

APPAREL AND ACCESSORIES

Gucci details “culture of purpose” in sustainability site

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Gucci is sharing details of its sustainability and responsibility. Image courtesy of Gucci

By SARAH JONES

As consumer calls for brand transparency increase, Italian fashion label Gucci is launching a new platform to share stories of its corporate social responsibility with the public.

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Debuted on June 5 in honor of World Environment Day, Gucci Equilibrium is a microsite that delves into the brand’s efforts regarding people and the planet. Gucci intends for the platform to reflect the balance of aesthetic and ethical purposes that drive its strategy.

"Thanks to the shifting values of millennials, luxury brands like Gucci are realizing that CSR is no longer merely a box-ticking exercise," said Diana Verde Nieto, cofounder and CEO of [Positive Luxury](#), London. "Gucci recognizes the importance of communicating what it is actively doing for people and the planet – no matter how small those actions.

"It is consumer power that has helped drive the conversation and to make this relevant today, and Gucci is smart to join the movement," she said.

Ms. Verde Nieto is not affiliated with Gucci, but agreed to comment as an industry expert. [Gucci](#) was reached for comment.

Sustainability stories

While a platform for sharing the company’s own work, Gucci Equilibrium also invites consumers to get involved and join it in striving for sustainability.

Gucci Equilibrium gives consumers easy access to the brand’s corporate sustainability and responsibility policy. The brand also offers contact details for its CSR officer, opening up lines of communication.

"Gucci is not a company where you must leave your values at the door, but one where they are enhanced, challenged and amplified," said Marco Bizzarri, president/CEO of Gucci, in a statement. "Gucci Equilibrium is about us spreading that energy and that positive intent to everyone who loves our brand.

“These are critical times when we can all play our part in helping to deliver on the UN Global Goals and the Paris Climate Agreement,” he said. “The only way to do that is by bringing people together, sharing ideas, innovation and experiences. This is the objective we have set for Gucci Equilibrium.”



Gucci Equilibrium. Image credit: Gucci

The microsite splits Gucci’s efforts into three pillars, focusing on the environment, people and new models.

Under the environment, the brand shares details of its waste management, packaging and its move towards being fur-free ([see story](#)). One of its efforts in this area is Scrap-less, which cuts down on the amount of leather treated in production as well as the volume transported, saving resources such as water and reducing carbon emissions.

Gucci also delves into its efforts to empower its employees and preserve artisan skills through its supply chain in its “people” section. About six in 10 of Gucci’s senior managers are women, and the brand is a member of Parks – Liberi e Uguali, which focuses on helping companies achieve greater diversity.

Looking ahead, Gucci is also focused on developing new ways of doing business, from adopting more sustainable processes to fostering ideas in its recently opened ArtLab leather center of excellence.



Inside Gucci's ArtLab. Image credit: Gucci

Gucci is also running a program that lets employees donate 1 percent of their working time per year to volunteering.

"By creating Equilibrium, Gucci has outwardly acknowledged that its values need to match those of the consumer," Ms. Verde Nieto said. "Equilibrium could serve as a solid platform for the brand to showcase the stories and ideas behind its environment and social change, alongside how it plans to meet sustainability targets.

"It symbolizes to customers that Gucci is a company actively working towards a better future," she said.

Transparency tactic

Similarly to Gucci, British fashion label Stella McCartney is shining a light on its behind-the-scenes practices as an eco-friendly business with a series of content pieces to inspire others.

As more information becomes available in regard to the environment and how society has damaged the earth, many brands are taking a stance. Kering-owned Stella McCartney is hoping to negate the damage humanity has done to the earth with an appeal to those who share its same values in a new campaign that highlights brand practices with a series of videos and a new digital hub ([see story](#)).

A recent report found that a number of luxury fashion labels disclose little to no details about their supply chain, environmental and social policies, leaving room for more transparency in the industry.

Dior, Max Mara and Longchamp are among the brands that received low scores on Fashion Revolution's Fashion Transparency Index, which analyzes publicly accessible information. As consumers desire more details about the origins of the products they buy, transparency is a key component to winning and keeping their business ([see story](#)).

"[A brand sustainability site is] a step in the right direction, but luxury as an industry needs to go further," Positive Luxury's Ms. Verde Nieto said. "Companies need to develop a closer relationship with the consumer, one that is built on authenticity – and that, ultimately, requires innovation."

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