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Balmain announces H&M collaboration with star-studded flair

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Balmain H&M campaign featuring Kendall Jenner and Jourdan Dunn

By KAYSORIN

French fashion house Balmain used its army of celebrity friends to announce the brand's latest collaboration with fast-fashion company H&M, which will be released in November.

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Luxury Daily

Creative director Olivier Rousteing attended the Billboard Music Awards May 17 with models Kendall Jenner and Jourdan Dunn, wearing pieces from the new collection on the red carpet and posting numerous photos on social media. The collaboration is the latest in a series of attempts to emphasize Balmain's popularity with a younger, tech-savvy generation.

"A brand is a really sensitive thing," said [Brian Honigman](#), New York-based content marketing consultant and social media marketer. "It's a really sensitive reputation to manage.

"Navigating who to collaborate with or who not to collaborate with can raise or lower the public's impression of a brand. My opinion is this is very well aligned.

"Balmain is using the right fast fashion retailer, and my suspicion is it will only help these brands. It will help Balmain get to a larger mainstream audience and help H&M diversify

and show that they have a broader range of product offerings."

Mr. Honigman is not affiliated with Balmain, but agreed to comment as an industry expert.

Balmain was unable to respond by press deadline.

Armed and dangerous

Balmain posted an official announcement on its Instagram page featuring an image of Mr. Rouseing, Ms. Jenner and Ms. Dunn posing together on the red carpet. After the news broke, Mr. Rouseign continued to post images on his personal Instagram account, while the brand went on to share the information on Twitter and Facebook.



Image from Balmain's Instagram account

Balmain is well known for its high-profile celebrity clientele that Mr. Rouseign has named his "Balmain Army." Ms. Jenner and Ms. Dunn both have millions of followers on social media, and the announcement quickly went viral among fans and consumers.

Furthermore, the brand created a hashtag to promote the collaboration, asking users to tweet about #HMBalmaination. Mr. Rouseign expressed his opinion that the hashtag is a key element of the project, bringing people together in a "movement of togetherness."



Kendall and Kylie Jenner posed for Balmain's Instagram

At 29-years-old Mr. Rousteign has used social media to promote the Balmain brand and make it popular with a younger generation, many of whom are aspirational consumers. The new collaboration will make Mr. Rousteign's designs more accessible, while simultaneously promoting the brand and increasing publicity.

The celebrity-studded announcement at the Billboard Music Awards further emphasized Balmain's role as the luxury brand of choice for Hollywood's most successful models and performers. The publicity generated by the announcement and Mr. Rousteign's social media posts will likely ensure that the collection sells out quickly when it is released in November.



Ms. Jenner posted an image of Mr. Rousteign taking a selfie

Popularity contest

Balmain has used Mr. Rousteign's celebrity following and social media savvy to connect with consumers in new ways. The French fashion house recently capitalized on its young creative director with an online poll asking fans to vote on who they think Mr. Rousteing might be talking to the Metropolitan Museum of Art's Gala.

Top guesses ranged from Ms. Jenner to Kanye West, but the person was not revealed until Mr. Rousteing and his date arrive at the gala. Generating attention through its young creative director helped raise awareness of the gala, Balmain and Mr. Rousteing though younger fans on social media ([see story](#)).

Balmain's many brand ambassadors are a key element in its current popularity, as Ms. Jenner and Ms. Dunn showed at the recent announcement. The French fashion house regularly uses the most popular models and performers in its campaigns, ensuring that it receives plenty of attention.

For example, Balmain released images of its spring 2014 print ad campaign featuring pop star Rihanna to generate buzz for the label among both brand enthusiasts and fans of the singer.

Balmain posted five campaign shots across its Facebook, Instagram and Twitter accounts, and Rihanna, full name Robyn Rihanna Fenty, did the same, leveraging her own network of 30 million followers. By teaming up with a celebrity who has a massive fan base, Balmain was able to introduce itself to new potential consumers ([see story](#)).

Balmain's latest announcement was a successful way for the brand to stay relevant with

young consumers.

"There are absolutely advantages to announcing this collaboration with young celebrities, especially at an event," Mr. Honigman said. "What a wonderful platform to get it out there that this collaboration is happening.

"Working with celebrities, especially young ones with large followings, is a great way to get out information about what is happening with a brand."

Final Take

Kay Sorin, editorial assistant on Luxury Daily, New York

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