

# Anta's Acquisition of Arc'teryx: Analysis of High-end Outdoor Market Expansion and Brand Integration Strategy

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**Abstract.** As global consumers' pursuit of a healthy lifestyle continues to grow, the outdoor equipment market is also expanding, especially in China, where sales have reached US\$4.464 billion. Anta, as a leading sporting goods company in China, occupies 15% of the market share and has further expanded its high-end outdoor market by acquiring the high-end brand Arc'teryx. This study explores Anta's strategies and challenges in brand positioning, product innovation, marketing strategy, channel integration and supply chain management through SWOT analysis. The study points out that Anta has improved Arc'teryx's market competitiveness and high-end positioning through brand integration, channel optimization and the application of AI technology, but it still faces challenges in insufficient brand recognition, pricing and market expansion. In this regard, this paper suggests several strategies to improve supply chain efficiency and brand loyalty. These include differentiated brand marketing, customized customer experiences, and the use of mechanical intelligence in supply chain management. Such measures aim to meet the market demand for high-performance outdoor equipment and further strengthen Arc'teryx's position in the global high-end market.

**Keywords:** High-end outdoor market, brand integration, product innovation, artificial intelligence application and marketing.

## 1. Introduction

In recent years, global consumer demand for healthy lifestyles has continued to grow. This trend has driven the expansion of the global outdoor equipment market. By 2024, this market is expected to reach a revenue of USD 26.3 billion, with China leading at USD 4,464 million [1]. The global outdoor sports apparel market is also projected to have a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 4.60% by 2032 during the forecast period [2]. As a leading sporting goods company in China, Anta has a market share of 15% in China, just behind NIKE (26%) and Adidas (17%). Therefore, Anta's layout and expansion of the outdoor sports equipment market are mainly based on its high growth potential. As the global outdoor market expands and demand for high-end products grows, Anta can capitalize on this to enhance its brand positioning and profitability. The China market is particularly strong, and by strengthening its outdoor business, Anta will be able to better meet domestic demand and expand its market share. At the same time, consumers' pursuit of high-performance and high-quality products provides a good opportunity for Anta to optimize its brand matrix, cover the mass to high-end markets and strengthen its brand image. Therefore, Anta has adopted the strategy of "single focus, multiple brands" to actively participate in various sporting goods segments in order to broaden its product portfolio and expand its market penetration. By acquiring high-end outdoor brands, Anta has not only expanded its business territory in the outdoor market, but also responded to the market growth trend and further enhanced its competitiveness and influence in the global outdoor sports market.

This study aims to explore how Anta bridged its gap in the high-end outdoor sports market and accelerated its expansion in the global market through the acquisition of Arc'teryx. This paper will focus on Anta's integration strategy across several dimensions. These include brand positioning, marketing, channel integration, product innovation, and supply chain management. It will analyze the challenges faced during the integration process, such as maintaining Arc'teryx's premium brand image using AI technology and automated systems. The paper will also examine how Anta can stay

competitive in the high-end outdoor market and achieve brand synergies. Additionally, it will explore ways to realize brand synergies through differentiated and customized services.

## **2. Anta's Expansion into the Outdoor Sector**

### **2.1. Arc'teryx's Premium Market Positioning**

With the rapid growth of the global outdoor sports market, Anta has shown a strong vision for expansion in this segment. Through strategic acquisitions and brand integration, Anta intends to capture a higher share of the global outdoor sports market. In 2019, Anta further strengthened its business layout in the high-end outdoor sports market through the acquisition of Amer Sports, a Finnish company with a rich portfolio of brands and outdoor product lines. Amer Sports comprises a number of high-end outdoor sports brands under its umbrella, and among them, Arc'teryx, as the flagship brand, has become one of the important supports for Amer Sports to enter the high-end outdoor market with its high-performance outdoor equipment and professional market positioning. Through this acquisition, Anta hopes to further extend its business from mass sporting goods to high-end professional outdoor equipment, so as to cover a wider range of consumer needs.

