

NONPROFITS

Cartier Philanthropy highlights project in new content series

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Cartier Philanthropy is promoting its various projects in a new content series. Image credit: Cartier Philanthropy

By DIANNA DILWORTH

Cartier Philanthropy has launched a new content series to show how the charitable organization is giving back to communities impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

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The new "Upside" series is designed to inform consumers about how the partner organizations that Cartier Philanthropy works are on the frontlines taking action. The aim of the program is to show the positive side of a disaster in a year that seems to be overburdened with issues from the pandemic to racial injustice and unrest.

"Over the years, our organization has survived and continued to serve amid a coup d'tat, an Al Qaeda occupation, a refugee crisis, attacks by extremist groups, and active conflict," said Ari Johnson, CEO of Mali-based Muso, a nonprofit whose mission is to prevent child and maternal mortality. "The skills we will need right now have been forged in this fire."

Cartier Philanthropy is the charitable arm of Richemont-owned French jeweler, watch brand and leather goods maker Cartier.



Cartier Philanthropy funds Muso, a project aimed at preventing child and maternal mortality in Mali. Image credit: Cartier Philanthropy

Positive storytelling

Global crises cause great upheaval that change the way that people think about the world, forcing them to focus on their core values.

The Richemont group's latest philanthropic initiative shines a light on the silver linings, survivor stories and enterprising initiatives that inspire.

For example, one project by partner Village Enterprise in Uganda aims to bring education to people living in extreme poverty.

The program follows a successful grant program and has been extended to helping 2,700 extremely poor people, mostly women, to learn the skills to run sustainable micro-businesses.

The Upside is aimed at keeping consumers informed about how the organizations that the Cartier Philanthropy funds and supports are responding to the crisis at hand to bring more transparency to charitable giving. The stories will focus on places with weak systems but strong people.

"They comfort us, restore hope and strengthen our solidarity, showing resourcefulness and humor that helps us all live through this time, until the smoke clears," according to copy on the Web site for the new series.



Cartier Philanthropy funds Healthy Learners a non-profit dedicated to keeping kids in Zambia healthy so that they can attend school. Image credit: Cartier Philanthropy

Current events

The content launch comes as people have taken to the streets to protest inequalities worldwide.

Many organizations have come out to support more progressive initiatives such as anti-racism and Black Lives Matter. Upside helps show what Cartier is actually doing to help.

"Because of what's been happening on the streets of many cities in the world, almost every organization feels the need to do something to support diversity in the marketplace," said Al Ries, founder of positioning consultancy **Ries & Ries**.

"And Cartier Philanthropy is a typical example," he said. "It doesn't really help or hurt what the organization is already doing. It just explains what the premise behind Cartier Philanthropy is."

While the company is trying to put a positive spin on a crisis, it may or may not help the brand stand out as caring about individuals.

"The problem is that many, many other organizations are saying the same thing," Mr. Ries said.

Brands should, perhaps, wait for another time to do this kind of campaign to be noticed.

"When everybody is talking, nobody is really listening," Mr. Ries said. "Save your money and run a diversity program next year."

Another challenge is that brands that respond immediately may come off as insincere.

"I suspect many people are dubious of such efforts today," Mr. Ries said. "They think, Where were you yesterday when a program like this could have made a difference?"

Still, brands should do something. And Cartier is trying to take a stand.

"The only way to come off as sincere is to be as transparent as possible and tell the truth," said Michael Mirafior, independent brand consultant and startup advisor. "The idea is that brands should be building upon a foundation of trust that was built prior to the Covid-19 crisis, not cashing out on this trust or looking to trick consumers into thinking a brand is taking action when it is in fact, not."

"Consumers are developing higher standards for brands in general, including and especially brands that they are already loyal to," Mr. Mirafior said.