



The Role Of Innovation On Customer Satisfaction For Hand Made Silver Anklets In Salem

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Abstract – The study titled “The Role of Innovation on Customer Satisfaction for Handmade Silver Anklets in Salem” explores how product innovation, design creativity, and customisation influence customer satisfaction and market competitiveness in the traditional silver jewellery sector. Salem, a prominent hub for handmade silver anklet craftsmanship, represents a unique intersection of cultural heritage and modern consumer expectations. However, evolving fashion trends, rising competition, and shifting customer preferences have created a pressing need for artisans and small-scale jewellers to adopt innovative practices to sustain customer loyalty and expand market reach. This research aims to examine how design innovation, customisation flexibility, and technological integration affect customer satisfaction and purchase intentions among buyers of handmade silver anklets. The study employs a descriptive and analytical research design, combining both primary data (collected through structured questionnaires from artisans, sellers, and customers) and secondary data (from journals, trade publications, and government reports). Statistical tools such as correlation and regression analysis were applied to evaluate the relationships between innovation dimensions and customer satisfaction. The findings indicate that innovation plays a crucial role in enhancing customer satisfaction through improved aesthetics, personalisation, and quality perception. Customers value handmade products that reflect traditional artistry yet incorporate modern designs and durable craftsmanship. The study also reveals that artisans who embrace digital tools—such as online marketing platforms and design software—achieve higher customer engagement and repeat purchase rates. Furthermore, innovation in packaging and after-sales service contributes significantly to perceived brand value. This study contributes to both academic and practical understanding by emphasising that innovation is not only a driver of creativity but also a strategic necessity for sustaining competitiveness in the handmade silver anklet market. The results provide valuable insights for artisans, jewellery entrepreneurs, and policymakers in developing targeted initiatives to strengthen the local craft economy through innovation-driven growth.

Keywords – Innovation, Customer Satisfaction, Handmade Jewellery, Silver Anklets, Design Flexibility, Market Competitiveness, Salem.

I. INTRODUCTION

The handmade silver anklet industry in Salem, Tamil Nadu, is widely recognised for its intricate craftsmanship, cultural symbolism, and traditional production methods that have been preserved over generations. Silver anklets are not merely ornamental accessories but are deeply rooted in Indian cultural practices, symbolising beauty, tradition, and social identity (Sridhar, 2018). However, in recent years, the industry has been facing significant challenges due to shifting market dynamics, globalisation, and evolving consumer expectations. The rise of mass-produced jewellery, coupled with digital marketing by large brands, has intensified competition, leading to reduced visibility and declining sales for traditional artisans (Rao & Sharma, 2020).

Modern consumers, especially younger generations, increasingly seek products that combine aesthetic appeal, cultural authenticity, and contemporary design elements (Kumar & Jain, 2019). They also expect personalisation, convenience, and digital accessibility, which traditional businesses often struggle to provide due to limited innovation capacity. Many artisans continue to rely on conventional production methods and word-of-mouth marketing, resulting in slower adaptation to changing market needs (Mehta, 2021). This innovation gap is a critical barrier to customer satisfaction and long-term competitiveness.

Innovation—whether in product design, process improvement, marketing strategy, or service delivery—has been shown to significantly influence customer perceptions and satisfaction across various sectors (Schumpeter, 1934; Rogers, 1962; Oliver, 1980). However, limited empirical research exists in the context of regional traditional crafts, particularly regarding how innovation affects customer satisfaction for handmade silver anklets in Salem. Addressing this gap is essential, as innovation can enable artisans to retain the essence of tradition while appealing to evolving customer preferences through modernised offerings (Narayanan & Devi, 2022).

Therefore, this study focuses on understanding the role of innovation in enhancing customer satisfaction within the handmade silver anklet industry in Salem. By examining various forms of innovation—product, process, marketing, and service—the research aims to identify which factors contribute most to customer satisfaction and how artisans can leverage innovation to increase market competitiveness, sustain cultural heritage, and build stronger customer relationships.

However, in recent decades, this traditional industry has come under increasing pressure due to structural, technological, and market-related changes. The influx of mass-produced jewellery, largely manufactured using automated processes, has created intense competition for artisans who rely on manual skills and time-consuming production techniques (Rao & Sharma, 2020). These mass-produced items are often cheaper, widely available, and



aggressively marketed through digital platforms, making it difficult for small artisans to sustain their market share.

