

COMMERCE

Bulgari protects consumer data with “wrist-vault” timepiece

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Screenshot from Bulgari video for its Diagono E Magnesium

By SARAH JONES

Italian jeweler Bulgari is bringing traditional craftsmanship into the digital ecosystem with an intelligent timepiece focused on data security.

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The Diagono E Magnesium is a fully mechanical timepiece equipped with NFC technology, which allows the watch to act as a key that opens a secure Bulgari Vault smartphone application. As wealthy consumers are doing more online, from banking and shopping to email, technology that makes these interactions safer will be a welcome addition.

“[We have a] deep understanding what a luxury client needs,” said Guido Terreni, managing director of [Bulgari Haute Horlogerie](#), Neuchâtel, Switzerland. “We have wealthy clients who need to protect their wealth.

“Years ago you bought your stocks,” he said. “Now everything is not physical. Everything is at risk because hackers can attack your wealth through digital.”

Under lock and key

For its Diagono E Magnesium, Bulgari worked with WISEKey, a Swiss digital security and

data storage firm.

The timepiece is positioned as the first “wrist-vault.” The self-winding timepiece only differs from a standard luxury timepiece in the addition of a cryptographic system embedded in the dial that is outfitted with WISEKey’s NFCTrusted technology.

This technology enables the watch to communicate with a consumer’s smartphone.

Once consumers have downloaded the Bulgari Vault app to their iOS or Android device, they can place their watch near the phone to send a digital certificate, which will unlock the electronic vault. When it is unlocked, consumers can add data to be stored, which may include pass codes or encrypted cloud data.

Embedded Video: <https://www.youtube.com/embed/GAyKfPOYwws>

Bulgari Diagono Magnesium concept watch

They can also make secure payments, activate an alarm system or video surveillance remotely, unlock car doors, access transport tickets, access health services or check-in to a Bulgari hotel, among other tasks where security is of the utmost importance.

Once data is entered, it is encrypted and stored at military bunkers in the Swiss Alps, so it can only be read or accessed with the watch, making the information safe from hackers and other digital risks.

"The association of Bulgari and WISEKey bring together two major pillars from the Swiss traditions ultimate in time piece manufacture and highest level in security this very important for the luxury clientele," said Carlos Moreno, vice president of digital brand protection at WISEKey. "The Diagono E Magnesium is differentiating from the other connected time pieces enabling the security as foundation to enter in a protected way into the digital era."

Get smart

Haute horology was originally hesitant of entering the smartwatch category, but recently there have been a number of partnerships that combine Swiss craftsmanship with technology.

As the development of wearables has continued to move forward there have been ample opportunities for Swiss watchmakers to enter the space through collaborative efforts.

Collaborations, in any space in the luxury market, allow the partnering brands to explore their own heritages and best practices in a new way that may amplify their offerings. Oftentimes, these collaborations connect brands that seem like an unlikely duo such as Silicon Valley and Switzerland’s watch manufacturer partnership to create the first Swiss Horological Smartwatch ([see story](#)).

LVMH-owned Tag Heuer was one of the latest Swiss watchmakers to announce a smartwatch, news that came just as the Apple Watch was about to hit stores.

The creative partnership between Tag Heuer, Google and Intel signifies a new era of

collaboration between Swiss watchmakers and Silicon Valley to escalate the expertise of each brand whether it be watchmaking, software or hardware. From the first utterance of wearables, many horologists agreed that collaborative efforts between tradition and technology would yield competitive results ([see story](#)).

Bulgari's timepiece strikes a balance between haute horology and digital innovation.

"[There's been] a lot of activity in the industry [around smartwatches]," Mr. Terreni said. "We wanted to come out with our opinion.

"We think that smartwatches are usually functional watches," he said. "Usually you don't buy a luxury watch for its functionality. This kind of need is not the need of a luxury client."

Final Take

Sarah Jones, staff reporter on Luxury Daily, New York

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