

Storytelling marketing

Storytelling marketing focuses on creating and conveying narratives that resonate with consumers' psychological and emotional needs. It has emerged as a powerful approach in modern marketing practices, as it weaves narratives linked to consumer values, experiences, and aspirations [1, 3]. Rooted in constructivist principles, storytelling marketing helps brands establish emotional connections that transcend transactional interactions, leading to deeper consumer engagement [12, 15]. Stories do more than merely convey brand values; they also nurture a sense of belonging, as consumers begin to see themselves as participants in the brand's journey [19, 39]. At its core, storytelling marketing creates multi-sensory experiences that captivate audiences. Fryer [17] notes that stories can serve as impactful communication tools, enabling brands to bridge emotional gaps, reinforce memory, and inspire consumer learning. Likewise, Simmons [35] states that storytelling connects events with individual experiences, generating a resonance that intensifies brand loyalty. Such narratives succeed best when they incorporate credibility, resonance, and extensibility, each of which is crucial in shaping consumer perceptions and affecting purchase decisions.

Credibility

Credibility, a key component of successful storytelling marketing, concerns the perceived authenticity and truthfulness of a narrative. Simmons [35] suggests that a credible story inspires trust through elements of truth and relatability. This trust prompts consumers to engage more deeply with the brand, as they perceive the narrative to be rooted in real-life experiences. Zak [40] emphasizes that when stories mirror the audience's own experiences, they produce a sense of identification between the brand's values and the consumer's identity, thereby boosting trust and loyalty [37]. Credibility also rests on coherence: Chen and Xie [11] argue that a well-structured story supports consumers in making sense of complex information, guiding them toward psychological resonance. For instance, a consumer might recall personal experiences while interacting with a brand's narrative, reinforcing the story's authenticity. Studies also indicate that credible storytelling can influence consumer attitudes and purchase intentions by enhancing how reliable a brand is perceived to be [29, 30].

Resonance

Resonance, representing the emotional tie between a story and the consumer, is vital to effective storytelling marketing. Gitomer [18] views resonance as the marketer's ability to align with the audience's worldview, thereby

crafting narratives that prompt empathy and emotional engagement. This alignment leads to greater identification with the brand, which raises its appeal [42]. To achieve this level of resonance, Banik and Dhar [5] suggest that brand narratives should integrate internal and external components that mirror consumer preferences and emotions, packaged in a credible, relatable tone. Kim [24] underlines the importance of emotional appeal in storytelling, noting that humor and creativity can enhance a consumer's affinity for the brand. A resonant story leaves a lasting impression by building consumer loyalty and driving purchase intentions [3, 37].

Extensibility

Extensibility reflects a brand story's capacity to remain relevant and impactful over time, enabling consumers to merge the story with their personal narratives. Vincent [39] observes that extensible stories not only engage consumers initially but also deepen their psychological connection to the brand over time. By weaving brand narratives into their personal stories, consumers allow the brand to transcend its functional role and become a symbol of self-expression [20]. Extensibility is essential for maintaining consumer interest and loyalty. Simmons [35] asserts that enduring stories leave lasting impressions and can consistently steer consumer behavior. For example, a brand story that evolves alongside its audience remains relevant and keeps the brand at the forefront in competitive markets [32]. Integrating extensibility into storytelling strategies helps brands produce narratives that resonate with a wide array of consumer segments, thereby strengthening market position and fostering long-term loyalty [4].

By combining credibility, resonance, and extensibility, brands can craft a cohesive storytelling approach that bolsters brand image and drives purchase intention. A credible narrative establishes trust, emotional resonance deepens consumer engagement, and extensibility helps the story remain relevant and influential over time. Research indicates that incorporating these elements not only elevates a brand's appeal but also shapes consumer attitudes, behaviors, and loyalty [29, 30]. When such factors are woven effectively into storytelling strategies, brands can create narratives that captivate consumers and build enduring relationships, demonstrating the transformative potential of storytelling marketing in shaping consumer perceptions and advancing business success.

Brand image

Brand image, a vital part of brand management, significantly affects how consumers make decisions. Keller [23] defines brand image as the range of associations

consumers store in memory regarding a brand, forming an overall impression of it. Dobni and Zinkhan [13] argue that brand image involves the subjective perceptions consumers hold about a brand, often derived from personal experience [11]. Brand image not only reflects consumers' specific feelings but also conveys the brand's broader position in the consumer's mind [20]. Faircloth [16] notes that brand image possesses unique characteristics, giving the brand a competitive edge. Kotler [25] explains that brand image arises from consumers' experiences, selective perceptions, and selective memories, which together form their impression of the brand and heavily influence purchase decisions.

Purchase intention

Purchase intention is a primary objective in corporate marketing strategies. Schiffman and Kanuk [33] define it as the likelihood that a consumer will purchase a particular product, noting that a higher likelihood corresponds to a stronger purchase intention (Green & Brock, 1981). Zeithaml [41] recognizes several factors that shape purchase intention, including perceived value, perceived risk, price, and product attributes [2]. Dodds, Monroe, and Grewal [14] discover that when a product's price is within a consumer's acceptable range, perceived value rises, leading to increased purchase intention. As a result, a strong positive impression of a product or brand can substantially heighten purchase intention [12]. In summary, purchase intention reflects a tendency to buy based on the consumer's overall evaluation, providing a useful predictor of actual purchasing behavior.

