.04$, $p = .299$, or perceived quality ($M_{highmindfulness}$ = 5.90 vs. $M_{lowmindfulness}$ = 5.89), $t(398) = -.05$, $p = .962$. Further, the interaction on willingness to pay remained significant when all variables were entered as covariates.

Study 2b

Study 2b extends Study 2a by using a naturalistic, platform-native mindfulness cue to test whether a realistic mindfulness activation shapes responses to message-level brand prominence in a luxury ad. To distinguish mindful attention from general relaxation, the low mindfulness condition includes a relaxation prompt. Because Study 2b features a sponsored mindfulness segment rather than a shoppable product ad, brand attitude is the most ecologically valid outcome, capturing evaluative response without a specific product or price anchor (Kim et al. 2012). This design tests whether logo prominence in sponsored content can spill over to overall brand attitude, rather than whether mindfulness changes evaluations of the entire brand independent of the advertising context.

Design and Procedure. A total of 400 participants from the US (52% female; M_{age} = 37.50, SD = 11.67) were recruited via CloudResearch Connect and randomly assigned to a 2 (mindfulness: low = –1 vs. high = 1) × 2 (brand prominence: low = –1 vs. high = 1) between-subjects design embedded in a sponsored-content video format that mimicked the Calm app (Calm 2025). Each vertical 9:16 video was 27 seconds long and created from the same master timeline so that all visuals, pacing, and transitions were identical across conditions, while background music varied slightly to support the intended attentional state (*e.g.*, slower audio in the mindfulness condition). Two elements varied across the four versions. In the high mindfulness condition, the video opened with a brief guided-breathing prompt (*e.g.*, "breathe in, hold, breathe out"), whereas in the low mindfulness condition, participants viewed a matched relaxation-style prompt (*e.g.*, "relax, hold, no stress"). Brand prominence was manipulated only on the final frame: the low-prominence version displayed a small "sponsored by Louis Vuitton" logo positioned off to the side, whereas the high-prominence version displayed a large, centered "sponsored by Louis Vuitton" logo.

Immediately after exposure, participants reported their attitude toward Louis Vuitton on a 7-point scale (1 = strongly disagree, 7 = strongly agree) using four items ("My attitude toward Louis Vuitton is favorable," "I find Louis Vuitton appealing," "I find Louis Vuitton likable," and "Louis Vuitton is a good brand;" α = .96). Participants then completed the brand prominence check assessing perceived visibility of the logo (α = .72), followed by the

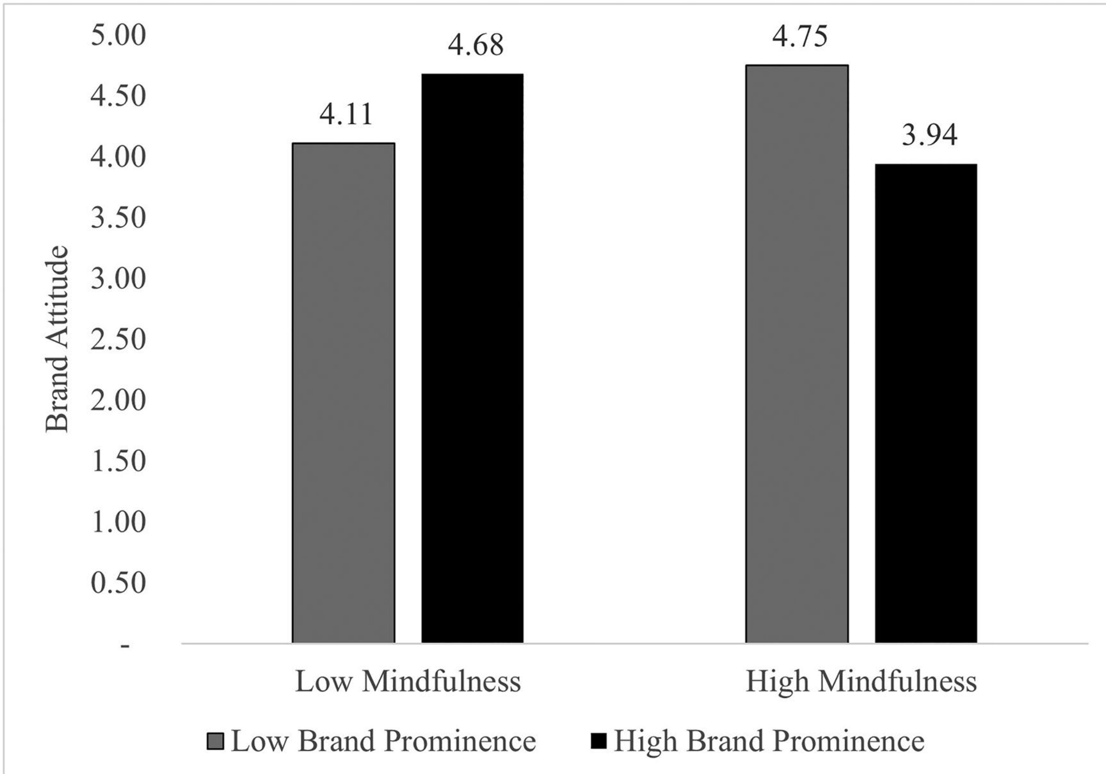

Figure 5 Interaction of brand prominence and mindfulness on brand attitude

state mindfulness check (α = .92). Participants also completed the craftsmanship item (*e.g.*, noticing design details) to ensure effects were not driven by general attention to product features. After completing these measures, participants responded to a standard attention check, control items, demographic questions, and were debriefed.

