

JEWELRY

Watch and jewelry sector's Top 10 headlines of 2017

December 22, 2017



Lab-grown diamonds are in a position to disrupt the luxury jewelry sector. Image credit: Diamond Foundry

By STAFF REPORTS

After years of hesitation, jewelry and watch brands embraced innovative digital selling tactics throughout 2017.

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Over the course of the year, a number of timepiece brands partnered with third party sellers to make ecommerce possible for its brand enthusiasts, but the sector's went beyond standard online selling by testing augmented reality and artificial intelligence strategies. Despite the sector's sluggish innovations, especially from watchmakers, jewelry and timepiece brands became more fluid and willing to embrace online consumers for a forward-looking strategy that is sure to continue next year and beyond.

Here are Luxury Daily's top 2017 headlines from the luxury jewelry and watch sector:



Promotional image for Chanel's Coco Club. Image credit: Chanel

Chanel touts timepieces, empowerment at feminine club

French fashion house Chanel made over the gentleman's club concept for ladies in a New York pop-up.

Dubbed the Coco Club, the experience took over women's co-working space The Wing in SoHo, offering activities

such as ping-pong and poker. Inspired by its Boy.Friend watches, the club invited women to "take time on [their] terms."

Chanel christened its temporary space with a private party. The club was then open to the public with free registration on Nov. 12.

When visitors first entered, they had their photo taken for identification and were handed a golden membership card. Visitors could then explore various areas including a caf, a library, beauty room and game room ([see story](#)).



There are only an estimated 80 Fabergé floral studies thought to have survived. Image credit: BBC

Fabergé floral arrangement valued at \$1.27M appears on Antiques Roadshow

An ornament designed by Russian jeweler Fabergé made its way to BBC's Antiques Roadshow for appraisal in the United Kingdom.

In what is being described as one of the most significant finds on the long-running television show's history, jewelry expert Geoffrey Munn recently appraised a Fabergé ornament for \$1.27 million. Antique Fabergé pieces fetch large sums at auction due to the brand's period of dormancy after the Russian Revolution began in 1917, which caused the maison to shutter until being revived decades later.

Antiques Roadshow was filming at the Black Country Living Museum in Dudley, West Midlands in the U.K. on June 21 when the Fabergé piece was brought for inspection by its owner.

The piece was appraised by jewelry expert Mr. Munn during filming for the television show's 40th anniversary series ([see story](#)).



The Peace Diamond is 709 carat and sold for more than \$6 million. Image credit: Graff Diamonds

Peace Diamond's \$6M sale will be reinvested into struggling community

In December, Graff Diamonds' chairman purchased the "Peace Diamond," one of the largest rough diamonds ever found in Sierra Leone.

By doing so, Sierra Leone's government and Graff Diamonds' Laurence Graff have worked out a deal in which 100 percent of the proceeds from the sale will go toward improving the infrastructure and community resources in the African country, particularly in the area where the Peace Diamond was found. The move represents a major step for the diamond industry and the government of Sierra Leone toward eliminating conflict diamonds and making sure the people of the country that source the precious stones are justly rewarded and not exploited ([see story](#)).

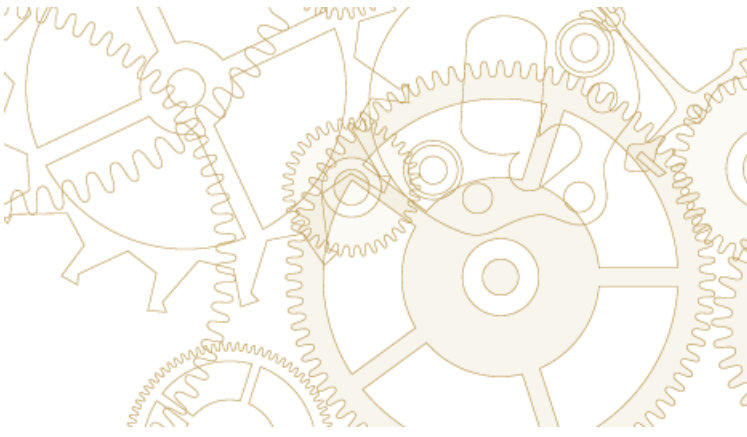


Image courtesy of Fondation de la Haute Horlogerie

FHH's new metrics label 64 watchmakers as true haute horologists

The Fondation de la Haute Horlogerie has worked for three years to develop a comprehensive brand evaluation method to define what constitutes fine watchmaking.

Established in 2005, the FHH was formed to promote fine watchmaking worldwide through its mission to inform, train, recognize and organize those in the sector and consumers interested in horology. Since its founding, the FHH has been asked time and time again by industry professionals what determines a fine watchmaker and how that criteria can be leveraged.