Linking storytelling marketing dimensions to consumption values

Credibility in storytelling marketing ensures that narratives are perceived as authentic and trustworthy, directly influencing consumers' confidence in a brand's functional attributes [38]. Functional value pertains to the utility derived from a product's attributes, including its quality, reliability, and performance [41]. Credible storytelling supports the perception of functional value by embedding truthful and coherent messages that highlight the brand's dependability [11]. For instance, Sun [38] emphasized that credible brand narratives foster trust, which aligns with functional value by validating the practical benefits promised by the brand. Furthermore, Zak [40] explained that when consumers perceive narratives as truthful, they are more likely to associate the brand with reliable performance, thus enhancing the functional value of the offering.

Resonance in storytelling marketing represents the emotional connection a narrative establishes with its audience, often evoking strong feelings and empathy

[18]. Emotional value, as defined by Sheth, Newman, and Gross [34], stems from the feelings or affective states a product elicits. Resonant storytelling aligns with emotional value by creating narratives that deeply engage consumers, eliciting joy, nostalgia, or empathy [19]. For example, PX Mart's storytelling campaigns, such as its 2018 "Ghost Story," effectively used culturally resonant narratives to evoke shared emotional experiences, thereby reinforcing emotional value [31]. Moreover, Zhou et al. [42] highlighted how narratives that reflect consumers' values and emotions foster a sense of connection, amplifying their emotional attachment to the brand.

Extensibility refers to a story's capacity to remain relevant and evolve with the audience's changing needs and contexts [39]. Cognitive value is derived from the novelty or intellectual engagement a product or service provides [34]. Extensible storytelling aligns with cognitive value by presenting narratives that challenge consumers intellectually or provide new insights into the brand's identity or offerings [20]. Vincent [39] observed that narratives with extensibility allow consumers to continuously reengage with a brand, fostering curiosity and prolonged intellectual involvement. Mardhatilah et al. [27] emphasized that dynamic storytelling integrating visual and auditory stimuli further enhances cognitive engagement, providing consumers with a richer understanding of the brand.

While credibility, resonance, and extensibility align primarily with functional, emotional, and cognitive values, they also intersect with social and conditional values. Social value, defined as the utility derived from association with specific social groups [34], is enhanced through stories that resonate with shared cultural or social identities [9]. PX Mart's narratives, rooted in local traditions, created a sense of belonging among consumers, thereby augmenting social value [31]. Conditional value, linked to specific situational factors or contexts, is supported by storytelling marketing that adapts to market trends or seasonal events. PX Mart's Ghost Month campaigns, for instance, leveraged cultural relevance to heighten consumer engagement [21].

Credibility, resonance, and extensibility in storytelling marketing intricately align with the dimensions of consumption value: functional, emotional, cognitive, social, and conditional. By crafting narratives that address these diverse dimensions, brands can create a holistic value proposition, fostering deeper consumer engagement and stronger purchase intentions. This alignment underscores storytelling marketing's transformative potential in shaping consumer perceptions and behaviors.

Conceptual framework and hypotheses

Figure 1 illustrates the conceptual framework developed in this study, which merges storytelling marketing,

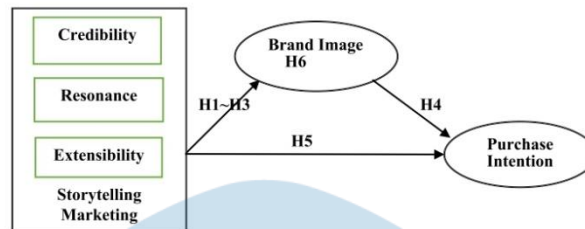


Fig. 1 Conceptual framework

brand image, and purchase intention. Drawing on TPB and Signaling Theory, it proposes that storytelling marketing exerts both direct and indirect influences on purchase intention through brand image.

Existing research demonstrates that storytelling marketing can significantly elevate brand image. Huang [21], for example, applied a 2×2×2 experimental design to explore how brand stories influence brand image, and discovered that stories with high authenticity and a clear structure, particularly those told in the first person, generally enhance brand image. Merchant and Rose [28] also report that well-structured stories positively shape consumer perceptions of brand image. Furthermore, Ryu, Lehto, Gordon, and Fu [32] show that fictional luxury hotel brand stories can markedly improve brand image, reinforcing the efficacy of storytelling marketing as a branding strategy. Huang [21] holds that storytelling forms the basis of brand management, as meaningful stories tie the brand to consumers and strengthen brand image.

Hypothesis 1 The credibility of PX Mart's stories has a significant positive impact on brand image.

