FASHION BUSINESS BLUEPRINT

Is Creativity Actually Fixing Luxury?

A creative-to-commercial audit of luxury's 2026 reset - what BoF & McKinsey predicted, what proven turnarounds teach, what failed conversion looks like, and what Chanel, Dior, Gucci and Burberry show so far. Includes the FBB Creative-to-Commercial Test for designers and founders.

RESEARCH QUESTION / A successful debut collection and a successful business are two different things. When does creative heat become measurable product demand, full-price sales, repeat behavior, margin and cash?

9 / 15	52%	42%
largest luxury brands changed creative director in the report's reference window [1]	HNW respondents: higher product quality/craftsmanship would make them spend more [1]	HNW respondents: more creativity/design innovation would make them spend more [1]

FASHION BUSINESS BLUEPRINT / RESEARCH PAPER

Research cut-off: 14 August 2026 | Final publication edition

Scope: Luxury strategy, creative leadership, product conversion, retail execution, customer response and economics. The analysis distinguishes company disclosure, credible third-party reporting and FBB inference; the practitioner appendix translates the same logic into a self-assessment tool.

Contents

READING GUIDE / The paper is designed to answer one question in sequence: what the report predicted -> what proven conversions looked like -> what non-conversion looked like -> why 2026 changes the test -> where today's resets sit on the evidence ladder.

Executive Summary

The question is not whether creativity matters. It clearly does. The harder question is whether a creative reset can travel all the way through a luxury company's economic system.

BoF and McKinsey's State of Fashion 2026 does not argue that hiring a famous designer automatically restores growth. Its "Luxury Recalibrated" chapter makes a more demanding claim: luxury's reliance on price-led growth has reached its limits in important customer segments, so brands need to rebuild value perception through creativity, craftsmanship, product quality, exclusivity, trust and customer experience - and then translate that renewed creative energy through merchandising, marketing, stores and clienteling into sustained commercial impact. [1]

This paper tests that proposition against both success and failure. It first reconstructs the report's evidence. It then studies four proven historical transformations: Hedi Slimane-era Saint Laurent, Alessandro Michele and Marco Bizzarri's Gucci, Daniel Lee's Bottega Veneta, and the Angela Ahrendts / Christopher Bailey era at Burberry. To control for survivorship bias, it adds a counter-case: Gucci's 2023-25 reset under Sabato De Sarno, where some products and icons received positive signals but the broader economics deteriorated. Finally, it applies the same framework to four live 2026 resets: Chanel, Dior, Gucci and Burberry.

The central finding is narrower - and more useful - than "creativity saves brands." Creativity is best understood as a demand catalyst. It can restore distinctiveness, make a house newly legible, recruit customers and give marketing something worth amplifying. The organization determines whether that creative signal becomes the right assortment, sufficient inventory depth, disciplined distribution, full-price sell-through, repeat demand, store productivity and ultimately profit and cash.

FBB THESIS / Creative heat is not economic repair. The creative director creates the possibility of demand. The organization determines the quality, scale and durability of the economics that follow.

The 2026 environment raises the standard of proof. Bain's June 2026 update expects personal luxury goods to grow only 2-4% in its base case and describes a more selective, polarized customer. [2] BoF/McKinsey's Global Fashion Index also shows luxury economic profit losing momentum while mid-market/value players captured a larger share of industry economic profit. [1] In a slower category, exceptional house-level growth is less likely to be explained by a rising tide alone; it increasingly requires share capture, customer reactivation or category-specific strength.

The live evidence should therefore be read on two axes: stage of conversion and confidence of evidence. Chanel currently shows the strongest headline commercial acceleration, but disclosure confidence is lower because the company is private. Dior shows strong product and management evidence, but its brand-level P&L is not separately disclosed. Gucci's 2026 data shows real sequential improvement and named-product traction, yet H1 revenue remains negative. Burberry shows the broadest public operating evidence - growth across divisions, new-customer acquisition, outerwear strength, handbags returning to growth, and improved retail execution - but still needs time to prove durability. [14]-[19]

The final answer is therefore not "yes" or "no." Creativity is already helping repair demand at several houses. There is much less evidence yet that it has repaired the economics. History suggests the gap is closed by a conversion system: creative authority + product legibility + merchandising + distribution + service + customer ownership + financial discipline.

Bottom-line findings

01 BoF/McKinsey's own evidence treats creativity as one component of the luxury value reset, not as a standalone turnaround mechanism.

02 HNW respondents rank higher product quality/craftsmanship (52%) and better in-store service/environment (45%) ahead of more creativity/design innovation (42%) as reasons to spend more. [1]

03 The strongest historical turnarounds paired creative authority with management alignment, product franchising, retail control, distribution discipline and patient investment.

04 The counter-case matters: a reset can generate positive product commentary while revenue, operating income and customer traffic continue to deteriorate.

05 The correct commercial clock starts when meaningful product reaches stores, not when the appointment is announced or the debut show receives applause.

06 One hero product is weak proof; breadth across categories, regions, cohorts and seasons is stronger proof.

07 Margin must be read on the right timeline. Investment can temporarily depress margin, while cost cuts can temporarily improve margin without proving creative conversion.

08 The strongest question is not "Which designer had the best debut?" but "Which house is building a repeatable conversion machine around renewed creative desire?"

1. Scope, Definitions and Evidence Standard

This is a business audit, not a review of runway aesthetics. Creative reception is treated as an upstream input into the analysis rather than the final outcome. The unit of analysis is the luxury house and the commercial system surrounding the creative director.

Research scope

- Primary framework: BoF & McKinsey, The State of Fashion 2026, Theme 10 “Luxury Recalibrated,” especially pp. 121-127 and the Global Fashion Index. [1]
- Market context: Bain-Altagamma’s June 2026 luxury update. [2]
- Historical benchmarks: contemporaneous Kering disclosures for Saint Laurent, Gucci and Bottega Veneta; Burberry disclosures for the Ahrendts/Bailey period. [3]-[10]
- Counter-case: Gucci 2023-25 company disclosures covering the De Sarno reset, product signals, traffic and economics. [11]-[13]
- Current cases: Kering H1 2026, LVMH H1 2026, Burberry Q1 FY27/FY26 results, and Reuters reporting for privately held Chanel. [14]-[19]
- Research cut-off: 14 August 2026. Live evidence is explicitly labeled provisional where future quarters can materially change the verdict.

What counts as “business recovery”?

A house is not classified as recovered because critics like a collection, social discussion rises, a celebrity wears a look, or a single product sells out. Those are useful demand signals, but they sit upstream of economics. Stronger evidence accumulates in the following order:

Stage	Observable evidence	What it proves
1. Attention	Share of voice, search, press, cultural conversation	The house has re-entered consideration.
2. Product proof	Named products, waitlists, scarcity, management commentary	Creative ideas are becoming commercial objects.
3. Full-price demand	Comparable retail, sell-through, markdown discipline	Customers are paying rather than merely engaging.
4. Breadth	Multiple categories, regions and customer cohorts	The signal is larger than one hero or one market.
5. Repeatability	Second/third season, replenishment, recurring franchises	Demand survives launch excitement.
6. Economics	Revenue, gross profit, operating margin, cash	The creative reset is becoming a business recovery.

Evidence confidence

Grade	Evidence type	How this paper uses it
A - High	Direct company disclosure with house-level revenue/profit or detailed KPIs	Can support downstream commercial/economic claims.
B - Medium-high	Company management commentary or segment disclosure that names the house/product	Supports direction; attribution is still limited.
C - Medium	Credible independent reporting for private-company performance or buyer/customer response	Useful when public disclosure is unavailable; language remains qualified.
D - Exploratory	Press/social/buzz evidence without sales confirmation	Attention signal only; never treated as proof of recovery.

ATTRIBUTION DISCIPLINE / Luxury turnarounds are multi-variable events. CEO changes, store actions, currency, tourism, pricing, wholesale strategy, advertising, inventory, product timing, regional mix and cost programs can all move the P&L. This paper therefore uses “associated with,” “coincided with,” “management cited” and “consistent with” rather than claiming that a designer caused a precise percentage of growth.