The FHH's brand evaluation method is similar to the guidelines set in motion by the Fédération Française de la Couture du Prêt-à-Porter des Couturiers et des Créateurs de Mode. The guidelines placed by the French federation determines which houses are considered true haute couture designers ([see story](#)).



Vacheron Constantin Historiques Cornes de Vache 1955 Limited-Edition for Hodinkee. Image credit: Vacheron Constantin

Vacheron Constantin's first foray into ecommerce sees limited-edition sell out in half-hour

Swiss watchmaker Vacheron Constantin experimented with online ordering for the first time through a partnership with horology publication Hodinkee.

Vacheron Constantin and Hodinkee teamed for the project back in 2015, which resulted in the creation of the Vacheron Constantin Historiques Cornes de Vache 1955 Limited-Edition for Hodinkee. Due to the watchmaker's lack of ecommerce on its Web site, Hodinkee served as the selling platform for the collaboration.

Hodinkee retailed the Cornes de Vache for \$45,000, and opened an online reservation request portal to field potential buyers.

The timepiece was sold on a first-come-first-serve basis. The first 36 watch enthusiasts to file a request were contacted by Vacheron Constantin over the phone to complete the order.

Richemont-owned Vacheron Constantin announced on social media Feb. 10 that the Cornes de Vache 1955 Limited-Edition for Hodinkee sold out in 30 minutes ([see story](#)).



H. Moser's new watch also serves as a proclamation of the superiority of mechanical watches. Image credit: H. Moser & Cie

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

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

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 ([see story](#)).

Lab-grown diamonds: Industry disruptor or novelty item?

As consumers search for brands offering transparent business practices, those pioneering alternative manufacturing processes that lessen environmental and social impact may cause disruption to specific sectors such as fine diamond jewelry.

Diamond sourcing, in particular, is often called into question due to concerns of environmentally harmful mining practices paired with alleged social injustices of those working in the mines. As consumers become increasingly aware of these issues, many have opted to steer clear of diamonds, especially the millennial demographic, as they do not wish to purchase or support anything that may weigh on their conscience.

Consumers' concerns of harming the environment or aiding social injustice have paved a path for alternative manufacturing advancements that bring natural elements into the laboratory ([see story](#)).



Shoppers can view crystal accessories in virtual reality. Image credit: Mastercard

Swarovski teams with Mastercard on VR shopping app

Precision-cut crystal maker Swarovski is working with Mastercard for its latest retail innovation, a virtual reality shopping app for home decor.

The app will allow customers to view crystal accessories for their homes in three dimensions, all through their smartphones. The partnership shows that even with augmented reality's dominance, virtual reality can still be a powerful tool for brands and retailers in all categories.

Through the app, customers are placed into a virtual house where they can view Swarovski home accessories and examine them in the context of a home setting.

The virtual home is made up of five areas and is populated with Swarovski designs created by artists and designers such as Kim Thome, Aldo Bakker, Toms Alonso and architect Zaha Hadid ([see story](#)).



Tag Heuer's personalized delivery service will help customers set up their smartwatch as soon as they get it. Image credit: Tag Heuer

Tag Heuer's personal atelier adds value to delivery process

LVMH-owned Swiss watchmaker Tag Heuer has unveiled a new personal atelier service with startup Enjoy to hand-deliver products to customers' homes.

Enjoy was founded by Ron Johnson, the former vice president of retail at Apple and the pioneer of Apple's Genius Bar. Tag Heuer will be the first luxury brand to use

Enjoy's personalized delivery service that adds value to the delivery process.

The lines between channels in the retail world are blurring everyday.

As customers begin their shopping journey in one channel, such as researching products through mobile, and finish in another, such as purchasing from a bricks-and-mortar store, brands are doing all they can to improve every step of this process.

This was the idea behind Tag Heuer's partnership with Enjoy, which seeks to take the home delivery step of many online purchases and turn it into something with more value that is unique and keeps customers coming back ([see story](#)).



Tiffany's Blue Box Cafe is located on the fourth floor of the New York store. Image credit: Tiffany

Tiffany unveils first retail dining concept at New York flagship

U.S. jeweler Tiffany & Co. is continuing to rework its retail strategy with the opening of an eatery located within its famed Fifth Avenue flagship.

Located on the newly renovated fourth floor of its New York store, Tiffany's Blue Box Cafe is the first retail dining concept envisioned by the jeweler. The fourth floor also houses Tiffany's new Home & Accessories collection of elevated everyday objects, its baby boutique, a collection of vintage books curated by Assouline as well as an area dedicated to the jeweler's fragrance.

For its first dining concept, Tiffany drew inspiration from its iconic blue gift boxes. Tiffany Blue is incorporated throughout the cafe's interior, including seating, tableware and decor ([see story](#)).