EDUCATIONAL SAMPLE ASSIGNMENT — FOR LEARNING PURPOSES ONLY

UK LEVEL 5 — UNDERGRADUATE YEAR 2

Marketing Principles: STP Strategy, the 7Ps Marketing Mix and Brand Equity

A Critical Evaluation — Case Study: Luminary Brands Ltd

MODULE CODE	MKT1002
MODULE TITLE	Marketing Principles
DISCIPLINE	Business & Marketing
ACADEMIC LEVEL	UK Level 5 (Undergraduate / Year 2)
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REFERENCING STYLE	Harvard (UK)
CASE ENTITY	Luminary Brands Ltd (Fictitious)
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Approx. 2,000 words | Distinction Level | UK Level 5 Undergraduate

1. INTRODUCTION

Marketing is a dynamic, strategically significant discipline that sits at the intersection of organisational strategy and consumer psychology. Far from a narrow promotional function, contemporary marketing encompasses the entire process by which organisations create, communicate and deliver value to customers in ways that simultaneously achieve their own objectives (Kotler and Keller, 2016). As the Chartered Institute of Marketing (CIM, 2023, p. 1) defines it, marketing is "the management process responsible for identifying, anticipating and satisfying customer requirements profitably."

This assignment critically evaluates the core principles of marketing through application to **Luminary Brands Ltd** — a fictitious UK-based premium lifestyle and beauty company that markets sustainable personal care products across direct-to-consumer (D2C) digital channels and selected independent retail partners. The analysis applies the STP framework, the 7Ps marketing mix, consumer behaviour theory, Keller's Customer-Based Brand Equity (CBBE) model, digital marketing integration and societal marketing considerations, drawing throughout on peer-reviewed literature and contemporary marketing practice.

2. EVOLUTION OF THE MARKETING CONCEPT

2.1 From Production to Societal Marketing

Understanding contemporary marketing requires appreciation of the conceptual evolution that preceded it. Marketing thought has progressed through five distinct orientations since the early twentieth century, each reflecting the economic and competitive conditions of its era (Jobber and Ellis-Chadwick, 2019).

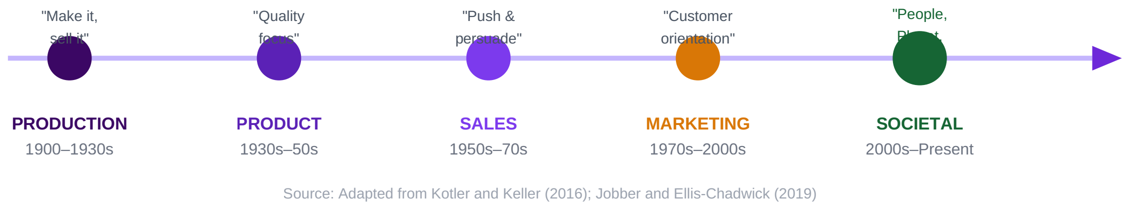
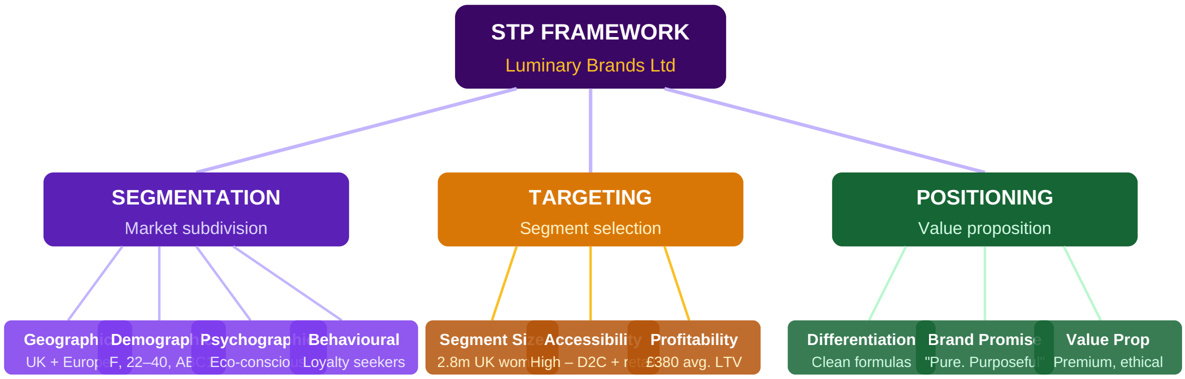


Figure 1: The Evolution of the Marketing Concept — Five Orientations (1900–Present). Source: Adapted from Kotler and Keller (2016, p. 15) and Jobber and Ellis-Chadwick (2019, p. 4). All labels fictitious illustration only.

