

ADVERTISING

Hennessy chases Wild Rabbit into the stratosphere and back

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Hennessy cognac

By FORREST CARDAMENIS

LVMH-owned cognac maker Hennessy is continuing to chase perfection in its award-winning advertising campaign about the drive and determination needed to accomplish goals.

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"The Piccards, the fourth installment in Hennessy's "Wild Rabbit" ad campaign developed with agency Droga5, reflects on the space and ocean explorations of the Piccard family. By continuing to update the Wild Rabbit campaign by telling new stories, Hennessy is creating heritage and carving out a clear brand identity while also innovating with new content.

"Fortunately, the idea behind the 'Wild Rabbit' doesn't change," said Phil Hadad, copywriter at Droga5. "It's about what drives people to do what they do, so the storyline never goes out of style.

"What we tried with 'The Piccards' was to evolve it and go beyond the story of an individual," he said. "So this time, we're playing with how ambition travels across generations and bloodlines."

Wild Rabbits

Directed by Daniel Wolfe, "The Piccards" tells the story of explorers Auguste Piccard and his son Jacques.

In 1931, the senior Piccard made 27 balloon flights into the upper atmosphere, gathering data on the upper atmosphere and cosmic rays while becoming the man closest to entering space. Around 30 years later, Jacques Piccard modified his father's pressurized capsule and opted to go toward the earth rather than away from it, charting ocean depths never before seen.



Brand ambassador and "The Piccards" narrator Nas

Hennessy's ad retells the story, opening with a hectic invocation of Auguste Piccard's flight into space as the narrator, rap superstar Nas, asks, "When a man reaches the edge, after he goes as far as any man could possibly go, how does his son continue?"

Impressively rendered CGI images of space give way to equally spectacular deep-sea images, complementing the music and providing an epic sentiment. At the end, title cards summarize the two men's accomplishments and the narrator asks the viewer, "What's your wild rabbit? Hennessy, never stop, never settle."

Hennessy V.S: The Piccards :90

"The part of the Piccard story that resonated strongly with me is the generational bond," Nas said in a statement. "My father traveled the world driven by his music and passion."

"That relentless chase and will to achieve that's at the heart of Hennessy's campaign has also helped shape my musical path," he continued. "It's in my blood."

The "never stop, never settle" mantra is ongoing with Hennessy, associating the brand with an attitude that differentiates it from its plethora of competitors and empowers the consumer. Centering a product on the idea of pushing to be the best one can also position the brand as having the same ethos, and implicitly, the best product in its sector.

TV, mobile and desktop spots for the ad have already begun, giving the ad a reach across a range of audiences. The creativity of the ad, as well as the presence of a beloved musician, will attract consumers who may have overlooked it otherwise.

Hennessy is also sharing the ad across social media channels, as it has with previous Wild Rabbit efforts, to extend its reach.

Old and new

This is not the first time that Nas has taken a role in the Wild Rabbit campaign, which has also included musician Erykah Badu and film director Martin Scorsese.

Back in 2013, LVMH-owned Hennessy refreshed its Wild Rabbit campaign by bringing Nas onboard as brand ambassador.

The campaign was aided by Hennessy's social media platforms to increase exposure for a younger audience who are likely familiar with Nas' music. The promotions featuring Nas represent the unifying theme of the Wild Rabbit campaigns of individuals who push personal limits in order to achieve success ([see story](#)).

The Wild Rabbit campaign also eases the transition and provides brand unity amid personnel changes.

LVMH-owned cognac maker Hennessy is creating a drinkable representation of its transition from one master blender to the next.

The house's current expert Yann Fillioux is stepping down from his position, handing down the reins and his knowledge to his nephew Renaud Fillioux de Gironde. Both master blenders have teamed up to develop Hennessy.8, a limited-edition cognac that shows the passing of tradition and know-how through generations ([see story](#)).

"There's a strong intergenerational element to the story and in many ways it is about one man continuing the legacy of his father," said Giles Woodyer, senior vice president, **Hennessy** at Mot Hennessy USA. "More importantly, it is also about both men pushing the limits of their own potential, which is the exact philosophy of the Hennessy Wild Rabbit campaign.

"For over 250 years, Hennessy has pushed limits and continues to push limits," he said. "Like Hennessy, the Piccards embody our tagline of 'Never stop. Never settle.'"

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