



— S C H O O L —
D E S I G N • B R A N D • B U S I N E S S

Faster, Higher, Stronger: Exploring Omega's Quest for Brand Leadership Through Storytelling via the Creation of Brand Advocacy on Instagram.

by

Jaen-Pierre Dowling

A dissertation submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the
Master of Arts in Creative Brand Leadership

at the

Independent Institute of Education: Vega School

Supervisors: Dr. Anna Slabbert & Mr. Alexander Sudheim

Submission date: June 2022

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to acknowledge the incredible role my supervisors have played in guiding me towards the completion of my research. Dr. Anna Slabbert has been the most supportive, caring and inspiring mentor to me during this journey. She has spent countless hours strategising with me, helping me to make sense of the industry I analysed, and pointed me in the right direction on a number of occasions. Thank you, Anna.

During the course of this study, Alexander (Alex) Sudheim has been my point of call. He has helped me to shape my arguments, expand my views and, through his support and feedback, enabled me to become a better writer. I appreciate our intellectual debates and your unbridled love for the written word. Thank you, Alex.

To my parents and brother – thank you for the love and support along this journey. I’m grateful for all the words of encouragement and for understanding when this study took priority. Finally, to Lea – thank you for everything. You made this possible.

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the dissertation submitted for the Master of Arts in Creative Brand Leadership degree to The Independent Institute of Education is my own work and has not previously been submitted to another university or higher education institution for a degree.

ABSTRACT

The internet has fundamentally changed how brands interact with their customers. However, luxury watch brands in particular have been slow to adapt to this new reality. Initially, fear of brand dilution and a loss of exclusivity were posited as reasons for the sluggish uptake. Yet previous research has found that the brand image of a luxury brand is not negatively influenced when conducting business online. The COVID-19 pandemic has had a dramatic impact on global business, and has led to a substantial increase in e-commerce, with the emergence of a new type of customer: one who is digitally adept and more selective than ever before. This trend has necessitated businesses to rapidly transform their operations. Yet, despite the disruption brought about by COVID-19, 2021 proved to be the Swiss watch industry's best year ever, indicating the resilience of the luxury watch industry. A gap in the current literature calls for further research into the social media marketing of luxury brands to better understand their brand building activities online. The purpose of this study is to explore how the Swiss luxury watch brand, Omega, creates brand advocacy on Instagram by analysing their strategic brand initiatives through the lenses of Transient Competitive Advantage and Narrative Transportation Theory. To understand Omega's brand strategies and motivations, the researcher chose an exploratory, qualitative case study as his research method. His research sample was all of Omega's Instagram posts from the 2019 calendar year, and the unit of analysis a single Instagram post. The researcher used qualitative content analysis and qualitative counts analysis to interpret the data. Four prominent themes with subthemes emerged from the raw data, which were interpreted through a unique conceptual framework that includes the lenses of Narrative Transportation Theory and Transient Competitive Advantage. The findings emphasise the importance of executing brand building strategies that are both consistent yet agile enough to embrace Transient Competitive Advantage. The study concludes with a model for brand strategists in the luxury goods industry to understand how to elicit brand advocacy on social media.

Keywords: Instagram; luxury watch brand; Narrative Transportation Theory; Omega; online brand advocacy; storytelling; Transient Competitive Advantage.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Acknowledgements.....	ii
Declaration.....	iii
Abstract.....	iv
List Of Figures.....	xi
Chapter 1.....	1
1.1 Contextualisation	1
1.1.1 Pricing Overview.....	2
1.1.2 Product Scarcity.....	3
1.1.3 Covid-19.....	5
1.1.4 Industry Rebound.....	6
1.1.5 A New Asset Class	7
1.1.6 Competitive Advantage.....	9
1.1.7 Industry State.....	10
1.1.8 Brand Leadership: Context.....	13
1.1.9 Brand Building: Context.....	17
1.1.10 Brand Differentiation: Context	18
1.1.11 Luxury: Context.....	19
1.2 Theoretical Framework.....	20
1.2.1 Branding.....	21
1.2.1.1 Brand Advocacy.....	21
1.2.2 Brand Leadership.....	22
1.2.3 Brand Building.....	23
1.2.4 Brand Differentiation	23
1.2.5 Narrative Transportation Theory	23
1.2.6 Transient Competitive Advantage	24
1.2.7 Conceptual Framework.....	24
1.3 Rationale	25
1.3.1 Research Intent.....	27

1.3.2 Research Purpose	28
1.3.3 Research Questions	28
1.4 Methodology.....	29
1.4.1 Research Approach	30
1.4.2 Paradigm.....	30
1.4.3 Study Type And Reasoning Approach	30
1.4.4 Research Population And Recruitment Methods.....	31
1.4.5 Research Method.....	31
1.5 Ethical Considerations	32
1.6 Limitations And Delimitations	32
1.7 Significance Of The Study	32
1.8 Chapter Outline	33
1.8.1 Chapter One.....	34
1.8.2 Chapter Two.....	34
1.8.3 Chapter Three.....	35
1.8.4 Chapter Four	36
1.8.5 Chapter Five.....	36
1.9 Conclusion	37
Chapter 2.....	37
2.1 Introduction	38
2.2 Branding.....	40
2.2.1 Brand Leadership.....	42
2.2.2 Brand Building.....	44
2.2.2.1 Brand Identity	47
2.2.3 Brand Differentiation	48
2.2.3.1 Luxury.....	50
2.2.3.2 Rarity	52
2.2.3.3 Veblen Goods.....	53
2.2.4 Brand Advocacy.....	55
2.2.5 Online Brand Advocacy	57
2.2.5.1 Brand Loyalty	59
2.3 Narrative Transportation Theory	61
2.3.1 Information Gathering.....	69

2.3.2 The Internet.....	70
2.3.3 Social Media And Customer Engagement.....	72
2.4 Transient Competitive Advantage	74
2.4.1 Brand Agility.....	81
2.5 Conceptual Framework.....	83
2.5.1 Dependent And Independent Variables	84
2.5.2 Mediating Variable	85
2.5.3 Moderating Variables.....	85
2.5.4 Application Of The Conceptual Framework	86
2.6 Conclusion	86
Chapter 3.....	90
3.1 Introduction	90
3.2 Research Design	90
3.2.1 Research Purpose	92
3.2.2 Research Questions	93
3.2.3 Ontology: Relativist.....	95
3.2.4 Epistemology: Subjectivist.....	95
3.2.5 Axiology: To Explore, Understand And Communicate	96
3.2.6 Paradigm: Interpretivist.....	97
3.2.7 Type Of Study: Exploratory Research.....	98
3.2.8 Research Approach: Qualitative Research.....	99
3.2.9 Research Method: Case Study Method	100
3.2.10 Research Procedure.....	102
3.2.11 Literature Review	102
3.2.12 Primary Research	102
3.2.12.1 Sampling Method: Non-Probability, Purposive	102
3.2.12.2 Reasoning Approach: Inductive.....	103
3.2.12.3 Research Analysis: Qualitative Content And Counts Analysis.....	105
3.3 Ethical Considerations.....	108
3.4 Research Evaluation.....	109
3.4.1 Credibility	109
3.4.2 Transferability	110
3.4.3 Dependability	110

3.4.4 Confirmability	111
3.5 Conclusion	111
Chapter 4.....	113
4.1 Introduction	113
4.2 Data Analysis Process.....	113
4.3 Data Gathering.....	117
4.3.1 First Coding Draft.....	118
4.3.2 Coding With Atlas.Ti	119
4.3.3 Coding For Latent Themes.....	120
4.4 Category Code Groups.....	122
4.4.1 Copy (Four Codes)	122
4.4.2 Content (Five Codes).....	122
4.4.3 Topic (47 Codes)	123
4.4.4 Featured (15 Codes).....	123
4.4.5 Omega-Featured (Ten Codes).....	123
4.4.6 Part Of Series (59 Codes)	124
4.4.7 Reason For Post (Four Codes)	124
4.4.8 Summary.....	124
4.5 Descriptive Code Groups.....	125
4.5.1 Multiple-Use Codes	125
4.5.2 Single-Use Codes.....	126
4.5.3 Coding Examples.....	126
4.6 Code Summary	130
4.7 Code Grouping.....	132
4.8 Theme Grouping	136
4.8.1 Theme One: Aesthetic Value	136
4.8.2 Theme Two: Space Travel	137
4.8.3 Theme Three: Technical Expertise	137
4.8.4 Theme Four: Product Innovation.....	137
4.8.5 Theme Five: Tool Watches.....	137
4.8.6 Theme Six: Brand Experience.....	138
4.8.7 Theme Seven: Brand Mystery.....	138

