

APPAREL AND ACCESSORIES

Hugo Boss seeks career-minded consumers via ambitious advertising

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Hugo Boss' fall/winter 2018 campaign. Image courtesy of Hugo Boss

By STAFF REPORTS

German fashion label Boss is speaking to the next generation of leaders in an effort that captures the drive to succeed.

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The brand's fall/winter 2018 campaign dubbed "The Next Boss" features men and women side-by-side in black-and-white portraits, embodying serious and aspirational characters. Marking a new creative direction for Boss' marketing, the advertising aims to position the brand as a leader.

"The strategy behind this campaign appears to align with their new perspective of the market," said Dalia Strum, educator at [The Fashion Institute of Technology](#), New York. "People are more versatile and are looking for their apparel to match their lifestyle, not the other way around.

"Hugo Boss recognizes that they need to keep multiple types of customers in mind, whether dressy or edgy, and their goal appears to focus on the emotion their customer is looking for when wearing their apparel," she said.

Ms. Strum is not affiliated with Hugo Boss, but agreed to comment as an industry expert. [Hugo Boss](#) was reached for comment.

Who's the boss?

The Next Boss features a cast of eight models from around the globe, with four men and four women. In the photographs shot by David Sims, the faces appear in solo portraits.

Rather than leading with an elaborate setting, the stark images depict the models against a solid background as they look straight at the camera.



Boss fall/winter 2018 campaign. Image courtesy of Hugo Boss

Building their personas as professional go-getters, some shots depict models holding briefcases or business-appropriate handbags.

Atop the models' photos, block lettering spells out the word "Boss," simultaneously referring to the brand name and the identity of the characters.

In a short campaign film, a man and woman contemplate the concept of ambition. He says, "It's seeking out the impossible, just so you can beat it," while her idea is, "Taking your own road. Demanding more."

Hugo Boss' The Next Boss campaign

Boss says that it wanted to portray that while everyone's path to success may be different, they have the same mindset.

Hugo Boss' multichannel campaign is being rolled out in stages. The first images released are close-up portraits.

These will be followed by three-quarter length photos a month from now. Finally, Hugo Boss will debut full shots of the models.

Hugo Boss is featuring the campaign on and offline, using the hashtag #TheNewBoss on social media to drive a conversation.

"The world has changed and Boss changes with it," said the brand in a statement. "The new direction for fall/winter 2018 is indicative of a brand that is determined to lead rather than follow just like the Boss man and woman of today, and of the years to come."

Moving ahead

Hugo Boss has frequently sought to align itself with driven individuals.

The label communicated its own passion and precision through the story of a record-breaking brand ambassador.

Hugo Boss tapped Singaporean swimmer and Olympic gold medalist Joseph Schooling as its latest face. Mr.

Schooling is the brand's first ambassador from Singapore, a market that is set to expand its luxury spending in the near future ([see story](#)).

So far this year, Hugo Boss' sales have seen a 1 percent uptick. Lately the group has been repositioning itself, getting back to its roots after a challenging attempt at moving upmarket ([see story](#)).

The Boss brand is growing at a faster rate than the group's diffusion Hugo line, leading the company to transfer some of its Hugo retail space over to Boss.

Boss is also seeing creative changes. Designer Jason Wu left the label after five years at the helm of its women's collections.

A Gallery Collection presentation in New York on Feb. 13 showed the designer's final designs for the brand. Since joining Hugo Boss in 2013, Mr. Wu has helped to shape the direction of its women's wear with his signature style ([see story](#)).

"By using buzzwords like instincts, ambition and intuition, and basing the campaign around #TheNextBoss, the emotion is focused on dressing for the job you aspire for and Hugo Boss will be there to support that initiative," Ms. Strum said. "It's ultimately a revamp on dress for the role you want' by keeping the customer's preferences and style in mind."

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