Results. Brand prominence Participants rated the ad as more prominently branded in the high-prominence than in the low-prominence condition.(*Mhighprominence* = 4.40, *SD* = 1.57 vs. *Mlowprominence* = 2.91, *SD* = 1.66), *t*(398) = −9.21, *p* < .001.

State mindfulness Participants in the high mindfulness condition reported higher state mindfulness than those in the low mindfulness condition (*Mhighmindfulness* = 4.59, *SD* = 1.10 vs. *Mlowmindfulness* = 4.35, *SD* = 1.08), *t*(398) = −2.12, *p* = .035.

Brand attitude A 2 (mindfulness) × 2 (brand prominence) ANOVA revealed a significant interaction, *F*(1, 396) = 19.99, *p* < .001, η_p^2 = .048. Participants in the low mindfulness condition had a more favorable brand attitude for high-than low-prominence ads (*Mhighprominence* = 4.68, *SD* = 1.75 vs. *Mlowprominence* = 4.11, *SD* = 1.39), *F*(1, 396) = 6.80, *p* = .009, η_p^2 = .017. This pattern reversed in the high mindfulness condition: low prominence yielded higher attitude than high prominence (*Mlowprominence* = 4.75, *SD* = 1.53 vs. *Mhighprominence* = 3.94, *SD* = 1.41), *F*(1, 396) = 13.83, *p* < .001, η_p^2 = .034. See Figure 5.

Alternative explanations A t-test showed no difference in craftsmanship (*Mhighmindfulness* = 5.23, *SD* = 1.63 vs. *Mlowmindfulness* = 5.15, *SD* = 1.44, *t*(398) = −.54, *p* = .590), and in perceived quality (*Mhighmindfulness* = 5.55, *SD* = 1.57 vs. *Mlowmindfulness* = 5.47, *SD* = 1.36, *t*(398) = −.54, *p* = .587). Further, the interaction on brand attitude remained significant when all variables were entered as covariates.

Study 3

Study 3 extends the investigation by using a different integrated advertising context and tests the complete dual-pathway model proposed in Hypothesis 2. First, it examines whether consumers across mindfulness levels both desire status but arrive at this outcome through different underlying motivations: intrinsic motivation in the high mindfulness condition (particularly for low-prominence executions) and extrinsic motivation in the low mindfulness condition (for high-prominence executions). Second, the study broadens generalizability by testing the moderated serial mediation model in a new luxury category, luxury hospitality (The Four Seasons), using message-level brand prominence (logo size) rather than product-level cues. Third, it further increases ecological validity by using a realistic luxury-travel advertising context. All participants viewed a professionally produced Four Seasons advertisement, with mindfulness cued through a text prompt. Together, Study 3 provides a stringent test of the full dual-path mechanism (mindful path: low prominence → intrinsic → status → WTP; low mindfulness path: high prominence → extrinsic → status → WTP) under realistic advertising conditions.

Design and Procedure. A total of 400 consumers from the US (50% female, M*age* = 37.45, *SD* = 13.26) were recruited via CloudResearch Connect, with no participants failing the attention check. Participants were randomly assigned to a 2 (mindfulness: low = −1 vs. high = 1) × 2 (brand prominence: low = −1 vs. high = 1) between-subjects design, yielding four conditions: mindful–low prominence, mindful–high prominence, low mindfulness–low prominence, and low mindfulness–high prominence. All participants viewed an integrated Four Seasons advertisement. In the high mindfulness conditions, the ad included a text-based mindfulness cue adapted from Errmann, Seo, and Septianto (2022) (*e.g.*, pause, breathe, be aware of your surroundings). In the low mindfulness conditions, the ad began with a neutral travel/experience introduction containing no mindfulness language. In both high mindfulness and low mindfulness versions, brand prominence was manipulated by varying the size of the Four Seasons logo (low vs. high).

After exposure, participants reported their willingness to pay for a one-night stay using a continuous slider (US$0–$10,000), then completed the brand prominence manipulation check ($\alpha = .84$) and the state mindfulness check ($\alpha = .89$). They next completed the situational extrinsic motivation scale adapted for the hotel context (Cheng, Mukhopadhyay, and Williams 2020; $\alpha = .78$), which included: "I would book a stay at this hotel to show it to others," "I would feel an obligation to stay here to show off to other people," and "The purpose of staying at a hotel like this is to show off to others." This was followed by the intrinsic motivation scale (Cheng, Mukhopadhyay, and Williams 2020; $\alpha = .79$), including: "I would book this hotel stay to have the experience for myself," "I would want the stay for my own personal gratification," and "I would voluntarily stay at the Four Seasons even if none of my family or friends knew I stayed there." Participants then completed the adapted need for status scale (Eastman, Goldsmith, and Flynn 1999; $\alpha = .90$), which included: "I would book this hotel because it has status," "I am interested in hotels with status," "I would pay more for a hotel if it has status," "The status of the hotel is irrelevant to me" (reverse-coded), and "A hotel is more valuable to me if it has some snob appeal." Finally, they completed the standard control items, provided demographic information, and were debriefed.