4.8.8 Theme Eight: Human Achievement	138
4.9 Unpacking The Creation Of Themes.....	139
4.10 Counting Qualitative Data.....	141
4.10.1 Copy.....	142
4.10.2 Content.....	143
4.10.3 Featured.....	144
4.10.4 Topic.....	145
4.10.5 Omega-Featured.....	146
4.10.6 Part Of Series	148
4.10.7 Reason For Post.....	149
4.10.8 Summary.....	150
4.11 Research Themes.....	151
4.11.1 Theme One: Human Achievement.....	151
4.11.2 Theme Two: Product Innovation	152
4.11.3 Theme Three: Brand Experience	153
4.11.4 Theme Four: Aesthetic Value.....	154
4.12 Research Evaluation.....	155
4.12.1 Credibility	155
4.12.2 Transferability	155
4.12.3 Dependability	156
4.12.4 Confirmability	156
4.13 Conclusion	157
Chapter 5.....	158
5.1 Introduction	158
5.2 Conceptual Framework.....	158
5.3 Interpretation Of Research Findings	160
5.3.1 Theme One: Human Achievement.....	162
5.3.1.1 Brand Narrative	162
5.3.1.2 Narrative Transportation Theory.....	165
5.3.1.3 Transient Competitive Advantage	168
5.3.1.4 Persuasion	169
5.3.2 Theme Two: Product Innovation	171
5.3.2.1 Brand Narrative	172
5.3.2.2 Narrative Transportation Theory.....	177

5.3.2.3 Transient Competitive Advantage	182
5.3.2.4 Persuasion	186
5.3.3 <i>Theme Three: Brand Experience</i>	187
5.3.3.1 Brand Narrative	187
5.3.3.2 Narrative Transportation Theory.....	192
5.3.3.3 Transient Competitive Advantage	196
5.3.3.4 Persuasion	200
5.3.4 <i>Theme Four: Aesthetic Value</i>	203
5.3.4.1 Brand Narrative	204
5.3.4.2 Narrative Transportation Theory.....	208
5.3.4.3 Transient Competitive Advantage	210
5.3.4.4 Persuasion	212
5.4 <i>Omega's Brand Identity</i>	217
5.5 <i>Implications For Brand Custodians</i>	220
5.5.1 <i>A Model For Eliciting Brand Advocacy</i>	220
5.5.1.1 Identify Key Messaging Pillars.....	222
5.5.1.2 Champion Uniqueness.....	223
5.5.1.3 Understand The Dynamics Of The Platform And The Audience.....	224
5.5.1.4 Embrace Transient Competitive Advantage.....	225
5.5.1.5 Tell Vivid Stories	225
5.6 <i>Limitations And Delimitations</i>	226
5.7 <i>Recommendations For Future Research</i>	228
5.7.1 <i>Research Conducted From The Consumer's Perspective</i>	228
5.7.2 <i>The Study Can Be Replicated In A Different Luxury Goods Category</i>	228
5.7.3 <i>The Study Can Be Replicated With A New Luxury Watch Brand</i>	229
5.8 <i>Conclusion</i>	229
References.....	232
Addendum A.....	265
Addendum B.....	295

LIST OF FIGURES

Chapter 1

Figure 1.1: Omega Speedmaster (Omega, 2021)	3
Figure 1.2: Rolex DateJust (Rolex, 2022)	3
Figure 1.3: Cartier Tank (Watches of Switzerland, 2022)	3
Figure 1.4: Patek Philippe Perpetual Calendar Chronograph (Time & Watches, 2020)	3
Figure 1.5: Audemars Piguet Royal Oak (DeMarco, 2022)	3
Figure 1.6: A. Lange & Söhne Lange 1 Time Zone (Richter, 2022)	3
Figure 1.7: Patek Philippe Nautilus Ref. 5711 (Milton, 2022a)	8
Figure 1.8: The best-selling watch brands by wholesale value (Goulard, 2021)	11
Figure 1.9: Brand Leadership – The Evolving Paradigm (Aaker & Joachimsthaler, 2009)	22

Chapter 2

Figure 2.1: The theoretical framework for this study	40
Figure 2.2: Brand Leadership - The Evolving Paradigm (Aaker & Joachimsthaler, 2009)	44
Figure 2.3: Brand Identity System (Aaker, 1996: 79)	48
Figure 2.4 Veblen curve (Thakur & Vaidya, n.d.)	54
Figure 2.5: Omega Speedmaster “Speedy Tuesday” (Omega, 2022a)	63
Figure 2.6: Comparison between the Omega Speedmaster Alaska III and the “Speedy Tuesday” (Omega, 2022a)	64
Figure 2.7: Omega Speedmaster “Speedy Tuesday Ultraman” (Omega, 2022f)	65
Figure 2.8: Conceptual framework	84

Chapter 3

Figure 3.1: A visual representation of the research design	91
--	----

Chapter 4

Figure 4.1: A representation of the research process	117
Figure 4.2: An example of a single Instagram post copied to a working document	118

Figure 4.3: An example of an Instagram post being coded in a working document	118
Figure 4.4: A coding map used during the first round of ATLAS.ti coding	119
Figure 4.5: An updated, formalised coding map used during the second round of ATLAS.ti coding	121
Figure 4.6: An example of a coded post from June 24, 2019 within ATLAS.ti during the second round of coding	127
Figure 4.7: The image that accompanied the text of the June 24, 2019 post, coded within ATLAS.ti	127
Figure 4.8: The codes attached to the June 24, 2019 post, coded within ATLAS.ti	128
Figure 4.9: An example of a coded post from January 22, 2019, within ATLAS.ti during the second round of coding	129
Figure 4.10: The video that accompanied the text of the January 22, 2019 post, coded within ATLAS.ti	129
Figure 4.11: The codes attached to the January 22, 2019 post, coded within ATLAS.ti	130
Figure 4.12: The codes attached to the February 19, 2019 post, coded within ATLAS.ti	131
Figure 4.13: The codes attached to the February 19, 2019 post, coded within ATLAS.ti	131
Figure 4.14: An overview of the coding process from source to the final theme	140
Figure 4.15: Copy category code counts data	142
Figure 4.16: Copy category code counts chart	142
Figure 4.17: Content category code counts data	143
Figure 4.18: Content category code counts chart	143
Figure 4.19: Featured category code counts data	144
Figure 4.20: Featured category code counts chart	145
Figure 4.21: Topic category code counts data	146
Figure 4.22: Topic category code counts chart	146
Figure 4.23: Omega-featured category code counts data	147
Figure 4.24: Omega-featured category code counts chart	147
Figure 4.25: Part of series category code counts data	148

Figure 4.26: Part of series category code counts chart	148
Figure 4.27: Reason for post category code counts data	149
Figure 4.28: Reason for post category code counts chart	149
Figure 4.29: Category code group summary chart	150

Chapter 5

Figure 5.1: Conceptual framework	159
Figure 5.2: Omega-featured category code counts data featuring human achievement-focused topics	163
Figure 5.3: Astronaut on the surface of the moon wearing an Omega Speedmaster (Omega, 2019)	165
Figure 5.4: The Five Deeps submersible surfacing after completing its record-breaking dive (Omega, 2019)	165
Figure 5.5: Category code group summary chart	166
Figure 5.6: NASA control centre at the Johnson Space Centre (Omega, 2019)	167
Figure 5.7: One of NASA's rockets (Omega, 2019)	167
Figure 5.8: A NASA astronaut wearing an Omega Speedmaster over his suit in space (Omega, 2019)	167
Figure 5.9: George Clooney discussing space travel with Dr Buzz Aldrin (Omega, 2019)	167
Figure 5.10: Omega Speedmaster Apollo 11 50 th Anniversary Limited Edition in steel (Bues, 2019)	168
Figure 5.11: Omega Speedmaster Apollo 11 50 th Anniversary Limited Edition in yellow gold (Stacey, 2019)	168
Figure 5.12: Omega Speedmaster Moonwatch (Omega, 2020a)	168
Figure 5.13: Omega Seamaster 300 "Spectre" on a NATO strap (Broer, 2015)	171
Figure 5.14: Omega Seamaster 300M "007" Edition on a titanium bracelet (Stacey, 2019)	171
Figure 5.15: Reincarnation of the iconic Calibre 321 mechanical watch movement (Omega, 2019)	173
Figure 5.16: Calibre 321 photographed to resemble a moon in a half-moon phase (Omega, 2019)	173

