

MULTICHANNEL

Armani launches first Swiss-made watch collection with multichannel campaign

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By SARAH JONES

Giorgio Armani's collection Emporio Armani is showing the Italian label's first Swiss-made watch line at Baselworld in a vault-inspired installation.

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Coinciding with the first day of the watch and jewelry show, Armani launched a dedicated microsite that mimics the physical vault in Messe Basel, Switzerland. Giving consumers an online platform to learn about the line that reflects the brand's display at the show will expand the reach of its exhibit at Baselworld.

"[The] bank vault is a symbol of financial industry, which represents a significant part of Swiss business and culture," said Bill Aurnhammer, CEO of [Aurnhammer](#), New York. "As the biggest exporting country of luxury watches, Switzerland is known for masterful techniques and exquisite tastes.

"By using a bank vault, Armani demonstrates its new watch collection's Swiss heritage," he said. "Plus, there's no better storage than a bank vault to show the preciousness of the products."

Mr. Aurnhammer is not affiliated with Armani, but agreed to comment as an industry

expert.

Armani was unable to comment before press deadline.

The big reveal

At Baselworld, Armani's display looks like a bank vault, with a large circular door at the entrance of the exhibit. Inside, glass cases of watches line the sides of the narrow room with walls decorated to look like safety deposit boxes.



Emporio Armani display at Baselworld

Drawing attention to its display at Baselworld, Armani customized a trolley, covering the body of the car with its logo and the image of a vault opening.



Tweet from Armani

Leading up to the unveiling of its Swiss Made collection, Armani posted teasers on social media, showing images of a closed vault. On Instagram, the brand posted a short video of a vault opening, which then dissolved into black without showing the contents inside.

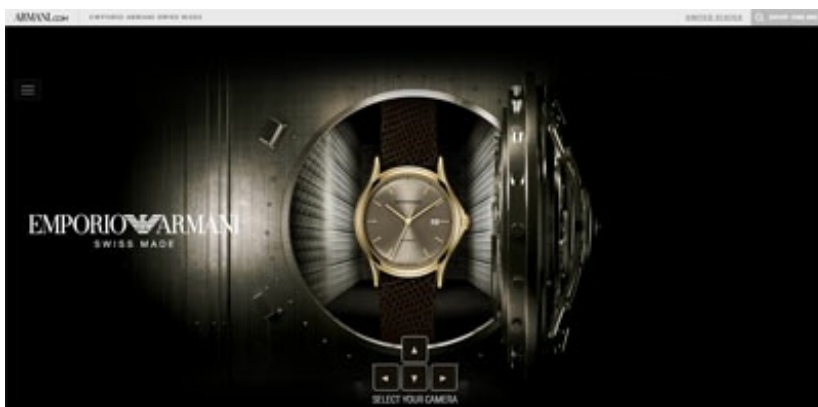


Instagram post from Armani

On Facebook, Armani told consumers to like its post to be notified when the vault opens, and then commented on the post days later with a link. Since the amount of work necessary on the part of the consumer was less than subscribing to an email, close to 2,700 people liked the post to get an update.

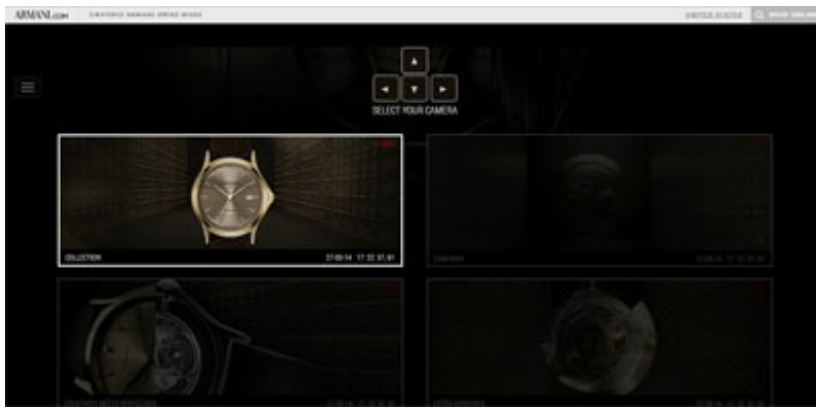
Armani posted the campaign video for the collection to social media on March 27, the first day of Baselworld. Included in the post was a link to the microsite the brand created for the collection.

The microsite continues the bank vault theme. When the Web site loads, a circular door's mechanisms move to open the vault and reveal a watch. This image is the same as the one used on the trolley and the cover photo on the brand's Facebook page for consistency.



Emporio Armani Swiss Made microsite

Below the image of the open vault, Emporio Armani invites consumers to select their camera view, including icons of the arrow keys on the keyboard. As the consumer clicks the arrow keys, four different boxes designed to look like security footage appear, with the time and date ticking in the corner.

