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Accessories/Innerwear/Legwear

Lucky Brand Expanding Into Watches

Lucky Brand Jeans is adding another accessories category to its roster.

The Los Angeles-based company, a division of Liz Claiborne Inc., is launching fashion watches in partnership with E. Gluck Corp., due to hit stores this fall.

The watch collection is just one more offering from the 18-year-old denim company. Lucky Brand produces costume jewelry, handbags and scarves in-house, and licenses a swim collection, eyewear, loungewear and even travel speakers.

"We're taking the brand and bringing it into lifestyle mode," said Paul Savignano, vice president of accessories and licensing at Lucky Brand. "We've been in bags since 2002, we relaunched jewelry in 2006 and our jewelry business has been explosive at wholesale and retail since October. So, we think the Lucky customer is loyal to the brand and finds something intimate about it. As we've launched other categories, people have attached themselves to it. Based on how successful the jewelry has been, we think watches are a natural next step."

Lucky Brand watches will be launched at department and specialty stores and at 175 Lucky Brand stores worldwide. They will retail from \$95 to \$595.

The collection features a distressed style with a broken-in look, similar to the company's signature blue jeans, and details include oiled leathers, heavy chains, vintage bangles and patchwork. Lucky Brand's iconic symbols — such as the four-leaf clover — are also incorporated into the collection.

Industry sources estimate the collection should generate annual sales in excess of \$25 million at wholesale. Savignano expects accessories to make up 45 to 50 percent of Lucky Brand's total sales in the next four years.

According to Mark Odenheimer, senior vice president of E. Gluck Corp., which also produces watches for Zac Posen and Badgley Mischka, the appeal of working with Lucky Brand is the integrity it's maintained since its inception.

"As long as we've been aware of the brand, they've been very protective in distribution and preserving its image, and we respect that," Odenheimer said. "And we're selective when we look for licensing. We want to know, will the watches have a long life? Lucky has been around since 1990 and has always stayed true to the brand. And the timing is very good."



— C.T.