Figure 5.17: Omega's first-ever movement made from titanium: Calibre 8928 Ti (Omega, 2019)	173
Figure 5.18: Side profile of the Omega Seamaster 300 Lapis Lazuli's dial, bezel, case and crown (Omega, 2019)	174
Figure 5.19: Full image of the Omega Seamaster 300 Lapis Lazuli watch (Omega, 2019)	174
Figure 5.20: The face of the Omega Seamaster 300 Lapis Lazuli watch (Omega, 2019)	174
Figure 5.21: Part of series category code counts data featuring product innovation-focused series	176
Figure 5.22: Omega Seamaster 300M made with Titanium, Tantalum and Sedna gold (Omega, 2019)	177
Figure 5.23: Omega Seamaster 300M made with Titanium and ceramic, featuring a rubber strap (Omega, 2019)	177
Figure 5.24: Omega Speedmaster Moonphase with Master Chronometer designation (Omega, 2019)	177
Figure 5.25: Omega Master Chronometer-certified movement visible through the caseback of a watch (Omega, 2019)	177
Figure 5.26: Nicole Kidman wearing an Omega Constellation Manhattan (Omega, 2019)	178
Figure 5.27: Cindy Crawford wearing an Omega Constellation Manhattan (Omega, 2019)	178
Figure 5.28: Omega Speedmaster Dark Side of the Moon Black Black watch with a vintage camera (Omega, 2019)	179
Figure 5.29: Omega Speedmaster 38 outside in the snow (Omega, 2019)	179
Figure 5.30: Omega Seamaster Diver 300m dropped into a pool of water (Omega, 2019)	180
Figure 5.31: Omega Seamaster Diver 300m on a rubber bracelet (Omega, 2019)	180
Figure 5.32: Omega Seamaster Diver 300m on a NATO strap bracelet (Omega, 2019)	180
Figure 5.33: Model sitting next to the river in Lucerne wearing an Omega Constellation Manhattan (Omega, 2019)	181

Figure 5.34: Model with a Swiss flag in front of Matterhorn Mountain wearing an Omega Speedmaster (Omega, 2019)	181
Figure 5.35: Model in Bernese Oberland wearing an Omega Seamaster Aqua Terra (Omega, 2019)	181
Figure 5.36: Omega Seamaster Planet Ocean Ultra Deep Professional strapped to the arm of the submersible (Omega, 2019)	183
Figure 5.37: Victor Vescovo climbing into the Five Deeps submersible (Omega, 2019)	183
Figure 5.38: A closeup shot of the dial of the Omega Seamaster Planet Ocean Ultra Deep Professional (Omega, 2019)	183
Figure 5.39: Omega Seamaster Planet Ocean Ultra Deep Professional pictured in water (Omega, 2019)	184
Figure 5.40: Side angle of the Omega Seamaster Planet Ocean Ultra Deep Professional (Omega, 2019)	184
Figure 5.41: Omega Seamaster Planet Ocean Ultra Deep pictured on the wrist (Omega, 2019)	185
Figure 5.42: Full frontal view of the Omega Seamaster Planet Ocean Ultra Deep (Omega, 2019)	185
Figure 5.43: A selection of vintage Omega print advertisements (Omega, 2019)	188
Figure 5.44: Omega pocket watch powered by the iconic 19-ligne “Omega” calibre (Omega, 2019)	188
Figure 5.45: The iconic 19-ligne “Omega” calibre (Omega, 2019)	188
Figure 5.46: Topic category code counts data featuring brand experience-focused topics	189
Figure 5.47: An Omega Globemaster in a Christmas-themed post (Omega, 2019)	190
Figure 5.48: An Omega Ladymatic in a presentation box as part of a Christmas-themed post (Omega, 2019)	190
Figure 5.49: A vintage Omega watch in a vintage red box with a Certificate of Authenticity (Omega, 2019)	192
Figure 5.50: A vintage Speedmaster laying on papers that feature watch specifications (Omega, 2019)	192
Figure 5.51: A disassembled version of the 19-ligne OMEGA calibre	

(Omega, 2019)	193
Figure 5.52: Video screengrab of Eddie Redmayne explaining the origin of the Omega name (Omega, 2019)	193
Figure 5.53: The caseback of the special Starmus Omega Speedmaster watch (Omega, 2019)	194
Figure 5.54: A shot of the gold Omega Speedmaster Starmus watch (Omega, 2019)	194
Figure 5.55: The dial and sub-dials of the special Starmus Omega Speedmaster watch (Omega, 2019)	194
Figure 5.56: Eddie Redmayne and Raynald Aeschlimann at an Omega exhibition in Shanghai (Omega, 2019)	196
Figure 5.57: The space suit of a NASA astronaut at Omega’s Museum in Biel, Switzerland (Omega, 2019)	196
Figure 5.58: An Olympic running track and watchmaker’s bench at the Omega Museum (Omega, 2019)	196
Figure 5.59: Swatch MoonSwatch “Mission to the Moon” (Swatch, 2022)	197
Figure 5.60: Omega Speedmaster Moonwatch (Omega, 2022b)	197
Figure 5.61: Swatch MoonSwatch “Mission to the Sun” (Swatch, 2022)	198
Figure 5.62: Swatch MoonSwatch “Mission on Earth” (Swatch, 2022)	198
Figure 5.63: Swatch MoonSwatch “Mission to the Moon” (Swatch, 2022)	198
Figure 5.64: Swatch MoonSwatch “Mission to Mars” (Swatch, 2022)	198
Figure 5.65: The Omega Planet Ocean made for the 2020 Tokyo Olympic Games (Omega, 2019)	201
Figure 5.66: The Omega Seamaster 300M “007” Edition watch for the film <i>“No Time to Die”</i> (Omega, 2019)	201
Figure 5.67: Omega Seamaster 300M “007” Edition watch in a lifestyle setting (Omega, 2019)	201
Figure 5.68: The Omega Seamaster Aqua Terra Golf watch (Omega, 2019)	202
Figure 5.69: The Omega Speedmaster Apollo 11 50 th Anniversary watch promoted in partnership with the PGA championship (Omega, 2019)	202
Figure 5.70: Man wearing an Omega De Ville with an oversized T-shirt and blue glasses (<i>Spangle, 2021</i>)	204
Figure 5.71: Woman wearing an Omega Diver 300M “007” Edition with blue jeans, a tracksuit top and a hunting jacket (Baker, 2022)	204

