

RETAIL

Saks adds personal touches to Pride partnership

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Saks Fifth Avenue is marking the 50th anniversary of the Stonewall Inn Uprising. Image credit: Saks Fifth Avenue

By SARAH RAMIREZ

Department store chain Saks Fifth Avenue is kicking off Pride Month celebrations through a wide-ranging partnership with the Stonewall Inn Gives Back Initiative, looking to raise awareness for the historical event in the LGBTQ rights movement.

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Saks' multichannel campaign includes a capsule collection, digital short, window installments and more in honor of the 50th anniversary of the Stonewall Inn Uprising. Prominent members and allies of the LGBTQ community are featured in the campaign, lending it more authenticity.

"The partnership is a positive signal by Saks of its desire to further its relationship with the LGBTQ community, and potentially change in how it supports LGBTQs inside its own ranks," said Raul Rios, vice president of strategy at [Walton Isaacson](#), Los Angeles. "The campaign enables Saks to contribute and impact long-term initiatives through SIGBI."

Mr. Rios is not affiliated with Saks, but agreed to comment as an industry expert. [Saks](#) was reached for comment.

Pride participation

The 50th anniversary of Stonewall, a turning point in the LGBTQ rights movement, is relevant to Saks since it occurred less than 3 miles from its flagship location. The demonstrations took place after police raids of the Stonewall Inn, a Greenwich Village bar that welcomed openly gay and lesbian patrons.

"Saks is honored to partner with the Stonewall Inn Gives Back Initiative to mark this important milestone for both the city of New York and the global LGBTQ community," said Emily Essner, senior vice president of marketing and digital at [Saks Fifth Avenue](#), in a statement. "It is a privilege to join forces with SIGBI to celebrate the city's vibrant LGBTQ community and work together to eliminate social injustices impacting the lives of these individuals."



Pride-inspired pieces from Alice + Olivia available at Saks Fifth Avenue

For its special Pride collection, Saks recruited luxury brands including Balmain, Christian Louboutin and Prabal Gurung. Pieces include rainbow sequined bomber jackets from Alice + Olivia and graphic sweatshirts by Stella McCartney.

With prices ranging from \$15 to \$5,495, the capsule collection is accessible to all consumers. Through June 30, 30 percent of net proceeds from the limited-edition pieces will be given to SIGBI, with a minimum donation of \$100,000.

Additionally, Saks has curated other colorful, Pride-inspired products for shoppers from labels including Gucci and Michael Kors.

For added visibility, Saks will unveil new window installments based on "PRIDE: Photographs After Stonewall" by Fred W. McDarrah on June 19 at its Fifth Avenue flagship. Stonewall-inspired window installments will be displayed at Saks locations in Beverly Hills, Miami and San Francisco throughout June and July.

Saks is also selling an exclusive edition of Mr. McDarrah's "PRIDE" book, with 100 percent of the proceeds being contributed to SIGBI.

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Saks Fifth Avenue shared the news about the partnership on Instagram

The Pride campaign also includes a short film about the history of Stonewall, as well as its personal significance to members of the LGBT community.

Activists and celebrities featured in the film include Amanda Lepore, Daniel Franzese, Dionne Warwick, Emanuel Xavier, Hennessy Carolina, Honey Davenport, Jonathan Fernandez, Kate Bornstein, Michael Urie and Nico Tortorella, among several others.

Luxury and LGBT

In honor of Pride Month every June, luxury brands are showing their support for the LGBT community through charitable initiatives, merchandise and events.

LGBT individuals are major forces in retail, spending more than their peers and making 10 percent more shopping trips. These consumers also represent a more than \$5 trillion market, according to LGBT Capital, making them a consumer segment that luxury cannot afford to ignore ([see story](#)).

In addition to Saks, other high-end retailers have previously launched initiatives around Pride Month.

Department store chain Barneys New York's foundation explored the meaning of Pride through the personal stories of LGBT individuals and allies. Barneys' #WhatPrideMeanToMe campaign spanned window displays, a short film, a social media initiative and a podcast episode ([see story](#)).

Last year, department store chain Bloomingdale's worked with Native Son, a platform and movement that aims to inspire and support Black gay men. Along with a capsule collection, Bloomingdale's hosted a launch party at its 59th Street flagship store during NYC Pride Week with cocktails, music and shopping ([see story](#)).

"During Pride Month, brands can easily get labeled by the LGBTQ community as a one-and-done' if they merely just show up at a Pride parade or throw a rainbow on merchandise and call it a day," Mr. Rios said. "Top retail brands such as Macy's, Target, Amazon and Apple garner strong brand recall among the community, mostly due to their 360-degree campaign strategies that happen year-round."