Results. Brand prominence Participants rated the brand as more prominently displayed in the high than in the low brand prominence condition (*Mhighprominence* = 5.21, *SD* = 1.63 vs. *Mlowprominence* = 4.13, *SD* = 1.86, $t(398) = -6.24$, $p < .001$).

State mindfulness Participants in the high mindfulness condition reported higher state mindfulness than those in the low mindfulness condition (*Mhighmindfulness* = 5.25, *SD* = 1.12 vs. *Mlowmindfulness* = 4.29, *SD* = 1.15, $t(398) = -5.99$, $p < .001$).

Willingness to pay A 2 × 2 ANOVA revealed a significant interaction ($F(1, 396) = 23.54$, $p < .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .056$). In the low mindfulness condition, participants were willing to pay significantly more for high-than for low-prominence ads (*Mhighprominence* = 506.09, *SD* = 38.35 vs. *Mlowprominence* = 331.49, *SD* = 38.94, $F(1, 396) = 10.14$, $p = .002$, $\eta_p^2 = .025$). This pattern reversed in the high mindfulness condition: participants were willing to pay significantly more for low than for high-prominence ads (*Mlowprominence* = 511.21, *SD* = 38.54 vs. *Mhighprominence* = 312.51, *SD* = 37.79, $F(1, 396) = 13.53$, $p < .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .033$). See Figure 6.

Extrinsic motivation A 2 × 2 ANOVA revealed a significant interaction ($F(1, 396) = 7.46$, $p = .007$, $\eta_p2 = .018$). In the low mindfulness condition, extrinsic motivation was higher for high-than for low-prominence ads (*Mhighprominence* = 2.67, *SD* = 0.89 vs. *Mlowprominence* = 2.04, *SD* = .79, ($F(1, 396) = 7.69$, $p = .006$, $\eta_p2 = .019$). In contrast, in the high mindfulness condition, extrinsic motivation did not differ by prominence (*Mhighprominence* = 1.97, *SD* = 1.34 vs. *Mlowprominence* = 2.16, *SD* = .65, ($F(1, 396) = .817$, $p = .367$). See Figure 7.

Intrinsic motivation A 2 × 2 ANOVA revealed a significant interaction ($F(1, 396) = 4.31$, $p = .039$, $\eta_p2 = .011$). In the low mindfulness condition, intrinsic motivation did not differ by prominence (*Mlowprominence* = 3.85, *SD* = .99 vs. *Mhighprominence* = 4.01, *SD* = .75, ($F(1, 396) = .395$, $p = .530$). In the high mindfulness condition, intrinsic motivation was higher for low than for high-prominence ads (*Mlowprominence* = 4.98, *SD* = .79 vs. *Mhighprominence* = 4.45, *SD* = 1.10, ($F(1, 396) = 5.23$, $p = .023$, $\eta_p2 = .013$). See Figure 8.

Need for status A 2 × 2 ANOVA revealed a significant interaction ($F(1, 396) = 11.61$, $p < .001$, $\eta_p2 = .028$). In the low mindfulness condition, need for status was higher for high-than low-prominence ads (*Mhighprominence* = 3.41, *SD* = .89 vs. *Mlowprominence* = 2.93, *SD* = .77, ($F(1, 396) = 5.16$, $p = .024$, $\eta_p2 = .013$). This pattern reversed in the high mindfulness condition: need for status was higher for low than high-prominence ads (*Mlowprominence* = 3.08, *SD* = 1.01 vs. *Mhighprominence* = 2.71, *SD* = 1.12, ($F(1, 396) = 5.97$, $p = .015$, $\eta_p2 = .015$). See Figure 9.

Moderated serial mediation We tested two moderated serial mediation pathways—one expected in the high mindfulness condition (via intrinsic motivation → status → WTP) and one expected

