

APPAREL AND ACCESSORIES

Kering teams with Alibaba to combat counterfeits

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Image from Alexander McQueen's fall/winter 2017 campaign. Image credit: McQueen

By STAFF REPORTS

French luxury group Kering is establishing a joint task force with Alibaba Group to protect brands' intellectual property.

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Together with Alibaba and its affiliate Ant Financial, Kering will exchange information and work collaboratively with law enforcement to take down those who are selling counterfeit goods. Alibaba has been criticized by a number of luxury companies, including Kering, for not doing enough to stop the sale of fake goods, but this may mark a turning point in the relationship between brands and the ecommerce group.

Fighting fakes

Kering, along with its brands Gucci and Yves Saint Laurent, filed a lawsuit against Alibaba in a U.S. district court in New York in 2015, stating that the online retailer had been allowing, and possibly encouraging, the sale of knock-off goods for profit ([see story](#)).

With this new agreement, Kering has agreed to dismiss its claims in the case. The luxury group similarly dismissed a 2014 case against the ecommerce giant following Alibaba's promise to establish new efforts to prevent counterfeiting on its platforms.

Now, instead of fighting Alibaba in court, Kering is instead deciding to work with the company.

Once Alibaba's technology has identified those misusing intellectual property from Kering brands, the joint task force will work together to bring action against them.



Kering and Alibaba will work together to fight counterfeits. Image credit: Gucci

With counterfeit merchandise rampant on marketplace platforms such as Alibaba's, this collaboration may prove more effective at taking down infringers than previous efforts.

In January of this year, Alibaba founder Jack Ma announced the formation of an Anti-Counterfeiting Alliance with brands including Louis Vuitton and Swarovski, but the coalition has done little to curb the sale of counterfeit luxury goods on the Chinese ecommerce site.

Since the announcement, Mr. Ma and Alibaba have been notably silent on the anti-counterfeiting measures.

Meanwhile, the number of counterfeit goods sold through the brand's eBay-like marketplace Taobao has grown ([see story](#)).

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