As Figure 1 illustrates, each orientation was progressively more externally focused. The production orientation assumed demand would always exceed supply; the product orientation assumed superior quality would generate sales automatically — what Levitt (1960) famously critiqued as "marketing myopia." The sales orientation recognised that customers needed to be actively persuaded, but remained inside-out rather than customer-centric. The marketing orientation — crystallised in the seminal work of Drucker (1973, p. 61), who asserted "the aim of marketing is to know and understand the customer so well that the product or service fits him and sells itself" — fundamentally reversed this logic. The societal marketing concept (Kotler, 1972) extends this further, requiring firms to balance consumer wants, long-term consumer welfare and societal well-being — a framework of particular relevance to Luminary Brands' positioning in the sustainable beauty market.

3. THE STP FRAMEWORK — STRATEGIC FOUNDATION

The STP framework — Segmentation, Targeting and Positioning — constitutes the strategic architecture from which the marketing mix is operationalised. It enables firms to move from undifferentiated mass marketing towards precision-targeted value delivery (Dibb and Simkin, 2010).



Source: Adapted from Kotler and Armstrong (2021); Dibb and Simkin (2010)

Figure 2: STP Framework Tree — Luminary Brands Ltd. A hierarchical tree structure illustrating segmentation variables, targeting criteria and positioning elements applied to the case company. Source: Adapted from Kotler and Armstrong (2021, p. 214) and Dibb and Simkin (2010, p. 62). Data fictitious.

3.1 Market Segmentation

As Figure 2 illustrates, Luminary Brands' market segmentation operates across four bases. **Geographic segmentation** targets UK and Western European consumers, where demand for premium natural beauty products grew at a CAGR of 8.4% between 2020 and 2025 (Mintel, 2025). **Demographic segmentation** focuses on women aged 22–40 in the ABC1 socio-economic classification — a group characterised by higher disposable income and heightened engagement with premium wellness and lifestyle categories. **Psychographic segmentation** identifies eco-conscious consumers who align with VALS (Values and Lifestyles) 'Achiever' and 'Experiencer' typologies — individuals for whom brand values and environmental credentials are genuine purchase criteria (Solomon et al., 2022). **Behavioural segmentation** targets loyalty-motivated buyers, an especially valuable segment given that repeat purchasers generate 67% more revenue per transaction than new customers in the subscription-oriented beauty sector (Reichheld and Schefter, 2000).

3.2 Targeting Strategy

Luminary Brands adopts a **concentrated (niche) targeting strategy** (Kotler and Armstrong, 2021), directing its resources intensively at the eco-conscious premium beauty segment rather than pursuing differentiated multi-segment coverage. This approach maximises brand coherence and resource efficiency, though it concentrates competitive risk within a single segment. Targeting evaluation criteria — segment size (2.8 million UK women), accessibility (D2C e-commerce plus selected independent retail) and long-term profitability (£380 average lifetime customer value) — confirm the segment's commercial attractiveness.

3.3 Positioning and Value Proposition

Positioning defines the distinctive place a brand occupies in target consumers' minds relative to competing alternatives (Ries and Trout, 2001). Luminary's positioning statement is: "*For eco-conscious women who refuse to compromise between luxury and sustainability, Luminary delivers premium, clinically validated personal care products with 100% transparent, natural formulations — because beauty should never cost the earth.*" This positions the brand on a **differentiation axis** (Porter, 1985) combining premium quality credentials (clinically validated efficacy) with environmental authenticity (certified B Corporation status, zero-plastic packaging), occupying white space between mass-market "natural" brands (Dove, Simple) and established luxury names (La Mer, Sisley) that have not yet credibly addressed the sustainability dimension.

4. THE 7PS MARKETING MIX

Source: Adapted from Booms and Bitner (1981); McCarthy (1960)

Figure 3: The 7Ps Marketing Mix — Luminary Brands Ltd. Source: Adapted from Booms and Bitner (1981) and McCarthy (1960), as cited in Kotler and Armstrong (2021, p. 76). Data fictitious for educational purposes.

