

APPAREL AND ACCESSORIES

## Diversity is vital from the inside out for fashion brands

November 15, 2017



*Valentino's latest campaign highlights London's diversity of people and style*

By BRIELLE JAEKEL

**BRUSSELS** When discussing diversity in fashion marketing and its importance in the industry, fashion model Eric Underwood cited Gucci as a prime example of a brand correctly representing the world of today.

Subscribe to **Luxury Daily**  
Plus: Just released  
State of Luxury 2019 **Save \$246 ▶**

Diversity is vital in all aspects of the fashion world today, but many brands struggle to determine what that means or how to respond. Speaking on a panel at The New York Times' International Luxury Conference Nov. 14, Mr. Underwood expressed that he feels as though it is brands' duties to accurately represent the world we live in and that Gucci has grasped this concept very well.

"I think that the brands have an ethical responsibility to represent the world that we live in," said Eric Underwood, ballet dancer, movement director and model. "So if I think of a brand like Gucci, I think of a 12 year-old boy going to school who really wants a new Gucci outfit but I can also think of someone who is going to walk on the red carpet looking to Gucci.

"I feel like they've got it right in terms of representing everyone in the world that we live in," he said.

Diversity of today

Gucci is a prime example of representing the diversity of today because its marketing and campaigns run the gamut.

While in one campaign, Gucci celebrates hip-hop artists that are fans of the brand, but it can also target a more formal audience.

For instance, Kering's Gucci recently enhanced its values of inclusion and diversity by becoming a Parks Liberi e Uguali member.

Parks Liberi e Uguali, "free and equal" in English, is an Italian nonprofit organization that concentrates on supporting companies looking to embrace diversity, with a specific focus on sexual orientation and gender identity.

Gucci is the first luxury fashion brand to become a Parks member, but many more are likely to follow suit, especially from within the Kering stable ([see more](#)).



*Video still from Gucci's casting series*

A major piece of a brand's part in diversity starts from within, said the global director of Interbrand during the panel. Core values need to start from the heart of the company and extend outward.

When evaluating brands, Interbrand looks at 10 values of a brand. Six of them are outward but four of them occur within the brand. It is vital to elicit change in the world in a visible way, but the real change occurs from within.

To be a strong brand with core values, companies need to be strong inside throughout their entire business.

#### Brands and diversity

Brands are embracing diversity in their marketing.

For instance, Italian fashion house Valentino followed up on its New York Diary video series with a London-themed version that represents the diversity and eclectic style of the city.

The video series, called "London Diary," promotes the brand's new Rockstud Pike bag. Each video's short length and light content makes it perfect for viewing on mobile and while browsing social media ([see more](#)).



*Valentino's latest campaign highlights London's diversity of people and style*

"Strong brands begin from within," said Rebecca Robins, global director at Interbrand. "The best thing we can do is be strong from the inside and be sure that we are living and breathing our values that we stand for the brand.

"Not just at the top of the company but the whole company," she said. "What you do on the outside needs to be a direct correlation of what you do on the inside.

"I think the other thing would be again consolidation. As brands and business focus on two things well strategically align with who are you as a company and where you want to be going as a brand."