2. What BoF & McKinsey Actually Argue

The report's luxury thesis is often summarized too loosely as "luxury needs creativity again." That misses two-thirds of the argument. Theme 10 is a three-part reset: restore creative differentiation, repair the value/trust equation, and build a commercial system capable of converting the first two into sustained demand. [1]

2.1 Creative change is being used as a demand intervention

9 / 15	#1	81%
largest luxury brands appointed new creative directors in the report's 12-month reference window [1]	Jonathan Anderson's Dior SS26 by UGC share of voice in Paris, per the report [1]	customers under 35 citing design/creativity as a primary purchase driver [1]

The scale of creative turnover matters because it turns designer appointments from isolated personnel stories into an industry-wide strategic response. The report links slower sales and customer demand for differentiation with the extraordinary replacement cycle. It treats Spring/Summer 2026 as an early test of new directions at Dior, Chanel, Loewe and other houses. [1]

Crucially, the report does not stop at buzz. Its executive priorities say the next challenge is to translate creative energy into sustained commercial impact through customer insight, marketing, merchandising, stores and clienteling. That is the hinge for this paper. [1]

2.2 Creativity is not the highest-ranked reason wealthy customers would spend more

The Altiant HNW survey reproduced in the report (N=300 across the US, UK and China) shows a richer value equation than the industry's fixation on designer appointments suggests. [1]

Factor that would encourage more luxury spending	Overall HNW response
Higher product quality and craftsmanship	52%
Better in-store service and environment	45%
More creativity and innovation in design	42%
Stronger pre- and post-purchase services	37%
Greater exclusivity	34%
More recognition as a VIP	31%
Stronger sustainability and ethical practices	21%

Source: BoF & McKinsey, The State of Fashion 2026, Theme 10, HNW survey exhibit. [1]

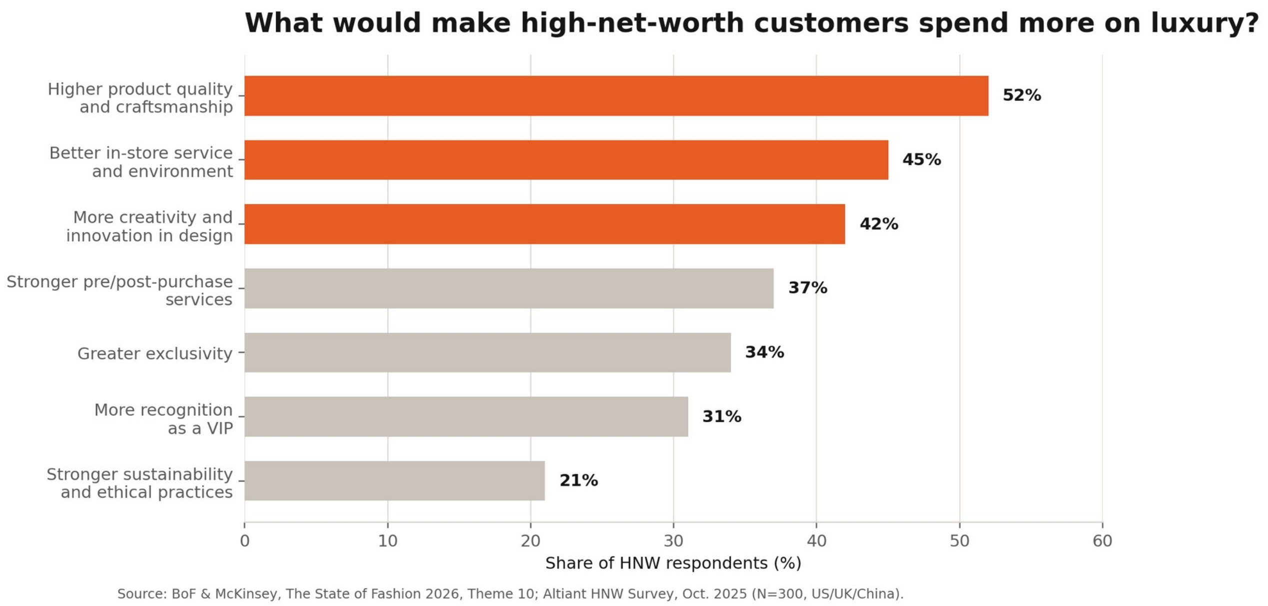

FIGURE 1 / Luxury customers are not asking for creativity alone. Quality and service rank ahead of design innovation in the cited HNW survey. Source: BoF & McKinsey / Altiant. [1]

The implication is not that creativity is unimportant. It is that creativity must be experienced as better luxury. A more exciting silhouette attached to disappointing materials, weak service or overexposed distribution does not solve the customer's value objection.

2.3 The value problem is also a trust problem

BoF/McKinsey connects repeated price increases and recent labor/supply-chain controversies with customers questioning whether high prices remain justified. It identifies "expertise and quality" as the top attribute that epitomizes luxury among ultra-high-net-worth respondents and treats craft visibility, sourcing responsibility and production control as part of rebuilding value. [1]

2.4 The report’s own executive priorities form a conversion system

01 Translate creative energy into sustained commercial impact: support creative instinct with insight; reinforce the new direction through marketing, merchandising and stores; look for measurable traffic, engagement and sales. [1]

02 Rebuild client trust: show evidence of exceptional materials and human skill, take responsibility across the value chain, and anchor storytelling in product quality and craft. [1]

03 Improve retail experience across channels: use clienteling, integrated customer data, tailored outreach and high-touch service to convert awareness into a relationship. [1]

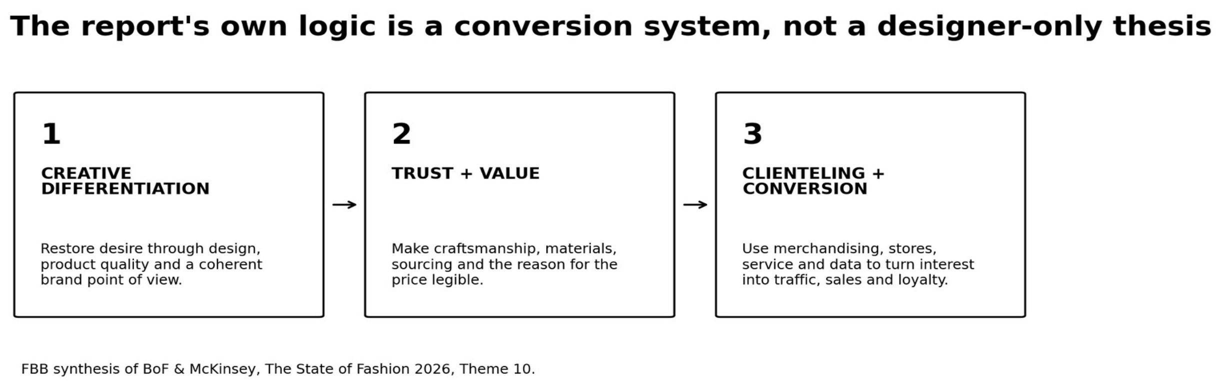

FIGURE 2 / BoF & McKinsey’s own recommendations imply a system: creative differentiation must be reinforced by value/trust and then converted through merchandising, service and retail. [1]

FBB INTERPRETATION / The report’s thesis is not “designer -> sales.” It is closer to CREATIVE DIFFERENTIATION + PRODUCT VALUE + TRUST + COMMERCIAL EXECUTION -> SUSTAINED DEMAND. The FBB contribution is to make the downstream economics explicit.

3. The FBB Creative-to-Commercial Model

A luxury company can produce a successful creative event without producing a successful economic event. The difference is conversion. The FBB model treats creative attention as the beginning of a chain rather than the finish line.

FBB stage	Management question	Best evidence
ATTENTION	Did the new direction restore relevance?	Share of voice, search, earned media, social response
CONSIDERATION	Did customers move closer to purchase?	Store/web traffic, appointments, wishlists, CRM engagement
FULL-PRICE PURCHASE	Are people paying the intended price?	Comparable retail sales, sell-through, markdown discipline
REPEAT PURCHASE	Does demand survive the launch moment?	Cohort repeat, franchise replenishment, second-season demand
GROSS PROFIT	Is demand economically attractive?	Price/mix, gross margin, inventory efficiency
CASH	Can the company fund the next cycle?	Operating profit, cash generation, working capital

THE BUSINESS CONVERSION CHAIN / ATTENTION -> CONSIDERATION -> FULL-PRICE PURCHASE -> REPEAT PURCHASE -> GROSS PROFIT -> CASH. A reset that stops at attention is a successful cultural moment, not yet a successful business recovery.

The model explains why early creative resets are easy to over-read. Attention is public and almost instantaneous. Revenue arrives later. Repeat behavior arrives later still. Margin may lag because the company is spending more on stores, people, marketing, inventory and product development. The press can therefore announce a “comeback” several quarters before the evidence is capable of proving one.

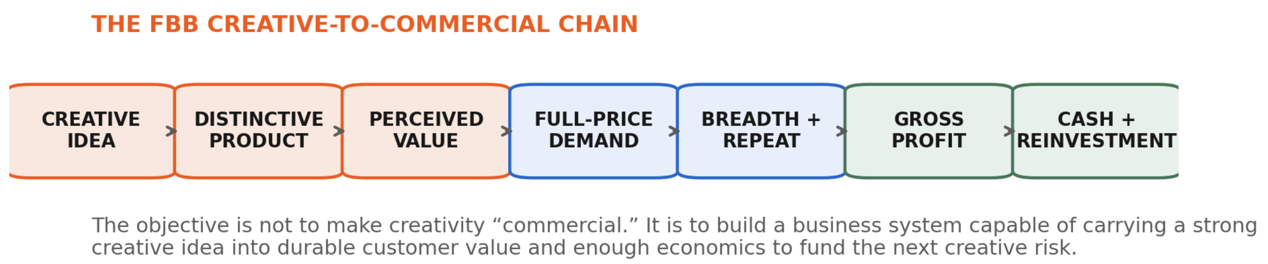

FIGURE 3 / The FBB Creative-to-Commercial Chain. The farther evidence travels downstream, the stronger the business claim.

4. The Creative-to-Commercial Clock

The correct clock starts when meaningful product under the new creative direction reaches stores at enough scale to affect customer choice. Appointment date, first show date and first retail delivery are different milestones. Judging every current designer on the same calendar date produces a false comparison.