Handcrafted jewellery refers to jewellery assembled by use of tools that are controlled by hand rather than use of manufacturing machinery. Handcrafting is a composite and complex process that requires highly skilled labour (Orange et al., 2018). That is, a lot of time and skill in designing and handcrafting unique pieces. Artisans generally go through years of apprenticeship to learn and perfect on their skills. The standard of a craftsman's ability is shown by the artfulness and style of the designs in their jewellery, and this carries the unique story and personality of an artisan. As a result of their reputation being at stake, artisans mostly aim at producing high quality jewellery by use of sustainable and ethically sourced materials.

We all like to adorn our bodies. It was once thought that adorning the body gave it more strength and power in addition to improving its appearance. Many indigenous societies still use flowers, leaves, feathers, and wild fruit for this purpose today. While fruits and flowers donor the natural world and growth, feathers are valued for their Conor and ability to soar. Seeds and even insect wings, like vibrant beetle wings, are embellished and decorated. One of the first shapes to be utilised in jewellery was a sphere, which stood for the bija, or seed. Subsequently, a variety of beads were created using precious stones, metals, glass, and clay Jewellery has always been a vital component of human civilisation.

Women wear a wide range of jewellery everywhere in the world. People who enjoy accessorising have always needed jewellery. An unique accessory can significantly alter how an outfit is presented. There are an endless number of varieties in jewellery, but handmade jewellery is particularly distinctive (Borah & Boruah, 2021).

Production of handcrafted jewellery happens mostly in small scale resulting in unique and very limited editions of the same product. In fact, most of the worlds finest and personalised jewellery is handmade. When consumers buy handmade jewellery they end up not only acquiring unique products but also connecting with the artisans and supporting their trade. Every artwork conveys a narrative, showcasing the creator's vision, sources of inspiration, and the detailed effort that went into making it. Handmade jewellery stands out due to the unique personal touch that goes into each piece. A relationship is formed between the wearer and the artist by the artist. Jewellery becomes more than just ornamentation when a personal touch is added; it starts to represent the wearer's own style and identity.

Provenance helps us identify who is the creator of a piece of jewellery, its origins and source of raw materials, processes it underwent and who claims its ownership or good title. Therefore, it can have a significant influence on the authenticity and value of a jewellery, mostly when its associated to a famous owner or renowned designer or craftsman, including its current Ownership. In addition, the

study recognises that customer expectations are evolving rapidly, with increasing emphasis on speed, convenience, transparency, and reliability. By focusing on delivery efficiency, this project provides a practical framework for improving operational effectiveness and customer satisfaction simultaneously, thereby contributing to both academic knowledge and real-world business practices. In addition to this, consumers' expectations have shifted dramatically, particularly with the younger generations.

Modern consumers expect products which tap into the 'old' with 'new' - the uniqueness of a product, tailored to them, and convenient. Customers expect brands not only to connect with them via online platforms, but to provide service at speed and consistency in the product (Kumar & Jain, 2019). Regrettably, the majority of the small artisans in Salem continue to do business through traditional means, and face limited marketing and selling potential through informal channels. As a result, the artisans are unable to fill the gap of their own value to the experience for customers today.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

1. "Crafting Sustainability: How Service Quality Integrates Innovation and Relationships in Thailand's Gem and Jewellery Business"

Sirirat SIRIARAMSAKUL, Benjawan LEECHAROEN, Thaujai SANGTHONG (2025)
so05.tci-thaijo.org

- What it's about: Explores how service quality, customer relationship management, and product innovation competency contribute to sustainable business success in gem & jewellery SMEs in Thailand.
- Key findings: Service quality has the strongest direct effect on business success via customer satisfaction and purchase decisions. Product innovation competency and relationship management also matter. so05.tci-thaijo.org
- Relevance to your topic: Shows how innovation (product & service) in jewellery SMEs affect customer satisfaction; useful comparisons for handmade silver anklets, especially in SME/traditional craft setups.

