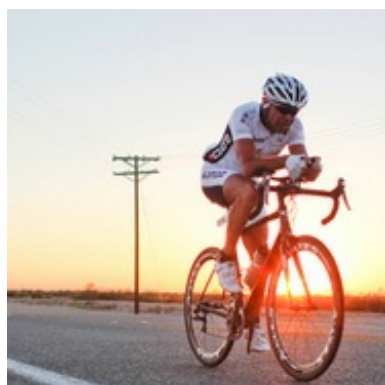


INTERNET

## IWC aligns with sports challenges in online video series

August 2, 2012



By TRICIA CARR

Swiss watchmaker IWC is relating the challenges behind the innovations of its timepieces to those participating in various sporting achievements in an all-digital campaign spanning a microsite and Facebook.

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The watchmaker began its IWC Challenge video campaign on the first day of the 2012 London Olympics to showcase male athletes and push its men's watch collection. Similar to a few other luxury marketers, IWC is likely aligning itself with the Olympics in a smaller-scale campaign as an alternative to a pricy sponsorship.

"Digital affords brands the opportunity to showcase their voice and personality," said Christine Kirk, CEO of **Social Muse Communications**, Los Angeles.

"People do not want to engage with a logo online, they want to engage with other people," she said. "Digital allows brands to humanize themselves, making them more relatable and helping to build customer loyalty."

"IWC is obviously world-renowned for its craftsmanship and this video series featuring athletes is a new direction for the brand, giving consumers the opportunity to engage and think about it in a way that they might not have before."

Ms. Kirk is not affiliated with IWC, but agreed to comment as an industry expert.

IWC did not respond before press deadline.

### Physical challenge

The entire IWC Challenge campaign is hosted on a microsite at <http://www.iwc.com/challenge>. Users can also follow the [IWC Facebook page](#) for updates.

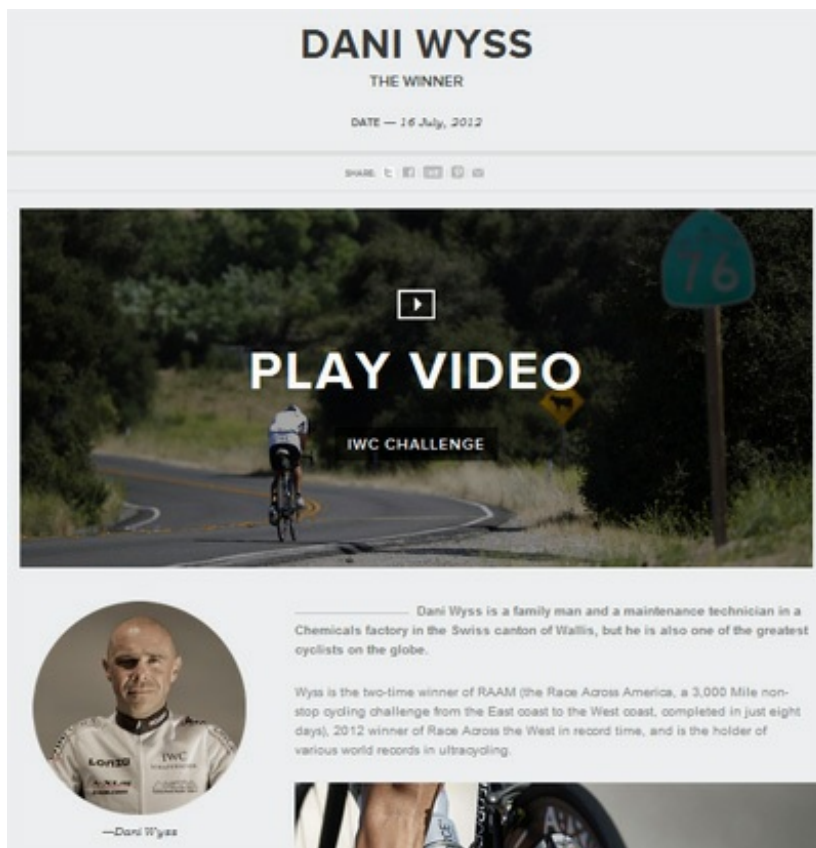
The purpose of the campaign is to relate the challenges of the watch brand in its pursuit to make the most precise timepieces in the world, to the challenges of international athletes, per IWC.

The watchmaker is releasing one athlete feature at a time in its Challenges series, but did not announce a set schedule as of press deadline. Each athlete is showcased with a video and a Q&A feature on the microsite.

Athletes share their triumphs, training regimen, motivations and advice in the features.

IWC released a video trailer to show what is to come in the campaign. It hints that the watchmaker will interview athletes in swimming, sailing and track and field in addition to the two cyclists that it is currently featuring.

The campaign began July 27 when Swiss cyclist Dany Wyss was showcased on the microsite.