House / reset	Appointment / creative start	Debut / first major expression	Meaningful retail exposure	Evidence available by 14 Aug 2026	Clock interpretation
Chanel / Blazy	Dec 2024	Oct 2025 debut	Mar 2026 first collection in stores [18]	Reported H1 +16%; strong demand/new-client commentary [18][19]	Only months of meaningful product exposure
Dior / Anderson	2025 appointment across mens/womens/couture [16]	Men Jun 2025; women SS26; couture Jan 2026	Progressive 2025-26 rollout	LVMH says first designs helped Q2 acceleration; Dior above division average [15]	Early commercial conversion; brand P&L opaque
Gucci / Demna	Jul 2025 effective [20]	La Famiglia Sep 2025; progressive retail from Jan 2026 [13]	Early 2026 meaningful newness	Q2 -2% comp; H1 -5%; Borsetto/Paparazzo traction; margin 17% [14]	Turning; not recovered
Burberry / Lee + Schulman	Lee Sep 2022; Schulman Jul 2024 [17][21]	Lee debut Feb 2023; first offer in stores Sep 2023 [17]	Multiple seasons + 2024-26 commercial reset	FY26 profitable sales growth; Q1 FY27 +5% comp and broad product/customer gains [16] [22]	Longer commercial exposure; stronger durability test

Timing is based on company disclosures and Reuters reporting. The “clock interpretation” is FBB analysis, not a company classification. [13]-[22]

ANALYTICAL RULE / Do not ask whether these designers are equally successful. Ask what evidence should reasonably exist at each stage of the commercial clock.

5. Historical Benchmark I - Saint Laurent: Repositioning Became Economics

Hedi Slimane-era Saint Laurent is a useful benchmark because it shows how a strong aesthetic shift can become a broad commercial repositioning. It is also a warning against attributing an entire transformation to the designer alone.

€707m	€974m	+60%
2014 revenue [3]	2015 revenue [4]	2015 recurring operating income growth [4]

By 2014, Kering said Saint Laurent's revenue had doubled in three years, driven by successful market repositioning. Revenue reached €707.3 million, up 27.2% comparable, while recurring operating income rose to €105.1 million. Directly operated store sales grew strongly and growth was broad across categories and geographies. [3]

In 2015, revenue increased again to €973.6 million, up 25.8% comparable, while recurring operating income reached €168.5 million, up 60.3%. [4]

Why it matters for 2026

- The creative reset was accompanied by a coherent market repositioning rather than isolated runway novelty.
- Direct retail and distribution control mattered: the visual identity and product message were reinforced by where and how the brand was sold.
- The P&L evidence became visible in both revenue and operating income - stronger proof than cultural attention alone.
- Causality remains shared: management, distribution and repositioning were part of the mechanism. The lesson is system alignment, not "one designer caused the whole result."

HISTORICAL LESSON / A creative reset becomes powerful when it compresses the brand into a legible proposition that product, stores, communications and distribution can repeat consistently.

6. Historical Benchmark II - Gucci: The Clearest Full Conversion

The Michele/Bizzarri era is the strongest historical example in this paper because conversion can be observed at every stage: attention, identifiable product franchises, broad category growth, direct retail, digital acceleration, revenue and operating margin.

€3.90bn	+43.4%	41.0%
2015 Gucci revenue [4]	H1 2017 comparable revenue growth [5]	2019 recurring operating margin [6]

In January 2015, Marco Bizzarri became CEO and Alessandro Michele creative director. Kering's 2015 results describe the new creative vision and strategy as providing fresh impetus, with Q4 comparable growth of 5%. Crucially, the company noted that Michele's first fully designed Cruise collection only entered stores at the end of Q3, separating appointment buzz from actual retail exposure. [4]

By H1 2017, the evidence had moved far beyond buzz. Gucci revenue was €2.833 billion, up 43.4% comparable. Directly operated store sales rose 46.2%, online sales grew more than 60%, and Leather Goods, women's and men's ready-to-wear and shoes all posted robust growth. Recurring operating income reached €907.3 million and margin 32.0%; Kering also noted Q2 growth without in-store markdowns. [5]

By 2019, Gucci revenue reached €9.628 billion and recurring operating income €3.947 billion, with a 41.0% margin. Kering noted that sales had more than doubled between 2016 and 2019. [6]

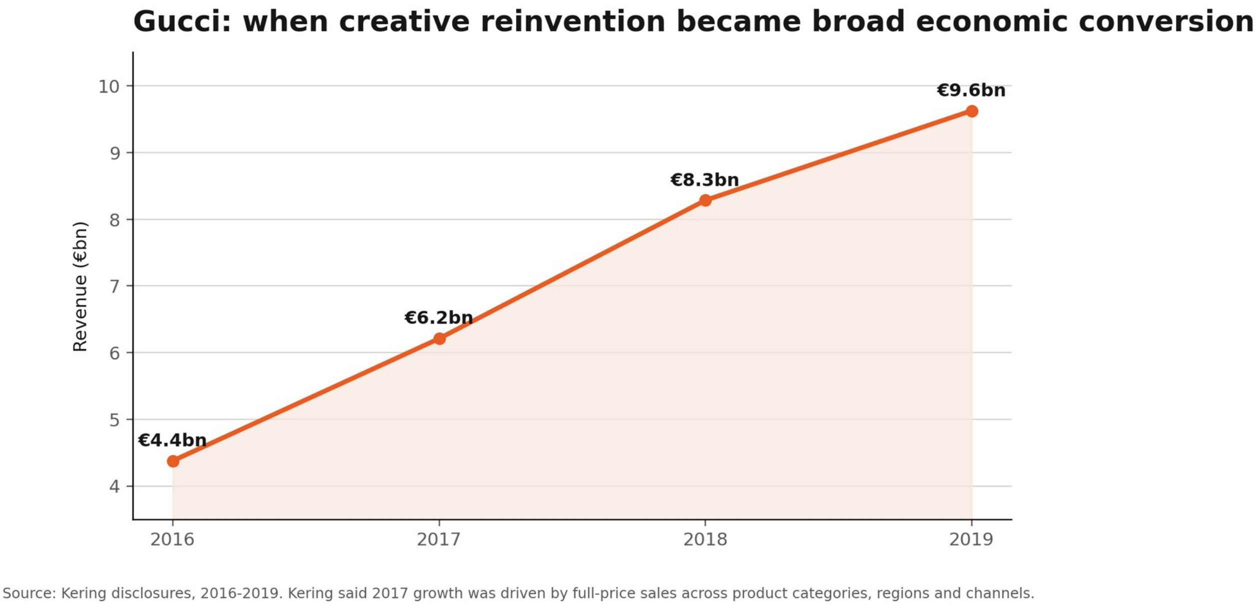

FIGURE 4 / Gucci is the clearest historical example in this paper of creative reinvention becoming broad revenue conversion. Source: Kering disclosures. [5][6]

What actually converted?

01 Creative codes were serialized into recognizable commercial franchises rather than left as runway ideas.

02 CEO and creative director operated as a paired leadership model: creative reinvention and business execution moved together.

03 Merchandising broadened the signal across leather goods, ready-to-wear and shoes instead of depending on a single object.

04 Direct retail and digital channels amplified the identity while protecting the customer relationship.

05 Operating leverage eventually proved that desire was not merely being purchased through marketing spend.

THE KEY DISTINCTION / Gucci did not prove that one aesthetic "works." It proved that a distinct creative worldview can become a business system when management turns it into repeatable product, distribution, digital and retail execution.

7. Historical Benchmark III - Bottega Veneta: Margin Can Lag the Turn

Daniel Lee's Bottega Veneta is the most useful case for avoiding a common analytical mistake: treating short-term margin pressure as proof that a creative reset is failing.

€1.17bn	+8.2%	€1.50bn
2019 revenue [6]	H2 2019 comparable sales growth [6]	2021 revenue, an all-time high [7]

Bottega Veneta entered 2018 in a softer position. Kering appointed Daniel Lee in June 2018 while the house continued to invest and preserve its high-end positioning. [8] In 2019, revenue returned to growth; H2 rose 8.2% comparable and Q4 9.4%, which Kering linked to strong reception of Lee's collections. Yet recurring operating income fell and margin narrowed to 18.4% because the house deliberately increased operating expenses behind the transformation. [6]

By 2021, Kering reported Bottega Veneta revenue of roughly €1.503 billion, an all-time high, with a larger customer base and strong direct retail growth. [7]

Why this matters now

- A relaunch can require upfront investment in stores, communications, product teams and inventory.
- The correct test is whether early demand broadens and whether the investment eventually produces higher revenue and profit capacity.
- Conversely, margin improvement driven primarily by cost cuts cannot by itself prove creative conversion.

8. Historical Benchmark IV - Burberry: Creative Authority + Digital + Retail

The Ahrendts/Bailey period matters because it breaks the Kering-only bias in the historical sample and shows a different kind of conversion system: brand purification, product focus, direct retail, digital leadership and global consistency working together.