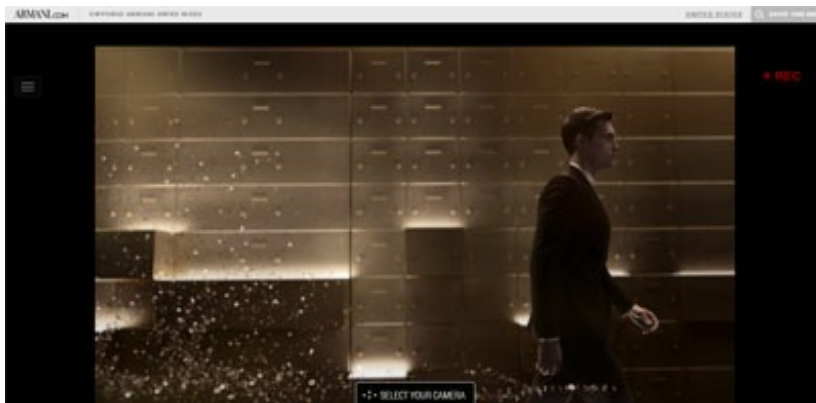


Emporio Armani Swiss Made microsite

In the top left is a collection tile, which brings up a slideshow of the watches that consumers can click through. Buttons lead to more product information or the ecommerce page for the particular watch.

To the right of the collection tile is the 50-second campaign video. This is set to the soundtrack of a modernized version of “Dance of the Four Swans” from “Swan Lake.”

The lights come up in a space that looks like the vault created at Baselworld, showing a man in a black suit. The safety deposit drawers on both sides of the walls open and watch mechanisms begin to fly out and converge in the middle of the room, following the model.



Video still from Emporio Armani Swiss Made campaign

As the model walks further the pieces fit together and create a complete watch on his wrist. He looks at the watch and then exits the vault, and the door closes and locks behind him.

Emporio Armani - The New Swiss-Made Collection

A click-through on the “creativity meets perfection” panel leads to information about the collection. Armani explains that this collection combines the brand’s design with “the Swiss tradition of high precision mechanisms.”

The collection was inspired by the 1930s and ‘40s.

Consumers can click a button below the image of a watch to start the hands.

Craftsmanship is also explored in this section through a gallery of images, from sketches of watches to the assembly of the timepieces.

“Extra contents” gives consumers the opportunity to download a screen saver of the Armani vault for iOS, Android or desktop. There is also a link to download the catalog.

Among the extra content is a craftsmanship video that shows watchmakers in lab coats sitting around a table crafting timepieces, carefully placing mechanisms and buffing out pieces of metal.

"The microsite uses bank vault cameras to lure consumers to explore different components of the campaign," Mr. Aurnhammer said. "Consumers can easily access detailed collection information, watch the beautifully produced video, and download digital catalogs to their smartphones and computers.

"The clear structure and stunning visuals are very impressive wow factors," he said.

"However, the microsite does not build connections with social media sites. It's a little pity to miss the opportunity for excited fans to share the microsite with their social networks."

Fashion meets function

It makes sense for fashion labels to create dedicated sections for consumers to learn about their newest watches, since it allows them to better explain the technical aspects of the timepieces.

For example, France’s Chanel encouraged enthusiasts to explore the phases of the moon through a Web site that illuminated its newly revealed J12 Moonphase wristwatch by

presenting its aesthetics and functions.

The J12 Moonphase watch joined the J12 collection that debuted nearly a decade ago. Chanel has been steadily advertising its fine watch collections throughout various media as of late to show consumers that its expertise extends beyond fashion ([see story](#)).

Other fashion brands have been actively promoting their watch collections as Baselworld begins.

For instance, Italian fashion label Versace introduced a new collection of women's wrist watches through a dedicated Pinterest board to expand awareness for its entire range of timepieces.

Officially debuting at Baselworld in Basel, Switzerland, March 27 through April 3, Versace's Pinterest board allows consumers not attending the watch fair to explore the new collection before it hits retail locations. Touting a new watch will also drive traffic to the Pinterest board where consumers may repin other watches available from Versace ([see story](#)).

Within the first day the watches were unveiled, the collection saw a lot of interest.

"The campaign is aimed to create consumer awareness and eventually lead to sales," Mr. Aurnhammer said. "Armani's large fan base offers a solid ground for spreading its branded messages. Its Instagram has nearly 500,000 followers, and the three updates about the watch collection have received more than 200,000 likes.

"To push forward purchases, the microsite adds a shopping link to some watches in the Swiss collection," he said. "So far, the watches that can be purchased online are all sold out, indicating the popularity of the new collection and the effectiveness of the campaigns. Therefore, great job, Armani."

Final Take

Sarah Jones, editorial assistant on Luxury Daily, New York