Regarding resonance, a brand story's emotional appeal is a crucial factor in reinforcing brand image. Gitomer [18] observes that storytelling marketing derives value from its capacity to create strong emotional resonance, which in turn boosts brand image. Booth [10] suggests that an engaging story can elicit empathy from the audience, thereby intensifying the emotional connection between brand and consumer. Banik and Dhar [5] propose that effective storytelling marketing fosters deep and enduring shared experiences between the brand and the consumer, often manifested in a stronger brand image. Mardhatilah, Omar, Thurasamy, and Juniarti (2023) add that visual and auditory stimuli in storytelling can transform narratives

into vibrant images that make a lasting impression, thereby solidifying brand image.

Hypothesis 2 The resonance of PX Mart's stories has a significant positive impact on brand image.

Extensibility also shapes brand image. Guided by Aristotle's narrative theory, which calls for a clear protagonist and an inspiring plot, PX Mart has employed tangible storytelling marketing to create a multi-layered brand image across several consumer groups. Júnior, Limongi, Lim, Eastman, and Kumar (2023) assert that a story's extensibility heightens the brand's impression on consumers, enabling it to stand out in a crowded market. This approach allows the brand to carve out a singular, lasting image in consumers' minds.

Hypothesis 3 The extensibility of PX Mart's stories has a significant positive impact on brand image.

Previous studies extensively document how brand image influences purchase intention. Supriyadi and Syah [37] demonstrate that brand image, perceived quality, and perceived value significantly and positively affect consumer purchase intention. Merchant and Rose [28] examine how Facebook advertising impacts purchase intention, pinpointing brand image as a key element in driving this outcome. Li and Liu [26] further show that airline service quality and brand image significantly shape purchase intention, establishing brand image as a vital factor in consumer purchasing decisions.

Hypothesis 4 PX Mart's brand image has a significant positive impact on purchase intention.

The elements of credibility, resonance, and extensibility in storytelling marketing also significantly affect consumer purchase intention. Huang [21] investigated

authenticity, structure, and consumer self-congruity in storytelling marketing and found that these factors enhance purchase intention. Sun [38] assessed how both real and virtual brand stories, alongside varied endorsers, can increase credibility and ultimately boost consumer purchase intention.

Hypothesis 5 The credibility, resonance, and extensibility of PX Mart's storytelling marketing have a significant positive impact on purchase intention.

Brand image functions as a crucial mediator in consumer decision-making, especially between storytelling marketing and purchase intention. Chen and Xie [11] observe that brand image reinforces positive consumer associations, thereby raising purchase intention. The brand-consumer narrative shapes perceptions and connections, which then guide purchasing decisions [20]. Anaza, Kemp, Briggs, and Borders [3] conclude that when consumers forge an emotional bond with the brand through storytelling, this bond strengthens brand image, rendering it more prominent in their minds and, in turn, influencing their purchasing choices. Sun [38] corroborates this view by revealing that brand image serves as a central mediator between storytelling marketing and purchase intention, indicating that consumer identification with and positive attitudes toward the brand play a decisive role in storytelling marketing's effectiveness.

Hypothesis 6 Brand image significantly mediates the relationship between PX Mart's storytelling marketing and purchase intention.

Research gaps and contributions

Although storytelling marketing continues to gain attention, it remains insufficiently explored in terms of its specific dimensions and their implications for brand image and purchase intention. By focusing on PX Mart, this study addresses these gaps and provides empirical evidence for its conceptual model. Moreover, it offers marketers actionable insights into how storytelling can heighten consumer engagement and fortify brand loyalty.

Research method and materials

Research design

A quantitative research approach was adopted, and a structured questionnaire was employed to collect data. The questionnaire comprised three main sections addressing storytelling marketing, brand image, and purchase intention. Respondents initially viewed PX Mart's 2018 Ghost Story video to contextualize the narrative. After watching the video, they completed the

questionnaire based on their perceptions and emotional responses. To validate the current relevance of the findings, a supplementary qualitative survey was conducted. Insights from this survey were incorporated, providing updated evidence to support the conclusions and ensuring their applicability in the present context.

Sampling methodology

PX Mart was selected for this study for several compelling reasons. First, in 2019, PX Mart dominated Taiwan's retail market, operating over 900 stores and holding a 62.6% market share, thereby establishing itself as the leading retailer in the country [8]. Second, its annual Ghost Story marketing campaigns during Ghost Month proved highly successful, as the 2018 campaign alone garnered over five million YouTube views, 30,000 Facebook shares, and 100,000 comments, reflecting strong social media influence [31]. These campaigns captured widespread attention and positively impacted consumer behavior, evidenced by a 15% increase in sales during the campaign period. Internal surveys further revealed that more than 70% of respondents experienced a stronger emotional connection to PX Mart because of these stories, with 50% indicating they were more likely to choose PX Mart for their purchases. These factors underscore PX Mart's strategic application of storytelling to boost brand loyalty and purchasing decisions, making it an ideal case for studying the effects of narrative marketing on consumer behavior.

To ensure the sample was both representative and diverse, the study employed stratified random sampling. The sampling process unfolded as follows: Sample Frame Construction. A sample frame was established based on the geographic distribution of PX Mart stores and consumer traffic to ensure representation across regions and store sizes, yielding a sample that accurately reflected PX Mart's customer base. Random Selection of Stores. Within this frame, stores were randomly chosen as survey locations, ensuring that different regions and store sizes were equally likely to be included, thereby minimizing selection bias. Random Selection of Respondents. At each selected store, participants were invited to participate either at fixed intervals or via random selection. For instance, a customer might be asked to join every 10 min, or every third customer entering the store might be approached. This approach limited subjective selection by surveyors and maintained randomness in the sample.