£743m	£2.33bn	70%
FY 2005/06 revenue baseline reported in Burberry's 2006/07 trading update [9]	FY 2013/14 revenue [10]	retail share of revenue in FY 2013/14 [10]

Angela Ahrendts became chief executive in 2006, partnering with Christopher Bailey's creative leadership. In Burberry's FY2006/07 trading update, management explicitly described significant investment to enhance the luxury component of the brand, expand retail and evolve the operating model. Full-year revenue reached £850 million versus £743 million the prior year, with retail sales up 24% underlying and broad regional gains. [9]

By FY2011/12, revenue had reached £1.857 billion, up 24% year-on-year, while adjusted profit before tax rose 26%. Retail represented 68% of revenue; all regions and product divisions grew double digit; outerwear and large leather goods were major demand engines; and the company was explicitly investing in customer insight, digital marketing and retail. [23]

By FY2013/14, revenue reached £2.33 billion. Burberry described the result as the product of disciplined execution of a uniform strategy over several years; its annual report emphasized innovative product design, digital marketing and dynamic retail strategies working together. [10]

What this adds to the framework

- Creative authority became more valuable because it was embedded into a single global brand system.
- Retail ownership and digital did not sit beside creativity; they became distribution mechanisms for the same brand idea.
- Core icons such as outerwear remained commercial anchors while the company expanded non-apparel and customer reach.
- This is an early proof that "creative + customer + channel" can be a system advantage, not only a design advantage.

HISTORICAL LESSON / The conversion engine can be built in different ways. What repeats across winners is not a specific aesthetic; it is organizational coherence around a distinctive product and customer proposition.

9. Counter-case - Gucci 2023-25: Creative Change Without Business Recovery

Studying only winners creates survivorship bias. A useful framework must also explain why a creative reset can generate individual product successes or encouraging commentary without repairing the wider business. Gucci's 2023-25 period provides that control case.

€9.9bn	€7.7bn	€6.0bn
2023 revenue; -2% comparable [11]	2024 revenue; -21% comparable [12]	2025 revenue; -19% comparable [13]

Kering entered 2023 with an explicit plan to revitalize Gucci and appointed Sabato De Sarno as creative director. Yet the company's reported economics deteriorated through the reset. Gucci revenue was €9.9 billion in 2023, down on a comparable basis. [11] In 2024 revenue fell to €7.7 billion, down 21% comparable, while recurring operating income fell to €1.6 billion and margin to 21.0%. Kering simultaneously noted encouraging performance from new leather-goods lines and reinterpretations of the Jackie bag. [12]

That contradiction is precisely why this case matters: product-level encouragement existed inside a deteriorating commercial system. In Q1 2025, revenue was still down 25% comparable despite a promising Softbit launch; De Sarno's collaboration with Gucci ended in February 2025. [12][24]

In 2025, after the creative transition, Gucci revenue declined again to €5.992 billion, down 19% comparable, and recurring operating income fell to €966 million. Later in the year, La Famiglia helped revive interest, but the business remained far from recovery. [13]

What the counter-case proves

01 A product can be "well received" while the house still loses traffic, revenue and operating leverage.

02 Creative change cannot overcome every simultaneous problem: customer fatigue, price/value tension, weak traffic, distribution restructuring, management transition and macro conditions can overwhelm upstream creative improvement.

03 This is why named-product success is a stage-two signal, not a turnaround verdict.

04 The framework must be willing to say "creative traction, no business conversion" when downstream evidence remains negative.

CONTROL-CASE VERDICT / Creative change without a functioning conversion system can produce isolated wins inside a declining business. Positive product commentary is not the same thing as recovery.

10. What the Historical Evidence Actually Proves

Capability	Saint Laurent	Gucci 2015-19	Bottega Veneta	Burberry 2006-14	Gucci 2023-25 counter-case
Distinct creative proposition	Strong	Very strong	Very strong	Strong / globally coherent	Newness visible, but insufficient conversion
Management alignment	System repositioning	Explicit paired reset	Investment-backed relaunch	CEO + creative + digital/retail system	Multiple leadership transitions
Product translation	Broad categories	Multiple franchises/categories	New leather-goods icons + RTW	Outerwear + non-apparel expansion	Individual products positive, broader traffic weak
Retail / distribution	DTC growth important	DTC + digital surge	Retail + selective wholesale	Retail share expanded materially	Distribution being reset while demand fell
Breadth	Categories + regions	Categories + regions + digital	Regions + channels	Channels + regions + products	Insufficient breadth
Economic proof	Revenue + ROI	Revenue + very high margin	Revenue first, margin later	Revenue + profit + retail mix	Revenue and ROI deteriorated

The historical evidence therefore supports a conditional proposition: creativity can become a major economic force when the company is able to turn a distinctive point of view into legible products, broad distribution quality, customer conversion and repeatable operating economics. It does not support the stronger claim that changing the designer is, by itself, a turnaround strategy.

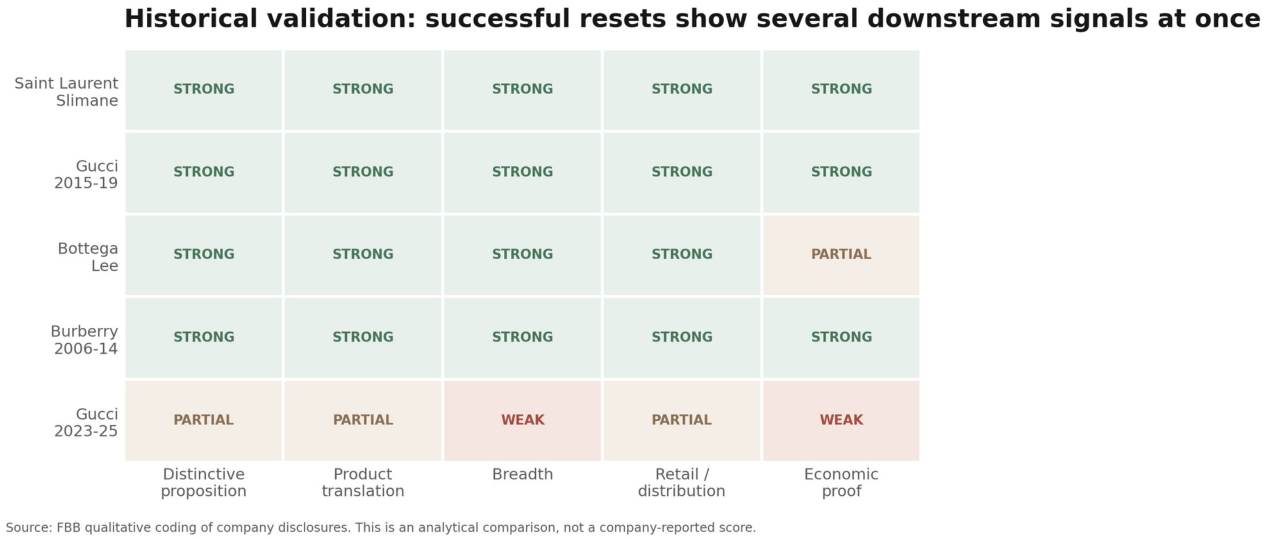

FIGURE 5 / Historical validation and the counter-case. Successful resets show several downstream signals at once; the failed-conversion case does not.

11. Why 2026 Is a Harder Test Than 2015-2019

Historical examples prove that creativity can create enormous economic value. They do not prove that the same playbook will convert at the same speed in 2026. The demand environment is different.

THEN: high-growth luxury cycle	NOW: 2026 recalibration
Broader category growth could lift multiple houses	Bain base case: personal luxury goods +2-4%; growth is more selective [2]
Aspirational recruitment was a major growth engine	Aspirational customers are more price/value sensitive; brands must recruit without eroding exclusivity [1][2]
Price increases had more room to support growth	Repeated price increases have created a visible value question [1]
Leather goods benefited from powerful category momentum	Jewelry is materially stronger than several soft-luxury categories in current results [1][14][15]
Social platforms expanded reach and desire	Discovery is more fragmented; resale and AI increase comparison and transparency [2]
Rising market demand could mask execution weakness	House-level outperformance increasingly requires share capture, customer reactivation or category advantage

11.1 The customer is not rejecting luxury; the customer is re-evaluating value

BoF/McKinsey's survey does not describe a customer who simply wants lower prices. It describes a customer who wants clearer reasons to pay: better product quality, stronger service, more creativity, greater exclusivity and trust. [1]

11.2 The category mix makes "luxury recovery" an unreliable headline

Current 2026 results show jewelry performing very differently from fashion and leather goods. Kering Jewelry grew 20% comparable in H1 2026 while Gucci was still negative; LVMH's watches and jewelry also outperformed its fashion division. [14][15] This means a group-level recovery can coexist with a fashion-house reset that remains incomplete.

11.3 Growth is more likely to be zero-sum

If the category grows only modestly, exceptional house-level acceleration is less likely to come from market growth alone. This is an FBB inference, not a directly reported market-share calculation, but it raises the strategic stakes: a successful creative reset may increasingly mean persuading a customer to reallocate attention and wallet share from another house.

2026 IMPLICATION / The new creative director operates in a slower-growth, more transparent and more selective market. The standard of proof should be higher: not just "did the collection create heat?" but "did the house win a customer, a product category and a profitable repeat purchase?"

