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Krug leverages brand reputation via Master Sommelier ambassador

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By TRICIA CARR

Krug Champagne is upping its status among spirits aficionados by appointing Master Sommelier Ian Cauble as the brand's first U.S. ambassador rather than tapping a celebrity personality.

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Mr. Cauble was inducted into the Court of Master Sommeliers in July and is one of fewer than 130 Master Sommeliers in the United States. Instead of relying on a celebrity to boost the brand image with his or her mass appeal, Krug seems to aligning its storied brand ideals with the choice of a new brand ambassador.

“Ian Cauble's main role as brand ambassador will be to share with consumers and trade his passion for Krug, as a pleasure-seeker first and also as a wine lover,” said Carl Helene, U.S. brand director at [Krug](#), New York.

“While Ian Cauble does have the impressive distinction of being a Master Sommelier, he is first and foremost a person who is passionate about Krug and understands our commitment to undisputed quality,” he said. “One does not need to be a wine expert to feel the enormous generosity and exceptional finesse of Krug Champagnes.

“If we would have met a celebrity with Ian's passion, we would have considered him or

her for the role as well.”

Ambassador with spirit

As Krug's spokesman, Mr. Cauble will host tastings and training events to educate consumers on Krug's Champagne-making process as well as the brand's philosophy.

Mr. Cauble is one of 130 U.S. Master Sommeliers and 200 worldwide. Candidates for this rank must undergo four stages of examinations and blind-tastings.



Ian Cauble

Furthermore, this process was filmed and will be presented in a documentary film called *Somm*. Mr. Cauble will be featured in the film with three other candidates.

The film will premiere at the Napa Valley Film Festival Nov.7 at the Napa Opera House in Napa, CA.

“With our U.S. Krug ambassador, we will be able to reach a much larger group of pleasure-seekers, inviting them to share Krug experiences and discover the generosity and unique philosophy that has defined the house since its founding,” Mr. Heline said.

Celebrity status

Luxury marketers employ ambassadors to further show the brand lifestyle through a known personality.

For instance, German automaker Mercedes-Benz strengthened its tennis sponsorships through a new television, social media, event and print campaign starring 2012 Wimbledon Champion Roger Federer and the 2013 GL-Class.

The multichannel campaign titled “Many Rogers” launched in time for the 2012 US Open Aug. 27-Sept. 9 in Flushing, NY. Swiss-born Mr. Federer has been a global brand ambassador for Mercedes since 2010 and an ambassador for Mercedes-Benz China since 2008 ([see story](#)).

In addition, LVMH-owned Hennessy added to its Wild Rabbit campaign with a multichannel collaboration featuring Futura, an artist whose persistence and refusal to

give up in the pursuit of excellence makes him an ideal brand ambassador for this effort.

In an attempt to reach its core demographic of African American and Hispanic consumers over 21 years old, Hennessy created a limited-edition bottle, a QR code campaign, social videos and a Facebook effort ([see story](#)).

Luxury marketers do not strictly ask actors or singers to be ambassadors, but often times a lesser-known personality is a better match to strengthen the brand to its core audience.

“As our brand ambassador, Ian will be the face of Krug in the U.S., embodying and sharing the values of the house of Krug and travelling across the country to inspire, educate and bring to life Krug’s savoir faire and unique brand philosophy,” Mr. Heline said.

Final Take

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