

APPAREL AND ACCESSORIES

Ralph Lauren taps tech, retail execs for board

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Ralph Lauren has named two new board directors. Image credit: Ralph Lauren

By STAFF REPORTS

U.S. fashion company Ralph Lauren is adding Angela Ahrendts and Michael George to its board of directors.

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Ms. Ahrendts is currently the senior vice president of retail for Apple, while Mr. George is the president and CEO of video and ecommerce retailer Qurate Retail Inc. As Ralph Lauren looks to innovate the customer experience, these board members will bring expertise in both technology and retail.

"I am delighted to welcome Angela and Mike to the Board of Directors," said Ralph Lauren, executive chairman and CEO of Ralph Lauren, in a statement. "Angela is an industry leader and innovator with deep expertise in luxury retail and an outstanding track record of growing global brands.

"Mike brings invaluable experience as a senior leader and board member, helping companies drive consumer engagement and growth," he said. "Their counsel will be incredibly valuable as we continue to build the future for our iconic brand."

Board additions

Ms. Ahrendts has been at Apple since 2014. Prior to joining the tech company, she was CEO and a board director at Burberry. Her resume also includes roles at Liz Claiborne and Donna Karan International.

At Apple, Ms. Ahrendts oversees the company's retail presence across channels, from physical stores and online to customer service centers. This includes everything from overall strategy to real estate development.

Ralph Lauren's board has nominated Ms. Ahrendts for election to the board, and plans to have shareholders vote to approve the nomination in August.

Mr. George also comes to Ralph Lauren from digital retail. Qurate Retail is the parent company of QVC, HSN, zulily and other video and ecommerce retailers.

Prior to becoming Qurate's CEO, the executive was president and CEO of QVC. His past experience also includes chief marketing officer at Dell and senior partner at consultancy McKinsey & Co.

Mr. George has been appointed to Ralph Lauren's board, effective May 9.

"Angela and Mike are among the most respected leaders in the business," said Patrice Louvet, president and CEO of Ralph Lauren, in a statement. "They each have driven strong growth and created superior value at some of the best-known brands in retail, and I know we will benefit greatly from their experience and fresh perspective as we continue to elevate our brand; evolve our product, marketing and shopping experience; expand our digital and international presence; and increase productivity."



Digital campaigns and growth outside the US led to better-than-expected results. Image credit: Ralph Lauren

Ralph Lauren's Way Forward has been improving the company's performance.

Driven by an increased emphasis on digital and social marketing campaigns, U.S. fashion brand Ralph Lauren reported better-than-expected financial results for third quarter of the 2018 fiscal year.

Ralph Lauren pointed to a few different projects, including a Create-Your-Own customization launch and a holiday campaign themed around teddy bears, as part of the reason the company did better than expected in the third quarter of fiscal 2018. The brand is hoping to continue this trend with more digital and personalized campaigns over the course of the next year ([see story](#)).

Focusing on digital, the brand recently hired Alice Delahunt, formerly of Burberry, as its first chief digital officer.

In the newly created role, Ms. Delahunt will oversee the corporation's digital platforms around the globe and focus on the digital customer experience. As digital and ecommerce are becoming an increasingly integral part of luxury operations, Ralph Lauren sought out additional talent in the space ([see story](#)).

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