

INTERNET

Bulgari flaunts star power to aid philanthropic efforts

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By SARAH JONES

Italian jeweler Bulgari is promoting its Save the Children campaign with a star-studded video on its Facebook page and a dedicated Web page.

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The video, shot by Fabrizio Ferri, cuts between groups of children around the world and numerous celebrities holding up their hands, wearing the ring the brand created to raise money for the charity. By incorporating famous faces into its Save the Children campaign, Bulgari is able to draw more attention to its campaign, but not necessarily reach its usual consumer base.

"Involvement of celebrities will make the video more interesting to people who are not typical Bulgari clients," said Ron Kurtz, president of the [American Affluence Research Center](#), Atlanta. "It is not likely to have much impact on Bulgari's regular consumers. Our research shows the affluent are not that impressed by celebrities and their endorsements.

"This campaign is not likely to produce any significant incremental business among Bulgari's primary customers," he said. "The campaign will give some who cannot normally afford a Bulgari product the opportunity to now do so.

"The brand's image among both groups can be enhanced by this campaign, which will

give Bulgari good content for its social and digital media activities and for traditional media."

Mr. Kurtz is not affiliated with Bulgari, but agreed to comment as an industry expert.

Bulgari, an LVMH brand, did not respond by press deadline.

Charitable cause

To direct traffic to its Web site, Bulgari posted a video about its Save the Children campaign to its Facebook page.



Facebook post from Bulgari

The video transitions between images of children in various parts of the world and celebrities in front of a gray background holding up their hands to show Bulgari's ring it created for the charity. Famous faces include Ben Stiller, Ginnifer Goodwin and Ricky Martin.

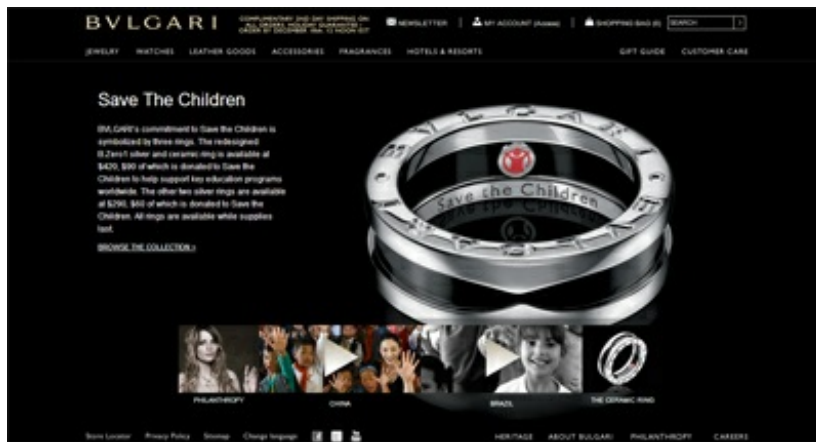
Save the Children- Stop, think give

Bulgari did not link to its Web site within the post, relying upon fans to search or type the address themselves.

Bulgari offers rings in two different price points, to try to reach more aspirational

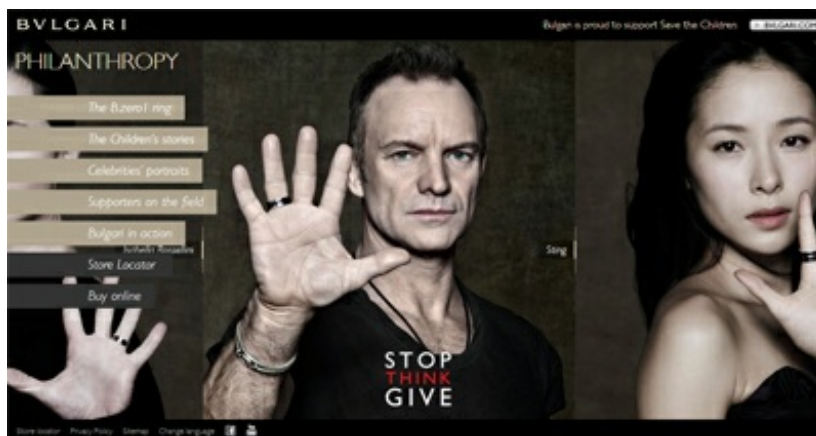
consumers. Its Bzero1 ceramic and silver ring retails for \$420, with \$90 of the proceeds going to the charity, while its silver rings sell for \$290, from which Bulgari donates \$60.

On the collection page for the Bzero1, Bulgari has included links at the bottom for consumers to learn more about Save the Children, and how their purchase will help the organization with its work.



Bulgari Web site

To the left is a slideshow of the celebrities from the video. When a user clicks on the philanthropy tile, they are taken to a corporate Web page with more information about the rings and Save the Children.



Bulgari Web site

Visitors can read tangible effects that can be achieved with the \$90 from the Bzero1 ring, such as training for 13 teachers in Indonesia or a school library in India. There are also stories of individual children impacted by Save the Children.

Also included is a gallery of the full collection of celebrity portraits. Videos show the workers and Bulgari representatives, including celebrities, working in the field in China and Brazil, among other countries. These two particular videos can also be played directly from the product page for the Bzero1.

The video for China begins with the message "Education can build peace and break the cycle of poverty." After that, a montage of happy students at a school plays.

A message from Francesco Trapani, president of LVMH watches and jewelry and former Bulgari CEO tells readers that Bulgari has partnered with Save the Children since 2009,

and gives the reader the total amount raised in four years: \$9 million.

Philanthropic pursuits

Other jewelry brands have created special items to raise money for charity initiatives.

For example, Swiss jeweler Chopard is working together with the Happy Hearts Fund to help rebuild schools and aid children that have been affected by natural disasters with an exclusive bracelet designed specifically for the cause.

The Happy Hearts Fund was created by model Petra Nemcova in 2005 after she was injured in Thailand during the 2004 tsunami that devastated the region. Chopard's involvement with Ms. Nemcova's charity is likely to attract affluent philanthropists interested in giving back to their global community in time for the holiday season ([see story](#)).

Using celebrities in a video promoting charity giving can help consumers pay attention.

For instance, U.S. apparel and accessories label Michael Kors is upping its philanthropic portfolio through a long-term partnership with the United Nations' World Food Programme to help put an end to world hunger.

The brand pushed the partnership and encouraged donations through a PSA that was released on its social media channels and its Destination Kors' Web site. The PSA includes messages from notable celebrities who support the cause including Bette Midler, Seth Myers, Olivia Munn, Patti Hansen and Karolína Kurková ([see story](#)).

Philanthropic efforts are always a good idea for luxury brands, but they need to be careful how they promote the work they are doing for their chosen cause.

"Charitable activities like the Bulgari Save the Children campaign can enhance the stature of the brand and make its clients feel good that they are customers of the brand," Mr. Kurtz said.

"It can also make the brand look good among people who may have some resentment toward a company that caters to the very affluent, especially given the current discussion of income inequality," he said.

"Heavy promotion can be risky in that it might give the impression that the campaign is not motivated by good intentions but rather for commercial reasons."

Final Take

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