### **2.2. Positioning of Arc'teryx**

Arc'teryx has an extensive line of outdoor sports products, including high-performance mountaineering apparel, SKI gear, outdoor footwear, backpacks, and accessories. Arc'teryx positions itself as a premium brand with products that are dedicated to high-income consumers, especially professional players in skiing, mountaineering, and hiking [3]. Secondly, through the constant pursuit of innovation, Arc'teryx has earned a high degree of credibility and influence worldwide. For example, the introduction of high-performance, waterproof and breathable materials into its clothing line has resonated with professional athletes and recreational outdoor enthusiasts alike [4]. The premium positioning and professional image adopted for Arc'teryx effectively complemented Anta's existing product portfolio, allowing Anta to quickly enter the high-value-added outdoor market and meet international consumer demand for high-performance outdoor products.

### **2.3. Differentiation Strategy Implemented by Anta for Arc'teryx**

#### **2.3.1. Store Location**

According to Kumagai and Nagasawa [5], choosing a highly positioned store significantly expands the perceived brand image of restricted users, demonstrating the positive impact of store location on consumer attitudes towards luxury. Therefore, in 2020, Arc'teryx will locate its flagship store on Huaihai Road in Shanghai, where luxury brands are clustered, next to Hermes and other top luxury brands. This 'clustering effect', as Arrigo [6] points out, by locating the flagship stores of different brands in a cluster, the brand can capitalize on the high status of other luxury brands, increasing their current brand associations, images, awareness and attributes. Thus, Arc'teryx has made the brand's premium nature, sense of quality and luxury attributes more firmly established in the minds of consumers by being located next to other luxury brands. This enhances the brand's visibility while also strengthening consumers' identification with it as a top outdoor luxury brand. In order to further strengthen the brand's luxury attributes Arc'teryx chose to open a 2,400 square meter "Beginner's Bird Museum" in 2024 on West-Nanjing Road in Shanghai, which is also a luxury goods district, and replicated the one-on-one shopper system of the luxury brand in order to enhance the exclusive services for consumers [7]. This strategy led to the creation of the Arc's Bird Museum, a 2,400-square-meter museum.) This strategy allows Arc'teryx to not only emphasize the high-end positioning of the brand in the physical space, but also increase the unique value of the brand through personalized service, which enhances consumer loyalty and satisfaction with the experience.

In addition to emphasizing the brand's luxury credentials, in 2022, Arc'teryx opened a "Mountain Classroom" store high in the mountains of Shangri-La, located next to hiking trails to directly serve

consumers who are passionate about the outdoors. This not only allows the brand to reach its core audience, but also reinforces its image as a top specialty outdoor brand by providing authentic outdoor experiences.

### **2.3.2. Research, Development and Innovation**

By supporting Arc'teryx's research, development and technological innovation, Anta ensures that its products remain at the forefront of technical performance. Its exclusive Coreloft cotton, for example, is a material that gives Arc'teryx products excellent skin-friendliness, as well as functional properties such as lightness, high warmth, quick-drying, and water repellency, which meets the stringent performance requirements of high-end outdoor consumers. According to Jorge [8], launching new products or improving existing ones has a significant impact on business growth. Therefore, Arc'teryx's technological innovations not only fulfill the market's demand for functionality in high-end outdoor gear, but also add value to the brand's products.

This continued technological innovation has not only solidified Arc'teryx's position in the marketplace as a top outdoor brand, but has also earned it a leadership position in the industry. By continually improving the technological content of its products, Arc'teryx is able to differentiate itself from its competitors and maintain a competitive edge. Investment in research and development enables the brand to adapt to changing market demands, while also enabling it to actively lead industry trends and strengthen its presence in the premium segment.

In addition, technological innovation has also enhanced Arc'teryx's brand awareness and consumer loyalty. As consumers increasingly attach importance to the functional and technical quality of outdoor equipment, Arc'teryx has attracted high-end consumers and consolidated its global influence through innovative products and technologies. This innovation-driven approach is critical to the brand's long-term growth, helping Arc'teryx maintain its leading market position and fuel its global expansion.

### **2.4. Channel Integration**

Anta has effectively advanced Arc'teryx's channel integration by implementing the DTC (direct-to-customer) model, which allows the brand to bypass traditional retail intermediaries and interact directly with consumers through digital channels. This approach allows the brand to bypass traditional retail intermediaries and interact directly with consumers through digital channels. The DTC model streamlines the brand's sales process and strengthens Arc'teryx's global connection with consumers, enabling it to gather real-time feedback to improve its products and services, which is critical for long-term growth.