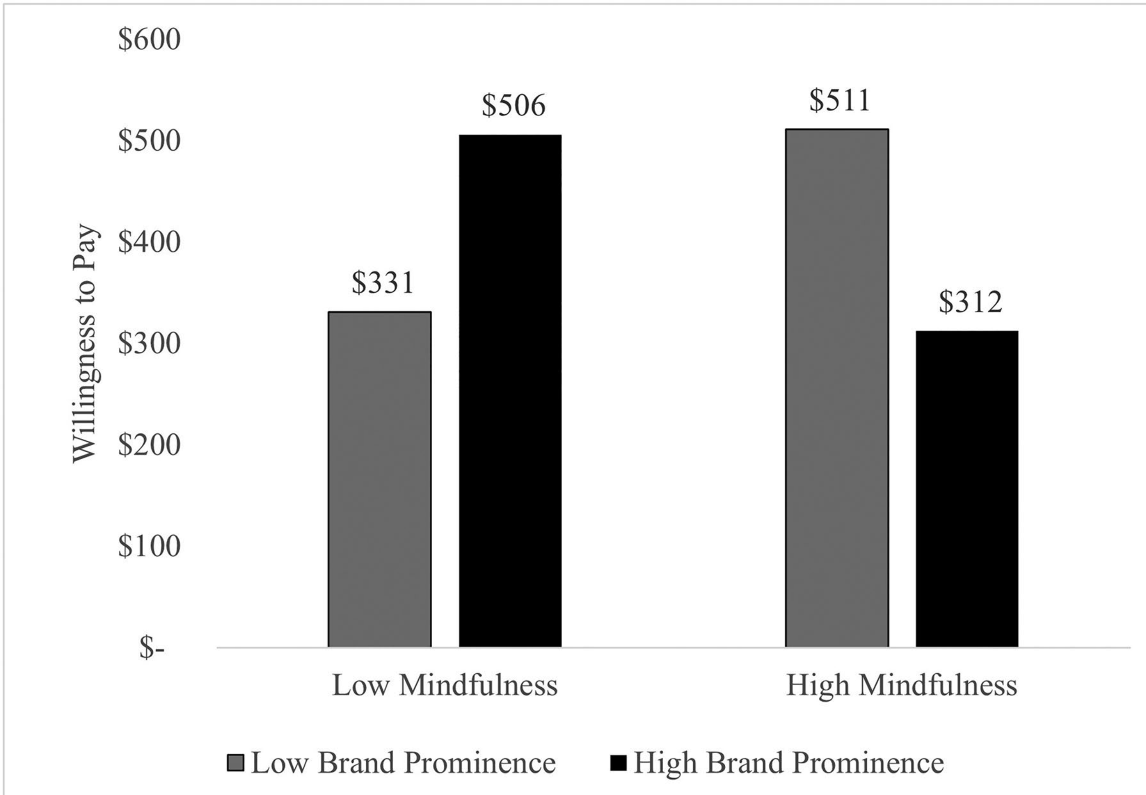

Figure 6 Interaction of brand prominence and mindfulness on willingness to pay

in the low mindfulness condition (via extrinsic motivation → status → WTP)—using PROCESS Model 85 with 5,000 bootstrap samples (Hayes 2017). Brand prominence (low = –1, high = 1) served as the independent variable, mindfulness (low mindfulness = –1, high mindfulness = 1) as the moderator, willingness to pay as the dependent variable, and either intrinsic motivation (Pathway 1) or extrinsic motivation (Pathway 2), followed by need for status, as the mediators.

Pathway 1: Consumers high in mindfulness (intrinsic → status → WTP) Brand prominence × mindfulness significantly predicted intrinsic motivation (B = –.16, $t(397) = –2.07$, $p = .038$). As expected, in the high mindfulness condition, higher prominence significantly reduced intrinsic motivation (B = –.26, $t(397) = –2.28$, $p = .022$), whereas in the low mindfulness condition, prominence had no effect (B = .07, $t(397) = .66$, $p = .508$).

The interaction predicted need for status (B = –.21, $t(397) = –2.87$, $p = .004$). In the high mindfulness condition, higher prominence marginally decreased perceived status (B = –.18, $t(397) = –1.78$, $p = .054$), whereas in the low mindfulness condition, higher prominence increased perceived status (B = .23, $t(397) = 2.27$, $p = .023$).

The brand prominence × mindfulness interaction further predicted willingness to pay (B = –68.69, $t(397) = –3.77$, $p < .001$). Conditional effects confirmed the crossover: in the high mindfulness condition, willingness to pay was higher for low-versus high-prominence ads (simple slope B = –70.21, $t(397) = –2.76$, $p = .006$), whereas in the low mindfulness condition, willingness to pay was higher for high-versus low-prominence ads (simple slope B = 67.17, $t(397) = 2.61$, $p = .009$).

The serial indirect effect via intrinsic motivation → status → WTP was significant only in the high mindfulness condition (B = –5.08, SE = 2.70, 95% CI [–11.33, –0.75]). The moderated serial mediation index was also significant (B = –6.57, SE = 3.71, 95% CI [–14.98, –0.27]).

Pathway 2: Consumers low in mindfulness (extrinsic → status → WTP) Brand prominence × mindfulness significantly predicted extrinsic motivation (B = –.20, $t(397) = –2.73$, $p = .006$). In the low mindfulness condition, higher prominence significantly increased extrinsic motivation (B = .31, $t(397) = 2.93$, $p = .003$), whereas in the high mindfulness condition, prominence had no effect (B = –.09, $t(397) = –.90$, $p = .364$).

The same interaction predicted need for status (B = –.15, $t(397) = –2.27$, $p = .032$). In the low mindfulness condition, higher prominence increased need for status (B = .16, $t(397) = 1.92$, $p = .035$), whereas in the high mindfulness condition, lower prominence increased need for status (B = –.21, $t(397) = –2.31$, $p = .010$).