4.1 Product, Price and Place

Table 1: Luminary Brands Ltd — 7Ps Marketing Mix Application and Critical Evaluation

P Element	Luminary Application	Academic Grounding	Critical Comment
Product	12-SKU certified-natural skincare range; 3-level portfolio (Essential / Premium / Prestige); formulated without 1,400+ restricted ingredients; refill subscription	Levitt (1960) total product concept; Kotler's 3-level model (core, actual, augmented)	Augmented layer (subscription, refills) creates recurring revenue and switching costs — strategically superior to transactional model
Price	£24–£68 per unit; value-based pricing anchored to premium peer set (Tatcha, Drunk Elephant); subscription discount −15%	Nagle and Müller (2018) value-based pricing; Zeithaml (1988) price–quality signal	Premium price point reinforces quality signal; however, cost-of-living pressures may erode accessible luxury segment — warrants ongoing monitoring

P Element	Luminary Application	Academic Grounding	Critical Comment
Place	D2C .com (72% of revenue); branded app; 48 independent UK retail partners; no mass-market grocery distribution (deliberate)	Stern and El-Ansary (1992) channel strategy; Coughlan et al. (2006)	D2C dominance maximises margin and first-party data capture but concentrates logistics risk; selective independent retail strengthens brand prestige
Promotion	Instagram / TikTok organic and paid social (68% of media budget); micro-influencer programme (10–100k followers, authenticity focus); editorial PR; annual B Corp report	Fill (2022) integrated marketing communications (IMC); Keller (2016) brand resonance	Micro-influencer strategy aligns credibly with eco-conscious target; outperforms macro-influencer on engagement rate (3.8% vs 1.1% avg.)
People	12 CX specialists; NPS score 72; trained brand ambassadors; zero-script customer service philosophy	Parasuraman, Zeithaml and Berry (1985) SERVQUAL; Grönroos (1984)	High NPS is a strong retention asset; investment in people training must scale with growth or service quality risks dilution
Process	48-hour order-to-dispatch; AI-driven personalisation engine (skin quiz → product recommendation); seamless returns (free, zero-waste)	Bitner (1992) servicescape; Lemon and Verhoef (2016) customer journey	AI personalisation increases conversion rate; however, algorithmic bias in skin-tone recommendations is a reputational risk requiring ongoing audit
Physical Evidence	100% recycled mono-material packaging; refill pouches; branded unboxing tissue (seed paper); B Corp certification badge	Baker et al. (1994) environmental cues; Bitner (1992) tangible cues	Packaging as physical evidence must reinforce premium quality signal while communicating sustainability — dual brief that packaging designers must balance carefully

Note: All figures are fictitious and produced solely for educational purposes.

5. CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR AND THE DECISION JOURNEY

Effective marketing requires deep understanding of how consumers make purchasing decisions. The classical Engel-Kollat-Blackwell (EKB) model (1968) proposed a sequential five-stage decision-making process: need recognition → information search → evaluation of alternatives → purchase → post-purchase evaluation. While subsequent scholars have critiqued this linear model as overly rational (Simon, 1955; Kahneman, 2011), it nonetheless provides a useful heuristic framework for structuring marketing interventions at each decision stage.

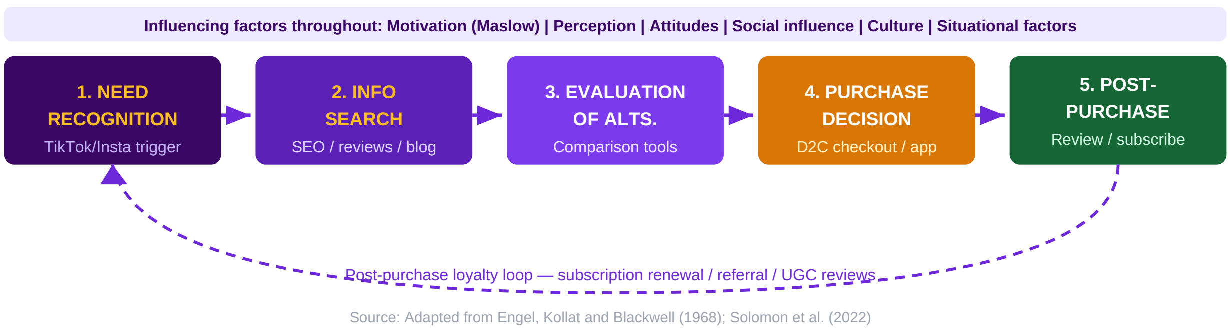


Figure 4: Consumer Decision Journey — Luminary Brands Ltd Marketing Touchpoints. Source: Adapted from Engel, Kollat and Blackwell (1968) and Solomon et al. (2022, p. 330). Touchpoints are fictitious illustrations.

