

MOBILE

Michael Kors, Duracell create power options for iPhones

November 4, 2014



Michael Kors phone cases

By NANCY BUCKLEY

U.S. fashion label Michael Kors is teaming with Duracell to create a powermat and PowerCase for iPhone users to charge remotely.

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Luxury Daily

The new collection is inspired by the Michael Kors holiday collection and will launch during the season. This collaboration will likely spark the interest of consumers who are interested in always having battery power in their phone, but do not want to settle for any case.

“Technology has become a cornerstone of today’s society—but that doesn’t mean it can’t also be fashionable,” said Lisa Pomerantz, SVP global communications and marketing at [Michael Kors](#), New York.

“This collection is about more than just staying plugged in; these pieces are meant to be a smart extension of your personal style,” she said.

Fashion forward phone

A powermat is a wireless charging system created by Procter & Gamble and Duracell. The PowerCase has a built in, rechargeable battery that provides instant back-up power for the

iPhone. Each PowerCase has a wireless receiver that is designed to work with powermat; charges with this technology are designed to be twice as fast as USB chargers.



Powermats

The powermats and PowerCases will launch this season for the iPhone 5 and 5s; the iPhone 6 options will be released next year.

Each PowerCase's battery can provide the phone with a full charge and also shields the phone from the daily wears such as scratches.

In a branded statement, Ron Rabinowitz, CEO for Duracell powermat, said, "Michael Kors designs for a generation of men and women who are more connected than any other in history. That nonstop connectedness means portable power is a constant need. Together we are able to offer the most advanced portable power solutions in an iconic, beautiful way."



Duracell powermat

The Michael Kors collection will be enabled by the Duracell charging ecosystem that is being introduced into select Starbucks.

Cases are available in several colors including Michael Kors monogram. The collection will be released in November, and each set will include a powermat and a PowerCase, and will be priced at \$140.

"The Duracell/Michael Kors collaboration is a masterstroke of early holiday marketing—right at the white hot intersection of fashion, luxury and technology," said Dr. Nita Rollins, director of cultural insights at [Resource/Ammirati](#), Columbus, Ohio.

"As holiday apparel and accessories sales cede ever more ground to sales of the latest gadget, fashion labels have learned they must go where the action is—think Diane Von Fursternberg and Google Glass," she said. "The action for Michael Kors, the brand most associated with jet set travel, is with a device that eliminates today's biggest travel hassle: keeping our devices powered up.

"It's a very savvy lifestyle extension move for the brand, one that demonstrates that practical solutions are today's ultimate luxury if designed for tactile pleasure, first-class convenience, and personal empowerment. The powermat collection extends Kors's platform for affordable luxury *and* his focus on handbags and their stylish accouterments.

"The collaboration also brings to the Michael Kors brand an installed base of iPhone users who might not be inclined to shop Michael Kors's non-tech products. And it sends the right message to China and other overseas markets where luxury sales have slowed but are still crucial for luxury brands' growth, and technology has enormous allure."

Beyond smartphone

Technological advances have led smartphones to be an everyday accessory, an aspect many brands have realized and started creating accessories or even their own phones.

For instance, German fashion label Porsche Design teamed with BlackBerry for a third time to create a new Porsche Design smartphone.

The collaboration created a phone that combines Porsche Design's style with BlackBerry's technology to develop a new version of the BlackBerry 10. Aligning with a brand that holds similar values in both technology and design likely generated buzz around the new product ([see story](#)).

Also, London department store Harrods partnered with Geneva-based jeweler Savelli-Genève to release a luxury smartphone designed with affluent women in mind.

Savelli-Genève married technology with design through a series of handmade Google Android smartphones. Crafted similar to a high-end jewelry collection, the Savelli-Genève smartphone collection was sold in Harrods' Fine Jewellery Room ([see story](#)).

Creating a phone or accessories with technological advancements will likely spark

interest among consumers who may not regularly purchase such items. The daily dependency upon smartphones create an unusual market for brands to reach aspirational consumers and current consumers simultaneously.

“Our customers are as smart as they are fashionable, and they’re tapped into what’s new,” Ms. Pomerantz said.

“This collection of tech accessories lets them stay at the forefront of technology without ever having to sacrifice their style,” she said. “And it’s easy—no matter where they are, or what they’re doing.”

Final Take

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