

ADVERTISING

Luxury brands tap celebrity children as new brand representatives

June 1, 2015



Outfit from Lanvin's Petite collection for children

By KAYSORIN

A cultural obsession with celebrities has led many luxury fashion and accessories houses to collaborate with brand ambassadors who can use their large followings of fans to bring attention to the brand name and its latest products.

Sign up now

Luxury Daily

Recently, however, some brands have begun reaching out to younger brand ambassadors, some even as young as infants, often the children of celebrities who already have large fan bases of their own, regardless of their ability to speak in full sentences or stand on their own. As brands begin to market more heavily to children, will these fashionista celebrity toddlers truly have an effect on brand perception and publicity?

"It is always a benefit for a luxury designer brand to leap off the catwalk and appear on fashion influencers, including the tiny ones," said Karen Creamer, president of [K2 Brand Consulting](#), Overland Park, KS. "But when it comes to high-end designer fashion for children, it is more about showcasing a brand lifestyle than promoting the sale of miniature designer apparel.

"The trend of donning designer clothing on children begins with the parents' connection

with the brand, and often the personal relationship they have with the designer.

"So whether the exposure is planned or coincidental, this level of brand advocacy can certainly drive awareness of the brand and influence a broader audience with aspirations of the celebrity lifestyle."

The children's hour

Currently many of the most popular luxury apparel brands have children's lines that they have introduced in the past five or 10 years. New York-based department store Bergdorf Goodman now has a children's department devoted to these luxury brands.



Brooklyn Beckham has become a brand representative for Burberry

Italian fashion label Gucci unveiled its children's collection in 2010, a line that includes accessories such as sippy cups and sunglasses along with a pink python jacket for \$3,800 dollars. Gucci's line was so successful that the brand opened a children's location next to its flagship store on Fifth Avenue in New York.

Other luxury apparel brands that have introduced children's lines are Oscar de la Renta, Dolce & Gabbana, Fendi and Chloé. Lanvin's Petite collection launched at pop up stores in Paris, Monaco and New York, selling items such as a pink taffeta trench coat for \$1570 dollars and a red sundress for \$1,105 dollars.



Lanvin's Petite collection is popular despite its high prices

Recently, celebrities with young children have been looking to dress them in more expensive clothing that reflects the brands that the celebrities themselves wear. Actress Katie Holmes's daughter Suri Cruise is well known for her style and is often featured in magazines.

Reality star Kim Kardashian's daughter North West was seen attending her ballet class in a custom Balmain tutu and blazer. With Kim working regularly as a brand ambassador for the French fashion house, it is logical that she would turn to designer Olivier Rousteing to design baby clothes for her daughter.



Mr. Rousteing shared a picture of North West wearing Balmain to ballet class

Oftentimes, designers create custom looks for celebrity toddlers, leading them to realize the untapped potential of this market. For example, in 2008 Roger Vivier made a pair of custom shoes for a two-year-old Suri Cruise and was subsequently inspired to launch his own line of children's shoes that cost \$300 dollars and feature the brand's signature buckle.

Some brands have even begun to create more obscure products for their younger consumers. For example, Italian jeweler Bulgari, British fashion house Burberry and Dolce & Gabbana have all launched children's perfume.



Dolce & Gabbana advertises its perfume for children

Popular demand

Toddlers are not the only unusual brand representatives that some luxury houses are exploring. Millennials are well known for their love of looking at pictures of cats on the Internet, but some luxury brands are beginning to take advantage of this and use the furry friends to market products.

The best example of this is Choupette, Karl Lagerfeld's white Birman cat, who became an Internet sensation after the designer adopted her from a friend in 2011, and who is now a muse for the designer's own line. Other brands including menswear retailer Mr Porter, linen brands Frette and Sferra and fashion brand Marchesa have gotten on board recently, including animals in campaigns or posting pictures for National Puppy Day March 23 ([see story](#)).

Creating a captivating advertising campaign often requires brands to look outside of conventional fashion models for their ambassadors or representatives. For example, fashion brands have increasingly been picking famous faces over professional models for their advertising campaigns, favoring the well known over the generally unfamiliar.

Most recently, Marc Jacobs unveiled singer Cher as the face of its fall/winter 2015 campaign and Dior selected pop star Rihanna for its Secret Garden effort. While these celebrities may bring more attention to the ads due to their notoriety, what impact do these choices actually have on the brands ([see story](#))?

"Seeing a young child in expensive designer duds can have an "eye-roll" effect on many people, especially if the apparel is not age-appropriate," Ms. Kreamer said. "There is a fine line between design creativity and taste level, especially when designing garments for children.

"Celebrity fashion can be both inspirational and entertaining. Fashion designs worn by celebrities, and their children, can sell out overnight.

"Harnessing the power of celebrity brand advocacy can be very effective when managed appropriately, especially when children are involved."

Final Take

Kay Sorin, editorial assistant on Luxury Daily, New York

Embedded Video: <https://www.youtube.com/embed/ZIqHAhBQ2iQ>