

JEWELRY

Want to sell luxury watches and jewelry to China's Gen Z? Sustainability is key

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Milan-based Pomellato is a member of the RJC (Responsible Jewellery Council). Image credit: Pomellato

By [Jing Daily](#)

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The following is an excerpt from Jing Daily's market report, "The Secrets to Selling Hard Luxury To China's Gen Z." Packed with 73 pages of market research, spotlight interviews with industry insiders and brand executives, and revenue-generating consumer insights, the report is a must-read for anyone interested in understanding and effectively reaching China's next generation of luxury watch and jewelry buyers. Get your copy [on Jing Daily's Reports page](#).

Globally, Gen Z's rising environmental consciousness leads it to ask more of brands than previous generations, even millennials.

According to a December 2019 survey by First Insight, the majority of Gen Z consumers prefer to buy sustainable brands, and are willing to spend 10 percent more on sustainable products.

Another 2020 survey by the consultancy DoSomething found that 75 percent of Gen Z respondents wanted evidence that brands ensured employee and consumer safety, with DoSomething noting, "If [brands] are not authentic, Gen Z will be the first to raise a red flag."

In China, opinions are mixed regarding the extent to which sustainability and environmentalism motivate the purchase decisions of Chinese Gen Zers.

A 2019 survey by consulting firm OC&C of 15,500 respondents from nine countries found that 25 percent of surveyed Gen Zers in China were more concerned by environmentally friendly consumption, nearly double the global average of 13 percent.

However, interest in sustainable products is highly patchy among young Chinese consumers, with focus primarily on segments such as food and beverage and beauty and skincare, both of which have seen numerous high-profile product-safety controversies over the past decade.

As Jessie Lee, a senior strategy consultant at OrgHive, told *Jing Daily*, "[Gen Z's] shift towards conscious

consumerism is mainly driven by their health concerns with safe, natural and/or organic materials due to China's plethora of counterfeit scandals in previous years."

Eager to burnish their sustainability credentials, a growing number of luxury brands now promote the use of recycled materials, efforts to lessen their carbon footprint, or their general environmental awareness in China.

One example is the 2021 eco-exhibition "Trees" held by the Fondation Cartier pour l'Art Contemporain in collaboration with the Shanghai Power Station of Art, which included more than 200 multidisciplinary art pieces from 30 artists worldwide and featured a livestreamed roundtable conversation via Cartier's Weibo and WeChat accounts.

While the campaign hashtags, #MyTree and #TreeExhibition, generated in excess of 11 million combined mentions, the event only pushed modest traffic on Cartier's social channels. However, audience reaction was broadly positive, indicating this type of event does attract attention from Chinese millennials and Gen Zers.

According to a sustainability report by Impact Hub Shanghai, China's young, green consumers remain somewhat elusive, with 71 percent of interviewees saying they wanted to support sustainable products, but only 29 percent having bought them.

The survey noted that other factors chiefly good design, high quality and durability, and overall ecommerce experience were also at the top of consumers' minds.

In the hard luxury segment, interest in sustainability is rising among Gen Zers and manifesting in more consumers holding luxury brands accountable for their environmental impact.

According to Carson Chan, "I must say the shift in sustainability is something Gen Zers pay attention to. Not only in terms of material usage but also the sourcing of gems and precious metal as well. You will notice brands are starting to implement RJC (Responsible Jewellery Council) and Fairmined guidelines when producing both high-end watches and jewelry."

One of the brands taking this approach is Milan-based Pomellato.

As CEO Sabina Belli notes, "Sustainability is a topic that has gained traction in China and we do underline that our jewelry is crafted using 100 percent responsible gold," adding that Pomellato is also a member of the RJC.

Get your copy of "The Secrets to Selling Hard Luxury To China's Gen Z" today on [Jing Daily's Reports page](#).

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