

JEWELRY

## Watch and jewelry sector's Top 10 headlines of 2018

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*Image credit: Forevermark*

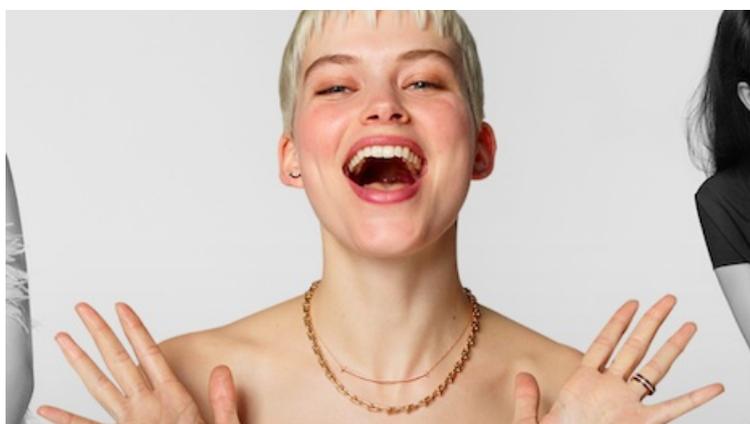
By STAFF REPORTS

After years of hesitation, jewelry and watch brands embraced innovative digital selling tactics throughout 2018.

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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 2018 headlines from the luxury jewelry and watch sector:



*Farfetch's new jewelry hubs feature brands from David Yuman to Tag Heuer. Image credit: Farfetch*

Farfetch debuts first hard luxury hubs for jewelry and watches

Online luxury platform Farfetch is taking a major step into the world of hard luxury with the launch of two new online hubs partnering with some of the biggest brands in jewelry.

Fine jewelry and fine watches will each now have their own separate hubs online on Farfetch's platform. Jewelers from Chopard to Tiffany & Co. to David Yurman will be represented on Farfetch for the first time, bringing some of the biggest names in luxury jewelry together in one online marketplace ([see story](#)).



*Lightbox Jewelry will be more affordable compared to De Beers. Image credit: Lightbox Jewelry*

### De Beers enters lab-grown diamond market with Lightbox Jewelry

British diamond company De Beers is entering the lab-grown diamond market with the launch of Lightbox Jewelry.

The new brand will focus on creating sustainable diamonds at a more affordable price than their mined counterparts. The brand's products will begin at around \$800 per carat, significantly less than De Beers mined diamonds ([see story](#)).



*John Hardy is one of the brands that has appealed to the self-purchasing woman. Image credit: John Hardy*

### Millennial women's shopping habits lean towards self-purchasing

Contrary to traditional marketing that positions jewelry as a gifting item, millennial women are more apt to buy pieces for themselves than to receive them from others.

A new report from MVI Research found that more than half of millennial age women indicate themselves as the primary buyer of jewelry in their households. Luxury marketers have begun to evolve their messaging surrounding jewelry, but as millennials become a bigger consumer base for high-end goods, it will become even more important to appeal to women themselves ([see story](#)).



*Virtual influencer Noonoouri stars in a new Buccellati campaign. Image credit: Buccellati*

### Buccellati taps virtual influencer to court younger consumers

Italian jeweler Buccellati is enlisting a popular influencer to showcase the brand's signature honeycomb pattern in a campaign that speaks to the social media generation.

With more than 77,000 Instagram followers, computed-generated avatar Noonoouri has a large audience that a number of luxury brands have been interested in reaching. This virtual personality is an unexpected choice of partner for Buccellati, since the more traditional house is tapping into an emerging marketing tactic ([see story](#)).



*Audemars Piguet is one of the brands leaving SIHH. Image credit: Audemars Piguet*

### Richard Mille, Audemars Piguet leave major watch trade show

Richard Mille and Audemars Piguet are the latest luxury watch brands in the last few years to announce their withdrawal from major watch trade shows.

With the trade show model becoming almost irrelevant, watch brands are finally pivoting to embrace more modern strategies. The two brands both announced on Wednesday that the upcoming Salon International de la Haute Horlogerie show in 2019 will be their last ([see story](#)).



*Gucci shows off its jewelry in its new campaign. Image credit: Gucci.*

### Gucci makes foray into high-jewelry

Italian fashion label Gucci is expanding into high-jewelry, taking artistic director Alessandro Michele's vision for the brand to a new category.

As reported by *Le Figaro*, the Kering-owned house's high-jewelry collection will drop in June or July next year. Gucci has ambitions to become a \$12 billion brand, and jewelry could help fuel its growth further ([see story](#)).



*TrueFacet saw a dramatic rise in mobile orders this Black Friday. Image credit: TrueFacet*

### Mobile jewelry, watch sales on the rise this holiday season

As sales this Black Friday and Cyber Monday reached new heights, consumers are becoming more comfortable buying luxury products on mobile devices.

According to online watches and jewelry marketplace TrueFacet, while this year's mobile traffic stayed steady over 2017 the platform's mobile conversion rates nearly doubled. Jewelry sales also edged out watches as the top sales category at TrueFacet, as the holidays mark peak gift-giving time for hard luxury items ([see story](#)).



*Satta Matturi jewelry uses responsibly sourced diamonds and precious stones for its line of African-inspired earrings, cocktail rings, pendants and bangles. Image credit: Satta Matturi Fine Jewellery*

### Diamond industry likely to follow strong 2017 with further growth

The global diamond industry experienced a strong 2017, with 2 percent growth across all industry sectors propelled by a dramatic increase in production.

According to Bain & Company's [eighth annual global diamond report](#), the diamond market is expected to see further growth for the foreseeable future. Nonetheless, companies need to reevaluate how they reach millennial and Generation Z consumers as their purchasing power grows ([see story](#)).



*Akoya pearl and gemstone brooch from Russell Trusso Fine Jewelry. Image credit: Cultured Pearl Association of America*

### Pearls ready for comeback as perfect gem for millennials

While the jewelry industry pulls its collective hair out over mined versus man-made diamonds and millennials, it is

time to change the conversation and talk about another gem perfectly suited to the next generation of luxury jewelry consumers.

Pearls are a natural, organic, environmentally sustaining and virtually renewable gem. Pearls come in all shapes and colors, play well with other gems, metals and materials, and can be quite affordable compared to gemstones. What is more millennial than that ([see story](#))?



*Swiss watches are growing in the United States. Image credit: Vacheron Constantin*

Swiss watches continue US comeback with export growth

Swiss watch exports were up around the world in November, but the sharpest uptick was in the United States.

The value of watches sent to the U.S. was up 17.6 percent last month, far surpassing the average global growth of 3.9 percent, according to statistics from the Federation of the Swiss Watch Industry. After facing a tough climate in the U.S. the second largest watch market Swiss timepieces have seen a resurgence throughout 2018 ([see story](#)).

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