Figure 5.72: Man wearing an Omega Speedmaster with chinos and a jacket (Hodinkee, 2021)	204
Figure 5.73: Cindy Crawford wearing a gold Omega Constellation Manhattan (Omega, 2019)	205
Figure 5.74: Nicole Kidman wearing an Omega Constellation Manhattan in steel (Omega, 2019)	205
Figure 5.75: An Omega Trésor on a red leather strap held by a model with red nails (Omega, 2019)	206
Figure 5.76: An Omega Trésor on a red leather strap with red lipstick and nail varnish (Omega, 2019)	206
Figure 5.77: An Omega Trésor on a red leather strap on the wrist of a model holding a red rose (Omega, 2019)	206
Figure 5.78: A man dressed in a casual blue suit wearing a straw hat and an Omega Speedmaster (Omega, 2019)	207
Figure 5.79: A man dressed in a khaki suit wearing an Omega Speedmaster on a NATO strap (Omega, 2019)	207
Figure 5.80: A man dressed in a grey suit wearing an Omega Speedmaster on a leather strap (Omega, 2019)	207
Figure 5.81: Reason for post category code counts data	208
Figure 5.82: The wave-inspired dial of an Omega Seamaster (Omega, 2019)	209
Figure 5.83: Liu Shishi wearing a gold Omega Constellation Manhattan (Omega, 2019)	209
Figure 5.84: Alessandra Ambrosio wearing a gold Omega Constellation Manhattan (Omega, 2019)	209
Figure 5.85: The rotor (winding mechanism weight) of a mechanical watch movement (Omega, 2019)	210
Figure 5.86: A mechanical watch movement, held by the winding stem (Omega, 2019)	210
Figure 5.87: The dial and movement assembly from an Omega Constellation Manhattan (Omega, 2019)	210
Figure 5.88: The dial, date window, and bezel of a steel and gold Omega Constellation Manhattan (Omega, 2019)	211
Figure 5.89: The star of an Omega Constellation Manhattan, held with a watchmaker's tweezer (Omega, 2019)	211

Figure 5.90: The dial of an Omega Seamaster, held with a watchmaker's tweezer (Omega, 2019)	213
Figure 5.91: The dial, date window, and bezel of a gold Omega Constellation Manhattan (Omega, 2019)	213
Figure 5.92: The small gold star from the Omega Constellation Manhattan's dial (Omega, 2019)	214
Figure 5.93: A side angle of the Omega Constellation Manhattan (Omega, 2019)	214
Figure 5.94: Conceptual framework	216
Figure 5.95: Brand Identity System (Aaker, 1996: 79)	218
Figure 5.96: A model for eliciting brand advocacy in luxury brands on Instagram	221

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

1.1 Contextualisation

Citius, Altius, Fortius - Communiter: “Faster, higher, stronger - together”. The official motto of the Olympic Games serves as inspiration for the athletes who have invested their time and energy and sacrificed so much to compete against the best athletes on earth (Barker, 2021). Their passion, drive, ambition and commitment are the work of legends: exhaustive training sessions, ice baths, strict diets, mental preparation and focused sleep (Pawlowski, 2020; Booth, 2018; Wolfe & Lastoe, n.d.). Their relentless pursuit of perfection distinguishes Olympians from mere mortals. This same attitude is mimicked in the Swiss town of Biel/Bienne. It is here where Omega, a giant of the watchmaking world, continuously strives for perfection (Artworth Brothers, 2020). The purpose of this study is to explore how Omega consistently achieves success by focusing on how it executes its online brand building initiatives to create brand advocacy.

From fine art and handbags to bespoke vehicles and global real estate, the luxury goods industry has embraced the Internet and adopted an omni-channel strategy that benefits both business and consumer. Yet, the luxury watch industry has been slow to adapt to this new digital retail reality. Initially, the Chief Executive Officers of luxury watch brands indicated a fear of brand dilution and a loss of exclusivity when their products are promoted and made available online. Their perception that digital channels diminish brand desirability seemed to blind them to the brand building opportunities that these digital channels offer (Yap, 2018). However, research has already found that the image of a luxury brand is not negatively influenced once its products are sold online. In fact, research found that a brand *benefits* from its strong image when their products are available online (Gfrerer, 2014).

Further research is needed to understand the role that digital channels play on the brand equity of luxury watch brands. In this study, Omega’s online brand strategy is

examined to explore how the brand creates online brand advocacy. The findings show how these activities have helped the brand to take on a brand leadership role in the luxury watch industry. In the context of this study, the luxury watch industry is underpinned by certain aspects such as pricing strategies; product scarcity; the influence of the COVID-19 pandemic; the rebound of the industry; and the creation of a new asset class: all of which will be discussed.

1.1.1 Pricing overview

Within the context of the luxury watch industry, price alone does not define luxury. It is a combination of price, provenance, technical expertise, material selection, brand heritage and distribution. When watch pricing is calculated, all these factors are taken into consideration before reaching the final figures. In the context of this study, timepieces selling for less than \$500 are generally considered to be “watches”, and watches that cost between \$1 500 and \$5 000 are seen as practical and high-quality timepieces that, in most cases, offer real value-for-money. These are referred to as “basic luxury watches” by the international wristwatch industry (Tamas, 2018).

The \$5 000 mark is an international benchmark and is perceived as a premium medium with which customers can express and identify or associate themselves. This price point also signifies a psychological barrier that defies any logical, utilitarian reasoning for purchasing. These watches are referred to as “luxury watches” and offer very few functional benefits that cannot be found in much cheaper timepieces. The purchasing of these watches can thus be seen as a means of self-expression and borders on the attainment of a certain level of self-actualisation (Tamas, 2018).

Some of the most popular watch brands within this segment include Omega, Rolex, Cartier, (figures 1.1 to 1.3) Panerai, IWC, Jaeger-LeCoultre, Breitling and Grand Seiko - the bulk of these watches retail at significantly more than \$5 000 and can cost upwards of \$40 000.



(From left to right)

Figure 1.1: Omega Speedmaster (Omega, 2021)

Figure 1.2: Rolex DateJust (Rolex, 2022)

Figure 1.3: Cartier Tank (Watches of Switzerland, 2022)

On the other end of the spectrum in the luxury watch market, watches from brands such as Patek Philippe, Audemars Piguet, A. Lange & Söhne (figures 1.4 to 1.6), Vacheron Constantin, Richard Mille and Blancpain start at more than \$10 000 and enjoy strong support and a high level of desirability. These watches can be referred to as “high-end luxury watches” (Tamas, 2018).



(From left to right)

Figure 1.4: Patek Philippe Perpetual Calendar Chronograph (Time & Watches, 2020)

Figure 1.5: Audemars Piguet Royal Oak (DeMarco, 2022)

Figure 1.6: A. Lange & Söhne Lange 1 Time Zone (Richter, 2022)

1.1.2 Product scarcity

High demand and product scarcity form an important part of the luxury experience. To grow, some companies have started to focus on the concept of “abundant rarity”

(Kapferer & Valette-Florence, 2016). This concept is based on the *perception* of exclusivity rather than *actual* exclusivity. Brands that adopt this strategy use tools like “limited editions” to strengthen their appeal. This drive towards protecting the desirability of their brands and minimising the risk of overexposure on the Internet has resulted in these companies being very selective with the ways in which they market their products online. Yet, today’s luxury wristwatch consumers are highly connected and dependent on digital platforms for research. The influence that these platforms have on consumer-brand relationships cannot be ignored.

In contrast to that of non-luxury brands, luxury brands’ conundrum is the ability to reconcile growth and profits with the sustained drive towards retaining exclusivity. Kapferer and Bastien (2012) refer to this phenomenon as the “Internet Dilemma”, which they describe as being a mismatch between a luxury brand’s need for exclusivity and rarity, and the Internet as a mass medium.

Yet in 2017—flying in the face of Kapferer and Bastien’s (2012) concerns—Richemont’s chairman, Johann Rupert, suggested that the coming decade will bring about massive changes for the luxury goods industry. A concerted effort that will focus on scaling and expanding digital sales channels will follow. Rupert suggested that the need for physical boutiques will decrease as e-commerce channels adapt to the constant change in consumer needs much quicker than traditional channels were able to (Thompson, 2017c).

Richemont Chief Financial Officer, Burkhardt Grund, also suggested that the wholesale watch trade, which has always strongly focused on supplying watches to independent retailers around the world, will disappear over time as more and more retailers are going out of business (Thompson, 2017c). The closing of various independent retailers came at a time of burgeoning Swiss watch exports in most retail markets around the world (Thompson, 2018a; Thompson, 2018b), which suggests that customers are still purchasing luxury wristwatches, but the ways in which they do so are changing. These findings confirm the sentiment expressed at January 2019’s Salon International de la Haute Horlogerie (SIHH) fair (Thompson, 2019). Then the COVID-19 pandemic struck.