The DTC model also enhances the consumer shopping experience, particularly through digital channels, enabling Arc'teryx to provide more convenient and personalized service. This direct engagement strategy allows Arc'teryx to more accurately target its audience, resulting in increased market penetration and brand loyalty. At the same time, the directly-managed model ensures consistency in image and quality across the globe, enabling Arc'teryx to consistently deliver a high-end, professional brand image to consumers.

In addition, Arc'teryx is rapidly expanding its store network through a hybrid model of direct-to-consumer (DTC) and franchising, which improves store efficiency while maintaining the high standards of quality and management found in DTC stores. In China, Arc'teryx has increased the proportion of directly-managed stores and improved store efficiency through the DTC model, which has helped the brand grow from 167 to a projected 300 stores in the Greater China region, increasing the brand's market presence and expanding its consumer base.

### **2.5. Marketing Strategy**

Co-branding Arc'teryx with Songtsam, a brand that also respects nature and culture, demonstrates its high regard for the environment and humanities, and through the concept of "co-creation", the brand's spirit is deeply fused with the local culture, creating a unique experience with emotional

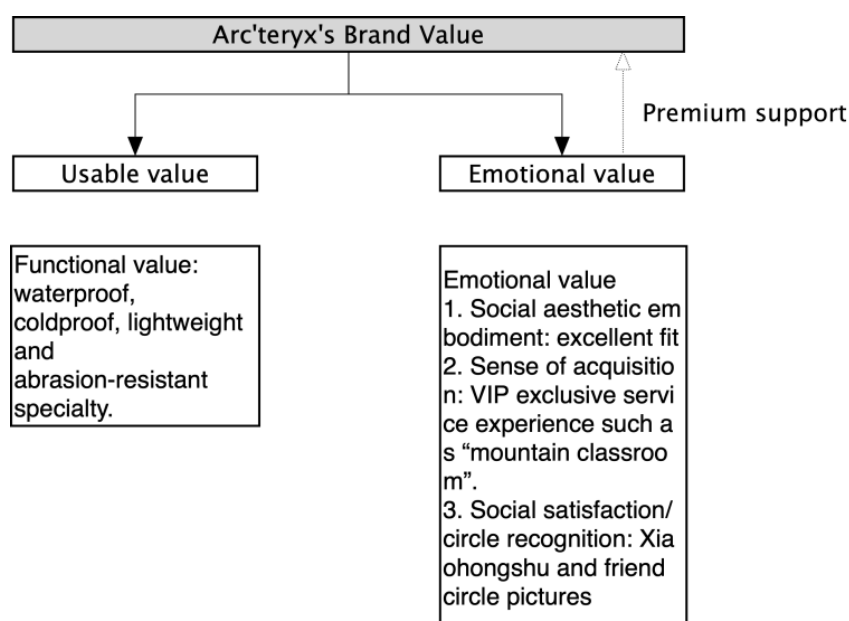
resonance [9]. This approach not only creates a strong sense of cultural identity and belonging, but also further strengthens the uniqueness and professionalism of Arc'teryx as a high-end brand in the global market.

This differentiation strategy not only enhances the brand's premium image, but also strengthens consumer engagement and loyalty through immersive experiences. The in-depth cultural integration and nature co-creation attracts high-end consumers who value sustainability and lifestyle, significantly enhancing the brand's appeal and market competitiveness.

### 3. SWOT Analysis

#### 3.1. Strengths

Arc'teryx's high-end positioning and brand value form a unique advantage that enables it to attract consumers who are willing to pay a premium for performance and brand (refer to Figure 1). In terms of functional value, the products have professional performance such as waterproof, cold-proof, and lightweight; in terms of emotional value, Arc'teryx has become a symbol of elite, fashionable, and high-end lifestyles through the promotion of social media, fashion KOLs, and celebrity effects. This high-end positioning complements Anta's multi-brand strategy, enabling Anta to cover the full range of outdoor markets from mass to high-end, enhance the added value of the brand portfolio, and further strengthen the influence and loyalty of Arc'teryx in the high-end outdoor market.



