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PR 568

“Made to Stick” Balenciaga Crisis Statement

Original: “We sincerely apologize for any offense our holiday campaign may have caused. Our plush bear bags should not have been featured with children in this campaign. We have immediately removed the campaign from all platforms.”

Revised:

On behalf of Balenciaga, I want to first express my deepest apologies to families and children for the harm and offense our holiday campaign has caused. Without wasting another second, we have removed the campaign from all platforms and have begun an internal investigation into how this regrettable mistake could have happened and ways to ensure a similar situation never occurs again.

When my twin daughters were born, it became my duty as their father to protect my daughters from outside harm and create a safe environment for them to grow. This experience has allowed me to understand first-hand the importance of protecting young children from abuse in any form. Therefore, I was filled with outrage and disgust when witnessed our holiday campaign feature children close to my daughters’ age. The insufficient oversight at Balenciaga that allowed this holiday campaign to feature children was a not just a regrettable mistake, but a failure to my commitment of protecting children from forms of abuse.

As the father to two young daughters and the CEO of a prominent fashion house, there is no world where these images should have been sanctioned by my company. Balenciaga has proven over the years that its more than just a company that provides luxury fashion, but a company that

provides timeless pieces that parents can eventually pass down to their children. A mother passing down her Balenciaga dress to her daughter for Senior Prom or a father passing down his Balenciaga belt for his son's first date. When you buy an item from Balenciaga, that item comes with a commitment to provide an endless amount of joy and creative expression to family members throughout generations. Therefore, when our holiday collection sparked outrage and disgust instead of joy, it directly violated our core values and my vision for this company. We take full accountability for the devastation we have caused to our Balenciaga families and vow to never let another project violate Balenciaga's vision and core values.

The first step to this vow to our Balenciaga families is conducting a comprehensive internal investigation to identify where our oversight processes have failed and how we can build them back stronger. Creating a more thorough oversight and validation process with multiple safeguards is the key step to preventing a similar mistake from occurring. In the meantime, I recognize that the harm our campaign caused has wider implications that has impacted children across the world. To action on my commitment to as a father to protect young children from all forms of abuse, Balenciaga will be partnering with non-profit organizations that are leaders in the fight against child abuse. Balenciaga will support these child protection organizations through:

- Committing substantial financial reparations to demonstrate our solidarity with the frontline organizers in the fight against child abuse.
- Partnering with these organizations to educate & train all levels of Balenciaga staff on child protection strategies and advocacy.

We understand that building back trust with our Balenciaga families will be a long journey, however I believe these first steps will lead Balenciaga in the right direction.

Signed: Cedric Charbit, Balenciaga CEO