

INTERNET

Jaquet Droz develops museum Web site to house unique creations

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By JEN KING

Swiss watchmaker Jaquet Droz has developed a dedicated museum-like Web site to pay homage to its founders by showcasing timepieces from throughout its heritage.

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Jaquet Droz's Gallery of Marvels takes watch enthusiasts through various types of timepieces to build awareness about the watchmaker's history. Housing content in a single location allows for greater exposure, especially for a smaller watch manufacturer.

"Watches, like any other collectibles, thrive on connoisseurship – the heritage aspect helps create interest and excitement around the brand as a whole, and this has a halo effect for current collections," said Elspeth Ross, strategist at [Siegel+Gale](#), New York.

"A Jaquet Droz watch is a significant investment," she said. "Consumers like to be reminded that what they buy has lasted and will last for generations."

Ms. Ross is not affiliated with Jaquet Droz, but agreed to comment as an industry expert.

[Jaquet Droz](#), owned by Swatch Group, did not respond by press deadline.

History of time

Unveiled on March 20 via social media and through an email blast sent to newsletter

subscribers, Jaquet Droz directed enthusiasts to its new Web site. The watchmaker's Gallery of Marvels includes pieces that have been commissioned throughout the world as a way to pay homage to its founders.

Jaquet Droz and horology enthusiasts can follow the provided link to explore various pieces that represent the brand's history as well as lend support to items currently designed by the watchmaker. A click-through lands on an introduction page that gives a brief run-down of the Jaquet-Droz family and their lasting legacy that began in the early 18th century.



Promotional image for Gallery of Marvels included in Jaquet Droz newsletter email

To elevate Jaquet Droz in the eyes of the consumer, the blurb includes that the watchmaker was the first to export its products to Beijing, known at the time as the “Forbidden City.”

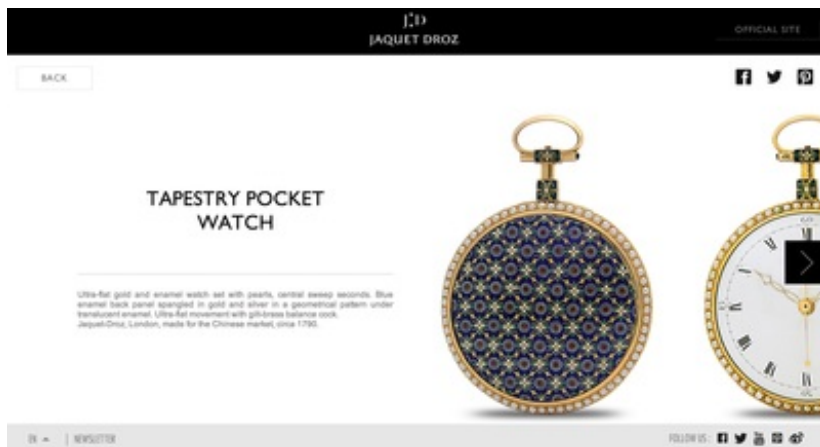
Also, Jaquet Droz mentions its trademark of fine decoration on its timepiece to show its dedication to craftsmanship.

On the right side of the welcome paragraph, a slideshow of pocket watches, clocks and a sketch of the Jaquet Droz manufacture appears. From here, the consumer can select from a drop down menu to explore the watchmaker's creations further.

Consumers can select from Pocket Watch, Singing Bird, Special Pieces and Automata. When a category is selected, the landing page features a short introduction and tiled images of pieces fitting within that section.

For instance, in Pocket Watch the blurb describes the complications used and the style of decoration used on Jaquet Droz watches such as hand-painted enamel artwork. Below, the consumer can explore various types of Jaquet Droz pocket watches.

If a certain design motif catches their eye, they can click to discover more or hold the cursor over the watch to share the image via Facebook, Twitter or Pinterest. When an item is clicked, the landing page describes the watch and gives a date similar to how a museum plaque would describe an item in an exhibit.



In the Singing Bird section, consumers can browse different types of pieces developed by Jaquet Droz that have birds worked into the designs. For example, the Singing Bird Urn, a music box created around 1780 is accompanied by additional images and a video.

The Singing Bird Urn video shows the landscape scene appear as the music plays. The Singing Bird collection also features a pocket watch, a hanging clock and a musical snuff box.

Embedded Video: <http://www.jaquet-droz.tv/v.ihtml/player.html?source=share&photo%5fid=9309040>

Singing Bird Urn by Jaquet Droz

Jaquet Droz's Special Pieces section shows the range of timepieces created by the brand as a way to differentiate itself from the competition. A prime example of Jaquet Droz's inventiveness would be its *Amour et Fidélité*, a musical, time-telling flask created for the Chinese market circa 1790.



Jaquet Droz's Amour et Fidélité

To continue to show the inventiveness of Jaquet Droz, the site also includes an Automata section. The original Automatas, *The Writer*, *The Musician* and *The Draughtsman*, designed by Pierre Jaquet Droz, are now on display at the Neuchâtel Museum of Art and History in Switzerland and were once the delight of the royal court.

For its current enthusiasts, Jaquet Droz has kept the tradition alive with the Art of Astonishment collection which includes *The Time Writing Machine* that is able to write the precise time on a sheet of paper and a completely animated timepiece, *The Bird*

Repeater. Humanoids Charlie and The Magician, created in 2012 and 2013, respectively, lift up bells to reveal hidden treasures underneath.



Jaquet Droz's The Musician automata

Night at the museum

Other brands have developed similar Web sites to tout brand innovation and heritage to build awareness outside the radius of a physical museum.

For instance, Italian fashion label Gucci created a digital hub for its bricks-and-mortar museum to expand the audience of its art and fashion displays.

The brand translated the Gucci Museo experience into a dedicated Web site that featured images of the exhibitions as well as information about the house's history. By keeping this Web site separate from Gucci's main site, the brand created a singular place to learn about the atelier's heritage through digital content, spreading awareness and building loyalty ([see story](#)).

Watchmakers can benefit from the exposure a physical museum exhibit can create as well.

For example, Swiss watchmaker Breguet is appealing to watch enthusiasts through its participation in the New York presentation, "Precision and Splendor: Clocks and Watches at The Frick Collection."

The three historic Breguet timepieces by Abraham-Louis Breguet and his son Antoine-Louis Breguet from the late eighteenth century are the most recent creations on display. Breguet also provided major funding for the exhibit, which could strengthen its reputation in the watch industry ([see story](#)).

By allowing images from the museum site to be shared, Jaquet Droz likely seen an increase interest in its contemporary pieces.

"The ability to share helps customers interact with the brand, and promote it to a wider and younger audience," Ms. Ross said.

Final Take

Jen King, editorial assistant on Luxury Daily, New York

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