**Figure 1.** Emotional value provided by Beginner's products supports brand premiums.

Researchers have found that luxury brand perceived functionality and experiential value have a positive effect on luxury brand purchase intention [10]. With its excellent performance in high performance, durability, and waterproof and breathable features, especially in the application of innovative materials and technologies, Beginner has won high favor among consumers. This perception of professional performance reinforces its market positioning as a high-end outdoor brand. Through the integration of Beginning Bird, Anta has successfully expanded its product line into the high value-added high-end outdoor equipment segment, thereby effectively enhancing the brand's overall quality image and market position.

#### 3.2. Weakness

Arc'teryx's premium positioning and pricing strategy has limited its entry into the global market. While the brand has a strong reputation, its high price and niche positioning have limited its penetration into the mass market, particularly in developing economies.

While Arc'teryx enjoys high brand awareness in the global premium outdoor market, it is still relatively unknown in some emerging markets, particularly China. Strengthening brand promotion and positioning in these markets is a key issue for Arc'teryx.

In addition, the high price of Arc'teryx may cause consumer resistance in some markets, especially in price-sensitive regions. It is a challenge for Anta to expand its market coverage while maintaining its high-end image.

### 3.3. Opportunities

The global trend toward healthy lifestyles has fueled the popularity of outdoor sports, driving demand for high-performance outdoor gear. With premium products and strategic brand positioning, Arc'teryx is well-positioned to capitalize on this trend and expand its global market share.

In China, the demand for outdoor sports and high-end equipment is also growing. With the support of Anta's strong distribution channels and marketing resources, Arc'teryx can quickly enter this growing market and expand its reach through a localization strategy.

Secondly, consumers are increasingly emphasizing functionality and technological innovation in outdoor gear, particularly durability, waterproofing, breathability and other advanced features. This trend provides Arc'teryx with a significant opportunity to expand its market share through continued product innovation and leading-edge technology.

### 3.4. Threats

Arc'teryx faces stiff competition from premium outdoor brands such as The North Face and Patagonia, which offer advanced, innovative products and a large, loyal global consumer base. This competition challenged Arc'teryx to expand its market share.

In addition, fluctuations in the global economy, changes in trade policies and currency exchange rate movements could negatively impact Arc'teryx's international sales. In economically unstable markets, a decline in purchasing power could affect sales of premium outdoor products, placing additional pressure on Arc'teryx's results.

As market trends change, so do consumer demands. Recent increased interest in sustainability, environmental protection and social responsibility has required Arc'teryx to quickly adapt its product design and brand strategy to remain competitive.

## 4. Challenges in Deployment

Arc'teryx faces stiff competition in the premium outdoor market from established brands such as The North Face and Patagonia, which have loyal customer bases and strong brand awareness. This poses a significant challenge for Arc'teryx to expand its market share.

