

EVENTS/CAUSES

Saks, Ralph Lauren support key markets with breast cancer awareness, fundraising

September 30, 2011



By KAYLA HUTZLER

Luxury brands such as Saks Fifth Avenue, Ralph Lauren, Elie Tahari and Domaine Chandon are standing up for their core consumers, not to mention driving sales, by supporting breast cancer research throughout the month of October.

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The brands are each conducting separate in-store and online shopping experiences that will benefit organizations searching for a cure. October is National Breast Cancer Awareness Month.

“Saks Fifth Avenue’s Key to the Cure campaign began 12 years ago and, since then, we have raised over \$30 million towards women’s cancer research,” said Kathleen Ruiz, vice president of special events, public relations and social media at Saks Fifth Avenue, New York.

“We believe in supporting charitable initiatives that make a difference in our customers’ lives and to our store communities,” she said.

Keying in on consumers

Saks is taking the fundraising to the next level.

The retailer will be hosting its 13th annual Key to the Cure campaign which includes a charity shopping weekend, a specially-designed T-shirt by U.S. designer Elie Tahari and a celebrity ambassador.

Jennifer Hudson is this year's Key to the Cure ambassador. As part of this role she will star in a national print public service announcement that will appear in fashion and lifestyle magazine through October.

"Our customers connect with Jennifer's integrity, style and warmth," Ms. Ruiz said. "She is wholly authentic in her support of those in need, having overcome a number of challenges in her own life.

"We were thrilled to partner with her this year, having admired her natural grace, style and strength for years," she said.

Ms. Hudson will also be wearing this year's Key to the Cure T-shirt that was designed exclusively for Saks by Elie Tahari.



The shirt costs \$35 and will be sold in Saks' retail stores, Off 5th outlet stores and on <http://www.saks.com>.

All of the proceeds from the shirt will be donated to the Entertainment Industry Foundation Women's Cancer Research Fund.

Additionally, all Saks retail and outlet locations nationwide and Saks.com will host a

charity shopping weekend Oct. 20-23 during which 2 percent of all sales will be donated to breast cancer research organizations.

Since Saks started the Key to the Cure and the charity shopping weekend in 1999, the retailer has donated more than \$33 million dollars to various local and national breast cancer research funds.

Pretty in pink

While Saks might be going above and beyond, other luxury retailers are also playing their part to support Breast Cancer Awareness Month.

For example, lifestyle brand Ralph Lauren is offering consumers 25 percent off in-store and online purchases Sept. 29-Oct. 1.

The brand will donate 10 percent of all proceeds during this time to the Ralph Lauren Pink Pony Fund ([see story](#)).

The brand created the Pink Pony Fund to support early detection, education treatment and research relating to breast cancer.

Ralph Lauren sent out an email to its customer base yesterday to alert them of the savings and to raise awareness of the foundation.

You Save 25%. We Donate 10%. Help Make A Difference
If you cannot view this message, [click here](#)

RALPH LAUREN



Yearlong, consumers can shop the pink pony collection online – all items feature a light pink brand logo – and Ralph Lauren will donate 10 percent of the sale to the foundation.

Additionally, LVMH's Domaine Chandon is supporting breast cancer research with its annual Pink Party and a national campaign to rally for early detection among young women ([see story](#)).

This year, the Pink Party will feature a fashion show by Whitney Eve. Also, a silent auction featuring items from Thomas Pink, Pointy Snout caviar and Sephora to benefit breast cancer research.

The party will take place Oct. 13 at the Domaine Chandon winery in Napa, CA.

However, not all fundraising efforts need to take place in-store to be effective.

For example, French fashion house Van Cleef & Arpels has created interactive advertisements on Conde Nast's W magazine Web site that invite users to search a hidden garden for four different gems ([see story](#)).

For each consumer that finds all four hidden gems, the brand will donate \$1 to breast cancer research.

While sometimes partnerships seem forced and therefore put-off affluent consumers, Saks' Key to the Cure is multifaceted and entrenched in the brand's history, so it appears to be a genuine effort.

Indeed, many brands are hosting fundraisers and affiliating themselves with an organization to create a halo effect around themselves and intrigue affluent consumers ([see story](#)).

"We look forward to creating more awareness of women's cancers and the need to fund research," Ms. Ruiz said.

"We also hope to connect with our customers at a personal level and to leverage our brand's reach towards this important fight against cancer," she said.

Final Take

Kayla Hutzler, editorial assistant on Luxury Daily, New York