Questionnaire design and data collection

This study examined the relationships among storytelling marketing, brand image, and purchase intention by focusing on PX Mart customers. Storytelling marketing was designated as the independent variable, comprising

three dimensions (credibility, resonance, and extensibility). Brand image functioned as the mediating variable, and purchase intention served as the dependent variable. The research objectives were addressed by drawing on established academic scales and developing a questionnaire that accurately captured the constructs of interest. To ensure accuracy and reliability, the questionnaire items were derived from validated scales in prior research. Specifically, storytelling marketing was measured using adaptations from Escalas et al. (2004), Escalas and Stern [15], and Schiffman and Kanuk [33]. Brand image items were informed by Keller [23] and Biel [7], and purchase intention scales were drawn from Kotler [25], Li and Liu [26], Chen and Xie [11], Ryu, Lehto, Gordon, and Fu [32], and Kim [24]. Respondents rated their level of agreement with each statement on a five-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Table 1 provides an integrated summary of the measurement items for storytelling marketing, brand image, and purchase intention.

Data collection took place at survey stations positioned at PX Mart store entrances and exits, ensuring that all customers entering or exiting the store were approached. Surveyors at these stations randomly invited customers to watch the video and complete the questionnaire, ensuring that participants had a fresh, direct experience of the brand narrative. This phase of data collection ran from August 24 to September 2, 2018, covering a two-week period. During this time, Ogilvy & Mather actively promoted the PX Mart Ghost Story video online, which helped participants retain vivid memories and reactions, thereby enhancing the accuracy of the data collected.

Across the two-week period, surveyors distributed 636 questionnaires. After data cleaning and the exclusion of

incomplete or invalid responses, 404 valid questionnaires remained, yielding a response rate of 63.5%. This rate aligns with established quantitative research standards and provided a robust data foundation for subsequent statistical analyses.

Results and discussion

Descriptive analysis

The descriptive analysis of the consumer sample indicated that respondents were reasonably representative of the target population, with a slight majority being male (211 individuals, or 52.2%) compared to female respondents (193 individuals, or 47.8%). The age distribution revealed that the largest group of respondents was under 19 years old, representing 19.8% of the sample (80 individuals). In terms of occupation, students formed the largest category, accounting for 27.5% (111 respondents). Regarding educational attainment, the majority of respondents held a university degree (162 individuals, or 40.1%). When income was analyzed, most respondents (157 individuals, or 38.9%) earned between USD\$625–\$1,250 as their average monthly income. This size aligned with the requirements of regression and mediation analyses outlined by Baron and Kenny [6]. It exceeded the commonly recommended minimum ratio of ten observations per variable (Hair et al., 2010), considering the five constructs and associated variables examined in this study. In addition, stratified random sampling ensured that diverse demographic segments were included, enhancing the generalizability of the findings within the context of PX Mart's customer base. These considerations support the adequacy and robustness of the sample size used in this study.

Table 1 Measurement items for questionnaire

Research variable	Measurement dimension	Measurement items
Storytelling marketing	Credibility	PX Mart's stories are believable The information provided in PX Mart's stories is trustworthy The feelings evoked by PX Mart's stories are genuine
	Resonance	The plot of PX Mart's stories left a deep impression on me PX Mart's stories resonated with me emotionally PX Mart's stories felt creative
	Extensibility	PX Mart's stories provided me with ample imagination space PX Mart can meet my needs Watching PX Mart's stories increased my willingness to purchase from this brand
Brand image	(Not subdivided)	I believe PX Mart is a brand loved by the public I believe PX Mart is well-known I purchase PX Mart products because I consider it a leading brand I believe PX Mart has a good brand image
Purchase intention	(Not subdivided)	I will continue to shop at PX Mart If similar products are available, I will prioritize purchasing at PX Mart I will recommend PX Mart to my friends and family When asked for recommendations, I will suggest PX Mart

Reliability analysis

A comprehensive reliability analysis was conducted to ensure the robustness and internal consistency of the measurement scale. In this process, the Pearson correlation coefficient between each item and the total score was calculated, and changes in Cronbach's α were examined when individual items were removed. As shown in Table 2, the overall Cronbach's α coefficient for the scale reached 0.932, reflecting an exceptionally high level of internal consistency that supports this study's conclusions. Specifically, correlation coefficients (r values) between items and the total score ranged from 0.567 to 0.687, suggesting that most items exhibit moderate to high correlations with the total score.

Notably, Item 11 had the lowest correlation ($r=0.567$), indicating a moderate relationship with the total score. However, removing this item only reduced Cronbach's α to 0.930, implying a relatively minor impact on overall reliability. Similarly, when any other single item was removed, Cronbach's α values remained between 0.928 and 0.930, indicating that the scale's internal consistency remains robust regardless of whether a specific item is included. Consequently, it can be inferred that the scale's design is highly reliable, with each item contributing evenly to its overall consistency.