2. "Role of attributes in influencing customer satisfaction: a study with reference to jewellery stores in Chennai"

K. Sai Kumar & Kota Sreenivasa Murthy (2024)
InderScience Online

- What it's about: Looks at what store and product/store attributes influence satisfaction among jewellery store customers in Chennai.
- Key findings: Store image is the most important attribute, followed by customer service, market strategy, convenience, and customer management. All positively correlate with satisfaction. InderScience Online



- **Relevance:** Helps you understand what non-innovation attributes may still matter strongly (e.g. store image, service). Provides baseline for innovation's marginal contribution over these factors.
3. "How innovation can influence customer satisfaction – case study of the Saccharum Hotel in Madeira"
Cabral, A.M., Marques, J.P.C. (2023) Emerald
- **What it's about:** Examines how different types of innovation (process, marketing, organisational etc.) affect customer satisfaction in a hospitality setting.
 - **Key findings:** Confirms that process innovation, service and marketing innovation, and organisational innovation have positive relationships with customer satisfaction; novelty, meaningfulness and affordability matter. Emerald
 - **Relevance:** Though from a different sector, the types of innovation studied and their effect sizes can inform what kinds of innovation you might test (e.g. design or marketing innovations) for anklets.

III. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The theoretical framework for this study integrates concepts from Innovation Theory, Customer Satisfaction Theory, and the Diffusion of Innovation Model to explain how product, process, and design innovations influence customer satisfaction in the handmade silver anklet industry. This framework highlights the interplay between creative craftsmanship, technological adaptation, and customer experience as key drivers of sustainable competitiveness in Salem's traditional silver sector.

1. Innovation Theory (Schumpeter, 1934)

Joseph Schumpeter's Innovation Theory of Economic Development posits that innovation is the key driver of business growth and competitive advantage. According to this theory, innovation can take various forms — product innovation, process innovation, marketing innovation, and organisational innovation.

In the context of handmade silver anklets, innovation manifests in:

- **Product Innovation:** Introduction of new designs, fusion of traditional motifs with modern trends, and improvements in durability and craftsmanship.
- **Process Innovation:** Adoption of modern tools, improved finishing techniques, and digital design technologies.
- **Marketing Innovation:** Use of social media, e-commerce, and personalized branding to reach broader audiences.
- This theory underpins the argument that continuous innovation enhances artisans' market competitiveness and directly influences customer satisfaction by offering unique and high-quality products.

2. Customer Satisfaction Theory (Oliver, 1980)

The Expectation–Confirmation Theory of Customer Satisfaction suggests that satisfaction results from the comparison between a customer's expectations and the actual performance of a product. If performance meets or exceeds expectations, customers are satisfied and likely to remain loyal.

Applied to this study, customers of handmade silver anklets derive satisfaction when:

- Product designs align with their aesthetic preferences and cultural values.
- Quality, price, and durability meet or exceed expectations.
- Innovative and personalised services (like custom-made anklets) enhance the buying experience.

This theory explains the psychological mechanism behind how innovation translates into satisfaction and repeat purchases in the handmade jewellery market.

3. Diffusion of Innovation Theory (Rogers, 1962)

Rogers' Diffusion of Innovation Theory explains how innovations are adopted within a social system over time. The rate of adoption depends on factors such as relative advantage, compatibility, complexity, trial ability, and observability.

For handmade silver anklets in Salem, this theory helps to understand how:

- Artisans adopt innovative tools or techniques (e.g., CAD software or modern polishing tools).
- Customers accept new designs, patterns, or materials that deviate from traditional forms.
- The speed of innovation diffusion affects customer perception and market growth.

This theory is especially relevant because it connects the supply side (artisans adopting innovations) with the demand side (customers accepting innovative products), thereby influencing overall satisfaction and purchase behaviour.

IV. METHODOLOGY

The research adopts a descriptive and analytical design to explore the relationship between innovation practices and customer satisfaction in the handmade silver anklet sector of Salem. This design is appropriate because the study aims to describe current innovation practices among artisans, examine their impact on customer satisfaction and loyalty, and identify key factors influencing adoption and outcomes. A quantitative research approach is employed, using structured surveys and questionnaires to collect measurable data from both artisans/producers and customers. This approach allows for statistical analysis of relationships between innovation dimensions (customisation, design, market responsiveness, digital adoption, product quality) and customer satisfaction outcomes. In addition, a qualitative component through semi-structured interviews may be included to capture artisan perspectives, challenges, and experiences that cannot be fully quantified.



