

MOBILE

IWC targets watch enthusiasts via Instagram hashtag campaign

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By JEN KING

Swiss watchmaker IWC Schaffhausen is encouraging timepiece enthusiasts to join the conversation through the use of branded hashtags in a new campaign on mobile image-sharing application Instagram.

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IWC has a strong social media presence that helps engage fans and keep the brand current. To keep the conversation going with fans, the brand uses a series of hashtags to make their social media accounts as interactive as possible.

"IWC has been active on Instagram for about a year," said Dominic Weir, head of digital, CRM and brand publishing for **IWC**, Schaffhausen, Switzerland.

"We noticed that we have a highly active community sharing photographs of their IWC watches and we wanted to provide them with a venue to share their passion for our creations," he said. "It also helps to get our activities noticed by the customers' other followers and friends and ultimately spread the IWC message."

"We want to share our stories, our products and provide our communities with an engaging content that brings them closer to our world."

#TBT

IWC created three unique hashtags to keep the conversation going and create new discussions for timepiece enthusiasts around the world.

On Thursdays, IWC uses the common #tbt ,or #ThrowbackThursday tag, on Instagram. Many users on Instagram post nostalgic pictures for #tbt, but IWC encourages fans to post pictures of their favorite vintage IWC timepiece.

For their #tbt, IWC will post a photo from its own 145-year history. Showing glimpses of the brand's history helps IWC relate to its fans by use of brand nostalgia.

Also on Thursdays, IWC uses the hashtag #CaseBackThursday. Similar to #tbt, this hashtag is used for fans to snap photos of their timepieces' movement and to show off any special engravings or markings.



Facebook banner to increase Instagram followers

#CaseBackThursday keeps fans engaged in IWC's tradition of designing special watches featuring limited-edition caseback engravings.

IWC also has weekly Instagram campaigns on Wednesdays. Using another interactive hashtag, #WednesdayWatchRiddle, followers are invited to play a guessing game.

Wednesday's hashtag combines IWC's Facebook campaign along with Instagram. In the evening, IWC reveals a "watch porn" photograph of a particular model timepiece. Fans are invited to guess in the comments section on Facebook.

Fans following IWC on Instagram will get a sneak peek earlier in the day giving those followers a competitive edge to IWC's content on Facebook.

The brand hosted the #ShoeLover Instagram contest that increased the number of candid images of its footwear on the mobile-social platform. Since Instagram is a visual channel and growing in popularity among young consumers, it is likely one of the most effective ways to reach a young, affluent audience ([see story](#)).

IWC 's use of Instagram will benefit its brand greatly as it is an ideal tool for reaching new affluent consumers.

“An Instagram initiative like this will be quite beneficial to IWC,” Ms. Cooper said.

“It taps into the friend-of-friend network, exposing new audiences to the brand and products by harnessing the peer-to-peer sharing inherent in the platform,” she said.

“The Instagram user base is largely composed of individuals between the ages of 18-29 and this type of initiative can work to increase market share and brand exposure among the socially-engaged within that demographic.”

Final take

Jen King, editorial assistant on Luxury Daily, New York