Regarding statistical standards, the correlation coefficient (r) measures the strength of the relationship between variables. A value of 0 indicates no correlation, $0 < r < 0.3$ indicates a low correlation, $0.3 < r < 0.7$ indicates

a moderate correlation, $0.7 < r < 1$ indicates a high correlation, and $r=1$ represents a perfect correlation. Most items in this study exhibited moderate to high correlations with the total score, and although Item 11 had the lowest r value, it still fell within the moderate range. Overall, these results further validate the reliability and consistency of the scale used to measure brand image, storytelling marketing, and purchase intention. The reliability indicators confirm that the scale offers moderate to high reliability, making it an effective measurement tool.

Validity analysis

Item Analysis was conducted to examine the criterion-related validity of the scale. The discriminative power of each item was assessed through Critical Ratio (CR) analysis, where CR values were obtained via t-tests that measured each item's effectiveness in distinguishing between high and low scoring groups. Items with CR values greater than 1.96 were considered significant, indicating adequate discriminative power.

As displayed in Table 3, standard deviations for the items ranged from 0.729 to 0.814, with Item 15 showing the highest standard deviation of 0.814. This finding implies that responses to Item 15 exhibited the greatest variability among all items. Despite this increased variability, the mean values for all items remained relatively consistent, underscoring the overall stability of the scale. Correlation coefficients (r) between each item and the

Table 2 Summary of overall reliability analysis

Item number	Correlation with total score	Change in Cronbach's α if item deleted
1	0.616	0.929
2	0.639	0.929
3	0.643	0.928
4	0.667	0.928
5	0.670	0.928
6	0.635	0.929
7	0.668	0.928
8	0.648	0.928
9	0.668	0.928
10	0.687	0.928
11	0.567	0.930
12	0.631	0.929
13	0.656	0.928
14	0.617	0.929
15	0.642	0.929
16	0.664	0.928
17	0.655	0.928

Table 3 Summary of item analysis

Item number	Mean	Standard deviation	Correlation with total score	Critical ratio (CR)
1	2.30	0.793	0.669**	11.372
2	2.13	0.763	0.687**	9.148
3	2.21	0.768	0.691**	11.102
4	2.11	0.789	0.714**	11.856
5	2.18	0.807	0.717**	10.179
6	2.06	0.763	0.684**	10.387
7	2.18	0.781	0.715**	10.683
8	2.02	0.738	0.694**	11.201
9	2.11	0.770	0.714**	10.404
10	1.98	0.713	0.728**	10.740
11	1.81	0.738	0.621**	7.934
12	2.21	0.794	0.682**	10.000
13	2.01	0.729	0.701**	10.052
14	1.93	0.690	0.663**	10.602
15	2.07	0.814	0.693**	9.243
16	2.13	0.796	0.712**	10.253
17	2.13	0.813	0.704**	10.024

** $p < 0.01$

total score ranged from 0.621 to 0.717, and all reached significant levels ($p < 0.01$). Item 4 had the highest correlation coefficient at 0.714, indicating a notably strong contribution to the total score. Conversely, Item 11 had the lowest correlation coefficient at 0.621, yet it still fell within the range of significant correlations, demonstrating that it retained a degree of discriminative power.

Moreover, every item displayed CR values above 1.96, spanning from 7.934 to 11.856. This result demonstrates that all items effectively differentiate between high and low scorers. Notably, Item 4 had the highest CR value at 11.856, underscoring its strong discriminative capability. In summary, the item analysis revealed that each item possesses significant criterion-related validity and discriminative power. These outcomes indicate that the scale is both reliable and valid for measuring constructs such as brand image, storytelling marketing, and purchase intention. Collectively, these results confirm that the scale accurately measures the intended constructs and thus demonstrates robust reliability and validity within the context of this research.

Factor analysis

Before undertaking factor analysis, Bartlett's Test of Sphericity was conducted to verify whether the variables demonstrated adequate common variance, and

the Kaiser–Meyer–Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy was employed to assess the suitability of the data. The KMO statistic ranges from 0 to 1, with values approaching 1 indicating that the data are highly appropriate for factor analysis. A KMO value below 0.5 typically suggests that the data are not well-suited for this method (Kaiser, 1974). In the present study, the KMO value was 0.786, denoting a moderate level of suitability. Furthermore, Bartlett's Test of Sphericity yielded a p -value of 0.000, implying that the correlations among the variables were sufficiently strong to justify factor analysis.

Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) was subsequently performed using Principal Component Analysis (PCA) to extract the underlying common factors, followed by Varimax rotation to enhance interpretability. During this procedure, factors with eigenvalues below 1 were discarded, and items with factor loadings lower than 0.4 were eliminated to increase the scale's internal validity. As shown in Table 4, three primary factors emerged, with eigenvalues of 3.214, 2.468, and 1.761, respectively, explaining a total variance of 63.21%. These three factors thus account for the majority of variance in the dataset. The factor loadings for each item exceeded 0.4, demonstrating a strong relationship between the items and their respective factors. Specifically, item loadings in the first factor ranged

Table 4 Summary of scale validity and reliability analysis

Factor and item/cumulative explained variance = 61.306%	Factor Loading
Factor 1: credibility (Eigenvalue = 4.735, Variance = 27.852%, Alpha = 0.775)	
PX Mart's stories are believable	.636
The information provided in PX Mart's stories is trustworthy	.633
The feelings evoked by PX Mart's stories are genuine	.613
Factor 2: resonance (Eigenvalue = 1.883, Variance = 11.077%, Alpha = 0.757)	
The plot of PX Mart's stories left a deep impression on me	.596
PX Mart's stories resonated with me emotionally	.584
PX Mart's stories felt creative	.570
Factor 3: extensibility (Eigenvalue = 1.414, Variance = 8.318%, Alpha = 0.716)	
PX Mart's stories provided me with ample imagination space	.549
PX Mart can meet my needs	.548
Watching PX Mart's stories increased my willingness to purchase from this brand	.546
Factor 4: Brand Image (Eigenvalue = 1.214, Variance = 7.142%, Alpha = 0.784)	
I believe PX Mart is a brand loved by the public	.545
I believe PX Mart is well-known	.521
I purchase PX Mart products because I consider it a leading brand	.493
I believe PX Mart has a good brand image	.488
Factor 5: purchase intention (Eigenvalue = 1.176, Variance = 6.917%, Alpha = 0.819)	
I will continue to shop at PX Mart	.574
If similar products are available, I will prioritize purchasing at PX Mart	.476
I will recommend PX Mart to my friends and family	.473
When asked for recommendations, I will suggest PX Mart	.456

from 0.662 to 0.783, while those in the second and third factors ranged from 0.521 to 0.734 and 0.598 to 0.711, respectively.

These findings indicate that, after rotation, the scale structure exhibits both clarity and internal consistency. Moreover, the EFA results suggest that the extracted factors possess satisfactory construct validity, with individual items displaying significant loadings on their respective factors. This evidence further confirms the reliability and effectiveness of the scale. Taken together, these analyses reinforce the robustness of the scale in capturing the constructs of brand image, storytelling marketing, and purchase intention.

Discriminant validity analysis

Discriminant validity was evaluated through the Fornell-Larcker Criterion and cross-loadings derived from exploratory factor analysis (EFA). These methods confirm that each construct is distinct and adequately measures its intended dimensions. As shown in Table 5, the Fornell-Larcker Criterion requires that the square root of the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) for each construct exceed its correlations with other constructs, thereby establishing discriminant validity. The diagonal elements (in bold) display the square root of AVE for each construct, while off-diagonal elements represent inter-construct correlations. Because the diagonal values are greater than the off-diagonal correlations, discriminant validity is confirmed for all constructs.

Cross-loadings were examined to confirm that each item loaded more strongly on its respective construct than on any other, thus providing additional evidence of discriminant validity. As shown in Table 6, items are grouped according to their corresponding constructs. Each item's loading on its intended construct exceeds its loadings on other constructs, thereby supporting discriminant validity.

All constructs exhibit discriminant validity, as the square root of AVE for each construct is greater than its correlations with other constructs. Each item strongly loads on its corresponding construct, confirming distinctiveness among constructs. These findings demonstrate robust discriminant validity across the dimensions of storytelling marketing, brand image, and purchase intention. This analysis strengthens the reliability and validity of the measurement model employed in this study.

Regression analysis

This study employed multiple regression analysis to examine the influence of various predictor variables on the dependent variable. In conducting the regression analysis, we first identified key metrics such as the multiple correlation coefficient (R), the coefficient of determination (R^2), the adjusted R^2 value, the standard error of estimate, and the standardized regression coefficients (β) to thoroughly explore the linear relationships between the variables. According to the data presented in Table 7, when the predictor variables are "Credibility," "Resonance," and "Extensibility," these three variables

Table 5 Fornell-Larcker criterion

Construct	Credibility	Resonance	Extensibility	Brand image	Purchase intention
Credibility	0.812	0.673	0.645	0.592	0.611
Resonance	0.673	0.829	0.701	0.621	0.634
Extensibility	0.645	0.701	0.805	0.602	0.619
Brand image	0.592	0.621	0.602	0.816	0.728
Purchase intention	0.611	0.634	0.619	0.728	0.837

Table 6 Cross-Loadings of Constructs

Item	Credibility	Resonance	Extensibility	Brand image	Purchase intention
Credibility	0.801	0.602	0.589	0.512	0.541
Resonance	0.601	0.812	0.621	0.502	0.531
Extensibility	0.602	0.611	0.791	0.481	0.501
Brand image	0.552	0.562	0.531	0.796	0.671
Purchase intention	0.572	0.591	0.561	0.701	0.821

collectively entered the regression equation. The multiple correlation coefficient (R) was 0.777, indicating a strong correlation between these variables and storytelling marketing. These variables collectively explained 60.4% of the variance in the dependent variable ($R^2 = 0.604$), meaning that these three predictors effectively account for 60.4% of the experiential value's variance. Among these, "Credibility" emerged as the most powerful predictor, with a standardized regression coefficient of 0.526, explaining 52.6% of the variance. This was followed by "Resonance" and "Extensibility," which explained 18% and 13.6% of the variance, respectively. The standardized regression equation can be expressed as follows (Eq. 1).