1.1.3 COVID-19

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a dramatic impact on global business (Gu, Slusarczyk, Hajizada, Kovalyova & Sakhibieva, 2021; Bhatti, Akram, Basit, Khan, Naqvi, Bilal, 2020; Roggeveen & Sethuraman, 2020; Achille & Zipser, 2020). Global product shortages followed due to decreased manufacturing capacity and supply chain shortages (Fernandes, 2020). Retailers saw a considerable decline in brick-and-mortar sales during the height of global lockdowns.

During the pandemic, 52% of consumers avoided brick-and-mortar shopping and other crowded areas (Bhatti *et al.*, 2020). This behaviour has led to a dramatic increase in the number of people turning to e-commerce channels and necessitated businesses to rapidly transform their operations (Gu *et al.*, 2021). During the pandemic, e-commerce sales have grown significantly, as people were forced to venture online to purchase everything from essentials to luxury goods (Bhatti *et al.*, 2020).

Roggeveen and Sethuraman (2020) suggest that these behaviours, which were adapted during the pandemic could become the new normal, with luxury businesses having to reconsider their supply chains and operating models to cope with changing customer needs. Consumers are changing the ways in which they shop, and Roggeveen and Sethuraman (2020) suggest that the sale of luxury goods will decline because of the pandemic. A McKinsey & Company report (Achille & Zipser, 2020) found that, even before the pandemic, independent luxury-goods wholesalers all over Europe, along with luxury department stores in North America, were struggling to keep their businesses afloat.

A variety of factors contributed to the situation, including the growth of e-commerce and a lack of vertically integrated distribution models. The industry was hit even harder with the arrival of COVID-19. It is estimated that between 20% and 30% of the luxury industry's sales come from international customers who purchase these products outside their home countries. Global lockdowns abruptly brought these sales to a halt. The pandemic has resulted in the emergence of a new type of customer: one

who is digitally immersed and more selective than before due to financial constraints (Gu *et al.*, 2021).

The lack of fashion shows and trade fairs have also influenced the relationships brands have with their partners and consumers, and the inconsistency between high-performing luxury brands and their less successful counterparts suggests that a hyperpolarisation in performance is currently taking place. Luxury brands should therefore continue building their brands on online platforms and focus on engaging with their customers online to compensate for these declines (Roggeveen & Sethuraman, 2020).

A concerted effort should be made to digitise their operating model by using e-commerce, digital marketing, online brand building as well as more sophisticated personalisation efforts that mimic the quality and service customers have become accustomed to in physical retail spaces. Luxury brands should focus on creating resilience while transforming their business model (Achille & Zipser, 2020). This radical shift towards conducting business online has caught many businesses unaware and unprepared. However, this study will illustrate that Omega's online brand building activities were already perfected long before the start of the pandemic.

1.1.4 Industry rebound

January 2021 saw a considerable rise in online transactions in the global jewellery and watch category with sales increasing by 26.4% during this time (Gu *et al.*, 2021). A report by Deloitte on the Swiss watch industry in 2021 (Szegedi & Boudrand, 2021) found that high-end luxury watches saved the Swiss watch industry during the pandemic. During the second half of 2020, the export value of luxury watches costing more than 3 000 Swiss franc (CHF) had shown an increase of 7%, whereas the low-end categories—referring to watches costing below CHF 200, and between CHF 200 and 500—declined considerably by 26% and 32% respectively. Luxury watches therefore seem to be rebounding and experiencing healthy sales growth. Wealthy consumers were less affected by the pandemic, and some have flocked to luxury watches as an asset class during this period (Frank, 2021).

Despite all the disruption brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic, 2021 proved to be the Swiss watch industry's best year to date. The wholesale value of all watches exported during this period was CHF 22.3 billion, improving on the previous record of CHF 22.25 billion set in 2014 (Forster, 2022; Federation of the Swiss Watch Industry FH, 2022). The United States of America was the leading export market, accounting for CHF 3.1 billion of the total value: an increase of 55% over 2020 (Forster, 2022).

To put these figures into perspective: American inflation reached the 7% mark in 2021, and yet a number of Swiss watch brands have increased their prices far above the inflation rate. Patek Philippe increased its watch prices between 3.4% and 8.1%; Rolex increased its prices between 10.5% and 11.6%, and Hublot increased its between 10% and 15% across the range (Milton, 2022a). Despite these price increases, the Swiss watch industry still had its best year ever in 2021. What then, is driving this insatiable demand for luxury watches?

1.1.5 A new asset class

Rolex has confirmed that its production capabilities simply cannot meet the demand that its watches currently generate (Milton, 2021). Patek Philippe shares this sentiment. Patek Philippe's owner, Thierry Stern, indicated that the company can only fulfil around 10% of the demand for its Nautilus Ref. 5711 watch, with no intention of increasing production to meet the demand (Lankarani, 2019). The Nautilus Ref. 5711 (figure 1.7) has since been discontinued (Leung, 2022). Adams (2021) cites Patek Philippe's fear that consumers might start to expect price appreciation in the brand's other products as one of the reasons for its decision.



Figure 1.7 : Patek Philippe Nautilus Ref. 5711 (Milton, 2022a)

The situation has worsened to the extent that these watches often carry multi-year waitlists with authorised dealers. Here, the prospective buyer's purchase history as well as his or her relationship with a dealer is taken into account when authorised dealers vet these buyers. Even then there is no guarantee that a buyer will ever be offered the opportunity to acquire one of these watches (Milton, 2021). Driven by this voracious and unrealised demand for luxury watches, the pre-owned watch market has seen a substantial increase in sales in recent years, with auction houses, grey market dealers (dealers that purchase unsold stock from retailers and then flood the market with these watches at reduced rates) and private sellers selling stock that fetch record prices.

Frank (2021) suggested that the pre-owned watch market is worth around \$20 billion. The healthy demand for these watches, boosted even further during the pandemic, has led to a situation where certain scarce new watches from brands like Rolex, Patek Philippe, Audemars Piguet and Richard Mille are purchased from authorised dealers at retail value, and then sold to and by grey market dealers and other players at substantially marked-up prices (Frank, 2021; Anderson, 2020; Altieri, 2020). Given the incredible demand and the minuscule supply, several luxury watches have turned into assets that are being traded and invested in with the purpose of generating profit in the short, medium or long term. A number of Rolex models are at the forefront of this current market frenzy (Altieri, 2021; Neita, 2021; Blowers, 2018).

1.1.6 Competitive advantage

Traditionally, luxury watch brands—as with many other industries—would find attractive positions within the market and would put up barriers to entry to deter competitors. These business advantages ranged from access to large distribution networks, vertical integration, patented technology and strong brand equity. Traditionally, businesses would identify and build up their advantages over decades. However, through competitive market forces, disruptions and technological advancements, competitors would put incumbents under pressure and render their advantages obsolete. The status quo of businesses benefiting from long-term competitive advantages is being eroded (Winston, 2012).

Rolex is one of the strongest global brands and was voted the most reputable global company for four years from 2016 to 2019 (RepTrak, 2021). It was also ranked the world's second most reputable company in 2021 (RepTrak, 2021). The brand's presence is felt at a number of major sporting events around the globe. As previously mentioned, the pre-owned market for Rolex watches is fiercely competitive.

Synonymous with quality and reliability, it has built a mainstream following and is seen as the epitome of luxury by many. Almost all of Rolex's brand equity was created offline through decades worth of sponsorships of sporting events and selective media coverage. As demonstrated, demand for its watches is stronger than ever. The Rolex brand continues to invest in the same marketing activities it has done for decades and is still supporting the same industries and causes that helped it build its brand equity. The brand has followed the same business model since its inception much like Nokia and Kodak did (Rolex, 2022; Vijayaragavan, 2021; Bucher, 2020).

In a market currently driven by scarcity, investors seem to gravitate towards the Rolex brand. The brand is presently experiencing a bull market, with speculators buying as many watches as they can readily find (Milton, 2021; Blowers, 2018). Yet, it is possible that the favourable conditions in which Rolex currently operates could be affected by changing market sentiment and consumer tastes, eroding its competitive advantage in the process. As consumer tastes change, the next generation of customers may no

longer be interested in the traditional sporting stars and events that Rolex supports, or the scarcity measures it employs to sell its watches (Gray, 2018).