The interaction also predicted willingness to pay (B = –71.63, $t(397) = –3.86$, $p < .001$). Conditional effects again showed the

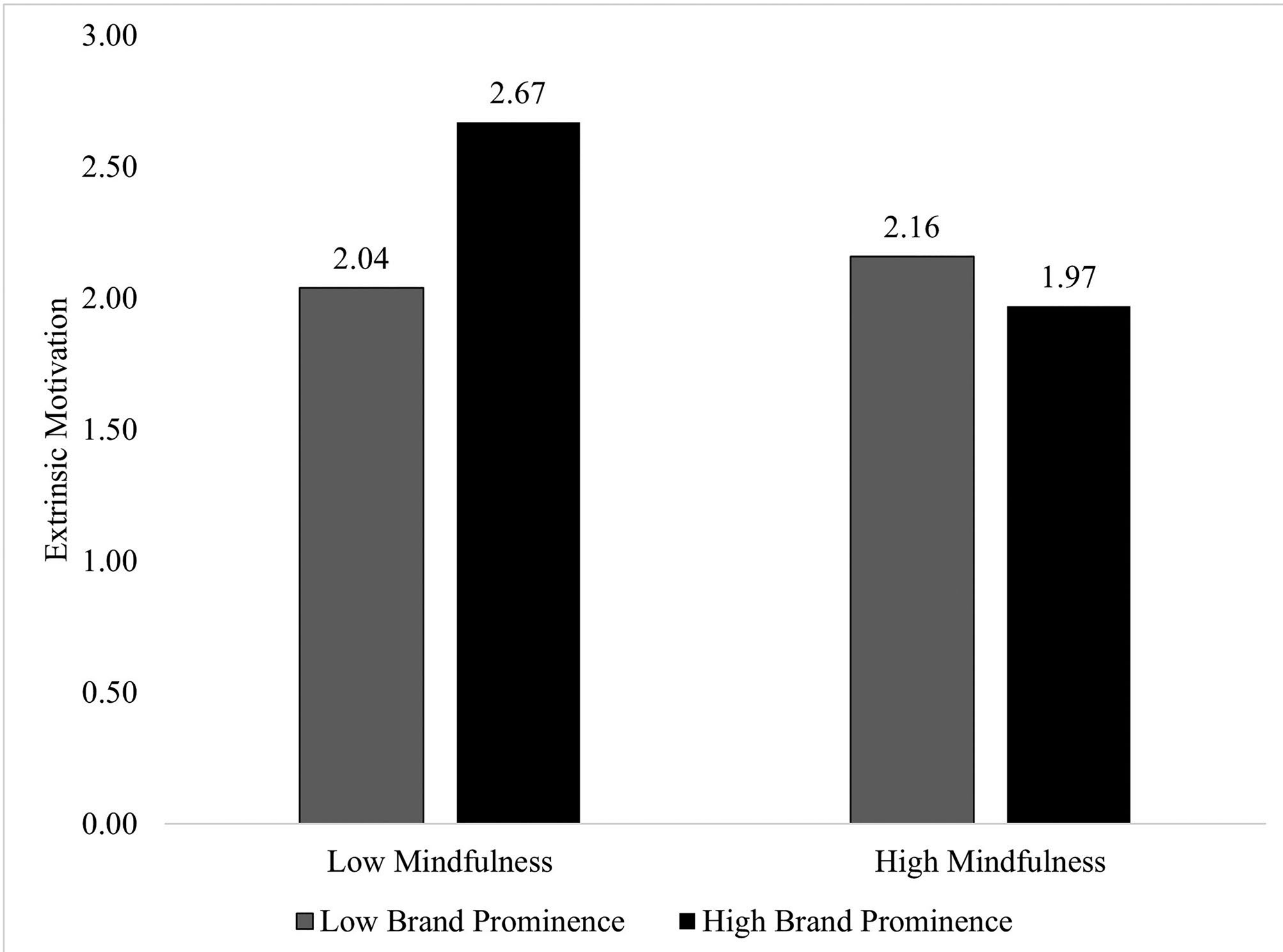

Figure 7 Interaction of brand prominence and mindfulness on extrinsic motivation

crossover: in the low mindfulness condition, higher prominence increased willingness to pay (B = 64.45, $t(397) = 2.44$, $p = .014$), whereas in the high mindfulness condition, lower prominence increased willingness to pay (B = –78.80, $t(397) = -3.05$, $p = .002$).

The serial indirect effect via extrinsic motivation → status → WTP was significant only in the low mindfulness condition (B = 12.76, SE = 6.07, 95% CI [2.80, 26.66]). The moderated-mediation index was significant (B = −16.64, SE = 7.60, 95% CI [−33.69, −4.34]).

Alternative explanations T-tests showed no significant differences in perceived luxury ($t(398) = .56$, $p = .576$), perceived quality ($t(398) = .78$, $p = .436$), or brand liking ($t(398) = -.27$, $p = .786$). Further, the interaction on willingness to pay remained significant when all variables were entered as covariates.

GENERAL DISCUSSION

The current research shows how luxury brand prominence interacts with consumer mindfulness to shape status-oriented behavior. Whereas consumers low in mindfulness prefer "loud" luxury because prominent logos align with extrinsic, socially driven status motives (Eastman, Goldsmith, and Flynn 1999; Li 2019), consumers high in mindfulness, those with heightened present-moment awareness (Brown and Ryan 2003), prefer "quiet" luxury because subtle cues align with intrinsic, fulfillment-based motives. Although consumers high in mindfulness may still derive value from status, they pursue it through self-directed and internally validated routes rather than visibility-based display. Luxury goods therefore serve both self-oriented and other-oriented status needs (Eastman and Eastman 2015; Pino et al. 2019), and our findings clarify how these dual motives produce opposing preferences for loud versus quiet brand prominence.

