

MARKETING

## In reality television, Netflix continues supporting its biggest star: luxury

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*Bling Empire stars Kim Lee and Christine Chiu. Image credit: Netflix*

By KATIE TAMOLA

Luxury has a place anywhere and everywhere, and that point is reinforced by two popular television shows, "Selling Sunset" and "Bling Empire."

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Both shows, although disparate in plots and backgrounds, share two very clear points of similarity: an affinity for luxury and drama. Whether characters are drinking Veuve Clicquot on a private jet for a shopping trip, driving a Porsche or fashioning an all-Balenciaga outfit, luxury serves as one of the most compelling characters on both programs.

"A number of the outfits [on Selling Sunset] are fresh from the latest runways, include coveted designers and it is like having a mini fashion show in every scene," said Kimmie Smith, cofounder and creative director of [Athleisure Mag](#), New York.

"When brands either partner with a show like this or the cast and its stylists bring these luxury brands into the show, it lets you know how coveted they are and what it says about the person wearing the clothes, driving a particular car or having amenities and features in their home that are high-end," she said. "The fact that it's in a widely accessible show, they have a large demographic of people that they are able to reach to that could be consumers.

"Even if those watching merely amplify what they saw to someone else who then connects with the brand, this is still a win and has the feel of an organic moment."

Gucci on Rodeo

Luxury is woven throughout both "Selling Sunset" and "Bling Empire," with some shots featuring multiple brands across sectors.

"Bling Empire" follows a group of Asian and Asian American affluents in Los Angeles, California. The group, friendly amid the trials and tribulations of life with some cast members closer than others, have different backgrounds with some operating multimillion dollar businesses, some professional entertainers and more.

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*Bling Empire cast member and former singer Cherie Chan attends a Dior fashion show*

Some of the luxury fashion brands worn by cast members while filming include Herms, Louis Vuitton, Dior, Fendi and Gucci. In a season one episode, socialite Anna Shay comically sends another cast member, Kevin Taejin Kreider, an entire rack of Dior clothing, as a means to encourage him to make more fashionable choices.

The luxury references are not limited to clothing, as the season one finale calls for a group shopping trip to Las Vegas, complete with a private jet service and bottles of Veuve Clicquot on board.

Later in the episode, various luxury automotive brands are seen dropping cast members off for dinner, including a cobalt Lamborghini and sleek, black Rolls Royce. At the event, Christine Chiu asks Ms. Shay's guest who is wearing fake jewelry at their table, to which he identifies two counterfeit pieces.

From dinner conversations to shopping trips, luxury is top of mind and front and center on "Bling Empire." Not to be outdone, "Selling Sunset" has five seasons of luxury-laden business.

This series follows the Oppenheim Group, a high-end real estate brokerage also located in Los Angeles. The brokers are selling homes that are worth millions of dollars, with the group having seen \$643 million in sales since 2017 and more than \$1 billion in total sales.

When in the business of selling homes to affluents, one must look the part.

Some of the fashion brands featured on "Selling Sunset" include Gucci, Louis Vuitton, Burberry, Balenciaga, Chanel and more. Christine Quinn, one of the show's biggest stars, is known for her open appreciation for luxury fashion and high-end items.

"Luxury, glamour, style is my thing and that's why my clients come to me," Ms. Quinn says in an episode.

*Ms. Quinn radiates luxury, which attracts clients*

With such a plethora of luxury brands and references on "Selling Sunset," fashion cloud technology platform Launchmetrics decided to utilize its Media Impact Value (MIV) Index to gauge just how strong the presence is.

In season 5 alone, Chanel generated \$507,000 in MIV; Fendi generated \$478,000; Gucci brought about \$464,000; Louis Vuitton saw \$400,000; and Balmain generated \$316,000.

As always, the luxury is not limited to fashion in the least.

Emma Hernan, a cast member, real estate agent and entrepreneur, can often be seen traveling with private aviation firm Wheels Up to meet with her clients. Other cast members ride in style in disparate ways, as actress and real estate agent Chrishell Stause can be seen parking her Porsche vehicle during the season five reunion episode.

From jewelry to jetting, global trips to baby clothes, weddings to baseball caps, luxury triumphantly permeates the world of Netflix reality programming.

#### Luxury and television

A beloved show can pack quite the punch for both producers and brands who are eager to tap up-and-coming talent.

Popular shows have become a means to not only showcasing luxury brands, but in creating and fostering popular actors who later go on to become brand ambassadors.

Last month, Italian fashion house Valentino proudly congratulated actress and brand ambassador Zendaya Coleman for being named one of Time magazine's most influential people of 2022.

As a beloved and world-renowned actress, singer, style icon and activist, Zendaya has been deemed one of the voices of her generation. The "Euphoria" actress is featured on appears one of the special issue's covers, wearing pieces from the Valentino "Anatomy of Couture" collection designed by creative director Pierpaolo Piccioli and styled by Law Roach ([see story](#)).

With last year's premiere of HBO Max's Gossip Girl reboot, established and emerging luxury brands were offered a new avenue for reaching the next generation of consumers.

The new Gossip Girl, which debuted on the streaming platform on July 8 in the United States, follows the glamorous and scandalous lives of high schoolers in New York in the same vein as its predecessor, which aired from 2007 to 2012. Luxury brands from Louis Vuitton to Cartier and Tiffany & Co. were woven into the original show from the characters' clothing and accessories to complete storylines befitting their Upper East Side lifestyles and the revival offers another platform to reach potential shoppers who are more resistant to traditional forms of advertising ([see story](#)).

A brand placement or tapping a rising star as ambassador can go a long way.

"As you watch shows like this, you know that you can take a screenshot to try and find [what you see], you can connect socially with the talent wearing it to find out more about it or it may be explicitly stated on the show," Ms. Smith said. "These shows tend to have people who are always known for wearing luxe designers and from episode to episode, you can continue to see how much they love a particular brand or whether they opt to rotate a number of them together.

"If the brand finds that being on 'Selling Sunset' that their pieces are on the cover of the key art or in a scene that is shot at a well-known restaurant that also has a celebrity these are great placements."