

SPORTS

Luxury goes for aces with US Open partnerships

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IHG transformed a hotel room into a "Tennis in Wonderland" experience. Image credit: IHG Hotels and Resorts

By NORA HOWE

From watches to hospitality to automotive, luxury brands are making their mark in the tennis world through creative U.S. Open partnerships.

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To engage the sport's top fans, official hotel partner of the U.S. Open IHG Hotels and Resorts created an over-the-top tennis installation at the Kimpton Hotel Eventi in New York. Additionally, German automaker Mercedes-Benz is focusing on renewable energy with its interactive activation at this year's tennis tournament.

U.S. Open branding

Last week, luxury watchmakers Hublot and Zenith garnered excitement for the tennis tournament through collaborations with Serbian tennis star Novak Djokovic and tennis icon Patrick Mouratoglou, respectively ([see story](#)).

As the official hotel sponsor of the tennis event, IHG invites guests and tennis enthusiasts to a uniquely curated lodging experience, dedicated to the sport.

IHG transformed a hotel room into a "Tennis in Wonderland" experience. Details throughout the room were given a sports-inspired upgrade, from tennis racquet chandeliers and furniture made out of tennis balls to 3D wall art.

Since Sept. 1, IHG has been inviting guests to the room, where they may enjoy snacks and cocktails while watching the match with friends and family.

In 2019, IHG announced its multi-year partnership with the U.S. Tennis Association (USTA), naming the group as the official hospitality sponsor.

The tournament has presented unique ways for the hospitality group to showcase its brands.



[View this post on Instagram](#)

A post shared by Christine Tran Ferguson NYC (@tourdelust)

In an effort to celebrate the launch of its collection of electric vehicles and support STEM education, Mercedes-Benz is engaging guests through an activation at this year's tournament.

The brand is encouraging tournament attendees to create and harvest clean energy that will later be used to help power an event with global partner and music artist Alicia Keys.

In partnership with [Pavegen](#), Mercedes-Benz invites fans to walk over a pathway of kinetic tech floor tiles that will generate reusable clean energy with each footstep.

The weight from their footsteps will compress an electromagnetic generator which transforms each individual footstep into a small amount of energy that is converted into clean electricity.

For each guest who participates, the automaker will make a \$1 donation per footstep to the [National Energy Education Development Project](#) (NEED) to help bring sustainability resources to schools.

As an official sponsor of the U.S. Open, Mercedes-Benz will host fans in their brand center at the USTA Billie Jean King National Tennis Center until Sept. 12.

As part of the activation, Mercedes-Benz will officially reveal the EQS, the brand's first all-electric luxury sedan from Mercedes-EQ, with two vehicle displays at the Mercedes-Benz Brand Center.

Big milestones coming up. Experience the future of electric and our all-new Mercedes-EQ models live, September 5, 2021, 12:00 PM EDT [#MBIAA21](#) [#MercedesEQ](#)
pic.twitter.com/hKCO3BK0CB

Mercedes-Benz USA (@MercedesBenzUSA) [September 1, 2021](#)

Fans will also have the chance to play a new virtual reality tennis game which features an LED wall to display energetic movement as the match is played. Guests may use racquets with sensors to serve and hit a virtual ball back and forth in the brand center.

Tennis and luxury

Luxury has maintained a significant presence in the world of professional tennis, from player collaborations to event and tournament sponsorships.

Earlier this year, Swiss watchmaker Tag Heuer enlisted tennis champion Naomi Osaka as its newest ambassador as the brand aimed to move in a younger and more diverse direction. Ms. Osaka, who has grown into an activist role,

appeared in a new film for the watchmaker.

The vignette showed how the elite athlete embodies Tag Heuer's ethos of passion and precision ([see story](#)).

In 2019, Swiss watchmaker Tag Heuer tapped a trio of rising tennis stars as ambassadors, highlighting a shared dedication to precision.

The campaign starred Felix Auger Aliassime, Alex de Minaur and Frances Tiafoe alongside existing brand ambassador Denis Shapovalov. Throughout the campaign, the idea of breaking boundaries and taking time to prepare for the future tied the sport's effort to watchmaking ([see story](#)).

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