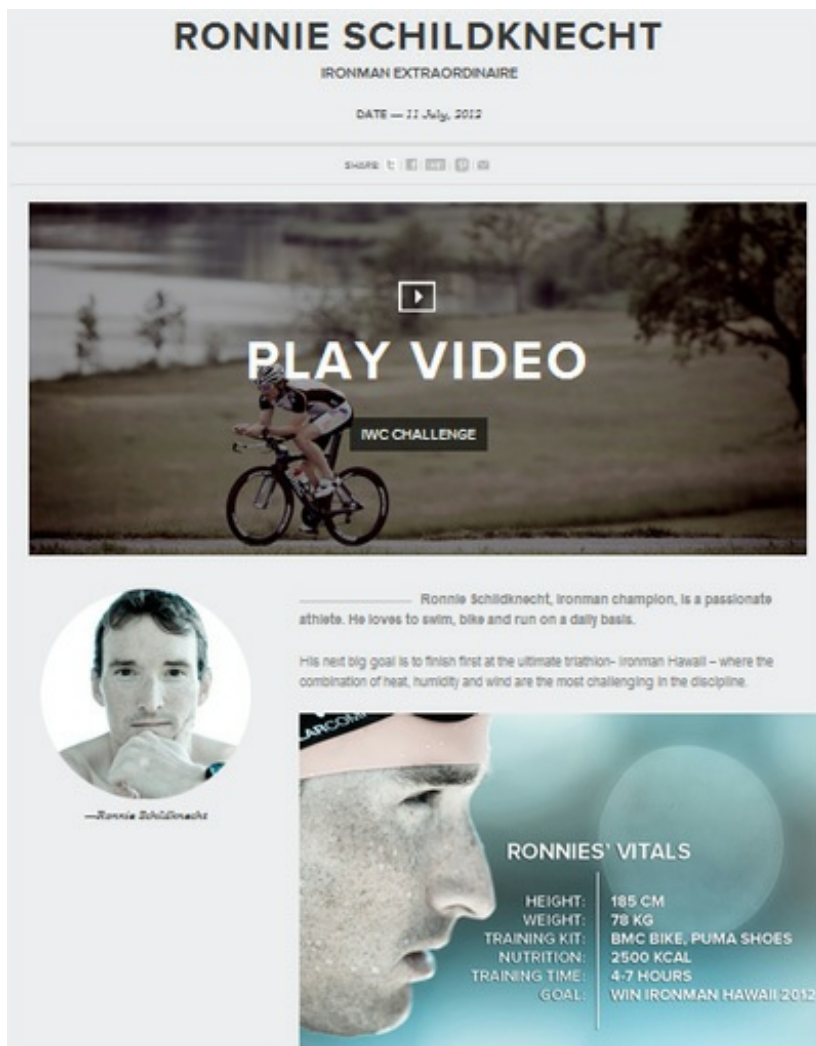


### Dany Wyss feature

The watchmaker posted two images of Mr. Wyss on Facebook and linked users to the IWC Challenge microsite.

In the video, Mr. Wyss shares that he still feels pain from his mountain biking accident that caused him to break his shin and fibula. However, he continues to participate in the Race Across America.

The next cyclist IWC chose to feature is Ronnie Schildknecht. His video and Q&A follows the same format.



**RONNIE SCHILDKNECHT**  
IRONMAN EXTRAORDINAIRE  
DATE — 22 July, 2012

SHARE: [t](#) [f](#) [g+](#) [p](#) [in](#)

**PLAY VIDEO**  
IWC CHALLENGE

Ronnie Schildknecht, Ironman champion, is a passionate athlete. He loves to swim, bike and run on a daily basis.

His next big goal is to finish first at the ultimate triathlon- Ironman Hawaii – where the combination of heat, humidity and wind are the most challenging in the discipline.

**RONNIES' VITALS**

|                |                         |
|----------------|-------------------------|
| HEIGHT:        | 185 CM                  |
| WEIGHT:        | 78 KG                   |
| TRAINING KIT:  | BMC BIKE, PUMA SHOES    |
| NUTRITION:     | 2500 KCAL               |
| TRAINING TIME: | 4-7 HOURS               |
| GOAL:          | WIN IRONMAN HAWAII 2012 |

### *Ronnie Schildknecht feature*

Let the games begin

It is not surprising that luxury brands are focusing some efforts on their association with sports during the Olympics.

Some marketers including IWC, Alfred Dunhill and Magellan Jets are taking a different approach to Olympic-themed efforts, likely as an alternative to pricy sponsorships.

For instance, menswear label Alfred Dunhill emphasized its British roots by dedicating a multichannel campaign to three of the country's athletes who are competing in the Olympics.

The ongoing Voice campaign looks to recognize real men who have overcome obstacles and achieved success in a variety of different fields. The spring/summer 2012 campaign employed social media, print advertisements and mobile to engage consumers ([see story](#)).

Also, private aviation company Magellan Jets helped affluent travelers get to London in time for the games with a package that included flights, hotel and tickets ([see story](#)).

In contrast, Olympic sponsorships can be a large commitment for luxury brands and if secured, they should be ready with multichannel efforts to raise the most awareness.

For example, watchmaker Omega is getting all it can from its longtime Olympics sponsorship during the 2012 games with efforts that span print, social and mobile channels, in addition to its key placement during the televised broadcast ([see story](#)).

However, brands that do take as large a step can relate to the Olympics with smaller efforts.

"This campaign will allow consumers to see IWC in a new light," Ms. Kirk said. "By creating engaging content for their customers, IWC is building lasting brand loyalty and maintaining an ongoing relationship with their consumers."

"The symbolism of timepieces and athletes is a poignant one, particularly as this campaign rolls out during the 2012 Olympics season," she said. "Online video is a social media tool that is still largely untapped, particularly by luxury brands."

"As one of the fastest growing mediums online, there is a wide open field of opportunity for a brand to stake its claim as a trail blazer in online video."

Final Take

*Tricia Carr, editorial assistant on Luxury Daily, New York*