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## [Students Take A Targeted Approach for Luxury Goods Program](#)

By Tonya Garcia on December 13, 2010 5:25 PM



Students from [Parsons The New School for Design](#) and [Columbia Business School](#) gathered last week alongside their professors and reps from [Bulgari](#), [Haviland](#), [Hermès](#), [Loro Piana](#), and [Maclaren](#) to make their final presentations for the joint program “The Design and Marketing of Luxury Goods.”

This is the 15th year for the partnership, which has always focused on luxury items. According to a spokesperson at Parsons, some of the students’ suggestions are even being considered by the high-end labels.

It was evident from these presentations (we had the opportunity to see them in person) that digital and social media are just as important to luxury goods as they are to any other category. Equally significant, the students set a laser-focus on a target market and used the brand’s most noted qualities to create their presentations.

For instance, gift suggestions for Loro Piana incorporated both the high-end lifestyle of the buyer and the brand’s luxury textiles. And the target for Haviland were chefs who want to incorporate a bit of storytelling in their dishes.

“Marketing has always played an important role for luxury companies, but it has evolved in the sense that the brands are also now listening more to their customers, so marketing is now much more a dialogue between the brands and their clients,” Ketty

Maisonrouge, adjunct professor at Columbia Business School and president of the Luxury Education Foundation told us via e-mail.

“Social media is one of these new tools to carry on this conversation, and luxury brands are learning how to listen and incorporate the feedback to enhance the consumer’s experience,” she added.

Moreover, the students got a lesson in integration.

“The classic marketing department will have to work side by side with the design teams to meet and increasingly exceed the diverse needs of a global consumer pool,” Heico Wesselius, an assistant professor of innovation and strategic design, at Parsons told us.

“This will consequently force these companies to transform the product development, manufacturing and distribution as well.”