More broadly, this research shows how conscious attentional states shape advertising response. Mindfulness enhances self-congruent evaluation by increasing awareness of internal values and reducing susceptibility to external pressures (Errmann, Seo, and Septianto 2022; Niemiec et al. 2010). This opens new avenues for

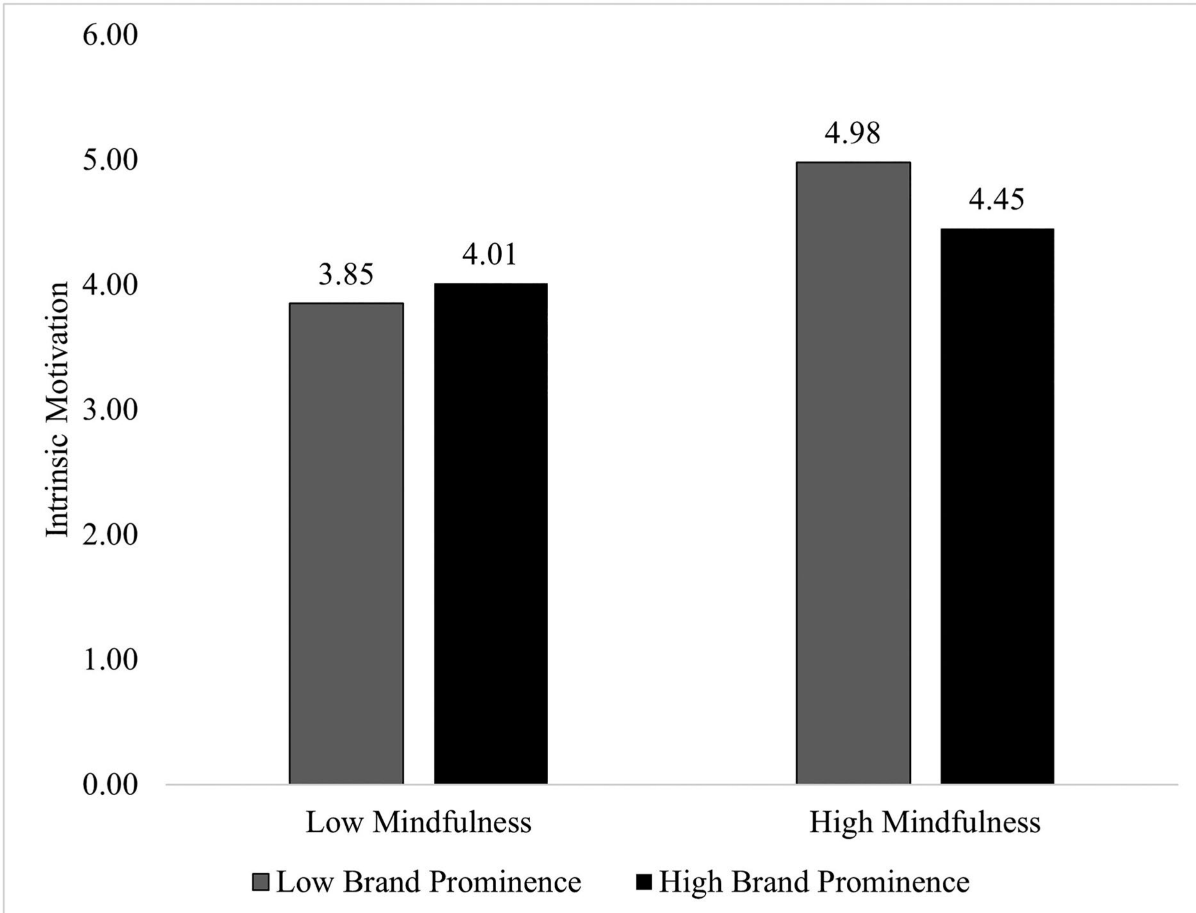

Figure 8 Interaction of brand prominence and mindfulness on intrinsic motivation

examining how present-moment awareness, motivation, and personal fulfillment shape responses to branding cues in advertising. Consumers high in mindfulness appear more receptive to nuanced cues and subtler executions, which may explain their stronger response to low prominence. This highlights the potential value of subtlety in an environment where consumers increasingly filter out overt persuasion (Errmann 2025). Mindfulness may also buffer against advertising fatigue, a growing concern in saturated digital spaces (Tripathi et al. 2022). Related evidence from autonomous sensory meridian response (ASMR) advertising shows that quiet, attentional formats can be especially effective for cognitively engaged audiences (Lee and Chen 2023; Sands et al. 2022). Together, these findings imply that matching the intensity of branding to consumers' mindset orientation may become central to future advertising strategy.

Theoretical Contributions

This research advances luxury advertising theory by demonstrating that status consumption is not a single visibility-based process but a dual-path mechanism contingent on consumers' attentional mindset. Prior work predominantly conceptualizes status as socially validated and comparison-based, with prominent cues signaling prestige and eliciting approval (Dubois and Ordabayeva 2015; Eastman, Goldsmith, and Flynn 1999; Han, Nunes, and Drèze 2010). We refine this view by showing that mindfulness systematically shifts the motivational pathway through which prominence cues influence brand evaluations. When mindfulness is low, prominence strengthens extrinsic motives tied to social recognition and need for status. When mindfulness is high, intrinsic motives centered on personal meaning and self-congruence become more salient, changing how luxury value is construed and reducing reliance

Mindfulness enhances self-congruent evaluation by increasing awareness of internal values and reducing susceptibility to external pressures.