Critically, the digital era has disrupted the linearity of the EKB model. Edelman (2010) introduced the concept of the **Consumer Decision Journey (CDJ)**, demonstrating that digital consumers move non-linearly — discovering brands via social algorithms, conducting simultaneous multi-source information searches, and engaging in an "active evaluation" loop in which the consideration set expands and contracts as new stimuli are encountered. For Luminary Brands, this non-linearity is strategically significant: user-generated content (UGC) and peer reviews on Instagram, Reddit and TikTok function simultaneously as information sources, evaluation criteria and social proof mechanisms — collapsing traditional funnel stages into overlapping, concurrent touchpoints (Fill, 2022).

Consumer behaviour for Luminary's target segment is further shaped by psychological drivers. Maslow's (1954) hierarchy of needs places beauty and personal care at the intersection of esteem needs (self-image, prestige) and self-actualisation (authentic expression, values-alignment), explaining the higher-order motivational pull of ethically positioned premium brands beyond functional product attributes. Howard and Sheth's (1969) theory of buyer behaviour additionally identifies the role of brand trust and perceived risk reduction in habitual re-purchase — directly applicable to Luminary's subscription model, which seeks to convert considered-purchase behaviour into automatic loyalty.

6. BRAND EQUITY — KELLER'S CBBE PYRAMID

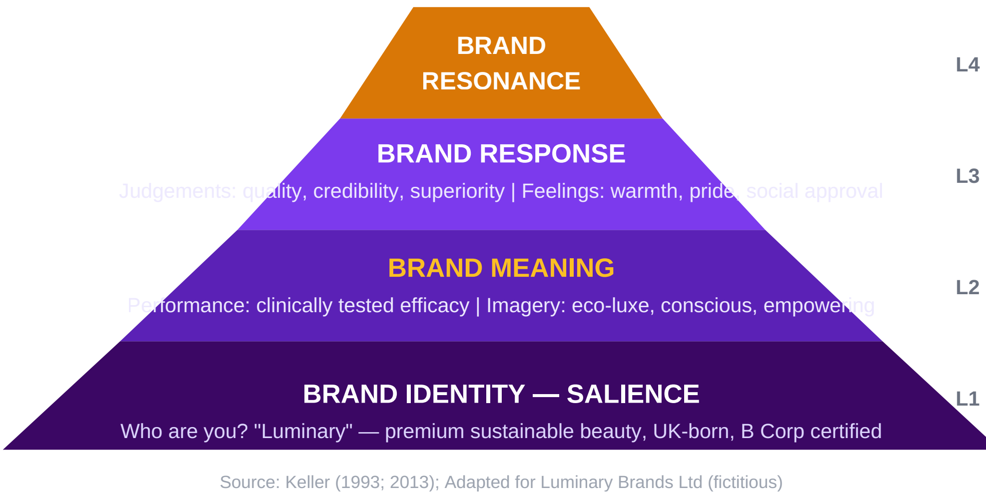


Figure 5: Keller's Customer-Based Brand Equity (CBBE) Pyramid — Luminary Brands Ltd. Source: Adapted from Keller (1993, p. 8; 2013, p. 108). Data fictitious.

Keller's (1993; 2013) CBBE framework argues that brand equity fundamentally resides in the minds of consumers: it is the differential effect that brand knowledge has on consumer response to marketing activity. As Figure 5 illustrates, Luminary must build brand equity progressively across four levels. At the **salience** base, the brand must achieve sufficient category awareness — a critical challenge for a D2C brand without mass-media reach. At the **meaning** level, performance claims must be credible and clinically substantiated to survive scrutiny from the sceptical eco-conscious consumer, who Ottman (2011) identifies as particularly sensitive to "greenwashing" — the deceptive representation of environmental credentials. At the **response** level, positive brand judgements (particularly credibility and superiority) and warm feelings (social approval from peer alignment) drive the evaluation process. Brand **resonance** — the apex — is achieved when consumers demonstrate active loyalty, community engagement (e.g., Luminary's #PurePurpose social community with 142k members) and advocacy. Keller (2016, p. 88) identifies resonance as "the ultimate relationship between the customer and the brand," and it is this level that transforms transactional purchasers into brand evangelists who reduce customer acquisition cost through referral.

