

Guess co-founder Paul Marciano quits following sexual harassment probe

NEWSWATCH: Guess co-founder Paul Marciano is stepping down as executive chairman after the fashion company concluded an investigation into allegations of sexual harassment.



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The Los Angeles-based company was forced to pay more than \$500,000 to five people who accused him of sexual misconduct.

As part of the company-commissioned investigation, a special committee interviewed more than 40 people and reviewed around 1.5 million pages of documents.

Guess says they were unable to corroborate a number of allegations against Marciano, including kissing and groping, but it was found that he "exercised poor judgement in his communications with models and photographers", according to a [BBC report](#). They said he also put himself in situations where it was "plausible" he'd be accused of misconduct.

Although Marciano's resignation was reportedly voluntary, he denies the allegations made against him.

Among Marciano's accusers – who mostly remain unnamed – is American model Kate Upton, who tweeted in February that it was "disappointing" Guess was still "empowering" him as its creative director.

“ It's disappointing that such an iconic women's brand [@GUESS](#) is still empowering Paul Marciano as their creative director [#metoo](#)— Kate Upton (@KateUpton) [January 31, 2018](#) ”

This was followed up by an [interview with Time](#) magazine, in which Upton claimed that Marciano began harassing her during her first professional modelling campaign when she was 18.

"As soon as I walked in with photographer Yu Tsai, Paul came straight up to me, forcibly grabbed my breasts and started feeling them - playing with them actually. After I pushed him away, he said, 'I'm making sure they're real.'

"Despite doing everything I could physically do to avoid his touch throughout the meeting, he continued to touch me in a very dominating and aggressive way, grabbing my thighs, my arms to pull me closer, my shoulders to pull me closer, my neck, my breasts, and smelling me," Upton stated in the interview.

Photographer Yu Tsai said he witnessed the harassment Upton describes and corroborated details of her allegations.



Paul Marciano. Image credit [Financial Times](#)

In a statement to *Time*, Marciano called Upton's accusations "absolutely false" and "preposterous", claiming that he'd never been alone with the model and never touched her inappropriately.

Marciano will remain a board member and stay on as chief creative officer at the fashion retailer until his contract expires at the end of January. The board has appointed his brother Maurice Marciano as chairman.

For more:

[Guess founder quits over kissing and groping claims](#)

[Paul Marciano resigns as Guess executive chairman after probe](#)

[Guess co-founder steps down after sex misconduct investigation](#)