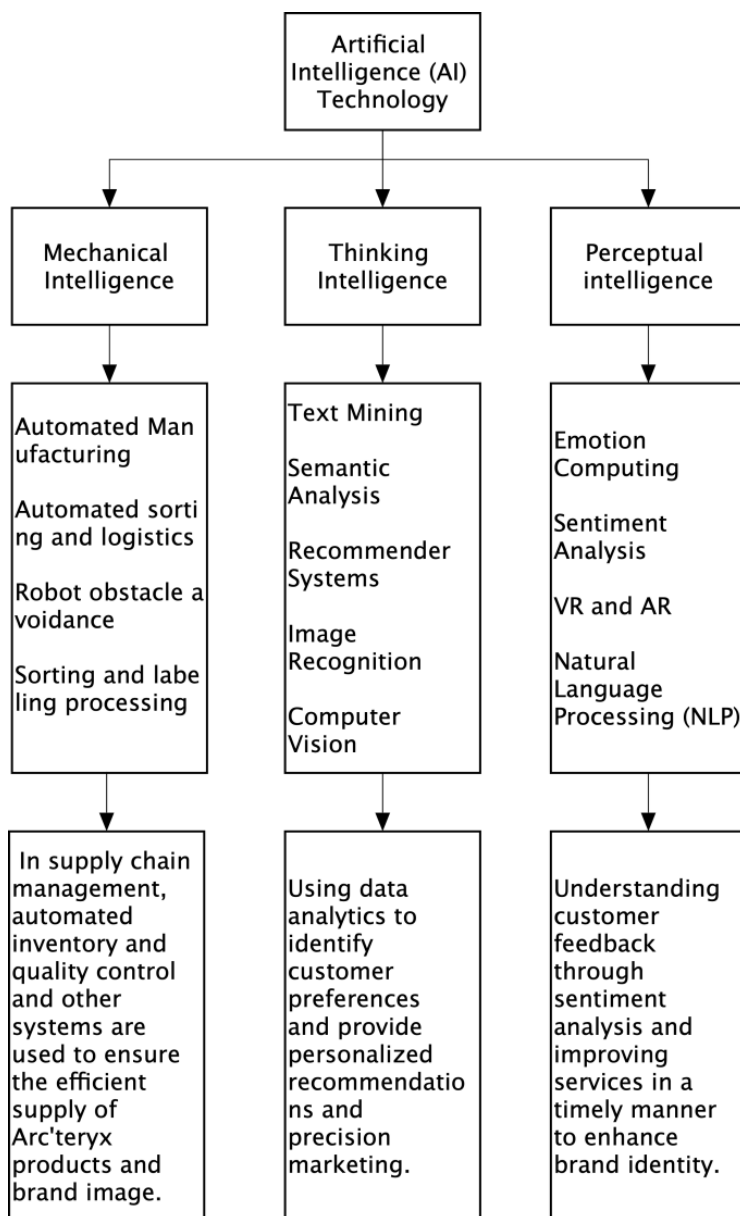
As Arc'teryx enters new markets, it becomes critical to maintain its premium, professional brand image. ANTA must appeal to a wider consumer base while ensuring that Arc'teryx's unique premium positioning remains intact.

Although Arc'teryx has gained recognition in the global premium market, its brand awareness in some emerging markets, especially China, is still relatively low. Improving brand awareness and consolidating its premium positioning are key challenges that need to be addressed.

The second is the evolution of global market trends, and consumer preferences are also changing at the same time. People are paying more and more attention to sustainability and environmental protection, which requires Arc'teryx to quickly adjust its products to adapt to these trends and remain competitive.

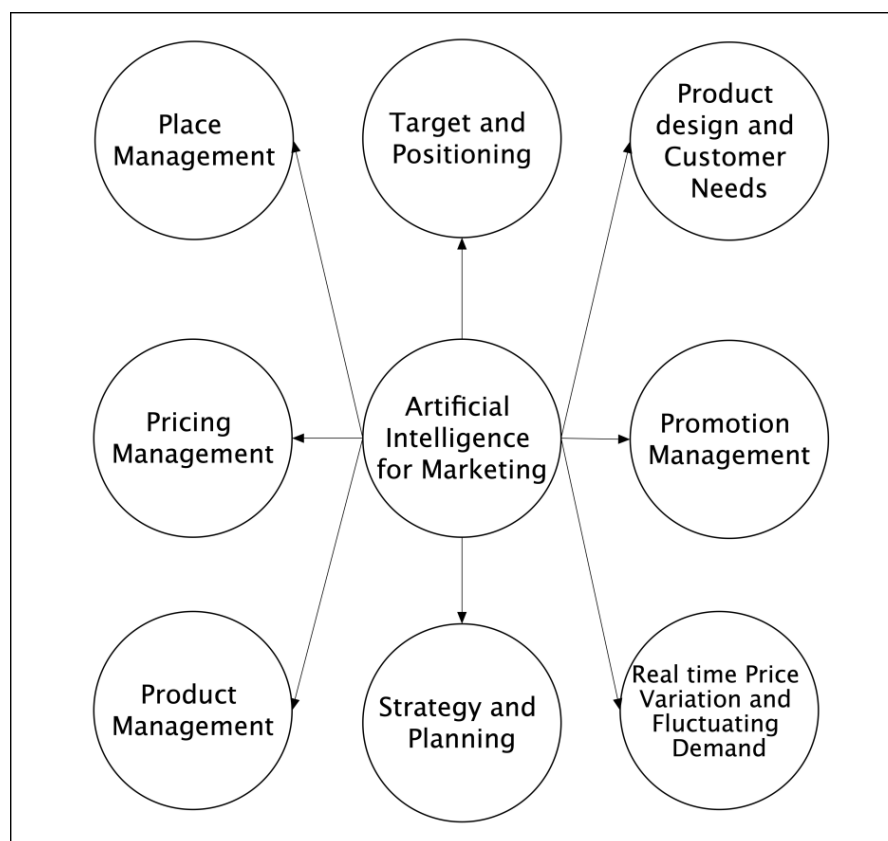
In terms of supply chain and distribution network optimization, ANTA must ensure that Arc'teryx products are both convenient to purchase and effective. As a high-end brand, Arc'teryx requires strict product quality control and distribution standards, and Anta must adhere to these standards when expanding its channels.