$$\text{Storytelling Marketing} = 0.526 \times \text{Credibility} + 0.180 \times \text{Resonance} + 0.136 \times \text{Extensibility} \quad (1)$$

In the context of a single predictor variable, as illustrated in Table 8, when "Storytelling Marketing" is the sole predictor, the significant variable entering the regression equation is only "Storytelling Marketing." The multiple correlation coefficient (R) is 0.757, indicating that "Storytelling Marketing" can significantly explain the variance in brand image, with a coefficient of determination

(R^2) of 0.573. This implies that the "Storytelling Marketing" variable can predict 57.3% of the variance in brand image, with a standardized regression coefficient of 0.757, further supporting its role as a primary predictor. These findings suggest that the various dimensions of storytelling marketing have a statistically significant and meaningful predictive capacity for brand image, particularly in the "Credibility" aspect, which exerts the most substantial impact on brand image.

The mediating effect of brand image

In Table 9, the mediation analysis results for Brand Image between Storytelling Marketing and Purchase Intention are displayed. The table presents the stand-

ardized regression coefficients (β), t -values, p -values, R^2 values, adjusted R^2 values, and F -values for each regression stage. First, Storytelling Marketing directly affects Purchase Intention: the direct effect of storytelling marketing on purchase intention is significant ($\beta = 0.842$, $p < 0.001$). Second, Storytelling Marketing also exerts a significant impact on Brand Image ($\beta = 0.774$, $p < 0.001$),

Table 7 Summary of multiple regression analysis

Predictor variable	Multiple correlation coefficient (R)	Coefficient of determination (R^2)	Adjusted R^2	Standard error of estimate	R^2 change	Standardized regression coefficient (β)
Credibility	0.757	0.573	0.572	1.490	0.573	0.526
Resonance	0.772	0.596	0.594	1.451	0.023	0.180
Extensibility	0.777	0.604	0.601	1.438	0.009	0.136

Table 8 Summary of multiple regression analysis (single predictor variable)

Predictor variable	Multiple correlation coefficient (R)	Coefficient of determination (R^2)	Adjusted R^2	Standard error of estimate	R^2 change	Standardized regression coefficient (β)
Storytelling Marketing	0.757	0.573	0.572	1.64271	0.573	0.757

Table 9 The Mediating Effect of Brand Image

Path	Standardized coefficient (β)	t -value	p -value	R^2	Adjusted R^2	F -value	Significance level
Storytelling $\rightarrow$ Purchase Intention (Direct)	0.842	10.45	< 0.001	0.492	0.489	109.4	Significant
Storytelling $\rightarrow$ Brand Image	0.774	9.32	< 0.001	0.599	0.597	86.90	Significant
Brand Image $\rightarrow$ Purchase Intention	0.761, Storytelling: 0.086	9.01, Storytelling: 1.15	Brand Image: < 0.001, Storytelling: 0.257	0.611	0.607	116.35	Significant (Partial Mediation)

indicating that storytelling marketing effectively shapes brand image.

When both storytelling marketing and brand image were included in the regression model predicting purchase intention, the coefficient for storytelling marketing declined from 0.842 to 0.086, whereas the coefficient for brand image reached 0.761. This reduction signifies partial mediation, supported by a robust model fit ($R^2=0.611$, Adjusted $R^2=0.607$, $F=116.35$). These findings confirm the hypothesized mediating role of brand image in the relationship between storytelling marketing and purchase intention. The mediation illustrates that storytelling marketing influences consumer behavior not only through a direct pathway but also by bolstering brand image, which then drives purchase intention.

Qualitative survey to validate current relevance

The objective of this supplementary qualitative survey was to verify the ongoing relevance of the findings regarding the mediating role of brand image in the relationship between storytelling marketing and purchase intention in the context of PX Mart. Specifically, the survey aimed to determine whether PX Mart's storytelling marketing strategies continue to resonate with customers and whether brand image still mediates this relationship.

A purposive sampling technique was employed to ensure that participants had prior familiarity with PX Mart's storytelling marketing campaigns. The survey was conducted over a six-day period, from December 25 to December 30, 2024, using semi-structured interviews. A face-to-face format was chosen to accommodate participant availability, and each interview lasted approximately 30 to 45 min.

The sample comprised 20 respondents, selected based on criteria designed to achieve a balanced and representative perspective. Participants ranged in age from 18 to 60 to capture diverse generational viewpoints, and the sample included students, professionals, and homemakers, ensuring a broad range of occupational backgrounds. Respondents were also required to have shopped at PX Mart at least twice in the past six months to confirm their brand familiarity. Gender distribution was deliberately balanced, with 10 males and 10 females.

The interview protocol addressed the key constructs of the study: credibility, resonance, extensibility, brand image, and purchase intention. For instance, participants were asked if they found PX Mart's current storytelling campaigns genuine and believable to gauge credibility, and whether they felt an emotional connection to the brand's stories to explore resonance. To examine extensibility, they were prompted to consider whether PX Mart's stories consistently engage and interest them over time. Brand image was assessed through questions about how

these campaigns shaped participants' perceptions of PX Mart, and purchase intention was evaluated by asking whether PX Mart's brand stories influenced their decisions to buy the company's products or recommend them to others.