12. Live Case I - Chanel / Matthieu Blazy

Preliminary verdict: COMMERCIAL CONVERSION STRONGLY INDICATED / FULL RECOVERY STILL PROVISIONAL

Chanel is currently the strongest headline signal that a new creative direction can move beyond attention into product demand. It is also the case that requires the strictest disclosure discipline because Chanel is private.

Evidence

- Blazy's first Chanel collection landed in stores in March 2026. Reuters reported strong demand for handbags, two-tone pumps and tweed jackets, alongside comments from Harrods describing unusually strong recruitment of new Chanel clients. [18]
- Reuters later reported, citing Bloomberg and a person familiar with Chanel's performance, that comparable H1 2026 revenue rose about 16%, with Blazy's new collections associated with the acceleration. [19]
- The commercial clock is therefore more meaningful than the appointment date: most of the relevant product exposure begins in March, not December 2024.

What the evidence does - and does not - prove

The combination of strong retail demand, named products and a reported revenue acceleration is stronger than runway buzz. But it still cannot isolate how much of H1 growth was caused by Blazy versus base effects, existing category momentum, pricing, tourist flows, store execution or other factors. Chanel also does not publish the same brand-level margin detail as a listed group.

Stage	Current signal	Confidence
Attention	Strong	High
Product proof	Strong: multiple named categories	Medium-high
Full-price / sales	Strong reported H1 acceleration	Medium
Breadth	Positive signs across bags, shoes, jackets	Medium
Economics	Public margin evidence unavailable	Low
Repeatability	Too early	Low

VERDICT / Commercial conversion is strongly indicated. The next proof is repeatability across H2, breadth beyond launch scarcity, and whether the reported acceleration persists after the first collection's novelty fades.

13. Live Case II - Dior / Jonathan Anderson

Preliminary verdict: PRODUCT TRACTION / EARLY COMMERCIAL CONVERSION - BRAND ECONOMICS PARTLY OPAQUE

Dior is analytically important because the available evidence is both persuasive and incomplete. LVMH can name the brand and product effect, but Dior's standalone P&L is not publicly disclosed.

- BoF/McKinsey identified Anderson's Dior as the top Paris SS26 show by user-generated-content share of voice, making attention unusually measurable. [1]
- LVMH said in July 2026 that acceleration in the second quarter arose in particular from the success of Jonathan Anderson's first designs for Christian Dior. [15]
- Management also said Dior was positive in Q2, above the Fashion & Leather Goods division average, with leather goods and women's ready-to-wear outperforming on the strength of Anderson's first collections. [25]

Interpretation

This is already stronger than "the show was well received." The company is explicitly connecting products under the new creative direction with improved brand momentum. Yet the downstream economic chain remains only partly visible: no separate Dior revenue percentage, gross margin or operating margin is published. The right response is to lower confidence, not invent precision.

Stage	Current signal	Confidence
Attention	Strong	High
Product proof	Strong; company cites first designs/collections	Medium-high
Full-price / sales	Positive company signal; no standalone rate	Medium
Breadth	Leather goods + women's RTW positive	Medium
Economics	Brand P&L not disclosed	Low
Repeatability	Too early	Low

DISCLOSURE LESSON / Absence of public Dior brand-level economics is not the same as absence of economic impact. The correct analytical response is lower confidence, not a fabricated number.

14. Live Case III - Gucci / Demna

Preliminary verdict: TURNING / NOT RECOVERED

Gucci is the most important live case because it contains both a failed prior conversion and a new experiment. The crucial analytical move is to separate Sabato De Sarno's 2023-25 phase from Demna's current phase rather than treating "Gucci reset" as one continuous event.

Chronology

Phase	Creative / commercial event	Economic context
2023-24	De Sarno reset begins; new product and icon refresh	Revenue weakens; 2024 -21% comparable [11][12]
Feb-Mar 2025	De Sarno exits; Demna appointed, effective July	Q1 2025 revenue -25% comparable despite promising Softbit [24]
Sep 2025-Jan 2026	La Famiglia presented then progressively rolled into stores	Kering says it helped revive interest; 2025 still -19% comparable [13]
H1 2026	New collections/products including Borsetto and Paparazzo gain traction	Q2 -2% comparable; H1 -5%; margin 17.0% [14]

H1 2026 evidence

- Q2 Gucci revenue declined 2% comparable, a seven-point sequential improvement from Q1 and the strongest sequential acceleration in several quarters. [14]
- Kering said new collections continued to gain traction, improving brand visibility, client engagement and retail trends. Borsetto and Paparazzo were named as successful launches. [14]
- All regions improved in the quarter; North America was the key growth driver, while Mainland China remained challenging. [14]
- H1 revenue remained down 5% comparable. Recurring operating margin improved to 17.0%, but Kering explicitly attributed part of the margin improvement to continued cost discipline. [14]

Interpretation

This is a textbook example of why recovery must be staged. Product traction is real. Sequential improvement is real. Margin improvement is real. But none of those facts makes "Gucci is back" a defensible claim while revenue remains negative and cost actions contribute to the economics. The current phase has moved from creative heat toward commercial conversion; it has not yet reached business recovery.

KEY LESSON / At Gucci, the most useful signal is not that a bag is popular. It is that the direction of travel is improving while multiple downstream indicators begin to move together. The next test is whether that improvement crosses into positive full-price comparable growth and repeats.

15. Live Case IV - Burberry / Daniel Lee + Joshua Schulman

Preliminary verdict: EARLY BUSINESS RECOVERY / HIGHEST PUBLIC EVIDENCE QUALITY

Burberry is analytically valuable because the current recovery is not cleanly attributable to one variable - and that is exactly why it resembles the operating system described by BoF/McKinsey. Daniel Lee's creative direction is now being translated through Joshua Schulman's Burberry Forward strategy, pricing architecture, merchandising, store execution and customer acquisition.

Evidence

- FY2025/26 returned to positive comparable store sales growth (+2% for the year) and adjusted operating profit rose to £160 million with a 6.6% adjusted margin. [22]
- Q1 FY27 comparable retail sales grew 5%. For the first time in three years, Burberry reported growth across Womenswear, Menswear, Accessories and Childrenswear. [16]
- Outerwear grew double digit; women's handbags returned to growth and attracted new customers; Gen Z grew double digit; e-commerce grew mid-teens. [16]
- Management explicitly said the product and pricing strategy is working across good/better/best tiers and highlighted improved store productivity from clienteling, visual merchandising and category destinations. [16]

Why this is stronger evidence

Burberry's disclosure covers more of the conversion chain than most peers: customer acquisition, product categories, comparable retail, regional breadth, e-commerce, store productivity and operating profit. It is therefore the strongest public case that creativity and commercial execution are moving together. The caveat is timing: Burberry is further along the clock than Chanel or Dior, and Schulman's operating reset is a major confounder.

Stage	Current signal	Confidence
Attention	Positive brand momentum	Medium-high
Product proof	Strong across outerwear + handbags	High
Full-price / sales	Q1 +5% comparable; FY26 positive	High
Breadth	All major divisions; multiple regions/cohorts	High
Economics	FY26 adjusted profit/margin improved	High
Repeatability	Several improving quarters, but still early vs long-cycle proof	Medium-high

VERDICT / Burberry currently shows the broadest evidence of early business recovery. The right credit assignment is "creative + management + merchandising + pricing + retail execution," not "Daniel Lee alone."

16. 2026 Reset Matrix: Stage vs. Evidence Confidence

One score cannot capture both how far a turnaround has progressed and how confidently the public evidence lets us measure it. The final FBB framework therefore uses two axes.

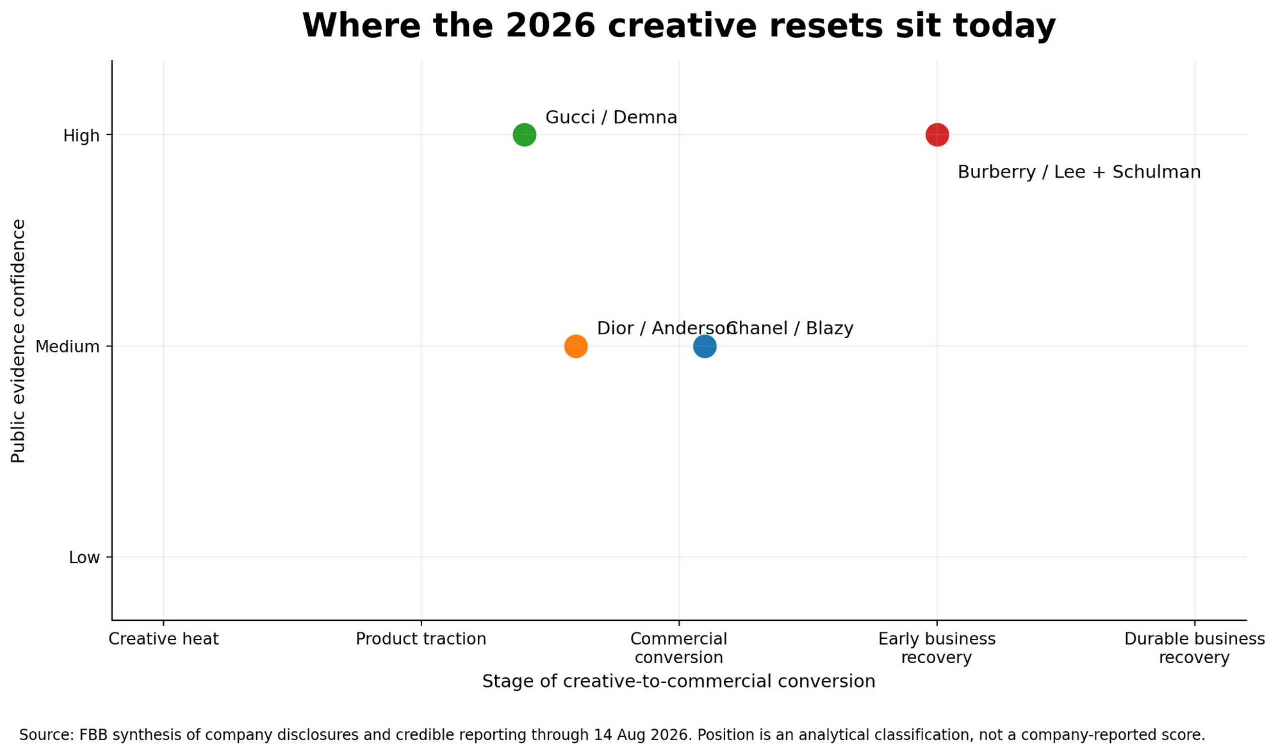

FIGURE 6 / Current stage and evidence confidence should be read separately. This avoids over-crediting a young reset or under-crediting a private-company signal.

