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## H. Moser & Cie unveils not-so-subtle jab at Apple Watch

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*H. Moser's new watch also serves as a proclamation of the superiority of mechanical watches*

By DANNY PARISI

Swiss watchmaker H. Moser & Cie has debuted a new timepiece with a strikingly familiar design that is seemingly a direct send-up of the Apple Watch.

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The Swiss Alp Watch Zzzz is almost a direct copy of the Apple Watch with one key difference: it is entirely analog. Communications for the timepiece makes the comparison almost explicit, suggesting that H. Moser is having some fun at the expense of the tech-obsessed while reinforcing the superiority of its high-end watches.

"With this novelty, H. Moser & Cie is taking a direct swipe at smartwatches by not only designing a watch that looks almost identical to the Apple Watch, but going a step further to call out key differentiators," said Donnie Pacheco, **Clean Channel Consulting**, Seattle. "In doing so, they are drawing a distinct contrast between mechanical and smartwatches.

"The comments are direct, yet tongue in cheek callouts of the limitations of smartwatches. Minimalist watch designs are not a new concept, but drawing a direct comparison of a minimalist, mechanical design to a smartwatch is.

"Even the name Swiss Alp Watch Zzzz, whether intentional or not, conjures a comparison to a powered down (i.e., sleeping) smartwatch."

Mr. Pacheco is not affiliated with H. Moser but agreed to comment in an expert capacity.

Doppleganger

Since its debut in 2015, the Apple Watch has seen significant sales. While Apple does not share specific sales figures, the tech giant did reveal that sales had hit an all-time high at the end of 2016.

Given Apple's ubiquity in other areas, it is no surprise that its watch has caught on so much. But for many luxury watch brands, the Apple Watch is nothing more than a toy.

H. Moser has made its opinion on the Apple Watch clear with the release of its new Swiss Alp Watch Zzzz, which at first glance is almost indistinguishable from an Apple Watch.

In appearance, the Swiss Alp is virtually identical to an Apple Watch. It has a rounded black rectangular face with a single dial and a minimalist band.



*The Swiss Alp Watch Zzzz*

But where it does differ from the Apple Watch is in function. The watch is completely analog, telling the time and nothing else.

In fact, the Swiss Alp is so stripped-down it only has two hands and no numbers or indices. Its minimalist design is highly reminiscent of Apple's aesthetic, stripping off all unnecessary additions.

This similarity is not a coincidence. H. Moser makes its comparison clear, noting that the watch resembles a smart watch in sleep mode and trumpeting the "soul of mechanical watchmaking" as superior to the "cold electronics of connected watches."

H. Moser positions the Swiss Alp as almost a taunting gesture toward the makers of connected watches and those who wear them on behalf of the creators and lovers of old-fashioned mechanical watches.

"I think there is something to be said for the pushback in society right now of being over-connected, over-wired and under-inspired," said John Squire, co-founder and CEO of [DynamicAction](#), Silicon Valley, CA. "You see craft cocktails coming back into fashion, artisanal foods and handcrafted leather as a sign of consumers wanting products that are unique, personal and thoughtful rather than just technology-based and mass produced.

"I just don't know that this almost 'spoof' of an Apple Watch is the way to answer the consumers' desire for traditional and finely constructed watches."

#### Mechanical vs. connected

Despite the confident tone H. Moser is taking in regards to smart watches, many of its competitors have already begun embracing smart watch technology. While mechanical watchmaking may remain popular for its associated heritage, an increasingly connected world requires more connected products.

For example, Montblanc recently unveiled its own smart watch, the Summit.

The Montblanc Summit combines traditional horology codes with the latest in wearable technology, an approach to smart watch manufacturing that has generated success for a number of watchmakers. Although the smart watch category has not overrun traditional timepieces, brands must show a willingness to embrace new technology, especially as the sector sees waning consumer interest ([see story](#)).



*H. Moser's watch is intentionally designed to evoke the Apple Watch*

Similarly, Tag Heuer unveiled a watch that brings together its traditional watchmaking process with connected tech in the Modular 45.

Tag Heuer Connected Modular 45 has been designed, developed and assembled in the same spirit and exacting standards of the brand's analog timepieces, but with Intel and Google technologies. For the first time, Tag Heuer Connected wearers can interchange watch components to fit their mood, similar to customizations seen on a traditional watch ([see story](#)).

While H. Moser has been pushing the superiority of mechanical watches over connected ones for a while, such as [this](#) campaign video from January of last year, other brands have already begun combining the two in a more symbiotic way.

"In calling out the difference in power reserves, H. Moser & Cie is directly drawing a comparison between a watch that you need to plug in to recharge and a handcrafted, mechanical watch," Clean Channel's Mr. Pacheco said. "They call the watch a 'living watch, with a heart and soul.'"

"This is portrays the mechanical watch as a living thing and allows the reader to draw their own conclusions as to what a smartwatch may or may not be. This is an innovative way to compare and contrast the craftsmanship of a mechanical timepiece to a technical watch.

"There is clearly no direct comparison due to functionality, price point, limited edition, etc., but that is exactly their point."

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