

ARTS AND ENTERTAINMENT

Prada proves most-popular brand for television name-dropping

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Gucci is one of the most mentioned brands on TV. Image credit: Printemps

By SARAH JONES

Many luxury brands receive organic mentions from television writers, but Prada, Gucci and Chanel are the labels who have been referenced the most.

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Luxury fashion platform Winkelstraat.nl analyzed more than 100 popular TV shows with at least 50 episodes, 30 of which were broadcast after 2000. Inclusion in mass media channels can help increase brand's awareness, increasing their status as a household name.

"We see that [Prada's lead in the rankings] is all about the 'brand awareness' and their 'target audience' and the fact that they are 'established,'" said Joost van der Veer, CEO of Winkelstraat.nl, Vianen, The Netherlands.

"Prada is an established and well known luxury fashion brand that has been around for a long time," he said. "It is popular under a very broad audience from different ages and therefore a safe choice as the brand Prada will stay for more years to come."

Small screen scenarios

Interestingly, the series with the most brand name mentions are all off the air. While remaining in popular culture due to re-runs and streaming, shows such as "Sex and the City," "Ugly Betty" and "Gossip Girl" are no longer creating new episodes.

The show that names fashion brands most frequently is HBO's *Sex and the City*, in which fashion brands made regular appearances. Across its six seasons, 126 mentions are made to designers and labels, with Manolo Blahnik, Prada and Dolce & Gabbana the most popularly named brands.

The four main characters Carrie, Miranda, Samantha and Charlotte made an average of 1.4 brand mentions per episode.

Fashion was a regular topic of the show, driving the plotlines of many episodes. In one instance, Carrie models a Dolce & Gabbana look during a fashion show featuring "real people," while another episode finds Samantha going

in search of a knockoff Fendi bag in Los Angeles.

ABC's *Ugly Betty*, which centered much of its action on a fictional fashion magazine, came in second with 117 mentions. Gucci was the most-frequently mentioned brand by the show's characters, with 21 name drops.



Ugly Betty centered on the fashion industry. Image credit: *Ugly Betty*

Gossip Girl also featured numerous brands in dialogue, coming in third. Favored brands for its dialogue were Valentino and Christian Dior.

The show set on Manhattan's Upper East Side featured a cast of wealthy New Yorkers, with fashion and luxury goods a significant part of building the characters' personas. Along with mentions, it also proved a popular collaborator for luxury product placement ([see story](#)).



Chanel was mentioned seven times on Gossip Girl. Image credit: Gossip Girl

"Desperate Housewives," "Gilmore Girls," "The O.C." and "Devious Maids" followed the top three in number of references.

Of the top 12 shows with the most brand mentions, almost all cater largely to a female audience. The one exception is "30 Rock," the critically acclaimed series about the production of a live sketch-comedy show that drew mixed female and male audiences.

Along with aforementioned brands, others that had significant numbers of mentions include Armani, Versace, Marc Jacobs, Ralph Lauren, Louis Vuitton, Christian Louboutin and Jimmy Choo.

"[Placement on TV] is almost essential if you are a brand that hasn't been established yet," Mr. van der Veer said. "In these days, building a fashion brand is all about influencer marketing.

"Customers do not only care what they read in magazines, they want to see what their favorite actors, celebrities and presenters wear."

Popularity contest

While Prada earned the top spot for overall mentions on television, today it has fallen behind some of its peers in other measures of popularity.

New rankings from NetBase assessed Gucci as the most-discussed luxury brand on social media, but Tiffany & Co. and Louis Vuitton elicit stronger feelings and Chanel sees greater passion.

NetBase's [Retail Brands Industry Report](#) reveals that passion and sentiment for luxury brands are mostly driven by the search for authenticity. However, as a whole, the luxury retail sector only drove a 10 percent share of mention volume ([see story](#)).

Italy's Gucci is the hottest brand in fashion right now, based on an analysis of searches, page views, clicks, shares

and word-of-mouth buzz on social media.

Online retailer Lyst and Business of Fashion teamed up for the Lyst Index, a compilation of the top fashion brands in the industry, ranked by popularity and buzz along with some of the top selling products. What the retailer and publication found was that the hottest brands were the ones that consistently used social media to appeal to Generation Z ([see story](#)).

Winkelstaat.nl found that television has not kept up with the streetwear trends that are driving fashion today.

"As we see the number of luxury fashion brands growing every year, it is more difficult for shows to focus on specific brands in terms of name-dropping," Mr. van der Veer said. "There are just too many and brands come and go.

"Instead we see an increasing amount of partnerships/sponsorships between fashion brands and TV shows," he said. "This is done to promote the brands itself, but also to position the show towards a specific audience. Actors or presenters are often styled with the apparel of a certain brand."

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