House	Conversion stage	Evidence confidence	Why
Chanel / Blazy	COMMERCIAL CONVERSION	MEDIUM	Strong reported sales/product demand; private-company economics limit verification.
Dior / Anderson	EARLY COMMERCIAL CONVERSION	MEDIUM	Management explicitly links first designs with acceleration; no standalone P&L.
Gucci / Demna	PRODUCT TRACTION -> COMMERCIAL CONVERSION	HIGH	Detailed public house-level data; revenue still negative.
Burberry / Lee + Schulman	EARLY BUSINESS RECOVERY	HIGH	Public KPIs span customer, category, channel, revenue and operating profit.

Verdict ladder

STAGE / CREATIVE HEAT ONLY -> PRODUCT TRACTION -> COMMERCIAL CONVERSION -> EARLY BUSINESS RECOVERY -> DURABLE BUSINESS RECOVERY. The label should move only when new downstream evidence appears.

Confidence ladder

CONFIDENCE / LOW = attention/buyer commentary only. MEDIUM = credible private or management evidence with missing P&L. HIGH = direct house-level public KPIs and economics.

17. The Confounder Matrix

Because the research question asks whether creativity is fixing luxury, the paper must explicitly show what else could be causing the observed result. The matrix below is an attribution-control device, not a claim that each factor has equal weight.

House	Creative change	CEO / management	Cost actions	Store / distribution	Product / pricing	Category / macro tailwind	Attribution implication
Chanel	Blazy	Stable private-company leadership	Not publicly granular	Strong boutique/clienteling system	New bags/shoes/RTW; high scarcity	Private disclosure; strong affluent base	Positive signal, but causal share cannot be isolated
Dior	Anderson	Delphine Arnault leadership; LVMH group system	Group-level discipline	New House of Dior locations; global network	New creative product architecture	LVMH portfolio/category mix helps absorb volatility	Brand signal credible; exact economics hidden in segment
Gucci	Demna after failed prior reset	CEO changes + ReconKering	Explicit cost discipline	Network rationalization + distribution reset	Borsetto/Paparazzo/ newness	US stronger; China still hard	Sequential turn is multi-variable; margin not pure creative proof
Burberry	Lee	Schulman + Burberry Forward	Restructuring/ productivity	Clienteling, category destinations, wholesale quality	Good/better/best; outerwear/scarves authority	Americas/China improving	Best evidence of system conversion, not designer-only causality

ATTRIBUTION RULE / The stronger the confounders, the more precise the language should become. “Creative renewal is associated with improving demand” is often more defensible than “the designer caused the turnaround.”

18. Cross-Case Findings

Finding 1 - Creativity can restart the reason to look

Every successful case begins by restoring distinctiveness. Without a new reason to pay attention, the downstream commercial system has nothing fresh to convert.

Finding 2 - Product quality and product legibility matter more than runway novelty

BoF/McKinsey's HNW survey ranks quality/craftsmanship ahead of design innovation. Historical winners serialized creative codes into products customers could recognize, desire and buy repeatedly. [1]

Finding 3 - Management alignment is a multiplier

The historical Gucci case is inseparable from Bizzarri/Michele alignment; the historical Burberry case from Ahrendts/Bailey and retail/digital integration; today's Burberry from Lee/Schulman. Creative ambition needs an operating sponsor.

Finding 4 - Breadth is the antidote to the hero-product trap

The strongest proof arrives when demand extends across categories, geographies and customer groups. Gucci H1 2017 is a historical gold standard; current Burberry's all-division growth is more meaningful than one viral accessory. [5][16]

Finding 5 - Margin must be read on the correct timeline

Bottega 2019 shows that a relaunch can depress margin while demand improves. Gucci 2026 shows the opposite caution: margin can improve partly through cost discipline while sales remain negative. [6][14]

Finding 6 - The failed-conversion case changes the conclusion

Gucci 2023-25 proves that encouraging product signals can coexist with deteriorating revenue and operating income. Any framework that calls that a turnaround is measuring the wrong thing.

Finding 7 - 2026 is more zero-sum

With modest category growth, a successful creative reset increasingly needs to win share, reactivate customers or create category-specific strength rather than merely ride broad luxury expansion. [2]

Finding 8 - Creative direction is a demand catalyst, not a business model

A designer can change what the brand means and what products the organization can build around. Merchandising determines the buy; operations availability; pricing perceived value; retail conversion; finance whether the demand is worth having.

ONE-LINE CONCLUSION / The creative director creates the possibility of demand. The organization determines whether that possibility becomes productive revenue, repeat behavior and durable economics.

19. The FBB Creative-to-Commercial Test for Luxury Houses

The industry version of the framework asks whether creative renewal has moved from cultural relevance into products, full-price demand, breadth, customer behavior and economics. The objective is not to manufacture a score. It is to stop upstream cultural evidence from being mistaken for downstream economic proof.

#	Test	Question	Strongest evidence
01	ATTENTION	Has the house regained cultural relevance?	Share of voice, search, earned media
02	PRODUCT PROOF	Can we identify new products customers demonstrably want?	Named products, scarcity, sell-through commentary
03	FULL-PRICE DEMAND	Are customers paying intended prices?	Comparable retail, markdown discipline, AUR
04	BREADTH	Is demand broader than one hero SKU/category?	Multiple categories and franchises
05	CUSTOMER ACQUISITION	Is the reset recruiting new or lapsed clients?	New-client data, CRM cohorts
06	REGIONAL BREADTH	Is improvement visible in more than one geography?	Comparable regional sales
07	RETAIL PRODUCTIVITY	Are stores/e-commerce converting interest more efficiently?	Sales density, traffic conversion, e-com growth
08	REVENUE	Is organic/comparable trajectory improving?	House-level comparable growth
09	PROFIT QUALITY	Are gross/operating profits improving for the right reasons?	Margin + inventory + investment bridge
10	REPEATABILITY	Can demand be reproduced across 2-3 commercial seasons?	Replenishment, second-season growth, repeat cohorts

20. Strategic Implications for Luxury Management

20.1 Build the merchandising bridge before the show

Management should know which creative signatures are intended to become franchises, which are halo pieces and which price tiers recruit the next customer. Waiting for applause before building the product architecture wastes the attention window.

20.2 Treat the debut as a portfolio of experiments

Protect artistic risk by separating runway experimentation from commercial depth. Early signals should inform buy depth and localization without turning design into algorithmic committee work.

20.3 Measure productive revenue, not only top-line growth

The better metric is full-price sell-through, inventory health, store productivity and repeat purchase. Revenue created through promotion, wholesale loading or indiscriminate expansion is weaker evidence.

20.4 Make service part of the product

BoF/McKinsey's HNW data puts store experience ahead of creativity as a spending trigger. Tailoring, repair, clienteling, product education and recognition extend perceived value beyond the object. [1]

20.5 Use price as a consequence, not as the first signal

Management should be able to articulate what materially improved - construction, scarcity, service, design distinction, craft visibility or experience - before relying on another price increase.

20.6 Protect repeatability

Do not build an entire recovery around one "it" bag or one designer personality. A durable system needs permanent icons, seasonal newness, multiple categories, customer ownership and a communication cadence that survives the debut.

21. Translation for Founders and Growing Brands

The scale is different, but the logic is portable. A small brand does not need a famous creative director. It needs the same conversion discipline.

Luxury-house lesson	Founder translation
Creativity must become product	Define one or two repeatable product codes customers can recognize without the logo.
Buzz must become full-price demand	Track conversion and sell-through after content spikes; do not confuse likes with demand.
Breadth matters	After one hero works, build a companion product and a repeat/replenishment engine before over-expanding.
Retail/clienteling matters	Own customer data and build post-purchase service even if the “store” is digital.
Margin can lag investment	Know which launch costs are temporary strategic investment and which are structural bad economics.
Price follows authority	Improve product, perceived quality, experience and credibility before moving price.
Creative direction is not the model	The business still needs unit economics, inventory discipline, customer ownership and cash resilience.

