

JEWELRY

Omega sells straps only at pop-up boutique

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Omega's pop-up in Paris sells the brand's Nato straps. Image credit: Omega

By STAFF REPORTS

Swiss watchmaker Omega is encouraging consumers to mix and match in a pop-up shop devoted to accessorizing its timepieces.

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Located at 11 Rue Debelleye in Paris, the temporary storefront features an interactive screen through which visitors can explore and shop the brand's Nato straps. This first of its kind concept reflects the growing digitization of the watch business, as more brands embrace retail formats beyond bricks-and-mortar.

Pop-up purchasing

Omega's Nato straps are designed to allow consumers to express their personal style. The watchmaker is currently offering about 40 strap options that range from brightly hued stripes to more subdued solids.

Most of the Nato straps are made of the synthetic polyamide, while others come in coated nylon or leather. All of the straps have stainless steel buckles and keepers.

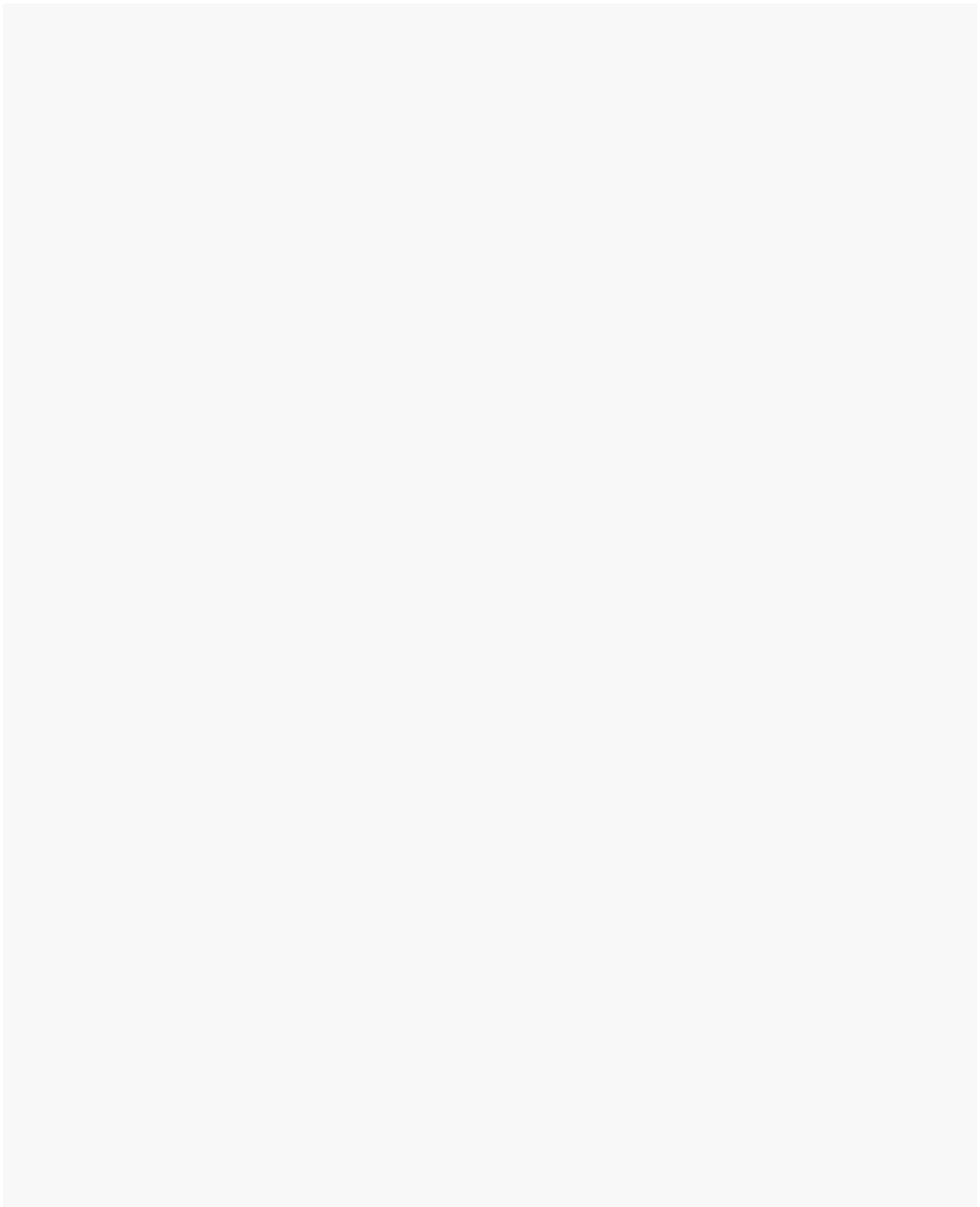
The Nato collection is inspired by the leather and canvas straps used by British pilots and navigators during World War II.

Unlike the spring bars usually used to attach straps, the armed forces' timepieces featured soldered bars on the back of the timepiece, through which a continuous strap would be threaded. This made it less likely that the strap fastenings would break, causing the watch to be lost.

The design also allows for a greater flexibility of size, as the wearer can adjust the strap's circumference to fit their wrist or the outside of a sleeve.

Omega's Nato pop-up shop is the latest to opt for ecommerce over physical shopping. While the browsing and buying experience is conducted via a digital screen, window displays showcase physical straps for passersby.

Consumers can pay for straps with their phone, and then have their purchase delivered to their door.



#OMEGANato No doors. No watches on sale. At OMEGA's new "Pop-up Boutique" in Paris, the digital experience is all about our NATO straps! Address: 11 Rue Debelleye, 75003, Paris.

A post shared by OMEGA (@omega) on Mar 1, 2018 at 8:49am PST

Among the items available for purchase is an exclusive strap designed in collaboration with brand ambassador Presley Gerber. Made of black denim and leather, the strap is embossed with the model's name.

Opened March 1, the pop-up will be up for six months. Throughout the duration, the temporary boutique will change its themes and the products offered.

In November, Omega launched its first online retail platform, indicative of the watch sector's growing embrace of

ecommerce.

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 ([see story](#)).

With ecommerce as an option, brands are finding that product does not need to necessarily be displayed physically in a pop-up.

Precision-cut crystal maker Swarovski engaged shoppers this holiday season through environments that blended physical and digital experiences.

In Toronto and Milan, the brand digitized the store concept with spaces that featured activations such as virtual reality and digital walls. The physical store no longer needs to be tied to traditional formats, allowing brands to incorporate digital as a means of immersing consumers in their worlds ([see story](#)).

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