## 5. AI-enabled Related Recommendations



**Figure 2.** Artificial Intelligence and its applications

Artificial intelligence can be divided into mechanical intelligence, thinking intelligence, and perceptual intelligence, in figure 2. Mechanical intelligence automates repetitive and routine tasks, such as automated manufacturing, sorting, logistics, and obstacle avoidance. It ensures efficient supply chain operations. Thinking intelligence relies on machine learning and neural networks to process unstructured data. It enables pattern recognition and decision-making and is widely used in text mining, recommender systems, and image recognition. These applications provide personalized recommendations and precision marketing. Perceptual intelligence is designed for human interactions. It analyzes and responds to human emotions using technologies like emotional computing and natural language processing (NLP). This type of intelligence enhances customer experience and strengthens brand identity [11].



**Figure 3.** Specific applications of artificial intelligence (AI) in marketing

Figure 3 illustrates specific application areas of AI. In recent years, AI has been widely used in digital marketing to drive product innovation and improve productivity. AI can support the key marketing segments shown in the figure, including pricing, strategic planning, product development, promotions, and location management. These applications not only improve marketing efficiency, but also enable companies to meet customer needs with greater precision, leading to personalized market positioning and enhanced customer experience.

### 5.1. Accurately Targeting Different Consumer Segments

According to the case of Great Wolf Lodge, the business was able to determine whether customers were net recommenders, net detractors, or neutral with 95% accuracy by using 67,000 reviews to train an NLP tool called an Artificial Intelligence Lexicographer (GIAL)[12]. This application demonstrates the power of sentiment AI in analyzing large amounts of customer feedback and extracting emotional and attitudinal data. Therefore, Antares can take a cue from this approach and use NLP technology to analyze Arc'teryx customer comments, social media interactions, and feedback to predict customer attitudes towards the brand with high accuracy. Through this real-time data analysis tool, Anta can accurately understand whether consumers are brand advocates, critics, or neutral groups, so as to develop more effective brand positioning and marketing strategies for Arc'teryx, and further strengthen its high-end image.

For example, in order to further inspire loyal customers to identify with Arc'teryx, Anta can reinforce the brand's scarcity and premium positioning through exclusive reward programs, customized offers and limited edition product releases, thereby driving word-of-mouth. At the same time, through NLP technology analysis Anta is able to quickly identify the causes of customer dissatisfaction and take customized actions to improve the experience. By responding in a timely manner, providing negative feedback and offering an apology or compensatory measures, Anta is able to improve the level of service and reduce the negative impact on the brand's high-end image, demonstrating that the brand attaches great importance to the customer experience, and reinforcing Arc'teryx's commitment to service as a high-end luxury brand.

## 5.2. Personalized Content and Advertisement Customization

Cluster analysis in Thinking Intelligence is widely used to classify target user groups, which can realize personalized recommendations and services by dividing distinctly differentiated user groups to enhance the operational efficiency and commercial effectiveness of enterprises, as well as to explore the value combinations of different products [13]. This can help Beginning Bird identify common correlation patterns in customers' purchasing behaviors, so as to more accurately understand customers' purchasing tendencies and product preferences, and in this way, design more attractive limited edition products and high-end experiences for different customer groups.

Based on this and real-time data analysis, Anta can customize advertising content for Arc'teryx customer groups. Based on the purchasing behavior and feedback sentiments of different groups, the advertisements are highly matched to their needs and preferences. AI can identify the best intervention points in the consumer shopping path and display personalized advertisements in social media, search engines or emails, thus enhancing the accuracy of the advertisements and improving the high-end perception of the brand.

