

EVENTS/CAUSES

Richard Mille expects large crowds for fall automotive event

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Image from Chantilly Arts & Elegance Richard Mille 2014

By KAY SORIN

Swiss watchmaker Richard Mille is continuing to align its brand with automakers by hosting the Chantilly Arts & Elegance Richard Mille event for the second year in a row.

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Last year's event was attended by more than 10,000 people who enjoyed the many workshops and exhibits designed to highlight French art and culture through automobiles, fashion, decorative arts and cuisine. The main attraction of the event is the large collection of antique cars that it draws from around the world, many of which have never before been seen by the public.

"It certainly makes sense for Richard Mille to support antique automobiles," said Al Ries, founder and chairman of [Ries & Ries](#), a Roswell, GA-based marketing strategy consultancy. "Expensive watches and expensive vehicles have lot in common."

"First of all, they are not very practical, but upper-income people collect them anyway to show off to their friends and relatives."

Mr. Ries is not affiliated with Richard Mille, but agreed to comment as an industry expert.

Richard Mille was unable to respond by press deadline.

Automatic win

Chantilly Arts & Elegance Richard Mille will take place on Sept. 5-6 at the Chantilly Chateau outside Paris. The event will celebrate a wide range of French culture, including automobiles, art and dining.



The event will take place at the Chantilly Chateau

The highlight of the event is the antique auto show known as the “Concours d’Etat” that is known as The Most Beautiful Cars in the World. It showcases a wide range of historic automobiles, many of which are extremely rare and valuable.

The contest is divided into 10 categories that are changed yearly to ensure that visitors can see a different selection of vehicles. One car is from each category is chosen by a jury as the winner, and at the end of the event one out of the final 10 is selected as Best in Show.



Outdoor events like picnics will allow visitors to relax and socialize

This year’s categories include “The Untouched Open Cars from the Inter-war Period,” “Homage to Bugatti: The Racing Cars,” “The Iconoclastic Interiors,” “The Famous Ladies’ Cars” and “Open Grand Touring: From the City to the Track from 1948 to 1956.” Automobiles from around the world will arrive at Chantilly to vie for the awards for each category.

In addition to the Concours d'Etat, Chantilly Arts & Elegance Richard Mille will also feature events to showcase other forms of French culture. There will be an elegant picnic on the Chantilly lawns and an exhibition of the chateau's impressive art collection, which includes historic paintings by Raphael, Botticelli and Poussin.

Chantilly Arts & Elegance Richard Mille is expected to attract a large number of visitors, helping the brand connect with affluents who are passionate about collectable cars.



The antique cars will be the highlight of the event

Fast and furious

Richard Mille has previously emphasized its affiliation with automakers with previous collaborations. For example, the Swiss watchmaker sponsored British automaker Lotus' Formula One racing team to increase exposure of its brand.

The watchmaker served as the official timing partner of the Lotus F1 team for the 2013 and 2014 seasons. Since many watchmakers have partnered with sports teams, brands need to find ways to stand out from the crowd to get noticed ([see story](#)).

Luxury watchmakers frequently choose to partner with automakers in order to highlight the precision of their timekeeping.

Richard Mille is one of many watchmakers that have introduced automotive-inspired initiatives in recent years. In 2013, Switzerland's Chopard collaborated with made-to-measure Italian automaker Zagato for a two-watch series that likely helped the brand appeal to affluent male consumers interested in classic and bespoke cars.

The limited-edition collaboration, part of the jeweler's larger Classic Racing watch series, was another step in solidifying Chopard's relationship with the racing world. Chopard's Mille Miglia Zagato watch design embodied the shared values of the jeweler, the automaker and the iconic Mille Miglia race in Italy that brought them together ([see story](#)).

Richard Mille's initiative will have the benefit of drawing large crowds, which will help the brand connect with consumers.

"Many of the people that attend this event would be prospects for Richard Mille watches,"

Mr. Ries said. "The event helps to burn the name 'Richard Mille' into the minds of these prospects.

"My feeling is that many luxury watch collectors are not very familiar with the Richard Mille brand name."

Final Take

Kay Sorin, editorial assistant on Luxury Daily, New York

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