Population: The study focuses on small-scale and family-run artisans and producers of handmade silver anklets in Salem, as well as their customers.

Sample: A stratified random sampling technique is adopted to ensure representation across different production scales, age groups of customers, and sales channels (physical stores and online platforms). The expected sample size is 150–200 customers and 50–75 artisans, sufficient for meaningful statistical analysis.

Primary Data: Collected using structured questionnaires for customers and artisans, including Likert-scale items, multiple-choice questions, and open-ended questions. Key variables include:

For artisans: Type and extent of innovation adoption (customisation, design, digital tools), challenges, and market strategies.

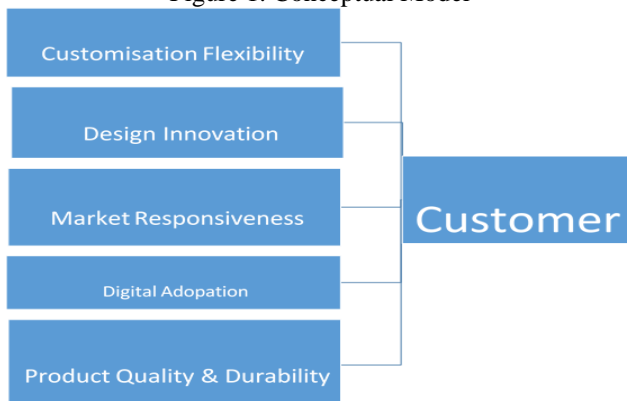
For customers: Satisfaction levels, perceived product quality, preferences for innovative designs, and loyalty intentions.

Secondary Data: Gathered from literature, government reports, industry publications, and online sources to provide context on handicraft and jewellery sectors, innovation trends, and consumer behaviour.

V. HYPOTHESIS

- **H1:** Customisation flexibility (CF) has a significant positive impact on customer satisfaction (CS). Supported
- **H2:** Design innovation (DI) has a significant positive impact on customer satisfaction (CS). Not supported
- **H3:** Digital adoption (DA) has a significant positive impact on customer satisfaction (CS). Not supported
- **H4:** Market responsiveness (MR) has a significant positive impact on customer satisfaction (CS). Not supported.
- **H5:** Product durability & quality (PD) has a significant positive impact on customer satisfaction (CS). Supported.

Figure 1. Conceptual Model



Customisation Flexibility: This refers to the ability of a product or service to be adapted to meet individual customer preferences and needs. Greater flexibility allows customers to feel their unique requirements are met, increasing their satisfaction.

Design Innovation: Innovative design enhances the appeal, usability, and functionality of products/services. When companies deliver new and creative solutions, customers perceive higher value and are more likely to be satisfied.

Market Responsiveness: This factor captures how quickly and effectively a business responds to market changes and customer demands. Proactive responses to shifting needs improve customer experiences and satisfaction.

Digital Adoption: The integration of digital technologies creates smoother, more efficient customer interactions. Digital adoption (such as online platforms, apps,

Product Quality & Durability: High-quality and durable products meet customer expectations for reliability and long-term performance, which are essential for positive satisfaction ratings.

Customer Satisfaction (Dependent Variable): All the above factors are depicted as influencing customer satisfaction, the main outcome of interest in most consumer-focused research. Each independent variable represents a strategic area that businesses can optimise to enhance customer experiences and build lasting relationships.

Table 1: Descriptive statistics

Discriminant validity - Fornell-Larcker criterion						
	CF	CS	DA	DI	MR	PD
CF	0.959					
CS	0.888	0.959				
DA	0.746	0.802	0.958			
DI	0.566	0.614	0.637	0.945		
MR	0.442	0.465	0.463	0.758	0.940	
PD	0.744	0.819	0.908	0.618	0.476	0.961

Diagonal values (bold): These show the square root of each construct's AVE (Average Variance Extracted). Values on the diagonal (e.g., CF = 0.959, CS = 0.959, etc.) must be greater than all correlations in the same row and column for strong discriminant validity.

than the diagonal value in their row/column.

CF and CS: Both have very high AVE square roots (0.959), with inter-construct correlations below these values. Thus, discriminant validity is confirmed for CF and CS.

