

RESEARCH

42pc of American respondents buying luxury as rewards: YouGov

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Top spenders are increasingly tying prestige products to the idea of accomplishment. Image credit: Burberry

By EMILY IRIS DEGN

Based on revelations from market researcher YouGov, high-end product purchase intent among those in the United States is rising.

Compared to 2021, the [U.S. Luxury Boom 2024](#) report details that the number of Americans who are likely to buy prestige goods in the next 12 months is up by 12 percentage points. As it turns out, the top reason for those in this demographic to spend on the sector is to reward themselves.

“The US luxury market is driven by high-achievers and entrepreneurs,” said Vincent Krsulich, CEO of [Martini Media](#), New York.

“Yes, there is still generational wealth passed down, but we have a culture of work hard, play hard,” Mr. Krsulich said. “It is not surprising that the top reason why Americans continue to buy luxury is to reward themselves.

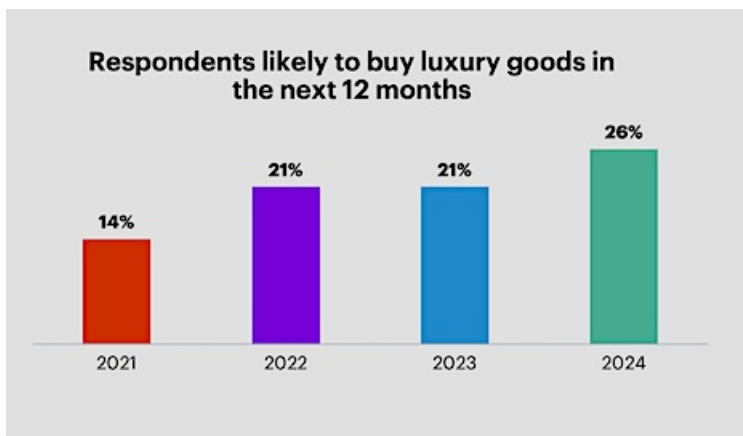
“Wealthy Americans are smart, but I never hear the luxury market talk of practical behavior unless they are talking about their investment strategy.”

Mr. Krsulich is not affiliated with YouGov, but agreed to comment as an industry expert.

For the findings, insights were gathered from YouGov Profiles, which the company describes as a constantly expanding living consumer information source from over 27 million global panel members with over 2 million data variables. The researcher’s brand tracker, YouGov BrandIndex, was also referenced, which studies over 2,000 labels across 16 vital business health metrics.

Luxury lift

Data for YouGov Profiles is continuously collected and is updated on a weekly basis.



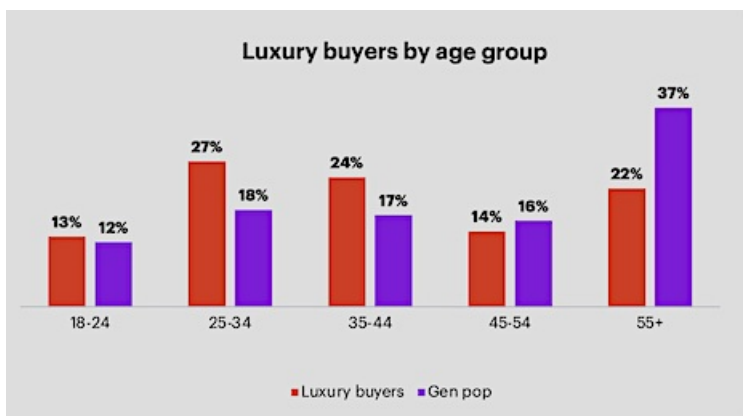
Intent to spend is going up. Image credit: YouGov

The moving average of the 52-week dataset feeds into this report’s analysis. Due to this, the market researcher encourages readers to interpret the findings directionally.

Information used includes American Profiles+ datasets from Feb. 14, 2021; Feb. 20, 2022; Feb. 19, 2023, and Feb. 18, 2024. The rankings cover survey responses given from Feb. 1, 2023, through Jan. 31, 2024 brands need to have scores available for at minimum 183 days during this time range to qualify for consideration.

Two sets of rankings are featured in the report. One shows brands that the highest percentage of luxury buyers have purchased from recently this category of customers is defined as Americans who have bought prestige products in the last 12 months.

The other reveals which labels more future luxury buyers, or Americans who plan to purchase high-end items in the next 12 months, are considering bringing home.