7. DIGITAL MARKETING INTEGRATION

The digital transformation of marketing has fundamentally altered the competitive landscape, shifting power from brands to consumers through information transparency, review platforms and social amplification. Chaffey and Ellis-Chadwick (2022, p. 12) define digital marketing as "achieving marketing objectives through applying digital technologies and media." For Luminary Brands, digital channels are not merely additional distribution or communication vectors but the primary engines of brand building, customer acquisition and retention.

SOCIAL MEDIA (PAID + ORGANIC)

Instagram (54k followers) and TikTok (112k) — primary brand discovery channels. TikTok short-form video drives 38% of new customer first visits. Organic reach augmented with geo-targeted paid social (CPM: £4.20).

SEO & CONTENT MARKETING

Blog: 40+ expert articles on clean beauty. Domain Authority: 46. Ranks top-3 for 28 high-intent keywords including "best natural moisturiser UK". Organic search generates 29% of revenue — highest-margin channel.

EMAIL & CRM

82,000 subscriber list. Klaviyo-powered segmented email flows: welcome (open rate 64%), replenishment nudge (42%), lapsed-buyer reactivation (18%). LTV of email-acquired customers 2.4× paid social.

MICRO-INFLUENCER PROGRAMME

68 UK micro-influencers (10–80k followers). Avg. engagement rate 4.1% vs macro-influencer 1.1%. Authenticity credibility crucial for eco-conscious segment — audience trust in micro-influencers 63% vs 48% for macro (Nielsen, 2024).

D2C WEBSITE & APP

Skin-type quiz drives AI personalised recommendations. Conversion rate: 3.8% (industry avg. 2.1%). Mobile-first UX — 74% of traffic from mobile. Subscription management self-service in app reduces churn.

DATA ANALYTICS

GA4 + first-party data CDP. Customer LTV modelling, cohort retention analysis, attribution modelling (data-driven). GDPR-compliant; no third-party cookies post-deprecation — first-party data strategy critical differentiator.

Figure 6: Luminary Brands Ltd — Integrated Digital Marketing Channel Strategy. Source: Adapted from Chaffey and Ellis-Chadwick (2022); Fill (2022). All metrics are fictitious educational illustrations.

A critical consideration is the post-cookie digital landscape. Google's deprecation of third-party cookies, fully effective from 2025, has fundamentally disrupted performance marketing models reliant on cross-site tracking for retargeting and attribution (IAB UK, 2024). Luminary's investment in first-party data capture — through the skin quiz, subscription model and email CRM — positions it advantageously relative to competitors whose digital marketing infrastructure was built on third-party data dependency. This structural shift in the digital ecosystem represents a significant strategic tailwind for D2C brands with strong owned-data capabilities (Chaffey and Ellis-Chadwick, 2022).

8. SUSTAINABLE AND SOCIETAL MARKETING

Kotler (1972, p. 54) argued that the societal marketing concept requires "a balance between company profits, consumer want satisfaction and public interest" — a tension that becomes structurally acute for a premium sustainability brand where brand promise and business model must be mutually reinforcing. Luminary Brands' B Corporation certification (score: 94/200 minimum required 80) provides third-party verification of its societal commitments across five impact areas: workers, community, environment, customers and governance.

Table 2: Luminary Brands Ltd — Sustainable Marketing Commitments vs Greenwashing Risk Assessment

Commitment Area	Current Initiative	Verification Mechanism	Greenwashing Risk
Formulation integrity	1,400+ restricted ingredient free; COSMOS Natural certified	Third-party COSMOS certification; INCI transparency	**LOW — certified, auditable**
Carbon footprint	Carbon Neutral certified (PAS 2060); offsets via Woodland Trust	PAS 2060 independent verification	**MEDIUM — offset dependency risks scrutiny**
Packaging	100% recycled HDPE; refill pouches launched FY2025	Published supplier audit reports	**LOW — measurable, transparent**
Supply chain	UK and EU sourcing; Sedex supplier audits	Sedex SMETA audit; annual modern slavery statement	**MEDIUM — Tier 2 supplier visibility gap**
Community	1% of revenue to Women in STEM bursaries	Annual impact report; charity accounts	**LOW — independently reported**
Communications claims	"Natural", "sustainable", "eco" used across marketing	CMA Green Claims Code compliance audit pending	**HIGH — CMA (2023) enforcement risk; vague terms require substantiation**

Note: All figures are fictitious. CMA = Competition and Markets Authority. Risk assessment for educational illustration.

