

Interview

Gaël Marchand

Interview conducted by Sarah Braun

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Mr. Marchand, after almost a decade as head of global security at Louis Vuitton, you are now choosing to create Add Lumen. What led you to take this step?

Above all, it is a natural movement; not a break: I have always been guided by a quest for meaning and mastery of my path. Add Lumen is the logical continuation of a journey marked by commitment, analysis, and demanding standards. It is the desire to make available, beyond a single group, convictions forged over the years in complex environments, and to offer discreet, strategic support based on solid field experience.

You have a diverse and atypical background, between the gendarmerie, international institutions, public companies, and the luxury sector. What do you take away from this path?

I have learned to evolve in shifting contexts. I have commanded units, managed crises, worked internationally. I have also taught, supported, and listened. Through these experiences, a constant: security is not an end; it is a means. A means to protect people, to preserve continuity, to guarantee trust. At Louis Vuitton, I was able to realize this vision by embodying a strategic function. Now, with Add Lumen, I want to pass on this ability to anticipate, to reassure, to enlighten the decisions of leaders.

Add Lumen's mission is to support companies through consulting and security advisory assignments: how would you define your approach more precisely?

Our primary vocation is to preserve the desirability of brands. In luxury as elsewhere, reputation is a strategic asset. What we protect is not only goods or people, but a value chain, a capital of image, trust, and emotion. All our actions are structured around this idea: to be the silent guardians of what makes a brand valuable.

You have mentioned your convictions several times. What are they?

The essential function of security is to reassure: to embody a strong presence, to set a framework, to calm and support our clients. Then, it is to help keep a course. We intervene where companies are shaken, in moments of uncertainty. The current context—geopolitical, technological, economic—is complicated because it is uncertain—there is nothing worse than uncertainty; thus, this requires benchmarks. We bring this capacity for anticipation, analysis, and perspective. Finally, we do not believe in rigid models. Add Lumen is founded on flexibility and adaptation: each mission is tailor-made, depending on the profile of our client, their needs, and their expectations.

“The essential function of security is to reassure: to be there, to set a framework, to calm.”

How does your firm stand out in the private security landscape?

Through the premium quality of its resources—experienced profiles, carefully selected—and through its positioning. We only intervene where we have real added value. Our model is based on discretion, confidentiality, and a very high level of demand. Our growth is based on trust and word of mouth. Luxury has its own codes. We understand its logic, its requirements, and its vulnerabilities. All of this makes us unique.

How do you structure your offer today?

Our vision is developed around three pillars. First, there is the strategic support of the executive, particularly through the design or redesign of security systems. Systems designed as strategic levers—and not just technical ones—regardless of the situation, including during crises. Next, our action is in the secure management of event projects, with proven expertise in complex operations, sometimes with very high visibility. Finally, the mastery of risks in the broadest sense, whether human, organizational, environmental, or reputational. We also support companies in their reflections on geopolitics, cyber defense, or the impact of new technologies.

Discretion seems to be a central value of your method. Why?

Because it is essential. In our profession, if people talk about us, it means we have failed. Add Lumen exists only to enlighten its clients. Our role is to work in the shadows, to anticipate for them, to protect them without ever taking their place. We are women and men of the shadows, at the service of light.

In the long term, how do you imagine the development of Add Lumen?

I want to anchor our action over the long term, by expanding our scope to other sectors where reputation is key: banking, healthcare, or even tech. In the insurance sector, our ambition goes beyond a simple provider/client relationship: we want to build a real partnership, to imagine together new security concepts. International development is also an ambition, especially in Northern Europe and North America, where the European vision can bring a unique perspective on global security issues. Whatever happens, our compass will remain the same: to preserve what makes our clients valuable.

A word to conclude?

Add Lumen does not seek to shine. Our mission is to help those who shine to continue doing so—durably, serenely, discreetly. ■