

MULTICHANNEL

Jacob & Co. taps Donnie Yen as brand ambassador

January 25, 2011



By ELIZABETH ZELESNY



Fine jewelry designer and watchmaker for the stars Jacob & Co.

hopes to bolster its creative style and spirit with consumers by naming Donnie Yen as the line's new brand ambassador.

Mr. Yen has starred in and directed several martial arts films. His popularity with the masses makes him an ideal brand ambassador to represent the luxury brand's success in China.

[Sign up now](#)

Luxury Daily

"Brands want to start with someone who is famous," said Al Reis, cofounder of **Reis & Reis**, a Roswell, CA-based marketing strategy consultancy. "Brands want someone who has some relationship to the product itself."

“A lot of times you have to compromise on something, particularly in this case, he’s certainly not worldwide famous, but he is appropriate for this particular brand,” he said.

Jacob & Co. unveiled Donnie Yen as brand ambassador with an event hosted in Hong Kong Dec. 16.

The luxury brand presented Mr. Yen with a newly designed, limited-edition Five Time Zone collection timepiece. Jacob & Co. customized the dial with the Chinese character Tan.

Brand ambassador credentials

The choice of selecting luxury brand ambassadors is a critical one, because these faces represent the brand.

In order to be a good ambassador, the celebrity endorsing the brand should know the product and the industry.

But most importantly, a brand ambassador should have enough influence to introduce the products to consumers so they can discover the brand.

Mr. Reis said brands are running the risk of their reputations if they choose the wrong brand ambassador.

“No brand ambassador is going to be perfect because there are just too many things to think about,” Mr. Reis said. “A lot of famous people get in trouble. So that is always a gamble.”

Affluent consumers, of course, have always acted as brand ambassadors by sharing recommendations with friends and family. This trend is skyrocketing thanks to the popularity of social media outlets.

These interactions between consumers have a huge impact on a luxury brand’s purchasing success, but brand ambassadors bring something unique to the table.

Familiar faces bring core traits and reputation, aspiration, credibility and trust. It is very important for luxury brands to leverage that association effectively.

Some brand ambassadors confuse people and the connection between the consumer and brand is lost, which is why it is very important for luxury brands to have a solid marketing strategy.

Appeal to the collectors

According to Mr. Reis, people tend to collect watches, so most watch purchases are made by consumers who already own other watches.

“So, an expensive watch is going to appeal to primarily the collector type who wants something,” said Mr. Reis. “By appealing to the watch-collector type, those are also people that are likely to influence their friends and neighbors.

“If you appeal to the people that tend to collect, these are exactly the kinds of people that

will recommend and mention the products,” he said.

This particular pairing of a Chinese martial artist and a timepiece brand is a unique collaboration, to say the least.

But, Mr. Reis says luxury brands need to attract consumer’s attention, and Jacob & Co. announcing Mr. Yen as brand ambassador does the trick.

“Brands might have the perfect message, but if no one is attracted, it disappears,” Mr. Reis said. “The fact that he is a martial arts expert, that is unusual and different.

“In turn, you need to have a message that sells, but you also need to attract people to the message itself,” he said.

Final take

Jacob & Co unique brand ambassador

© Napean LLC. All rights reserved.

Luxury Daily is published each business day. Thank you for reading us. Your **feedback** is welcome.