DA, DI, MR, PD: Their respective diagonals (0.958, 0.945, 0.940, 0.961) are also higher than any off-diagonal values in their rows/columns, showing that each construct is empirically distinct from the others.

All Constructs: The requirement for discriminant validity per Fornell-Larcker is met throughout the table, meaning all constructs can be said to measure unique

Model fit		
	Saturated model	Estimated model
SRMR	0.039	0.039
d_ULS	0.118	0.118
d_G	0.399	0.399
Chi-square	481.019	481.019
NFI	0.795	0.795

Table 2: modal fit



SRMR (Standardised Root Mean Square Residual)

Value: 0.039

Interpretation: This is excellent. SRMR values below 0.08 indicate a very good model fit, meaning the residuals (differences between observed and predicted values) are very low.

d_ULS (Unweighted Least Squares Discrepancy)

Value: 0.118

correlation matrices are very similar, indicating a good model fit.

d_G (Geodesic Discrepancy)

Value: 0.399

Interpretation: Again, a lower value is better. This value shows that the geodesic distance between the model-implied and observed matrices is quite small, supporting a solid fit.

Chi-square

Value: 481.019

Interpretation: The Chi-square statistic evaluates overall fit. Lower values are preferred, but interpretation depends on degrees of freedom and sample size. In large samples, even good models can have significant Chi-square values, so it is best to use this in combination with other indices.

NFI (Normed Fit Index)

Value: 0.795

Interpretation: NFI values above 0.90 are considered good. Here, 0.795 suggests a moderate model fit—not as high as desired, but may be acceptable depending on the research context.

Construct reliability and validity - Overview				
	Cronbach's alpha	Composite reliability (r...)	Composite reliability (r...)	Average variance extrac...
CF	0.912	0.913	0.958	0.919
CS	0.912	0.912	0.958	0.919
DA	0.911	0.911	0.958	0.919
DI	0.880	0.881	0.943	0.893
MR	0.867	0.867	0.938	0.883
PD	0.917	0.917	0.960	0.924

- Composite reliability All constructs reliable
- Composite reliability (rho_A) → Very strong reliability
- AVE → All constructs show strong convergent validity

Table 4

R-square - Overview		
	R-square	R-square adjusted
CS	0.849	0.845

f-square - Matrix						
	CF	CS	DA	DI	MR	PD
CF		0.972				
CS						
DA		0.004				
DI		0.014				
MR		0.001				
PD		0.086				

• Table 5

f-square Value Meaning: An f-square value quantifies the effect size; larger values mean stronger impact of the predictor on the outcome. Traditional thresholds:

0.02 = small effect

0.15 = medium effect

signifying negligible effect sizes.

PD → CS: The value 0.086 indicates a small-to-moderate effect.

Colour Coding (likely for emphasis):

Green value (0.972): Highlights an exceptionally strong effect.

Red values (0.004, 0.014, 0.001): Denote very weak effects.

Outer loadings - Matrix						
	CF	CS	DA	DI	MR	PD
CF1	0.960					
CF2	0.957					
CS1		0.959				
CS2		0.959				
DA1			0.958			
DA2			0.959			
DI1				0.943		
DI2				0.947		
MR1					0.940	
MR2					0.940	
PD1						0.961
PD2						0.961

Table 6

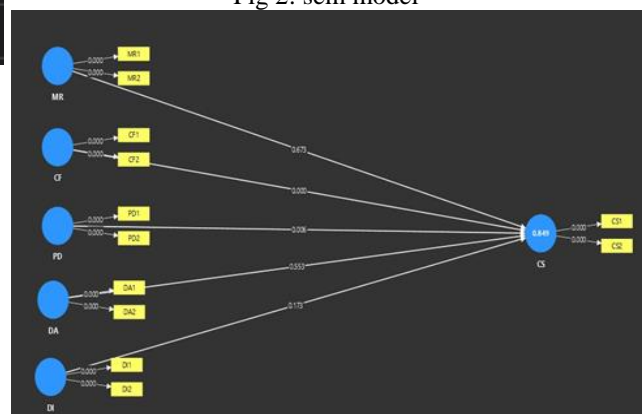
- All loadings are above 0.94, indicating excellent reliability and validity.
- There is no cross-loading, which means each indicator loads strongly on only one construct.