22. H2 2026 Watchlist + Claims Discipline

The live cases remain open. The following evidence should be refreshed immediately before the video is scripted or published.

Evidence to watch	Why it matters	Cases most affected
H2 sell-through / product availability	Separates launch scarcity from sustainable demand	Chanel, Dior, Gucci
Full-price comparable retail growth	Best public proxy for real conversion	Gucci, Burberry
Breadth across categories	Tests whether recovery is larger than one hero	All
Repeat/new-customer data	Shows recruitment and retention	Chanel, Burberry
Margin after reset investment	Tests whether demand becomes economic repair	Gucci, Burberry; Chanel if disclosed
China / aspirational behavior	Largest unresolved value-equation test	All
Leather goods vs. jewelry divergence	Shows how category structure helps/hurts	LVMH, Kering
Second/third commercial season	Strongest test of repeatability	Chanel, Dior, current Gucci reset

Claims discipline

Status	Claim	Why
SAFE	BoF/McKinsey argues luxury must translate creative energy through merchandising, marketing and stores into measurable commercial impact.	Directly supported by the report. [1]
SAFE	Chanel H1 2026 comparable revenue was reported at about +16%.	Reuters/Bloomberg; use “reported” because Chanel is private. [19]
AVOID	Matthieu Blazy caused Chanel’s entire H1 growth.	Multiple variables contributed; causal share cannot be isolated.
SAFE	LVMH says Anderson’s first Dior designs contributed to Q2 acceleration.	Direct company disclosure. [15]
AVOID	Dior grew X% because of Anderson.	No standalone Dior percentage is disclosed.
SAFE	Gucci improved sharply sequentially but remained down 5% comparable in H1.	Direct Kering disclosure. [14]
AVOID	Gucci is back.	Revenue remains negative; recovery is incomplete.
SAFE	Burberry Q1 showed +5% comparable retail sales and growth across all four major divisions.	Direct company disclosure. [16]
AVOID	Daniel Lee alone turned around Burberry.	Creative, CEO, merchandising, pricing, cost and retail execution all changed.
INFERENCE	In a 2-4% market, exceptional house growth is likely partly share transfer.	Plausible market arithmetic, not directly proven without market-share data. [2]

23. Final Thesis

Is creativity actually fixing luxury?

Creativity is already helping repair demand at several luxury houses. There is much less evidence yet that it has repaired the economics.

BoF and McKinsey were directionally right to identify creative renewal as a necessary part of luxury's recalibration. The industry needed new reasons for customers to desire product after years in which price increases often did more work than product newness. But the report's own evidence also tells us why a designer cannot carry the burden alone: affluent customers rank quality and craftsmanship above creativity as a spending trigger; service matters; trust matters; and the report explicitly demands alignment between creative energy, merchandising, marketing and stores. [1]

History shows what full conversion looks like. Saint Laurent turned repositioning into rapidly growing sales and operating income. Gucci turned a worldview into multiple product franchises, direct retail, digital acceleration and extraordinary margin. Bottega Veneta shows that investment can make margin lag the turn. Burberry's Ahrendts/Bailey era shows that creative authority can become more valuable when integrated with digital, retail and product systems. [3]-[10][23]

The counter-case sharpens the conclusion. Gucci's 2023-25 reset produced encouraging product signals while revenue and operating income deteriorated. That means positive creative or product evidence cannot be treated as sufficient proof. The system must convert. [11]-[13][24]

The live 2026 cases sit at different points on the same ladder. Chanel shows the strongest reported commercial acceleration but lower disclosure confidence. Dior shows persuasive product and management evidence but incomplete brand economics. Gucci is turning but not recovered. Burberry shows the broadest high-confidence evidence of early business recovery, but its result is inseparable from management and operating changes. [14]-[19][22]

FINAL ANSWER / The creative director creates the possibility of demand. The organization determines the quality, scale and durability of the economics that follow. A luxury business is not repaired when the runway becomes exciting again. It is repaired when the new desire repeatedly survives the journey from product to full-price purchase to profit and cash.

For Fashion Business Blueprint, that is the standard worth carrying into every future creative-director story: do not judge the show. Judge the conversion machine.

The same standard can also be turned inward. The practitioner appendix below translates the industry test into a framework designers and founders can use on their own collection, product or brand.

Practitioner Appendix - Apply the FBB Creative-to-Commercial Test to Your Own Work

The industry audit establishes the principle; this appendix turns it into a practical diagnostic. The purpose is not to make designers less creative. It is to identify where creative strength is converting - or failing to convert - into a durable brand and business.

PRACTITIONER QUESTION / Is your creativity creating recognizable product, perceived value, full-price demand and repeatable economics - or only attention?

A. Use two scores, not one

Score each dimension twice: Creative Strength (how strong, distinctive and coherent is the idea?) and Conversion Evidence (what evidence shows customers actually value it?). A high creative score with weak conversion is not a failed design; it is a signal that the commercial bridge needs diagnosis.

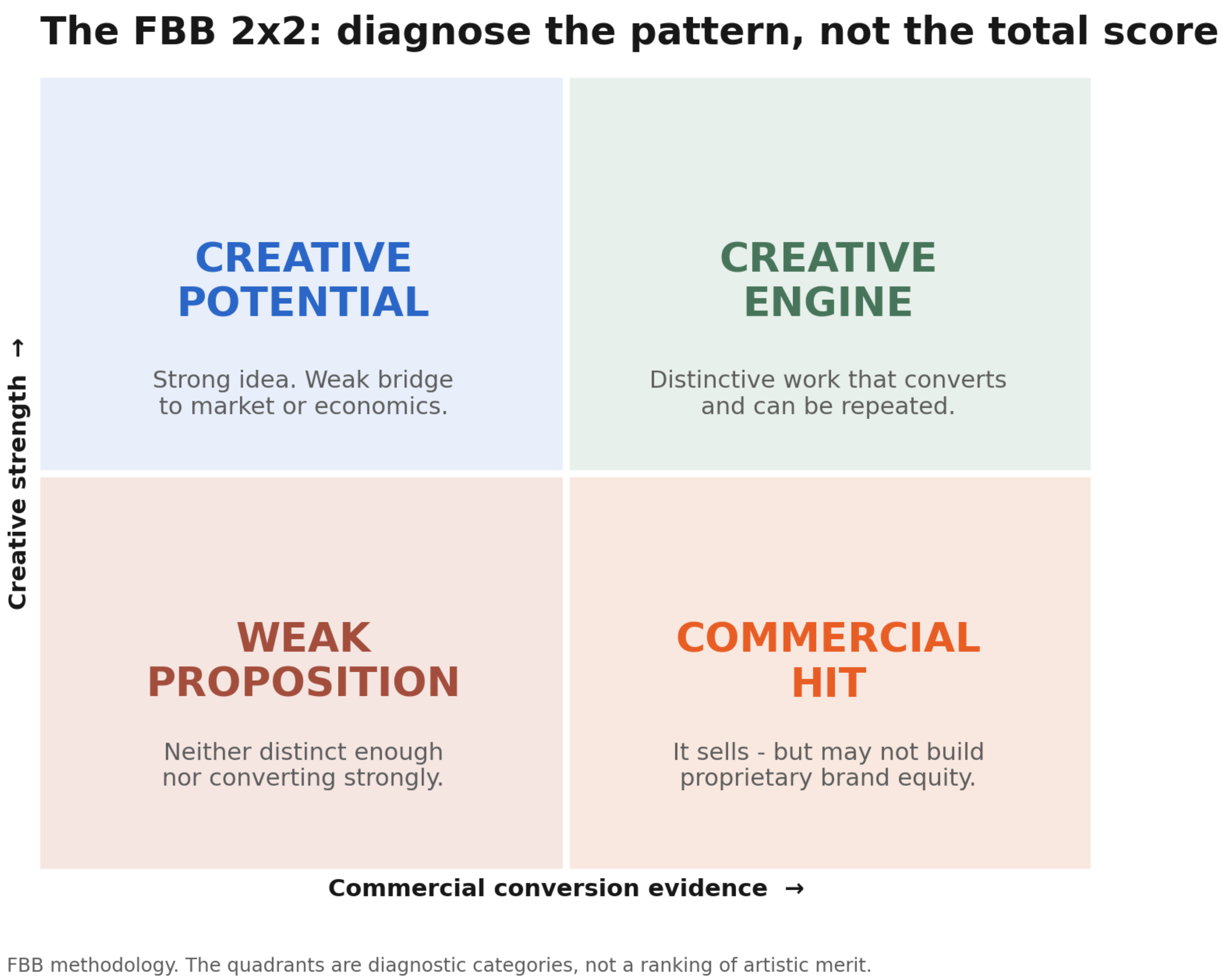

FIGURE 7 / The FBB 2x2 diagnostic. The goal is the Creative Engine quadrant: high creative strength and high commercial conversion.

B. The 10 designer-facing tests

#	Test	Question	What good evidence looks like
01	**Distinctiveness**	Could someone recognize this as yours without seeing the logo?	Clear authorship: silhouette, material, construction, color or styling codes.
02	**Brand coherence**	Does the work strengthen what the brand stands for?	Newness that expands the brand rather than disconnecting from it.
03	**Product translation**	Can the creative idea become products people can understand, use and buy?	Editorial/runway thinking becomes legible commercial objects.