Luxury buyers tend to be between the ages of 25 and 44. Image credit: YouGov

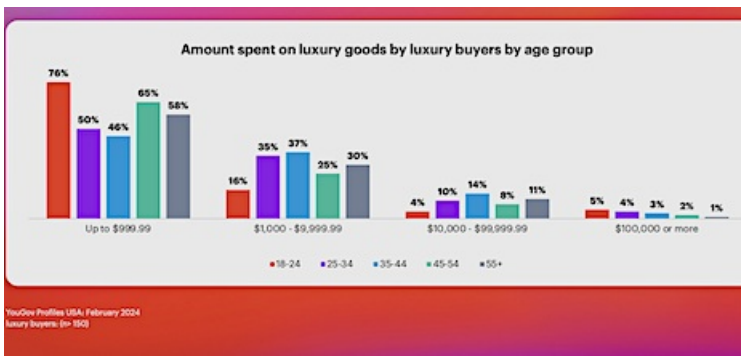
Based on the report, it seems that the luxury appetite of those in the U.S. has grown drastically since 2021 despite socioeconomic turbulence, inflation and other disruptions that the world has seen during this time.

In 2021, 14 percent of respondents indicated that they were going to buy products from the category in the next year. Now, that figure has boosted to 26 percent.

Currently, 33 percent of U.S. participants state that they are willing to pay more for luxury brands, compared to 28 percent three years ago.

Across all age groups, shoes are the most common purchase from the sector. For those between 18 and 24 years old, beauty products are in second place, while people aged 25 and above prefer fashion accessories.

Americans who are between 25 and 34 years old represent the highest number of luxury buyers, making them perhaps a profitable group to focus marketing endeavors on.



YouGov lays out how much each age group in the U.S. is spending on luxury. Image credit: YouGov

While 42 percent of respondents said that they engage in these transactions to reward themselves, 41 percent do so “to feel good.” The third most popular reason is because they believe that the quality is higher, which 36 percent of YouGov participants cited.

As a present or reward for someone else and as an investment came in the two last places, with 25 percent and 21 percent of Americans stating as much.

When it comes to the brand leaderboard, Swiss watchmaker Rolex and Italian fashion house Gucci come out on top, despite slipping profits at the latter (see story). Respectively, 15 percent and 11.6 percent of U.S. purchasers have brought home an item from the companies in the last 12 months.

These labels are swapped in order for future luxury buyers, of which 36.3 percent say they are considering a Gucci transaction, and 32.3 percent are eyeing Rolex.

Luxury fashion brand	Purchased in the past 12 months (% of US luxury buyers)
Rolex	15.0%
Gucci	11.6%
Dior	9.3%
Coach	8.1%
Tiffany & Co.	8.0%

Rolex and Gucci both largely appeal to all genders due to the unisex nature of watches and the latter’s recent fluid takes on fashion. Image credit: YouGov

“For Rolex, the brand has a linear focus on achievement; achievement in the arts, in sport, in the humanities,” said Mr. Krsulich.

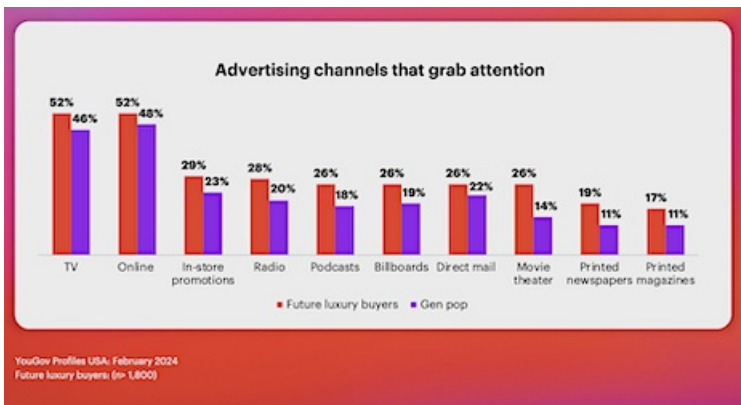
“The brand has never once veered off course (the course of excellence), and when you reach excellence, you buy a Rolex,” he said. “For Gucci, this really is a return to the top, and the brand recently installed a new designer who has a clear vision of bringing the classic Gucci vibe back.

“For authentic affluent consumers, the traditional Italian Gucci approach is the pinnacle of clean, stated, luxury style.”

Modern media

Looking at which advertising channels are most profitable, it seems that most Americans have their attention grabbed by spots on television and online.

Both of which were named by 52 percent of future luxury buyers. The next highest-ranking avenue is in-store promotions, which 29 percent of the same category of respondents said they notice.



There are two clear leaders for most attention-grabbing advertising channels. Image credit: YouGov

Of U.S. customers poised to spend on prestige, 72 percent and 54 percent have used Facebook and YouTube in the last 30 days, respectively. Perhaps these sites are suitable marketing picks.

With 71 percent of this YouGov group stating, “I try to hit the gym as much as possible,” these active spaces could also be a more untapped spot for advertisements.

Podcasts continue to capture hearts, and according to the report, 67 percent of future luxury buyers are likely to listen to them at least once per week. In the general population, 37 percent say as much.

From jewelry ([see story](#)) to fashion ([see story](#)) houses, many in the sector seem to be clued into this, launching their own programs.

“Listen, there is no formula for brand love in the luxury market nor in any market, really,” said Mr. Krsulich.

“However, authenticity certainly is a North Star.”