

APPAREL AND ACCESSORIES

Ralph Lauren report unveils new CSR strategy

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Ralph Lauren is embracing a new CSR strategy. Image credit: Ralph Lauren

By STAFF REPORTS

U.S. fashion brand Ralph Lauren is furthering its efforts around global citizenship and sustainability through new standards revealed in its annual report.

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Titled “Design the Change,” the new strategy includes benchmarks for areas such as female representation and sustainable sourcing. As consumers focus more on companies’ values, brands are working to create more socially and environmentally minded practices.

Responsibility report

Ralph Lauren’s strategy includes 16 goals. By 2020, Ralph Lauren intends to be teaching its product development teams about more sustainable, circular design, looking to reduce the environmental impact of its merchandise.

For instance, earlier this year the company launched the Earth Polo, a design that recycles water bottles into shirts.



Ralph Lauren Earth Polo. Image credit: Ralph Lauren

By 2025 the company plans to have 100 percent of its material sourcing be sustainable. The strategy also calls for all of the company's energy to come from renewable sources by this year.

In addition to environmental goals, Ralph Lauren has outlined plans for more gender parity in its workforce.

By 2025, the company aims to up its female factory management by 25 percent, and it is working towards having gender equality in its positions at the vice president and above by 2023. As of now, 53 percent of roles at the director level and higher are held by women.

Ralph Lauren has extended the role of the nominating and governance committee on its board of directors, giving it oversight of environmental and social issues. The company also bolstered its CSR leadership with the appointment of Halide Alagöz as its first chief sustainability officer.

As part of its new strategy, Ralph Lauren has signed the United Nations Global Compact, a worldwide corporate social responsibility initiative.

"When Ralph founded our company more than 50 years ago, he did so with the conviction that whatever we create is meant to be worn, loved and passed on for generations," said Patrice Louvet, CEO/president of Ralph Lauren Corporation, in a statement.

"This philosophy is deeply embedded in our culture, our brands and our purpose – to inspire the dream of a better life through authenticity and timeless style," he said. "It also inspires Design the Change, a strategy that will accelerate our efforts to create a positive impact in society and a more sustainable future."

Heritage brands must do more than focus on the quality of their products, but instead keep in mind the customer foremost to create valuable experiences.

During a keynote address at The New York Times International Luxury Conference on Nov. 13, the Mr. Louvet emphasized that the label is focused on selling a lifestyle and values. Luxury and heritage brands continue to see a shift towards prioritizing experiences and uniqueness instead of product quality ([see story](#)).

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