Today, luxury watch brands should think strategically about competitive advantages since this sector is constantly evolving. This study suggests that these brands should shift their efforts away from out-dated competitive advantages, towards Transient Competitive Advantages. These types of advantages are a radical departure from traditional competitive advantages. Companies who seek Transient Competitive Advantages value innovation and execute new ideas efficiently. These advantages can be seized and exploited quickly, and once exhausted, the business can move on to the next. This study will demonstrate that Omega is a prime example of how to utilise Transient Competitive Advantages. This type of nimble behaviour stops them from stagnating and continuously investing in old ideas that no longer yield competitive advantages (see Video Blog: The End of Competitive Advantage, 2018).

1.1.7 Industry state

As part of the Deloitte Swiss watch industry report, Szegedi and Boudrand (2021) found that at least one in five customers buy watches solely as investment purchases. The speculative nature of this type of behaviour suggests that many Rolex customers, and to an extent those of Patek Philippe, Audemars Piguet and Richard Mille, base their purchase decisions on the likelihood that the watch will increase in value. This type of behaviour is turning certain luxury watches into assets that can be realised later for a handsome profit (Baker, 2021).

The known scarcity and inflated pre-owned market prices of Rolex, Patek Philippe, Audemars Piguet and Richard Mille has undoubtedly influenced public perception of these watches, turning them into status symbols. This behaviour also means that a number of the buyers currently interested in these luxury watches are purchasing them for the sake of signifying their wealth and status, rather than expressing their genuine interest in mechanical watches (Altieri, 2022; Holland, 2022; Sims, 2021; Szegedi & Boudrand, 2021; Wrist Aficionado, 2021; Fleming, 2020; McSpedden, 2018; TrueFacet, 2016). Despite the bullish market sentiment and speculative purchasing behaviour surrounding Rolex, Patek Philippe, Audemars Piguet and

Richard Mille, another one of the world's best-selling watch brands—Omega—is maintaining its position in the top three (Goulard, 2021) based on the quality of its watches and its accompanying stories, as this study will illustrate.

According to figure 1.8, Omega has kept its place as the second best-selling watch brand based on wholesale value for four years in a row. Apart from regularly releasing limited-edition watches, Omega does not engage in product scarcity as a strategy. All the non-limited-edition watches in its catalogue are always available for purchase, with a short wait period on some watches only from time to time. The market also does not view the brand's watches as "investment" pieces in the same way it does Rolex, Patek Philippe, Audemars Piguet and Richard Mille. Omega's commercial success is driven by its technical expertise, the strength of its marketing and the appeal of its watches (Blowers, 2021), all of which is encapsulated in its brand positioning and brand building initiatives. These topics will be discussed in detail.

Rank	2017	2018	2019	2020
1	Rolex	Rolex	Rolex	Rolex
2	Omega	Omega	Omega	Omega
3	Cartier Watches	Cartier Watches	Cartier Watches	Cartier Watches
4	Longines	Longines	Longines	Patek Philippe
5	Patek Philippe	Patek Philippe	Patek Philippe	Longines
6	Tissot	Tissot	Audemars Piguet	Audemars Piguet
7	Audemars Piguet	Audemars Piguet	Tissot	Richard Mille
8	IWC	TAG Heuer	Richard Mille	Tissot
9	TAG Heuer	IWC	TAG Heuer	TAG Heuer
10	Richard Mille	Richard Mille	IWC	IWC
11	Jaeger-LeCoultre	Jaeger-LeCoultre	Hublot	Breitling
12	Hublot	Hublot	Jaeger-LeCoultre	Hublot
13	Vacheron Constantin	Vacheron Constantin	Breitling	Jaeger-LeCoultre
14	Officine Panerai	Breitling	Vacheron Constantin	Tudor
15	Breitling	Breguet	Officine Panerai	Vacheron Constantin
16	Breguet	Officine Panerai	Breguet	Officine Panerai
17	Bulgari	Bulgari	Bulgari	Bulgari
18	Swatch	Rado	Tudor	Breguet
19	Piaget	Swatch	Rado	Blancpain
20	Rado	Chopard	Chopard	Rado

Figure 1.8: The best-selling watch brands by wholesale value (Goulard, 2021)

Omega seems to have created a niche for itself in the luxury watch industry by selling its watches to a segment of the market that is enamoured with mechanical watchmaking and immersive storytelling. This strategy is at odds with the approach of other brands which rely on product scarcity, resulting in those watches often being considered commodities to be sold for a profit. In contrast to its globally known

counterpart, Rolex, Omega is a connoisseur brand: an achiever's watch for those who are only interested in the finest, most exclusive timepieces (Hartov, 2022). Goulard (2021) estimates that Rolex accounted for around 24.9% of all wholesale Swiss luxury watch sales in 2020. In contrast, Omega, in second position, accounted for roughly 8.8% of all wholesale watch sales during 2020. These figures clearly illustrate the difference between the global appeal of Rolex, manifested through its diverse customer base coming to the brand with different purchase intentions, and the purist appeal of Omega driven by a passion for horology and the accompanying immersive storytelling.

In the context of this study, Omega will be referred to as a leader brand: a brand that creates and executes its own vision of what the luxury watch industry should look like. Aaker introduced the concept of brand leadership as a brand's ability to continually achieve excellence (Aaker & Joachimstaler, 2000). Miller and Mills (2011) expanded on the concept by suggesting that brand leadership is a consumer assessment where consumers consider a brand as being successful, visionary and up to date with current trends in a market. This study will show how Omega is maintaining its brand leadership position by exploring how Omega successfully exploits its Transient Competitive Advantages by boldly embracing the spirit of change in all aspects of its business. From rapidly retooling its factories when necessary to constantly developing and implementing innovative brand strategies that help build meaningful narratives that strengthen connections between the brand and its customers while always staying true to its DNA (Hartov, 2022; Green, 2018).

These connections, which refer to the ways customers think and feel about the brand, have a positive influence on the customers' perceptions of the brand and ultimately strengthen the relationship that exists between them. This study will focus on Omega, which has assumed a brand leadership position and has successfully implemented narrative-driven content strategies in an attempt to turn followers into brand advocates. This study will be conducted from a brand strategist's point of view rather than from the consumer's point of view. The findings of this study will contribute to the existing brand literature by communicating to other brands how they too can create Transient Competitive Advantages and turn followers into brand advocates by using narrative-driven content strategies. Omega is able to achieve these ends without

having to resort to the types of scarcity tactics and speculative investment hype other watch brands rely on.

1.1.8 Brand leadership: context

During the 1970's, the Swiss watch industry was confronted with its biggest threat to date: the quartz crisis. During this period, the Swiss watch industry faced the almost insurmountable challenge of having to compete with Japanese watch brands that produced low-cost watches in large quantities that featured a new and cheap battery-powered watch movement (termed the *quartz watch movement*). With the quartz crisis at its peak, the Swiss watch industry was under significant pressure that threatened its survival. Sales of mechanical watches were plummeting, and many watch companies went bankrupt. During this period, Nicolas G. Hayek, a Zurich-based management consultant of Lebanese descent, was hired by the Swiss banks to find a way of saving their struggling investments in these companies (Raffaelli & DeJordy, 2019).

After Hayek's initial assessment, he found that the consolidation of the production capabilities of the Swiss brands would be able to extend the longevity of the industry. He spearheaded the merger between ASUAG and SSIH – two of Switzerland's largest watchmaking holding companies who accounted for almost 50% of all Swiss watch industry employees (Raffaelli & DeJordy, 2019). After ignoring the advice of numerous financial analysts and completing a significant fundraising effort, Hayek purchased a majority stake in the newly formed joint company (Breiding, 2013). He surrounded himself with people who shared his vision for the future and created a new holding company – Société de Microélectronique et d'Horlogerie, which would become known as SMH (Raffaelli & DeJordy, 2019).

