

JEWELRY

Ulysse Nardin eyes innovation with CEO hire

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Ulysse Nardin's Marine Torpilleur. Image credit: Ulysse Nardin

By STAFF REPORTS

Kering-owned Swiss watchmaker Ulysse Nardin has announced Patrick Pruniaux as its new CEO.

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The watchmaker's current CEO Patrik P. Hoffmann, who has played a key role in the development of Ulysse Nardin, will step down from his role. Mr. Hoffmann's departure comes as the senior executive looks to move in a new direction for personal reasons.

From Silicon Valley to Switzerland

As CEO of Ulysse Nardin, Mr. Pruniaux will report to Albert Bensoussan, the CEO of Kering Luxury – Watches and Jewelry division.

"I am delighted to see a talented individual such as Patrick Pruniaux join Ulysse Nardin, which once again illustrates the attractiveness of the Kering Group," Mr. Bensoussan said in a statement.

"His in-depth knowledge of the watchmaking sector, from product innovation to customer relations and distribution, will be an important asset in the ongoing drive to develop this watchmaking house, building on its cutting-edge technical expertise and unique identity," he said.

"I would like to thank Patrik P. Hoffmann and pay tribute to the pivotal contribution he has made to the growth and reputation of Ulysse Nardin for almost two decades."

Mr. Pruniaux comes to Ulysse Nardin after many years of watchmaking industry experience.



Ulysse Nardin embraces its nautical history. Image credit: Ulysse Nardin

Over a nine-year tenure, Mr. Pruniaux held various positions at LVMH-owned watchmaker Tag Heuer. During his time at the brand, Mr. Pruniaux served as Tag Heuer's export director, taking on the responsibilities for EMEA sales in 2009.

The following year, he was appointed to vice president of global sales and retail and a member of Tag Heuer's executive committee.

In 2014, Mr. Pruniaux relocated to Cupertino, CA to join Apple's special projects team. While at Apple, Mr. Pruniaux was involved in the launch of the Apple Watch.

From 2015, he was the consumer electronics maker's country manager for the United Kingdom and Ireland and a member of Apple's EMEA executive committee.

In his new role as CEO of Ulysse Nardin, Mr. Pruniaux will work to accelerate the brand's international expansion through his innovative thinking and expertise.

The fine watchmaking sector has been struggling due to waning sales and interest, but brands that inject innovation and technology have a leg up.

Mr. Pruniaux's former employer Tag Heuer, for example, is going up against Apple Watch with the debut of an 18-karat rose gold Connected smartwatch ([see story](#)).