

COMMERCE

Frette babies customers with new line

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By RACHEL LAMB

Luxury bedding and home-goods manufacturer Frette is appealing to its customers' inner child with a new line of baby and children's apparel that fittingly extends the brand's image.

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The new line will offer everything from pajamas to bed linens. The line of children's clothing will correctly enhance Frette's image of comfortable, luxurious fabrics.

"Frette wanted to offer its same coveted collection of the finest fabrics and materials for babies," said Filippo Arnaboldi, vice president of Frette North America, New York. "Our fabrics feel incredible against the skin so it was easily translatable to create a line that would apply for babies."

Tiny luxury

The apparel and bedding come in a variety of styles and comes in pink, blue, ivory and beige.



Frette's baby sweaters

Frette's line consists of robes, bed sets, bibs, blankets, quilts, pajamas and towels.

The baby collection is embroidered with a special giraffe, or emblazoned with the Frette logo.



Robe with the Frette logo

The line is aimed at children aged 0-10, and the bedding comes in cradle, cot and single bed sizes.

“[The new line] continues to prove we are innovative and continually excelling in new product categories,” Mr. Arnaboldi said. “It will also add a broader category assortment for our customer.”

Expanding on brand expansion

More luxury brands are taking their product lines in new directions.

For example, Stuart Weitzman stepped out of the shoe-making realm to try its arm at making handbags ([see story](#)).

Also, shoe-maker Manolo Blahnik charmed jewelry maker Tous with a new line of iconic stiletto-inspired jewelry ([see story](#)).

“Most brands periodically build some stretch into their strategic thinking, said Rex Whisman, founder and principal at [Branded Consultants Group](#), Denver. “Brands do so in

an attempt to develop new revenue opportunities or to make their brands more relevant.

“As long as the stretch aligns with an organization’s mission and core values, stakeholders will consider the stretch to be authentic and believable,” he said.

If brand extensions or collaborations are plausible and relevant, then there is no reason why they should not work out.

However, forced or unrealistic collaborations are where things could get tricky.

If a luxury brand teamed up with another non-luxury brand or sold a product that did not remain true to its image, it could dilute the brand’s name or confuse consumers.

For instance, when Gilt Groupe sold a new Volkswagen vehicle, some industry experts were confused and thought that this initiative could damage the brand’s reputation as a luxury retailer ([see story](#)).

As an ecommerce destination that primarily sold designer apparel and products, the move seemed random and detrimental toward Gilt Groupe.

When a brand stretches into foreign territory and does not align with the organization’s purpose and guiding principles, the brand looks desperate,” BrandED's Mr. Whisman said. “When this happens, brand champions will be skeptical or jump ship because the brand devalues itself.”

Nonetheless, the consultant seems to think that this expansion makes sense.

Frette’s new line of baby-inspired products does not disvalue the brand or blur any product lines to confuse consumers.

Instead, it makes sense for this line to launch and will most likely only add value and more options of purchase for Frette customers.

“We are continually expanding into new categories that are natural brand extensions,” Frette's Mr. Arnaboldi said. “Frette is a lifestyle company offering everything from bedding, lounge wear, decorative accessories and a unique gift assortment.

“There may be a line of bedding for dogs in the future,” he said.

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