

APPAREL AND ACCESSORIES

## How Gucci establishes long-term relationships with Chinese celebrities

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Gucci announced Xiao Zhan as brand ambassador with a playful image series and a short video featuring the idol. Image courtesy of Gucci

By [Jing Daily](#)

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### *A Jing Daily x Gucci collaboration*

On Oct. 22, Gucci made the announcement that young Chinese actor [Xiao Zhan](#) would be the house's brand ambassador, which garnered substantial buzz from both the luxury industry and consumers.

Gucci presented the announcement with a playful image series and a short video featuring Mr. Xiao wearing Gucci tailoring and other statement ready-to-wear pieces and accessories, including the brand's Horsebit 1955 shoulder bag.

"I am honored to be the face of Gucci," said the actor. "I have always admired Gucci's vibrant design aesthetic and Michele's romantic fashion language. I hope to collaborate more with the brand in the future, to explore the world of Gucci's creative inspiration, and to open up a multifaceted aesthetic dialogue."

The announcement received more than 1 million likes from Weibo users in less than three hours terrific social traffic for a luxury brand celebrity endorsement. On Instagram, global shoppers were also impressed by the partnership and commented that Mr. Xiao's personality was a perfect match with the house's image.

In light of this milestone, *Jing Daily* looked at how the Kering-owned Italian fashion house builds long-term relationships with Chinese celebrities, from brand ambassadors to partners, and collaborates with them to create engaging content.

### **A retrospective of Gucci's China brand ambassadors**

Before this remarkable celebrity endorsement from Mr. Xiao, Gucci had already established long-term relationships with household names, including Chris Lee, Ni Ni and Lu Han, who all represented the brand well and connected with global consumers.

Among the four brand ambassadors, Mr. Lee was the first one to [collaborate with Gucci](#) in November 2015.

Back then, China's luxury market was still emerging, and few luxury houses tapped into celebrity endorsements.

However, Gucci pioneered this tactic by embarking on its journey with this evergreen star.

Over the past six years, the partnership between the house and Mr. Lee included campaigns, red carpet looks and stage costumes.

After Mr. Lee's appointment, Ms. Ni became the second brand spokesperson since Alessandro Michele took creative control of Gucci. Thanks to her extraordinary performance in the 2011 film "The Flowers of War," directed by Zhang Yimou, the actress gained overnight fame nationwide. Her elegant and charming temperament attracted attention from local audiences as well as Gucci.

Aside from the two female ambassadors, Mr. Lu's appointment was a hit when announced in 2020. Gucci's collaboration with the singer was sparked in 2016 when he hosted a series of touring solo concerts called Reloaded. He also starred in the brand's 2019 and 2020 Chinese New Year celebrations and the Gucci Beloved campaign from 2020.

These three partnerships were initiated during the early stages of those stars' career paths.

Likewise, Gucci's relationship with Mr. Xiao began in June 2019, ahead of the premiere of his next TV drama titled "The Untamed."

While he rose to fame due to starring in this drama a smash hit across Asia his dedication to stage and screen acting has been consistent. His participation in the leading theater show "Dream Like A Dream" marked his debut in a theatrical performance and garnered positive reviews from audiences.

### **Spotlighting creative talents who are leading players in various areas**

In addition to maintaining long-term relationships with brand ambassadors, Gucci has always kept an eye on the creative talents shaping China's cultural landscape, using them to enrich the house's narratives in the country.

During **China's 520 Valentine's Day** this year, Gucci played with the color red symbolizing love to celebrate the many different representations of love.

In the campaign videos, the featured stars such as brand ambassadors Ms. Ni and Mr. Lu, and actors Lai Kuan-lin and Lareina Song showcased their memories of love.

In celebration of **Gucci's 100th birthday**, the house invited up-and-coming musical talents to dive into the house's enduring culture through the lens of pop music.

The centenary series was inspired by the number 22705 the number of songs containing the word "GUCCI" written between 1921 and now and featured two China-specific initiatives: a video campaign and a podcast program.

Both projects spotlighted rapper Jin Au-Yeung commonly known as MC Jin and Ricky from the click15 band. They both shared their journeys through the hip-hop and funk genres, respectively.

Overall, Gucci's connections with celebrities are more comprehensive and sustained beyond shooting and posting campaign images and photos on social platforms.

These endorsements have not only allowed the Italian house to re-position itself in China over the years, but they have also transferred their stars' unique personalities to the brand with each new collaboration.

Correspondingly, Gucci has accompanied these celebrities along their paths, witnessing their personal and professional growth.

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