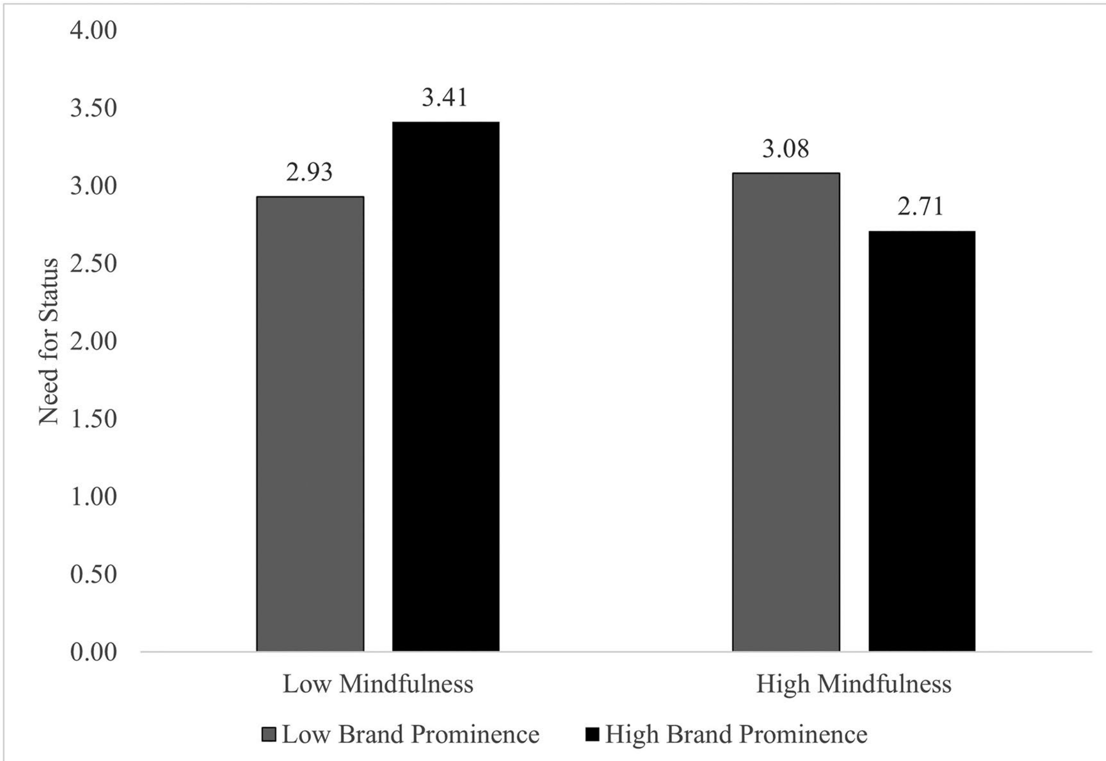

Figure 9 Interaction of brand prominence and mindfulness on need for status

on overt broadcasting cues. This account builds on evidence that luxury consumption increasingly reflects self-directed pleasure and emotional enrichment (Atkinson and Kang 2022; Petrescu et al. 2025; Truong and McColl 2011) and clarifies when these fulfillment-oriented motives dominate. In line with the results observed in Study 3, highly conspicuous signals may even weaken perceived status value under mindful attention.

Second, we offer a complementary perspective on brand prominence, highlighting that its effects may be motivationally contingent rather than purely fixed as a signaling mechanism. Although existing theory assumes prominence reliably communicates wealth or prestige (Dubois and Ordabayeva 2015; Han, Nunes, and Drèze 2010), our findings suggest that its meaning depends on consumers' attentional orientation. Under low mindfulness, high prominence reinforces socially visible status signaling. Under high mindfulness, low prominence aligns more closely with intrinsic reward processes and internally grounded meaning. The same visual cue can therefore produce opposite downstream motivational effects. By integrating attentional processes with intrinsic and extrinsic motivation (Chang, Huang, and Lin 2015), this dual-pathway framework broadens luxury theory beyond static signaling accounts and explains why quiet luxury can thrive alongside highly conspicuous branding, even for the same individual depending on their mindfulness level at the moment of exposure.

Third, this work contributes to advertising theory by introducing an attentional-state perspective on advertising effectiveness. Although mindfulness is often studied as a stable disposition, our results show convergent effects across both trait and experimentally induced state operationalizations (Brown and Ryan 2003; Tanay and Bernstein 2013). Prominence effectiveness therefore depends not only on enduring consumer characteristics but also on situational attentional orientation. By linking attentional mindset to motivational pathways and brand evaluations across print, video, and mobile executions, we provide a coherent and testable framework for predicting when loud versus quiet luxury advertising will be most persuasive.