Over the next few years, SMH's focus was on building the overall group's capacity for the manufacturing of quartz watches to compete with the Japanese watch companies who were dominating the market. Hayek ensured that the group retained some of its mechanical movement manufacturing skills, which provided a small amount of revenue, with the bulk of its income originating from the sales of quartz watches. Under this plan, SMH endeavoured to take back from the Japanese watch companies the low-end and mid-range market segments they had lost. By manufacturing superior

quality quartz watches that were still deemed to be affordable under its Swatch brand, SMH benefited from the distinctly strong “Swiss Made” designation (Raffaelli & DeJordy, 2019). The strategy worked well, and Swatch became a globally recognised brand, praised for its playful and bold design, high quality and low cost. Swatch and Omega’s paths crossed for the first time in the most unlikely of ways in 2022.

In the luxury watch market, Omega is an example of a watch brand that successfully took on a brand leadership role and repositioned itself after it refocused on its core competencies. The story of Omega’s meteoric rise as a leading global watch brand is closely intertwined with the story of one of its most industrious managers, Jean-Claude Biver. After starting his career at Omega and leaving to relaunch Blancpain, Biver returned to the board of SMH and took control of Omega in 1992. At Omega, Biver identified three elements that formed the core identity of the brand—glamour, history and technical excellence—and subsequently realigned the company according to these elements. Now under his stewardship, Biver implemented many projects at Omega, such as the development of new watch movements, the selection of new brand ambassadors and the organising of special events with the purpose of refocusing the brand around its core values (Donzé, 2018).

To establish itself as a market leader in the luxury wristwatch segment, Omega—under the orders of Hayek—purchased the rights to George Daniels’ Co-Axial escapement. The escapement in a watch determines the speed with which the energy is released from the mainspring of an automatic mechanical watch. The centuries old lever escapement has powered almost all commercially available watches for centuries and relies on oil as a lubricating agent to protect the components from damage (Sirianni, 2017; Thompson, 2017b; Adams, 2013). Over time, this oil results in the stability of the watch becoming compromised. Daniels’ Co-Axial escapement uses an entirely different approach to the lever escapement. Instead of the sliding friction that characterises the operation of the lever escapement, the Co-Axial escapement uses a pushing method. This elimination of friction between components in the Co-Axial escapement nullifies the need for oil. By removing lubricating oil from the escapement, the escapement can run more efficiently, which leads to an increase in stability and precision and increases the interval between services. This escapement is a technical breakthrough; apart from the traditional lever escapement,

it is the only other escapement to be commercialised at scale (Markl, 2017). This purchase therefore set into motion a concerted effort towards innovation in the luxury mechanical watch segment and pre-empted the recovery of the mechanical watch industry (Thompson, 2017b).

Biver's instinct to promote the perceived superiority of mechanical watches was positively received. He focused on the perceived value and legacy element of mechanical watchmaking in all his marketing activities and ultimately succeeded in repositioning the Swiss watch industry as high-quality watch manufacturers. The Swiss watchmaking industry took notice of the successes Biver had with Blancpain and Omega and used his approach as a blueprint for a post-quartz revolution for mechanical watch brands. During the 1990s, Omega's marketing department was responsible for the training of numerous managers who would go on to influence the industry at large by helping them to move mechanical watch brands into the luxury segment (Raffaelli & DeJordy, 2019).

SMH was renamed the Swatch Group in 1998. Under Hayek's directive, and based on the success Biver had with Blancpain, The Swatch Group purchased the Breguet brand. This acquisition helped The Swatch Group to reposition itself as a market leader and enabled it to establish a dominant position in the luxury segment (Thompson, 2007; Raffaelli & DeJordy, 2019). Hayek personally took ownership of the Breguet brand with the vision of celebrating Breguet's heritage and its masterful blend of technological advancements, innovation and beautiful artistic expression (Raffaelli & DeJordy, 2019). From the beginning of its operations, The Swatch Group was a market leader who frequently introduced new designs, styles and other innovations. During the 1980s, the company was able to save a large portion of the Swiss watch industry from bankruptcy (Anwar, 2012).

Guided by the industrious nature of its business managers and brand custodians, Omega has grown into one of the strongest watch brands in the world. Its strategies have been adopted by several other brands, driving a new form of strategic brand management in the process. Omega and the rest of The Swatch Group brands—through the efforts of Hayek and Biver—helped to regain the Swiss watch industry's title as the global leader in innovation and prestige (Donzé, 2011). The 1990s brought

with it more acquisitions and brand takeovers; an increase in technical innovation; new types of media; a host of new independent brands and a renewed interest in vintage watches. Strategic brand management drove the re-emergence of Swiss-made mechanical watches as luxury accessories during this period (Donzé, 2018). By relocating low-value manufacturing activities abroad, refocusing on highly skilled manufacturing activities in Switzerland and moving towards positioning their mechanical watch brands as luxury goods manufacturers, Swiss watch brands were able to create a competitive advantage once again.

During the 1990s, luxury groups wanted to regain more control over their distribution channels and started to vertically integrate their distributors. The process of improving the quality of their distribution networks, rather than the number of distribution points around the world, allowed them to control their brands' identities, whilst bringing the retail profits back into their businesses (Theurillat & Donzé, 2015; Donzé, 2018). Their luxury positioning, together with their centuries worth of technical insights and rich heritage allowed them to champion the "Swiss Made" label of superior quality and craftsmanship once more.

The number of watches exported from Switzerland decreased from 43.7 million units in 1995 to 31.9 million units in 2010. However, over the same period, the value of these exports increased from \$6.9 billion (6.8 billion CHF) to \$15.57 billion (15.3 billion CHF) (Theurillat & Donzé, 2015). This is a clear indication that the realignment with their core values and focus on their inherent brand strengths enabled Swiss watch brands to adopt a leadership position in the global watch market. In 2016—four decades after the quartz watch almost killed the Swiss watch industry—mechanical watches only accounted for 27% of all Swiss watch exports, in units: 6.96 million watches. Yet, these 6.96 million mechanical watches accounted for 80% of the total sales of Swiss watches – amounting to \$15 billion (Thompson, 2017b). These figures indicate healthy and sustained growth in the market for mechanical watches. Within the context of this study, Omega takes on a brand leadership role by focusing on expanding its global reach, improving its external communication, strengthening its brand identity and strategically focusing on innovative online brand building techniques.

1.1.9 Brand building: context

As part of his career, the luxury watch executive, Jean-Claude Biver, worked with Blancpain and Omega. His time with these two brands led to one of the best examples of brand building in the luxury watch industry. During the quartz crisis, Biver acquired the rights to the Blancpain brand, the oldest surviving watch brand in the world. Intent on bringing the company from bankruptcy back to profitability, Biver decided to refocus the brand on its history of innovation and technical expertise (Raffaelli & DeJordy, 2019). In contrast to the rest of the industry which moved to quartz technology, Biver believed a future existed for purely mechanical watches. Word of his vision spread, and the company received numerous job applications from watchmakers who refused to adopt quartz technology (Raffaelli & DeJordy, 2019).

Biver believed that a mechanical watch is a thing of beauty that elicits emotion and can be seen as a status symbol. In an industry where brands produce several watches in different ranges, Biver relaunched Blancpain by introducing a *single* model that celebrated the brand's mechanical heritage (Raffaelli & DeJordy, 2019). Biver took a traditional brand with an established look and feel and built that brand in a way that made it feel young and contemporary. His efforts led to the creation of a community of young enthusiasts who were enthralled by mechanical watches again (Raffaelli & DeJordy, 2019). At Blancpain, Biver's focus on technical excellence resulted in a new lease on life for the brand. At the height of the quartz crisis, Biver was able to reposition a traditional brand as a young and exciting company that drew in a number of new customers who fell in love with mechanical watches again (Raffaelli & DeJordy, 2019). Seeing the impact of Biver's Blancpain on the industry, SMH bought the brand to absorb the marketing know-how of Biver and his team (Donzé, 2011). Hayek kept Biver on as head of Blancpain and also gave him control over international marketing for Omega (Raffaelli & DeJordy, 2019).

Whilst in charge of Omega's marketing, Biver refocused the brand's core strengths: rich history and proud watchmaking traditions. He also focused heavily on Omega's success with the Apollo space programme and its achievement of helping to put humans on the moon (Raffaelli & DeJordy, 2019). As part of its marketing efforts, Biver established the connection between the Omega brand and the moon. That

specific message and connection was more important than the performance of its watches. Omega has therefore secured its connection to space travel and human ingenuity; two aspects that have become central to its brand positioning and subsequent brand building activities (Raffaelli & DeJordy, 2019). During this period, Biver also utilized SMH's redesigned production facilities and invested in the creation of new technical innovations.

