

JEWELRY

Omega picks US market for ecommerce debut

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Omega is sailing into ecommerce. Image credit: Omega

By STAFF REPORTS

Swiss watchmaker Omega has launched its first online retail platform, indicative of the watch sector's growing embrace of ecommerce.

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At launch, the digital boutique exclusively serves U.S. clientele, allowing them to purchase its watches at a time and place convenient to them. Watchmakers had eschewed ecommerce for a long time, relying on their own boutiques and physical wholesale channels to sell their timepieces, but a growing number of watch brands have been adding ecommerce to their distribution as consumers become more comfortable buying online.

Online opening

Encouraging U.S. customers to buy online, Omega is retailing its Seamaster Planet Ocean "Michael Phelps" Limited-Edition exclusively through ecommerce. The timepiece was created as a tribute to the record-breaking Olympian.

Keeping competitive with other online retailers, Omega's boutique offers free expedited second-day delivery and complimentary returns by mail.



Omega is offering a Michael Phelps-inspired watch as an online exclusive. Image credit: Omega

While the U.S. was Omega's chosen launch market for ecommerce, the brand expects to open up online sales to other markets in the future.

Omega is looking towards ecommerce to supplement rather than supplant its bricks-and-mortar presence. The watchmaker has plans to further develop its international store footprint.

"By offering online sales in the United States, Omega can now reach fans in every corner of the country," said Raynald Aeschlimann, president and CEO of Omega, in a statement. "No one is restricted geographically, which will make us much more accessible.

"We also recognize that ecommerce is growing rapidly in the luxury sector and many of today's consumers use it as their primary way to shop."

After much hesitation, watch and jewelry brands have begun to embrace digital selling channels as a potential solution to the global turndown their industry has recently faced, per a report from L2.

L2's "[Watches & Jewelry: Ecommerce Insight Report](#)" found that while the sector is learning to adapt to online channels, the industry is finding it difficult to transfer brand equity that may have taken decades, if not centuries, to establish does not transfer to the digital realm. With luxury ecommerce sales forecasted to double by 2020, the watches and jewelry sector must continue forging ahead to incorporate online selling into its strategies or risk losing market share ([see story](#)).

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