

JEWELRY

Omega shows off Olympian craftsmanship with educational microsite

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Omega Planet Ocean watch

By FORREST CARDAMENIS

Swiss watchmaker Omega is embracing a new angle as it touts its role as official timekeeper of the 2016 Olympic and Paralympic Games.

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On an extension of its site, Omega has released a series of videos and educational slideshows expanding on its role as perhaps the games' most prestigious sponsor. The videos allow Omega to demonstrate its craftsmanship through a link that will appeal to more consumers.

"The Olympics requires precision timing," said Chris Ramey, president of [Affluent Insights](#), Miami. "It's the perfect stage for a global watch brand.

"The site underscore that the brand's presence is more than just product placement or sponsorship," he said. "Omega is the ultimate arbiter."

Mr. Ramey is not associated with Omega, but agreed to comment as an industry expert.

Omega did not respond to request for comment.

Olympian craftsmen

Users on Omega's site can now learn about how the brand creates the tools necessary to ensure precise and accurate timekeeping in races that are often decided by hundredths of a second.

In a slideshow on the page, Omega describes its photocell technology, which uses four cells to detect body patterns more fully than the standard two-photocell technology, allowing greater accuracy. Omega has also created a Scan'O'Vision MYRIA, which can take up to 10,000 digital images per second, allowing replay to identify winners of even the closest races.



Omega photo finish image

Additionally, a new false start detector measures pressure against a footrest 4,000 times per second, while an archery targeting system detects exact distance from the center within a fifth of a millimeter far better than the human eye.

The first of the videos shows the making of the last-lap bells, from the creation of the iron cast to the inscriptions made on the interior and the welding of the bell itself.

Omega's video emphasizes the work and detail necessary to craft the bell, demonstrating the brand's craftsmanship, but the Olympic tie-in provides a general interest element that could resonate even with consumers wary of advertising.

OMEGA The making of the last-lap bells

Another video shows how the 100-meter sprint is timed, with the footrest sensor detecting false start, the photocells, scoreboards, TV and camera working together to generate a photo finish image.

A similar process is described for the swimming events, which employ cameras as backups in case touchpad results are missing or too soft. A start pulse is given to the timing devices to let the swimmers know to jump, and the touchpads or backup cameras record the finish.

OMEGA times the 100M sprint

Omega also shares the number of volunteers, professional and equipment that it brings to the games and includes separate sections on individual sports or events Omega is working on.

The mass, global appeal of the Olympics promises Omega an enormous publicity boost. Leveraging that visibility to demonstrate its high standards of craftsmanship could help the hundreds of millions or billions of worldwide viewers remember the name, spurring purchases among some and generating aspirational status among others.

Photo finish

Omega has been pushing its relationship to the Olympics extensively in the months leading up to the games, which begin August 5.

The brand began counting down the 100 days left before the opening of the 2016 Summer Olympic Games in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil with a guest spot on NBC's the Today Show.

As of April 27, there are 100 days until the Olympic Games begin on Aug. 5, and brands with a role in the international sporting event are jockeying for attention from consumers and athletes the world over. For Omega, the Olympic Games is an important aspect of its brand heritage, as it has served as the official timekeeper for all events since the Los Angeles games of 1932 ([see story](#)).

Additionally, Omega also flaunting its role in the upcoming Olympic Games through a takeover of department store chain Printemps' atrium.

For Omega Loves Printemps, the brand is looking back on its 27-year relationship with the global sporting competition, sharing footage of key moments and demonstrating how its precision timekeeping has helped determine winners. Allowing fans to experience the Olympics even when not in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil the temporary display will be up through the run of the games ([see story](#)).

"Stories of Olympic success and failures engages consumers at a deep level," Mr. Ramey said. "Consumers are more malleable when they're emotional.

"Fascination drives desire; desire drives luxury," he said. "The site was necessary to reiterate Omega's importance to the games."

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