

INTERNET

Krug uses music to communicate Champagne taste digitally

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Krug's Grande Cuvee Champagne blend

By SARAH JONES

LVMH-owned Champagne maker Krug is building a multi-sensory experience around its wines with a music feature for both desktop and mobile

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Krug's "Music Pairing" has recording artists select their picks for tracks to accompany six particular varieties of Champagne, much like a chef would note what food pairs best with a particular wine. Since consumers cannot taste via digital mediums, providing this aural experience will help to illuminate the differences in the range.

"Differentiation and utilizing another of the 'senses' outside of taste which is arguably difficult to do well in digital media," said Erik Pavelka, CEO and founder of [Martini](#), San Francisco, CA.

"I like how Krug is thinking about the experience of drinking Champagne beyond just the taste, the bubbles, the smell, but also the full experience," he said.

"Champagne has both a celebratory and classy event aspect to it. Krug is building on this with associating the brand with music that pairs well, if you will, with the Champagne."

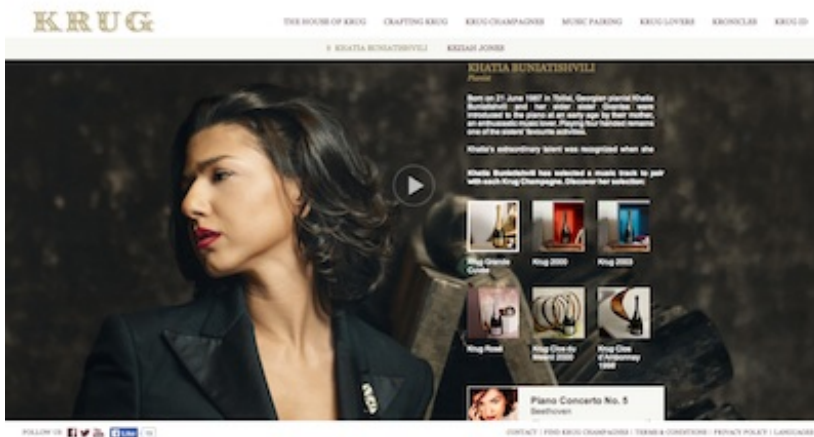
Mr. Pavelka is not affiliated with Krug but agreed to comment as an industry expert.

Krug did not respond by press deadline.

Listening to taste

Krug's Music Pairing series can be viewed on its Web site on a dedicated page or brand mobile application. The brand uses social media to drive traffic to the feature.

Music Pairing launched in May with Georgian pianist Khatia Buniatishvili. On the page for her playlist, Krug includes a brief biography, talking about her early career start at age six, playing with an orchestra.



Krug Music Pairing page

The first track, Beethoven's "Piano Concerto No. 5," begins to play automatically. This is the chosen soundtrack for enjoying Krug's Grande Cuvée, and consumers can click a link under the music player to find out more about the Champagne.

Ms. Buniatishvili's other choices are classical, with a Ravel piece for Krug's Rosé and Vivaldi's "Four Seasons" for its vintage 2003.

Also on the page is a video of Ms. Buniatishvili touring a Krug cellar, talking about how the complexity of making Champagne is like making music, where the process is not realized by the person enjoying the finished product. In the video, she also divulges her favorite from her tasting, explaining the emotional connection she felt when she tried Clos du Mesnil.

Embedded Video: [//www.youtube.com/embed/_xussafoQVE](https://www.youtube.com/embed/_xussafoQVE)

Khatia Buniatishvili for Krug

For its next music pairing, Krug chose singer-songwriter Keziah Jones, birth name Olufemi Sanyaolu. He calls his style "Blufunk" and mixes his Nigerian heritage with blues and funk.

Keziah Jones' pairings are more eclectic, starting with a Miles Davis jazz piece for Grande Cuvée and moving to the electronic Herbie Hancock song "Rockit" for Rosé.



Keziah Jones

The artist's own song "Lunar" is also present in the mix, chosen as the appropriate soundtrack for Krug 2003.

Krug chose the same six Champagnes for each artist to pair, giving consumers different takes on the same type.

Pairing up

Krug is also educating on food pairings for its Champagne through a series of dining events.

The brand is demonstrating how well its wine pairs with seafood with a dining experience in London.

From Sept. 3-7, LVMH-owned Krug is partnering with the newly-opened London restaurant Beast for the "Krug & Krustacean" tasting menu. By narrowing the scope of the menu, Krug can underscore how well its Champagne pairs with foods that may not be immediately associated with the beverage ([see story](#)).

Krug has explored the relationship between music and its Champagnes in the past.

The Champagne house celebrated its annual Grande Cuvée blend with a live tasting event in London that marries the sound of Champagne bubbles and live orchestra music.

During April 7-11, Champagne and music lovers could join Krug in unveiling its latest recreation of its Grand Cuvée while enjoying the music of London's Philharmonia Orchestra and tasting the 2014 vintage at The Loading Bay in Shoreditch, London. Creating interesting, culturally-relevant tasting events allows a brand to stay top of mind among new consumers ([see story](#)).

This feature, much like the other music marketing from the brand, is appropriate for Krug's audience.

"Clearly they are going after the affluent audience that are interested in music and events,"

Mr. Pavelka said. "Martini's data set shows that Krug Champagne drinkers are 20 percent more likely to listen to music online than other champagne brand users.

"Krug should absolutely be integrating this content into their advertising, pushing it into social media circles, having the artists promote from their social media, and driving users back to the site to experience, learn more and so on," he said.

"Will end users use this as a playlist? It's absolutely something that they will be pushing with the Krug mobile app.

"It doesn't appear that the music feature is live just yet, but integration into iTunes and thus the device's music playback will be key."

Final Take

Sarah Jones, editorial assistant on Luxury Daily, New York

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