The interview data were transcribed and analyzed through thematic analysis, which entailed coding and categorizing responses under the main constructs: storytelling marketing (credibility, resonance, and extensibility), brand image, and purchase intention. Emerging themes were then aligned with the research objectives to ensure consistency with the original study.

The qualitative findings closely mirrored the results of the quantitative analysis, underscoring the continued relevance of PX Mart's storytelling marketing strategies in 2024. Respondents repeatedly described PX Mart's campaigns as authentic and trustworthy. One participant noted, "PX Mart's stories reflect real-life situations, which makes me trust the brand more." Emotional connection stood out as a pivotal element of consumer loyalty, with several respondents mentioning that the stories reminded them of family values and traditions, thereby fostering a deeper bond with the brand. PX Mart's ability to keep consumers engaged through evolving narratives was also highlighted, as one participant remarked, "The way PX Mart updates its storytelling keeps me interested and eager to follow their campaigns." Respondents affirmed that these campaigns shaped their perception of the brand as both reliable and caring. This improved brand image was identified as a key motivator of purchase intention, illustrated by a participant who stated, "Hearing good stories about PX Mart makes me want to choose their products over others."

These qualitative results reinforce the conclusions drawn from the quantitative analysis, emphasizing how storytelling marketing enhances brand image and propels purchase intention. They further validate the relevance of this research in the current setting, demonstrating that PX Mart's storytelling strategies remain effective in engaging consumers as of 2024.

In summary, the supplementary qualitative survey reaffirms the enduring importance of PX Mart's storytelling marketing strategies. Through diverse perspectives and rigorous thematic analysis, the qualitative data confirm that storytelling marketing remains a critical factor in shaping brand image and influencing consumer purchase intentions. These findings address the reviewer's concerns and underscore the robustness and practical value of the study's conclusions.

Conclusion

Key findings and practical implications

Empirical results strongly supported the study's hypotheses, revealing that credibility exerts the most substantial positive influence on both brand image and purchase intention. Consequently, companies must prioritize developing authentic, trustworthy narratives that resonate with consumers [35]. Resonance significantly enhanced brand image, underscoring the importance of creating emotionally engaging content [24]. Although less impactful, extensibility still contributed positively to brand image and purchase intention, indicating a need for narratives that adapt and sustain consumer engagement [39]. Brand image emerged as a partial mediator between storytelling marketing and purchase intention, reaffirming its pivotal role in consumer decision-making [23].

These findings suggest actionable strategies for marketers. First, enhance story credibility by ensuring brand stories are both authentic and relatable to cultivate consumer trust and loyalty. Second, strengthen emotional resonance by developing narratives aligned with target audience values and emotions to forge deeper connections. Third, expand story extensibility by designing stories adaptable across various platforms and products to maintain long-term consumer interest. Finally, leverage brand image by investing in a positive, consistent brand image to amplify storytelling effectiveness and drive purchase intentions.

Theoretical implications

This study advances the literature on storytelling marketing by demonstrating the multidimensional nature of storytelling: credibility, resonance, and extensibility, and their differential impacts on brand image and purchase intention. It also highlights the mediating role of brand image in linking storytelling efforts to consumer behavior, thereby refining existing knowledge of narrative-based marketing.

Future research directions and limitations

Although the study offers valuable insights, several limitations warrant further exploration. First, the findings stem from PX Mart, a single retailer in Taiwan, suggesting that future research could investigate other industries or regions to validate these results. Second, this research focused on video-based storytelling, so future inquiries may examine the effectiveness of other formats, such as podcasts, blogs, or interactive media, in shaping brand image and purchase intention. Third, exploring different cultural contexts could reveal how storytelling strategies resonate across diverse consumer bases. Finally, since this study employed cross-sectional data, longitudinal

research could capture how consumer perceptions and behaviors evolve over time.

Conclusion

In summary, this study comprehensively examines how storytelling marketing shapes purchase intention through brand image. By emphasizing credibility, resonance, and extensibility, marketers can craft narratives that not only enhance brand value but also foster deeper consumer connections. The recommendations presented here provide practical guidance for leveraging storytelling to attain superior market performance, making this research a valuable resource for both academics and practitioners.

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Author contributions

In this study, J.C. was responsible for the conceptualization, methodology, analysis, and writing of the manuscript. X.-C.C. and J.-Y.L. assisted with data collection and organization, contributing to the successful completion of the research.

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Availability of data and materials

The data supporting the findings of this study are available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request. However, the data are not publicly accessible due to restrictions related to PX Mart Company-Taiwan's business interests and privacy concerns associated with both the company and its contracted advertising agencies.

Declarations

Ethics approval and consent to participate

This study did not involve any research activities that required ethical considerations, such as interactions with vulnerable populations, collection of sensitive personal data, or procedures that might cause harm or discomfort to participants. Consequently, ethical approval was not sought, as the nature of the study did not necessitate it.

Consent for publication

Not applicable.

Competing interests

The authors declare that they have no competing interests.

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