## 5.3. Introducing Limited Products

Association Rule Mining (ARM) allows Arc'teryx to identify product combinations or related purchasing behaviors that are common to specific customer groups in past purchase data. This data will reveal which products are typically purchased together and which customers are more interested in scarcity, design uniqueness and high performance.

First ARMs can reveal consumer preferences for certain design features such as color, material or functionality. For example, if certain customers tend to purchase products with high warmth and lightweight designs, Arc'teryx could launch limited edition products based on these preferences, combining special designs and technological innovations to enhance the appeal of these products and meet the needs of high-end customers.

Secondly Antares could use ARM, Arc'teryx could find that certain customer segments are particularly interested in purchasing high-end product combinations, such as the combination of a waterproof hiking jacket and high-performance hiking boots. Based on this, the brand could launch limited edition product packages designed specifically for these preferred combinations. For example, launching a limited edition hiking gear package, which might include jackets in high-tech fabrics, boots in limited colors, with exclusively designed outdoor accessories.

## 5.4. Delivering a Premium Experience

Association rules not only help Arc'teryx understand the connections between products, but also help the brand tap into the experience preferences and expectations of its premium customers. These customer segments may not only seek the product itself, but also want a more personalized service and exclusive experience.

Through ARM, Arc'teryx can discover that high-end customers tend to favor large purchases or frequent purchases at specific times, such as when new seasons or limited quantities are on sale. Through these behavioral patterns, Arc'teryx can provide these customers with customized VIP services, such as exclusive appointment shopping experiences, personal shopper consultants, or in-store experiential events. For example, the brand can organize limited edition launches, invite-only important customers, provide them with an exclusive shopping experience, and launch limited edition products at the event.

## 5.5. Key AI Applications to Optimize Supply Chain Management and Distribution Network

Automated picking and packing processes based on mechanical intelligence help Arc'teryx improve efficiency in warehousing and distribution. Automated sorters automatically distribute and package goods according to product labels, reducing labor requirements, lowering error rates, and ensuring that products flow quickly and accurately to the next supply chain step, thus improving overall supply chain efficiency and meeting the on-time delivery needs of the high-end market.

Multi-agent systems (ABS) respond quickly to demand fluctuations and market changes by treating each link in the supply chain (e.g., suppliers, manufacturers, distributors) as an independent agent, allowing them to make autonomous decisions under constraints. For Arc'teryx, ABS simulation can provide the organization with supply chain response models under different scenarios to help identify potential bottlenecks, thereby optimizing strategies to improve system flexibility and adaptability. Through this technology, Arc'teryx can more effectively balance production capacity, inventory and transportation resources to maintain the continuous supply and market competitiveness of high-end products. Therefore, this AI-based model is superior to more traditional short-term and long-term forecast modeling methods [14].

## 6. Conclusion

The report found that ANTA has effectively improved Arc'teryx's competitiveness in the global high-end outdoor market through brand integration and technological innovation. According to the research, ANTA has combined high-end brand positioning with advanced technology research and development, especially in product innovation and functionality, further enhancing Arc'teryx's market influence. Meanwhile, differentiated marketing strategies based on AI technology, such as personalized recommendations and the launch of limited edition products, have improved brand identity and customer loyalty. Through brand integration and AI-driven refined marketing strategies, Antares has realized the consolidation of Arc'teryx's high-end brand image and market expansion, driving its success in the global high-end outdoor market.

The main contribution of this study is to demonstrate the application of AI in brand positioning, product optimization and market segmentation, especially how AI technology can be used to accurately identify customer needs and customize and develop products and services that meet the expectations of high-end customers. This not only fills the research gap of AI technology in enhancing brand influence, but also provides valuable practical experience and theoretical support for other enterprises when integrating high-end brands.

This paper suggests further exploring the application of AI technology in supply chain management and consumer experience optimization to ensure the efficient operation of premium brands. Meanwhile, the study can also focus on the acceptance and demand trends of premium brands in emerging markets to help brands develop more localized marketing and product strategies. In-depth research in these areas will provide more evidence-based and strategic guidance for the global expansion of premium brands.

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