#	Test	Question	What good evidence looks like
04	**Hero creation**	Is there an immediate entry point into the collection?	A hero product or proposition customers quickly understand and desire.
05	**Assortment breadth**	Does demand extend beyond one hero?	Companion products, categories, occasions or price steps convert the same codes.
06	**Value justification**	Can the customer explain why the product is worth its price?	Materials, construction, design, rarity, service or meaning support the premium.
07	**Full-price demand**	Do customers want it without needing a discount?	Healthy sell-through, reorder, waitlist or low markdown dependence.
08	**Customer expansion**	Is the work recruiting the right new customers while retaining existing ones?	Acquisition and retention, not temporary hype.
09	**Repeatability**	Can these codes generate another commercially relevant season?	A design system or franchise, not one lucky hit.
10	**Economic conversion**	After the cost to make and sell it, does the creativity create healthy economics?	Gross profit, inventory productivity and cash improve enough to fund the next cycle.

C. Do not overclaim from weak evidence

Attention is the fastest signal and the weakest proof. The strongest claims require downstream evidence. Use the ladder below to decide what you are actually entitled to conclude.

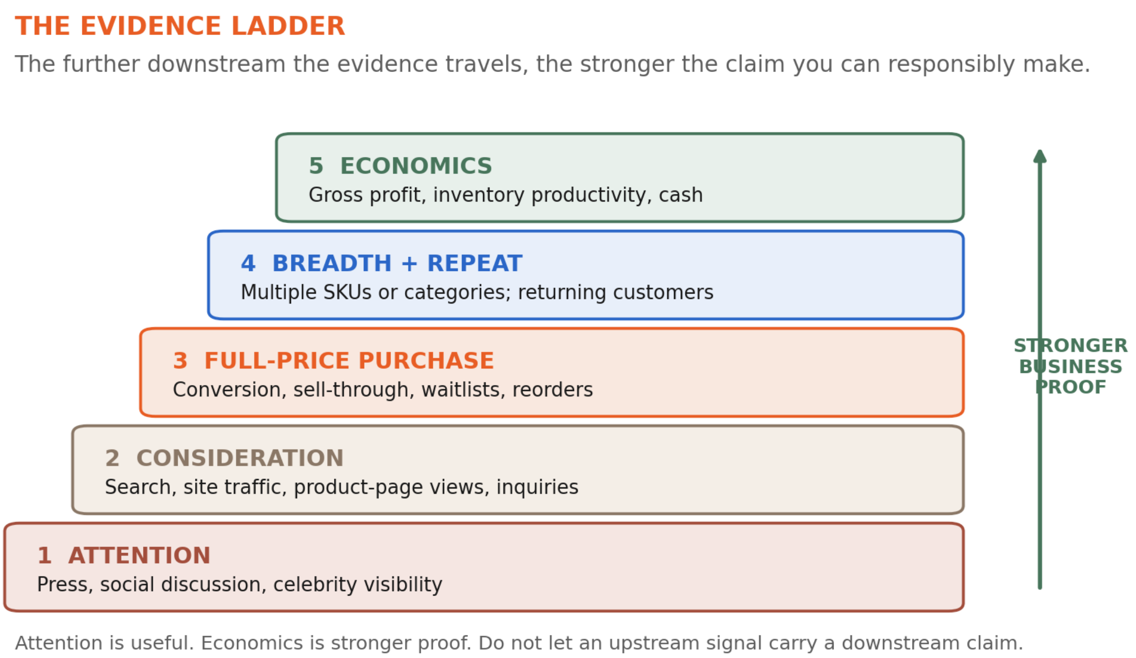

FIGURE 8 / Evidence ladder. Likes, press and social response can establish attention; they cannot prove full-price demand, repeat behavior or business recovery.

D. One-page collection scorecard

Use 1-5 for each layer. Do not chase the highest total. Look for the bottleneck: where does the pattern fall sharply from creative strength to conversion evidence?

Dimension	Creative strength /5	Conversion evidence /5	Evidence / next action
Distinctiveness			

Dimension	Creative strength /5	Conversion evidence /5	Evidence / next action
Brand coherence			
Product translation			
Hero creation			
Assortment breadth			
Value justification			
Full-price demand			
Customer expansion			
Repeatability			
Economic conversion			

THE PRACTITIONER PRINCIPLE / The goal is not to become less creative. The goal is to build a business capable of converting creativity into enough economic power to keep creating.

Appendix A - Historical Data Snapshot

House / period	Revenue	Comparable growth / signal	Recurring operating income / margin	Interpretive note
Saint Laurent 2014	€707.3m	+27.2%	€105.1m; 14.9% margin	Kering says revenue doubled in three years via repositioning. [3]
Saint Laurent 2015	€973.6m	+25.8%	€168.5m; +60.3% ROI	Strong cross-category growth. [4]
Gucci 2015	€3.898bn	+0.4%; Q4 +5%	€1.032bn	New vision starts to convert late in year. [4]
Gucci H1 2017	€2.833bn	+43.4%	€907.3m; 32.0% margin	Broad product/DTC/online growth; no in-store markdowns. [5]
Gucci 2019	€9.628bn	+13.3%	€3.947bn; 41.0% margin	Sales more than doubled 2016-19. [6]
Bottega Veneta 2019	€1.168bn	H2 +8.2%; Q4 +9.4%	€215.2m; 18.4% margin	Demand turned while relaunch investment compressed margin. [6]
Bottega Veneta 2021	€1.503bn	Record sales	~€286m; ~19% margin	Scale confirms multi-year conversion. [7]
Burberry FY06/07	£850m	+15% underlying	N/A in this snapshot	Early Ahrendts period; retail +24% underlying. [9]
Burberry FY11/12	£1.857bn	+23% underlying	Adjusted PBT £376m	Retail 68%; all regions/product divisions double-digit. [23]
Burberry FY13/14	£2.330bn	+17% reported	Adjusted PBT £461m	Long-cycle creative/digital/retail system. [10]

Appendix B - Counter-case and Current 2026 Snapshot

Case	Latest evidence	Interpretation	Main caveat
Gucci / De Sarno reset	2024 -21% comparable; 2025 -19%; individual product signals positive [12][13]	Creative/product traction did not convert into recovery	Macro, pricing, traffic, distribution and management confounders
Chanel / Blazy	H1 comparable revenue reported ~+16%; first products in stores from Mar 2026 [18][19]	Strongest current commercial-conversion signal	Private company; interim figure reported, not company-published
Dior / Anderson	LVMH says first designs helped Q2 acceleration; Dior above division average [15] [25]	Product traction + early commercial conversion	No standalone Dior P&L
Gucci / Demna	Q2 -2% comp; H1 -5%; margin 17%; named products gaining traction [14]	Sequential turn, incomplete recovery	Cost actions also help margin; China remains challenging
Burberry / Lee + Schulman	Q1 +5% comp; all divisions growing; FY26 margin recovered to 6.6% [16][22]	Broad early business recovery	Longer reset clock; management actions materially contribute

Sources and Research Notes

[1] BoF & McKinsey & Company, The State of Fashion 2026, Theme 10 “Luxury Recalibrated,” pp. 121-127; plus McKinsey Global Fashion Index.

[2] Bain & Company / Altagamma, “Global luxury stabilizes amid compounding disruptions as brands race to amplify meaning and rebuild relevance,” 25 June 2026.

[3] Kering, 2014 Results - Another Year of Solid Performances, February 2015.

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[5] Kering, Record Growth in Revenue and Profits in First Half 2017, July 2017.

[6] Kering, 2019 Full-Year Results, February 2020.

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[9] Burberry Group plc, Second Half 2006/07 Trading Update, 17 April 2007.

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[13] Kering, 2025 Results: Sequential Improvement, February 2026.

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[15] LVMH, Accelerating Growth in the Second Quarter - Solid First-Half Results, 27 July 2026.

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[18] Reuters, “Chanel returns to growth as Blazy’s designs win over new shoppers,” 19 May 2026.

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[21] Burberry, Daniel Lee announced as Chief Creative Officer, 28 September 2022 (company reference).

[22] Burberry Group plc, Annual Report 2025/26.

[23] Burberry Group plc, Preliminary Results for the year ended 31 March 2012.

[24] Kering, First-quarter 2025 Revenue, 23 April 2025.

[25] Vogue Business, “LVMH’s Fashion Sales Rise 1% in Q2,” 27 July 2026, reporting LVMH management commentary on Dior.

Research note on source quality

Companion methodology: Fashion Business Blueprint, The FBB Creative-to-Commercial Test (August 2026). The practitioner appendix in this paper is a concise application; the standalone methodology paper contains the full scoring guidance, worksheets, worked example and course/team use cases.

Company disclosures are used for revenue, comparable growth and operating-profit metrics whenever available. Reuters is used where a private company does not publish equivalent interim data. BoF/McKinsey and Bain are used as market and consumer frameworks rather than substitutes for company financials. Where a conclusion is an FBB inference, the paper labels it as such. Public-company metrics are still subject to accounting definitions and group reporting boundaries; this paper does not treat management attribution as proof of single-variable causality.