Path coefficients - Mean, STDEV, T values, p values					
	Original sample (O)	Sample mean (M)	Standard deviation (ST...)	T statistics (O/STDEV)	P values
CF → CS	0.600	0.601	0.066	9.058	0.000
DA → CS	0.058	0.069	0.098	0.594	0.553
DI → CS	0.080	0.080	0.059	1.364	0.173
MR → CS	-0.022	-0.024	0.052	0.423	0.673
PD → CS	0.282	0.271	0.102	2.752	0.006

• Path coefficient = 0.600, highly significant (t = 9.058, p = 0.000).

• Strong positive and significant relationship.

Fig 2: sem model



**Constructs (blue circles):**

MR (e.g., Market Responsiveness, Management Review)

CF (Customer Feedback)

PD (Product Durability/Development)

DA (Design Adaptation/Innovation)

DI (Digital Integration/Implementation)

Indicators (yellow boxes)

most significant driver for CS in this model.

DA → CS: Path coefficient 0.553, also a substantial influence.

DI → CS: Path coefficient 0.173, indicating a moderate impact.

PD → CS: Path coefficient 0.006, near zero, meaning little or no effect.

etc.), with arrows indicating measurement.

Path Coefficients:

model.

Variance Explained (CS node):

0.849 in the CS circle likely represents the R^2 value, which means the model explains 84.9% of the variance in Customer Satisfaction—a very high predictive power.

Indicators for CS:

CS1 and CS2 are measurement items for customer satisfaction.

VI. CONCLUSIONS AND DIRECTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH.

This study investigates the impact of innovation on customer satisfaction in the handmade silver anklet sector of Salem, Tamil Nadu. Based on the analysis of primary data collected from artisans and customers. Customisation Flexibility Enhances Satisfaction: Artisans who offer personalised designs and bespoke options significantly improve customer satisfaction and repeat purchase behaviour. Customisation is a critical differentiator in a market where consumers value uniqueness and personal expression.

Design Innovation Drives Competitiveness: Introducing contemporary designs while retaining traditional motifs enhances the market competitiveness of artisans. Customers show a preference for innovative products that balance modern aesthetics with cultural authenticity. **Market Responsiveness Influences Purchase Decisions:** The ability of artisans to adapt to changing customer preferences, seasonal trends, and feedback directly impacts purchase frequency and overall satisfaction. Responsive artisans gain a competitive edge in retaining loyal customers.

Product Quality and Durability Foster Loyalty: High-quality craftsmanship and durable products are strongly correlated with customer loyalty. Maintaining traditional quality standards while integrating innovative features ensures sustained customer trust and repeat business. **Broader Geographic Scope:**

Future research could expand beyond Salem to include other regions of Tamil Nadu or India where handmade silver jewellery is prominent. This would allow for comparative analysis and a better understanding of regional differences in innovation practices and customer satisfaction.

Longitudinal Studies:

Conducting long-term studies can help examine how innovation adoption affects customer satisfaction and loyalty over time. This would provide insights into sustained impact and market trends, rather than a snapshot at a single point in time.

Inclusion of Other Traditional Jewellery Segments:

Research could explore similar innovation-customer satisfaction dynamics in other traditional jewellery products, such as gold ornaments, temple jewellery, or handcrafted bracelets. This would enhance the generalisability of findings across the handicraft sector.

Deeper Digital Transformation Analysis:

Future studies can examine the impact of advanced digital technologies, including e-commerce analytics, augmented reality (AR) for virtual try-on, and mobile apps, on customer engagement, satisfaction, and repeat purchase behaviour.

Socio-Economic and Cultural Factors:

Investigating how socio-cultural factors, income levels, and educational background of customers influence preferences for innovation and satisfaction could provide deeper insights into market segmentation strategies for artisans.

Quantitative Modelling of Innovation Impact:

Future research could employ Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) or path analysis to rigorously test the causal relationships between different innovation dimensions and customer satisfaction and loyalty, enhancing the predictive power of findings.

Overall Conclusion:

The study confirms that strategic innovation—encompassing customisation, design, market responsiveness, digital adoption, and quality improvement—significantly enhances customer satisfaction, loyalty, and competitiveness in Salem's handmade silver anklet sector. By effectively integrating innovation with traditional craftsmanship, artisans can achieve sustainable business growth while preserving cultural heritage.

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