

APPAREL AND ACCESSORIES

Hugo Boss debuts modern rebrand with star-studded campaigns

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American rapper and producer Future stars in Boss' new global campaign. Image credit: Hugo Boss

By NORA HOWE

German fashion house Hugo Boss is entering a new era with the help of some familiar faces.

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Ostensibly looking for a refresh after nearly 50 years, the company is introducing new logos for its two brands, Boss and Hugo, as well as a comprehensive rebrand across all touchpoints. To celebrate, Hugo Boss has unveiled two global campaigns targeting millennials with its flagship Boss brand and Gen Z with Hugo featuring a cast of famous models, musicians, influencers and athletes.

"There is no better time for Boss to rebrand and make a splash in the market for upscale clothing and accessories than now," said Thoma Serdari, director of fashion and luxury MBA at [NYU Stern](#) and author of *Rethinking Luxury Fashion*, New York.

"It coincides with this major cultural wave coined as the great resignation' a reaction of younger millennials to COVID-19," she said. "In pursuit of higher life aspirations, they have been quitting their jobs to be their own boss and to rechart their professional paths."

New year, new Boss

Shot by fashion photographer Mikael Jansson, the new spring/summer 2022 #BeYourOwnBOSS campaign stars models Kendall Jenner, Hailey Bieber and Joan Smalls, American rapper Future, TikTok star Khaby Lame, South Korean singer and actor Lee Min-ho, British professional boxer Anthony Joshua, Italian tennis star Matteo Berrettini and German Olympic runner Alica Schmidt.

Boss also announced a new partnership with Mr. Lame after casting the TikTok star in his fashion runway debut in Milan, which generated 4 billion impressions in four days.

In addition to still imagery, #BeYourOwnBOSS features a short energetic film that exudes style, youth and an overall "cool" factor.

Tapping into themes of individuality, strength and aspiration, Hugo Boss hopes to connect with younger audiences in a more concrete way inviting everyone to live, love, work, dream, inspire and dress like a boss.

Boss taps the power of celebrity to reach younger audiences

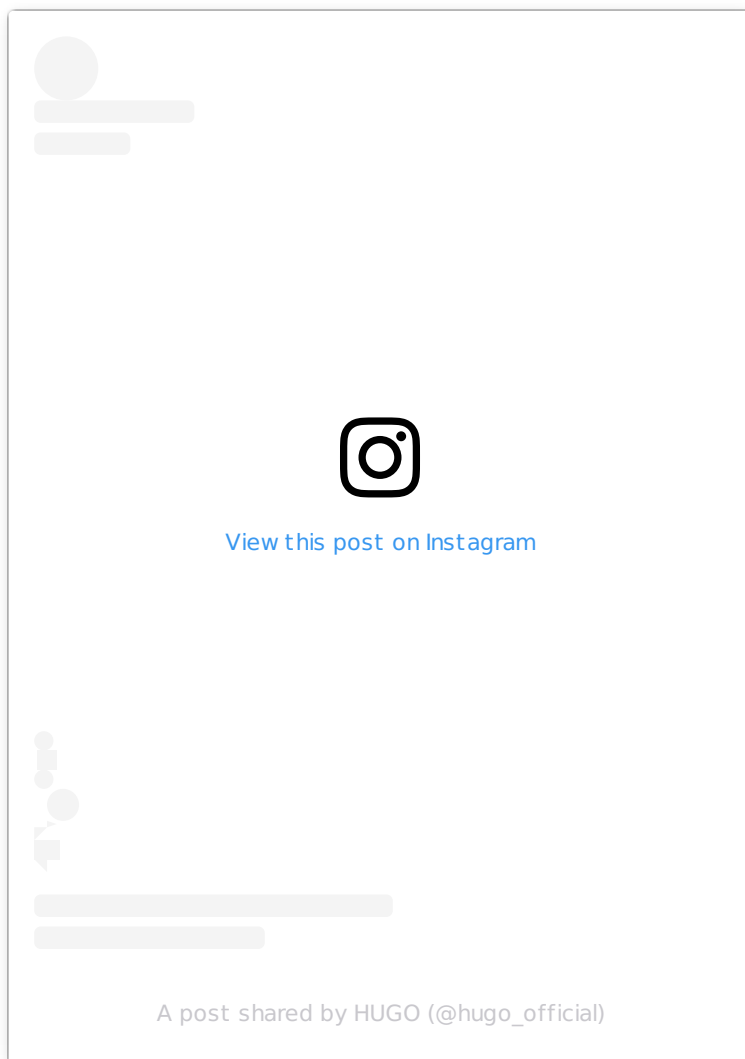
"The celebrities used in the campaign are themselves hard-working, creative professionals who represent the ethos of Boss," Ms. Serdari said. "They represent the aspirations millennials share and, as such, help bridge the distance between the quality of product and adoption rates."

