Kering Q1 sales lifted by U.S., Europe

21 April 2022

Gucci owner Kering said on Thursday its sales rose 21% on a like-for-like basis over the first quarter, as strong demand for its high-end fashion labels in the United States and Europe helped offset disruption to business in China due to COVID-19 lockdowns.
Group sales for the three months ending in March came to 4.96 billion euros ($5.4 billion), slightly above a forecast for 4.89 billion from Citi analyst Thomas Chauvet, who tops Refinitiv Eikon's rankings for Kering estimates in terms of estimate accuracy.

Kering's star label Gucci, which accounts for over half of the French luxury group's annual sales, clocked 13.4% growth, with a strong performance in the United States, Western Europe and Japan, while COVID lockdowns disrupted business in mainland China. This figure fell below Chauvet's estimate for 23% growth and marked a deceleration from last quarter.

"The quarter is ahead of expectations overall by 5.6%," said Luca Solca, analyst with Bernstein, noting that Gucci was "one step behind" consensus forecasts while flagging an "impressive performance" from smaller labels.

Yves Saint Laurent posted 37.2% growth, while sales at Bottega Veneta grew 16.3%.

“The fundamentals of the luxury market in China remain intact,” Kering Chief Financial Officer Jean-Marc Duplaix told journalists in a call, noting the resilience of Chinese consumers after crisis periods, the growing middle class and appetite in the country for luxury brands.

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