

EVENTS / CAUSES

## Gucci taps women's empowerment, star power for global CSR program

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By TRICIA CARR

Gucci is taking a stance on women's right to education, health and justice by establishing a new global campaign with creative director Frida Giannini, actress Salma Hayek Pinault and singer-songwriter Beyoncé Knowles-Carter at the helm.



The PPR-owned Italian fashion house launched the "Chime for Change" global movement Feb. 28 at the TEDxWomen luncheon during the TED2013 conference in Long Beach, CA. The label is creating buzz for the new fundraising and awareness program with video efforts.

"It would be easy for a brand like Gucci to lend its name to an established charitable organization and benefit from the associated goodwill," said Karen Kreamer, president of **K2 Brand Consulting**, Overland Park, KS. "It is impressive that Gucci has created this campaign and is leading the effort to actively promote girls' and women's empowerment.

"It's a really strong message that is both relevant to the brand and inspirational for their customers," she said.

Ms. Kreamer is not affiliated with Gucci, but agreed to comment as an industry expert.

**Gucci** was not available for comment before press deadline.

Women chiming in

**Chime for Change** was cofounded by Ms. Giannini, Ms. Hayek Pinault and Ms. Knowles-Carter.

The program will “convene, unite and strengthen voices speaking out for girls and women around the world,” per Gucci. Efforts will center on the areas of education, health and justice.

Chime for Change was established to address the current plights of women on an international scale such as cases of violence in India, Ireland, South Africa and the United States.

Gucci is partnering with companies and organizations to push Chime for Change. The PPR Corporate Foundation for Women’s Dignity and Rights, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, Facebook, Hearst Magazines and crowd-funding platform Catapult are strategic partners for the program. The Huffington Post is the digital media partner.

To kick-off the program, Ms. Hayek Pinault narrated a Chime for Change short film that introduces the goals of the program to consumers and activists. It was presented at the TEDxWomen luncheon.

Embedded Video: <http://www.youtube.com/embed/xpYqPCcvJe0>

*Chime For Change video*

Also, Ms. Hayek Pinault introduced luncheon attendees to one of 10 Chime for Change short film. The first is an extended trailer for filmmaker Joanna Lipper’s “The Supreme Price” that follows Nigerian democracy activist Hafsat Abiola.

Embedded Video: <http://www.youtube.com/embed/YCHZoTTWHhk>

*The Supreme Price trailer*

The documentary was a 2012 Gucci Tribeca Documentary Fund recipient. The film won the Spotighting Women Documentary Award as well.

Ms. Lipper and Ms. Abiola attended the Chime for Change luncheon and participated in a talk moderated by TEDxWomen host Pat Mitchell.

Ms. Abiola also serves on the Chime for Change advisory along with other supporters such as Muna AbuSulayman, Jimmie Briggs, Gordon and Sarah Brown, Lydia Cacho, David Carey, Joanne Crewes, Waris Dirie, Yasmeen Hassan, Arianna Huffington, Musimbi Kanyoro, John Legend, Pat Mitchell, Alyse Nelson, Sharmeen Obaid Chinoy, François-Henri Pinault, Jada Pinkett Smith, Julia Roberts, Jill Sheffield, Caryl Stern, Meryl Streep and the Archbishop Desmond Tutu and his daughter Mpho Tutu.

Future Chime for Change efforts include a content platform led by journalist Mariane Pearl, a film unit with projects produced by Ms. Hayek Pinault and a global campaign event that will be announced in mid-March.

## World view

Gucci often participates in CSR efforts that focus on global issues.

For example, Gucci pushes its seven-year partnership with the United Nations Children's Fund through products that support the cause.

The label offers a line of country-specific handbags, accessories and T-shirts for which a portion of the proceeds go to the organization.

Items in the GG Flag Collection feature an enlarged double-G logo in a flag pattern and 25 percent of proceeds are earmarked for UNICEF's "Schools for Asia" initiative that gives disadvantaged children in Asia-Pacific access to quality education ([see story](#)).

Additionally, Gucci invited its Facebook followers to join the brand in supporting One Billion Rising, a campaign to end violence against women.

The label posted a video to its Facebook page that encouraged its fans to participate in the organization's awareness day Feb. 14.

Gucci also supports the PPR Corporate Foundation for Women's Dignity and Rights.

These CSR efforts help Gucci create an emotional connection to its customers, per Ms. Kreamer.

"Strong brand marketers understand the balance between generating short-term results and creating long-term, sustainable brand loyalty," Ms. Kreamer said. "Companies are exploring new ways to strengthen relationships with current customers and to reach new customers by supporting worthy causes.

"The idea of brand philanthropy isn't just a soft marketing idea," he said. "The values and beliefs behind the brand is an absolute necessity for connecting with a brand's target audience.

"For Gucci, these values are as important to customers as the design and craftsmanship of every garment."

## Final Take

*Tricia Carr, editorial assistant on Luxury Daily, New York*