Advertising Implications

Mindfulness varies across contexts and can be shaped by situational cues, allowing advertisers to align brand prominence with attentional environments rather than treating mindfulness as a fixed consumer type. This targeting logic does not require brands to classify consumers as mindful or unmindful. Instead, advertisers can use contextual and behavioral indicators of motivational orientation. High mindfulness contexts, such as meditation or wellness apps, ASMR environments, slow-living video feeds, immersive long-form content, or reflective browsing journeys, mirror the conditions under which our manipulations elicited stronger intrinsic motivation (Study 2b). Conversely, competitive, high-arousal settings such as sports highlights, finance news, fast-scrolling social feeds, or real-time event coverage may activate extrinsic, recognition-based motives, increasing responsiveness to prominent branding (Deci and Ryan 2008; Li 2019). Real-world campaigns already reflect this attentional logic (Leban et al. 2024). For example, the Alabama Tourism "Take a Moment" campaign uses slow visuals and guided breathing to cultivate attentional calm before presenting destination imagery, an approach consistent with our findings under mindful attention. By contrast, Louis Vuitton's Pharrell campaign deploys highly visible monograms within fast-paced, culturally dominant media environments, reinforcing visibility-based signaling.

Luxury brands can also adopt dynamic creative tailoring, aligning prominence intensity with attentional and behavioral cues. In lower-mindfulness environments, prominent logos, bold contrasts, and socially oriented messaging ("Make Your Mark") may reinforce extrinsic motives tied to recognition and social display. In higher-mindfulness contexts, subtle branding, sensory detail, slower pacing, and narratives emphasizing personal meaning may better align with intrinsic motivation and internally grounded status valuation. Brands can further refine this targeting through prior preference for discreet versus logo-forward products, CRM segmentation, and creative A/B testing that compares responses to subtle versus prominent branding. Campaigns such as Brunello Cucinelli's quiet-luxury films, Aman Resorts' "Find Your Stillness" storytelling, and Aesop's slow-media executions exemplify fulfillment-oriented luxury communication that resonates in immersive contexts.

Importantly, our findings indicate that attentional orientation can be influenced within the advertising experience itself. Study 2b shows that brief pre-roll mindfulness cues, such as guided breathing or reflective prompts, shift motivational orientation and alter responsiveness to prominence cues. Similarly, our mobile-based stimuli (Study 2a) demonstrate that reflective browsing prompts can signal a high mindfulness engagement mode. Campaigns such as Davidoff's "Mindfulness & Indulgence" ritual series illustrate how brands may embed attentional framing directly into creative execution.

Finally, media timing and placement should reflect attentional fit. Quiet luxury may perform more effectively in attention-rich environments such as premium streaming, print, experiential retail, or long-form storytelling, whereas loud-luxury executions may be better suited to high-reach, fast-consumption contexts such as outdoor placements or social pre-rolls. This principle aligns with evidence that advertising effectiveness depends on fit between message abstraction and consumption context (Massara, Scarpi, and Porcheddu 2020). Together, these implications introduce a psychologically grounded framework for luxury advertising: match the intensity of brand prominence to contextual and behavioral signals of consumers' momentary motivational orientation.

Limitations and Future Research Directions

This research has several limitations that offer opportunities for future work. First, although some studies used matched brand executions, subtle differences in stimuli design cannot be entirely ruled out. The effect on willingness to pay remained robust after controlling for perceived luxury, quality, liking, and design, and Studies 2a–2b address this concern by holding video content constant while varying only mindfulness elicitation and end-card logo size. In Study 1a, stimuli were adapted from brand imagery rather than formal advertising executions, did not include a formal manipulation check, and did not capture additional aesthetic perceptions (*e.g.*, elegance or trendiness) that may influence evaluations. Future research could examine how such design perceptions interact with prominence cues. Second, Study 1a measured dispositional mindfulness, whereas subsequent studies manipulated state mindfulness; the observed main effect may therefore reflect stable individual differences rather than situational attentional states. Future research could further disentangle the roles of trait and state mindfulness in luxury consumption.

Third, Study 2b extends the findings to a sponsored-content format in which message-level logo prominence shaped overall brand attitude rather than product-specific evaluations. This design reflects how luxury brands often appear in platform-native wellness or lifestyle content without a specific product or price anchor. However, because Louis Vuitton has a broad product portfolio and strong existing associations, this result should be interpreted as evidence of spillover from prominence cues to broader brand evaluation rather than as a product-level effect. Future research could test this distinction by measuring advertisement attitude, product attitude, and brand attitude in parallel across brands with different baseline prominence strategies.

Fourth, the current studies focus on U.S. consumers. Cross-cultural research is needed to test whether mindfulness and brand prominence interact similarly in rapidly expanding luxury markets (*e.g.*, Asia-Pacific) or in historically anchored European luxury contexts. Exploratory analyses from Study 1a suggested that dispositional mindfulness was not significantly associated with simple demographic indicators, including age and gender. While this provides initial insight, future research could more systematically examine demographic, psychographic, and behavioral correlates of mindful luxury preferences to support more targeted strategies. This is especially important given cultural differences in cognitive processing styles (Kastanakis and Voyer 2014).

Finally, several substantive research directions remain unexplored. A further direction is to investigate how mindfulness shapes transportation in luxury advertising more broadly. Formats that rely on sensory subtlety, such as ASMR (Sands et al. 2022) or slow-paced, nature-rich visuals (Errmann 2025), may enhance perceived narrative transportation for audiences higher in mindfulness. Future work could examine how aligning message tone, pacing, and aesthetic subtlety with attention influences luxury evaluations.

ETHICS APPROVAL

This study received ethical approval from the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee 22/200.

DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

There is no conflict of interest to disclose.

DATA AVAILABILITY

In accordance with the first author's institutional regulations, the data are available upon reasonable request via a secure data-sharing link.

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