Beginning Jan. 26, the campaign was activated worldwide across a multitude of channels, led by social media content and engagement. Each main campaign cast member posted their personal Boss stories on Instagram, Weibo, Red or WeChat.

"People are really looking at women for making boss moves, and so much respect comes with that," Ms. Bieber said in an Instagram story on Jan. 26. "I'm just happy to see that boss women are getting the respect they deserve."

A second campaign for Hugo, also shot by Mr. Jansson, features South Sudanese top model Adut Akech, rappers Big Matthew, SAINt JHN and American dancer Maddie Ziegler.

As the Hugo brand is now primarily focused on reaching young, unconventional and progressive people, the mostly social-led campaign aims to connect the worlds of dance and music through interviews, behind-the-scenes imagery and TikTok challenges.



The Hugo and Boss labels already have distinct social media presences

Big Matthew and TikTok creator Vik White choreographed a dance challenge #HowDoYouHUGO, which will be echoed by 60 TikTok creators to generate buzz across social platforms.

Hugo is also taking a guerilla marketing approach to its physical advertising through painted murals and public transportation coverage across the world.

Both the Boss and Hugo brands feature new logos with a notably bolder typeface conveying a contemporary look. This is Boss' first logo change in almost 50 years and Hugo's first logo change since the early 1990s.

Boss menswear new arrivals range from \$14-\$795 and womenswear \$88-\$2,295, reflecting its more established

clientele. Hugo menswear new arrivals range from \$78-\$645 and womenswear \$88-\$398.

Refresh in the making

In line with the company's Claim 5 growth strategy, both brands are transforming their identities to focus on a younger, more diverse demographic.



Hugo aims to reach Gen Z consumers. Image credit: Hugo Boss

Their apparel designs, store concepts and omnichannel experiences will now be centered on a more casual aesthetic while staying true to the brand's style codes, which were given a slight update last year.

In August 2021, Hugo Boss launched new codes for its fall/winter 2021 collection with the help of Australian actor and brand ambassador Chris Hemsworth. For its men's and womenswear collections, the brand unveiled three unique styles: new formal, clash of codes and sports style.

In a simple campaign, the actor modeled relaxed, casual and layered looks from the brand's latest offerings ([see story](#)) apparently a sneak peek at what was to come.

In a similar pivot towards casualwear and youth culture earlier that year, the brand teamed with the National Basketball Association on a capsule collection.

To promote the collection, Hugo Boss assembled a #BossTeam lineup including three-time NBA champion and Golden State Warriors star Draymond Green, NBA G League player Isaiah "Zay" Todd, Grammy-nominated rapper Amin and jewelry designer Greg Yuna ([see story](#)).

"All brands need a rebrand," NYU's Ms. Serdari said. "Some do it gradually and over time so that it becomes imperceptible, while others capitalize on the assets they have for a period of time and when they sense a misalignment of philosophy, product and customer base they go through major rebranding.

"While products maintain their high quality and continue to project the pillars of the brand, the new aesthetic makes it more appealing to younger customers," she said. "Therefore the brand gains awareness, equity and increased market size."