

LEGAL/PRIVACY

## Chanel lawsuit not likely to damage brand reputation: lawyer

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By RACHEL LAMB



French fashion house Chanel is being sued by a woman who got

a ring stuck on her finger, but it is highly unlikely that the brand should suffer reputational damage, per a lawyer.

After getting a \$10,000 ring stuck on her finger at Chanel's flagship store on 57th Street in Manhattan, a woman named Rosy Mizrachi Gindi is suing the company, per various reports. The charges are unspecified.

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"In this situation, there is very little harm to be done to Chanel's reputation," said Mark Rosenberg, intellectual property attorney at [Sills Cummis & Gross PC](#), New York. "The person who got the ring stuck on her finger is digging for a settlement based on an

inadvertent mishap that happened in the store.

“There are worse things that can happen than getting a Chanel ring getting stuck to you,” he said.

Chanel declined to comment for this article.

Ring of fire

Ms. Gindi spent three hours in the emergency room before doctors were finally able to remove the ring without cutting it.

The consumer is suing **Chanel** for unspecified damages in Brooklyn Supreme Court.

“We're kind of thinking that maybe the lawsuit is to cover up the embarrassment of getting caught in Chanel trying to squeeze a too-small ring on your finger and getting it stuck in front of the salespeople,” said an article from Racked.

Unfortunately, incidences such as these happen frequently, per Mr. Rosenberg.

Most of the time, no damage is done and brands still retain their pristine images.

However, luxury houses can fall into trouble if there is a clumsy public relations response or if the brand looks unconcerned or unprofessional.

“If the retailer makes a faulty public relations response or makes it look like the 100-pound gorilla going after an innocent person, there can be some damage,” Mr. Rosenberg said. “It's then that you can have reputational injury if the retailer comes across as a bully.”

Lawyer up

This scandal is relatively low-key and petty, compared to some of the other scrapes that luxury brands have been in.

For instance, luxury hotel chain Four Seasons is currently in the middle of a lawsuit where the brand allegedly swindled its condo owners out of money.

Famed luxury houses will probably always get into scuffles with one another and with their customers.

Most of the time, it is the luxury brands that end up suing consumers and other retailers for intellectual property theft, copycatting and counterfeiting.

For instance, Christian Louboutin sued Yves Saint Laurent for ripping off its signature red soles on shoes.

The discrepancy landed both fashion houses in court.

Additionally, fashion designer Alexander McQueen sued footwear maker and retailer Steve Madden for allegedly copying a bootie inspired by a motorcycle jacket.

Brands such as Cartier, Louis Vuitton and Rolex are constantly in the middle of battles to fight against consumers and other brands ripping off products and selling them as their

own designs.

What luxury brands care most about is reputational damage, rather than monetary penance.

“Ideally, [the Chanel suit] is something that should have been laughed away,” Mr. Rosenberg said. “Unless there is some kind of medical condition.

“Even then, a good retailer is to be proactive and alleviate customers’ concerns,” he said. “Often, these cases result from the retailer hatching its response that damages the customer that claimed he or she was wronged.

“Instead of working with the customer to resolve it, the matter turns into an argument, positions harden and that’s how you end up in court.”

Final Take

*Rachel Lamb, editorial assistant on Luxury Daily, New York*

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