

JEWELRY

Marc Jacobs unveils first touchscreen smartwatch, The Riley

June 6, 2018



The touchscreen watch is the first smartwatch from Marc Jacobs. Image credit: Marc Jacobs

By DANNY PARISI

U.S. fashion label Marc Jacobs is taking its first step into the world of touchscreen smartwatches with its latest model, The Riley.

Subscribe to **Luxury Daily**
Plus: Just released
State of Luxury 2019 **Save \$246 ▶**

The Riley represents the growing crossover between luxury timepieces and smartwatches. Traditionally, the two have had somewhat of a distant relationship, with makers of each type of watch steering far clear of the other, however this may be changing now.

Luxury smartwatch

When Apple introduced its smartwatch in 2015, many predicted that connected timepieces would be the latest craze.

While the Apple Watch has performed well enough to continue existing three years later, even becoming popular enough for Apple to surpass Rolex as the world's number one watchmaker, smartwatches have not quite caught on as much as many expected.



The Riley. Image credit: Marc Jacobs

But slowly, smartwatches are gaining prominence. The latest big step for the category comes from Marc Jacobs, which is releasing a new watch that is available with a touchscreen and smartwatch capabilities.

Available in both analog and smartwatch formats, The Riley allows customers to receive calls, texts and emails, listen to music, customize the watch face and keep track of their health and activity.

The watch combines elements of luxury watch design with the more utilitarian look of most smartwatches. For example, the case comes in luxurious gold or rose gold while being paired with a sporty silicone strap.

An accompanying advertising campaign sees the watch photographed on models in a variety of scenarios to showcase its versatility as a piece that can fit into many different lifestyles.

Merging together

The smartwatch industry is poised to grow over the next few years. Shipments of wearable devices are expected to almost double by 2021, as categories such as smartwatches take off.

According to projections from International Data Corporation, fitness bands will see slower growth over the next few years, while products such as smart clothing and watches will see sales accelerate. While hesitant at first, watchmakers are embracing hybrid or smartwatches as consumer cravings for technology and connectivity increase ([see story](#)).

But so far, the luxury watch industry has not expressed too much interest in smartwatches as a whole outside of a few examples.

For instance, Richemont-owned Montblanc demonstrated the ways in which fine watchmaking can meet the digital age with the release of its first smartwatch.



The Montblanc Summit smartwatch. Image credit: Marc Jacobs

The Montblanc Summit combines traditional horology codes with the latest in wearable technology, an approach to smartwatch manufacturing that has generated success for a number of watchmakers. Although the smartwatch 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](#)).

Marc Jacobs is now the latest luxury watch company to embrace smartwatches, perhaps signaling that the invisible wall separating the two may finally be coming down.

© 2020 Napean LLC. All rights reserved.

Luxury Daily is published each business day. Thank you for reading us. Your [feedback](#) is welcome.