The most significant regulatory risk identified in Table 2 is the use of broad sustainability claims in marketing communications. The UK Competition and Markets Authority's (CMA, 2023) Green Claims Code requires that all environmental claims must be accurate, clear, not omit material information, make fair and meaningful comparisons, and consider the full life cycle of a product. Vague descriptors such as "eco-friendly," "sustainable" and "natural" — ubiquitous in Luminary's current marketing collateral — risk enforcement action under the Consumer Protection from Unfair Trading Regulations 2008, a risk heightened by the European Commission's planned Empowering Consumers Directive (2023), which bans generic environmental claims without substantiation. Peattie and Crane (2005) critically observe that sustainable marketing has frequently collapsed into a repositioning exercise rather than a genuine business model transformation — a charge Luminary must vigilantly guard against through continuous substantiation and third-party verification of all claims.

9. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This analysis has critically evaluated the core principles of marketing through application to Luminary Brands Ltd. The STP framework provides the strategic foundation: a concentrated targeting strategy directed at eco-conscious premium beauty consumers, differentiated by a dual promise of clinical efficacy and authentic sustainability, is coherent and commercially viable. The 7Ps mix is well-configured for the D2C model, with particular strength in the People, Process and Physical Evidence dimensions. Consumer behaviour analysis highlights the non-linear digital decision journey and the central role of social proof, UGC and community in brand building for the target segment. Keller's CBBE pyramid indicates that Luminary is successfully building brand meaning and early response, but must accelerate resonance-level engagement to create the advocacy-led flywheel that will reduce customer acquisition cost at scale.

STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS — LUMINARY BRANDS LTD

1. **Commission an independent green claims audit:** Engage a CMA-specialist legal firm to audit all marketing communications against the Green Claims Code before the next campaign cycle — prioritising vague

terms ("eco", "sustainable", "natural") that carry highest enforcement risk under the CMA's (2023) revised enforcement framework.

2. **Invest in brand resonance-building initiatives:** Expand the #PurePurpose community with structured engagement mechanics — user-generated formulation feedback panels, monthly sustainability Q&As with founders, and a loyalty-tier ambassador programme — to accelerate Keller's (2013) resonance layer and reduce paid acquisition dependency.
3. **Develop a first-party data strategy roadmap:** Formalise the skin-quiz to CRM data pipeline by implementing a Customer Data Platform (CDP) with explicit consent management, cohort-level LTV modelling and predictive churn scoring — building a durable competitive moat in the post-cookie digital landscape (Chaffey and Ellis-Chadwick, 2022).
4. **Evaluate a differentiated targeting expansion:** Conduct segmentation analysis of the 40–55 female demographic (menopause-wellness adjacency) as a potential second target segment, given its significant unmet premium beauty need and lower direct competition — without diluting the core brand positioning through premature portfolio extension.
5. **Implement a customer journey attribution model:** Transition from last-click to data-driven attribution in Google Analytics 4 to accurately quantify the incremental contribution of content marketing and micro-influencer activity — channels whose value is systematically undervalued under single-touch models and whose investment case requires evidence-based advocacy with the leadership team.

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Table 3: Competitive Positioning Matrix — Luminary Brands Ltd vs Key Competitors (FY2025)

Brand	Price Tier	Sustainability Credibility	Digital-First	Clinical Claims	Luminary Advantage
Luminary Brands	Premium (£24–68)	**★★★★★ B Corp**	**★★★★★ D2C**	**★★★★ COSMOS**	Unique triple-credential positioning
The Ordinary	Mass-Premium (£5–28)	**★★★ — recycled packaging**	★★★★★	★★★★★	Luminary: higher sustainability credibility
REN Clean Skincare	Premium (£18–60)	**★★★★ Zero Waste**	★★★	★★★★	Luminary: stronger D2C / community model
Elemis	Prestige (£30–120)	**★★ — aspirational only**	★★★	★★★★★	Luminary: authentic sustainability advantage
Simple	Mass (£4–14)	★★★	★★★	★★★	Luminary: differentiated on premium + ethics

Note: All ratings and figures are fictitious and for educational purposes only.

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