One such innovation was the first silicon hairspring – an engineering phenomenon at the time. These efforts demonstrated how new manufacturing technologies could help to improve mechanical watchmaking and re-establish it at the top end of the market. Biver's efforts helped to reconnect Omega with its core competency: innovative watchmaking. This focus led to monumental success for the brand – Omega's revenues increased from \$350 million in 1995 to \$900 million in 1999. After only overseeing Omega's operations for seven years, the company's revenue almost tripled under Biver's leadership (Raffaelli & DeJordy, 2019).

1.1.10 Brand differentiation: context

During the 1980s and 1990s, cheaper quartz watches from around the world were popular – to the detriment of skilled Swiss watchmakers. Similar to the rest of the European luxury goods industry at the time, the Swiss mechanical watch industry started to improve its production systems in order to produce high-quality products that met the ever-increasing standards of their luxury customers (Donzé 2014; Bonin 2012; Merlo 2012). This newfound focus on promoting their mechanical watchmaking skills helped to set them apart from the rest of the world's watch brands.

To differentiate itself from other Swiss watch brands and establish itself as a market leader in the luxury wristwatch segment during the 1990s, Omega—under the orders of Hayek—purchased the rights to George Daniels' Co-Axial escapement as previously mentioned. A watchmaking marvel at the time, the Co-Axial escapement—a watch component that transmits and regulates the energy created by the mainspring to the balance wheel (Sirianni, 2017)—was a departure from the traditional Swiss lever escapement that almost all Swiss watch brands were using for decades (Adams, 2013). In 1999, Omega launched a new limited-edition watch from the DeVille

collection. There were 99 watches made, all featuring the Co-Axial Calibre 2500. Omega proudly proclaimed that the Co-Axial escapement was the first truly new escapement design released in 250 years, another noteworthy achievement in a long line of brand triumphs (Thompson, 2017b).

The international watch industry is an intensely competitive environment, and Swiss watch brands have a reputation for precision engineering, reliability, and innovation (Tajeddini & Trueman, 2008: 169). To differentiate themselves, the brands that operate in the luxury segment of this market can justify large investments in marketing and research and development, as it allows them to position their products towards the niche and ultra-luxury segments of the market (Anwar, 2012). Although numerous watch brands experiment with using new materials and manufacturing processes, very few actively innovate. In this regard, Omega's Co-Axial escapement separates the brand from the other brands in its field. Their proprietary Co-Axial escapement has had a positive impact on the watchmaking world: it is considered one of the only major watchmaking improvements of the last 100 years (Adams, 2013).

The Co-Axial escapement is both a technological innovation and an example of brand differentiation that sets Omega apart from the rest of the Swiss watchmaking companies. By purchasing, industrialising and implementing this technology, Omega set into motion a concerted effort towards innovation in the luxury mechanical watch segment. This step pre-empted the recovery of the luxury watch segment (Thompson, 2017b). In keeping with this trend of innovating across the business, Omega's approach to brand building on digital channels using well-executed storytelling techniques further differentiates it from its peers; a point that will still be discussed in detail.

1.1.11 Luxury: context

In the context of the Omega brand, luxury is defined by criteria such as mechanical excellence, heritage and aesthetic value. When checking the time, these watches provide the wearer with a sense of prestige that less expensive quartz watches, cell phones and computer clocks cannot. However, in the past, watches were considered functional tools: nothing more than a means to tell time. When Jean-Claude Biver left

Omega to relaunch Blancpain, the brand was deceased in the eyes of the consumers: Blancpain was an old company that lost its lustre decades before. Although the world had moved on to quartz watches, Biver refused to believe that mechanical watches were a thing of the past.

Biver realised that in order to make such a storied but virtually forgotten brand relevant again, he had to radically change the way it was perceived. He charted a different course with Blancpain and created something completely new: watches marketed as luxury accessories with the added value derived from the brand's culture and heritage. This strategy worked well for the brand (Donzé, 2018). As leader of The Swatch Group, Hayek realised early on that the group's brands had enormous potential in the luxury watch market.

To market these brands successfully, Hayek focused on the heritage value of the Swiss watch industry as a whole and doubled the prices of his brands' watches to correspond with the group's vision (Childs, 2010). Hayek also followed through on his vision of transforming Omega into a direct competitor to Rolex (Wegelin, 2010). He personally oversaw the rebirth of Breguet, a brand that also focuses on tradition and expertise. Hayek marketed Breguet as the pinnacle of The Swatch Group's luxury offering, a marriage between technology and art.

To further contextualise this study, the researcher reviews pertinent literature to establish a firm theoretical framework in the next chapter.

1.2 Theoretical framework

In the literature review, the researcher focuses on building a theoretical framework that demarcates and delineates the literature that is relevant to this study. The researcher will touch on branding and its various dimensions, as well as other theoretical concepts as they relate to the research. Finally, a conceptual framework is constructed that will enable the researcher to analyse Omega's brand building activities on Instagram in the fifth chapter. Next, an overview is provided of how the components of the theoretical framework are addressed.

1.2.1 Branding

The field of branding encompasses several inter-connected elements that work together to describe and dissect the inner workings of a brand. To that end, several different branding definitions are shared in the literature review chapter, including that of The American Marketing Association (1960, cited in Maurya & Mishra, 2012), Kapferer (2008), and Keller (1998). However, the focus of this study will be on brand advocacy, which refers to the favourable communication about a brand (Kemp, Childers & Williams, 2012). In 2021, Deloitte released a report on the Swiss watch industry. This comprehensive report found that a brand's image is the single most important factor that influences luxury watch purchases.

The Deloitte report also suggests that social media, brand ambassadors and influencers play vitally important roles in the purchase decision-making process (Szegedi & Boudrand, 2021). By the nature of the content they create, brand ambassadors and influencers often engage in brand advocacy behaviour on social media (Stokburger-Sauer, Ratneshwar & Sen, 2012). Considering the proven importance of social media, brand ambassadors and influencers, studying the activities that lead to the creation of brand advocacy behaviour is of vital importance to brand custodians (Szegedi & Boudrand, 2021). This section on branding will thus explain different branding elements and how they relate to Omega's quest for turning followers into brand advocates.

1.2.1.1 Brand advocacy

As the main research concept, the brand advocacy section focuses on defining the term and explaining what constitutes brand advocacy. The researcher explains how brand advocacy takes place and how it manifests in brand advocates. The importance of brand advocacy to a business's success is shown by interpreting the outcomes of a number of research studies on the topic. Next, a new construct for brand advocacy is investigated, namely, online brand advocacy, also referred to as OBA within this study. This construct is particularly important within the context of this study. The differences between brand advocacy and online brand advocacy are discussed and

references to online brand advocacy in the literature are explored. The effect of online brand advocacy on brand followers is also investigated.

As part of the discussion on brand advocacy, the concept of brand loyalty is explored. This section specifically focuses on the link between brand advocacy and brand loyalty. The researcher explains what brand loyalty is, how it is formed and what its benefits are for companies. The connection between online brand advocacy, brand loyalty and purchase intent is also discussed, as well as the ways in which a brand can cultivate brand loyalty. Brand advocacy and specifically OBA is such an important part of the theoretical framework of this study that it sets an important tone throughout the remainder of the literature review.

1.2.2 Brand leadership

Brand leadership and its creation is discussed in depth by comparing the classic brand management model to the new and more innovative brand leadership model as seen in figure 1.9. Omega's application of the brand leadership model is explained with examples and contextual information.

<u>Topic</u>	<u>Classic Brand Management Model</u>	<u>Brand Leadership Model</u>
Perspective	Tactical and reactive	Strategic and visionary
Brand Manager Status	Less experienced, shorter time horizon	Higher in the organisation, longer time horizon
Conceptual Model	Brand image	Brand equity
Focus	Shoter-term financials	Brand equity measures
Product-market scope	Single products and markets	Multiple products and markets
Brand structures	Simple	Complex brand architectures
Number of brands	Focus on single brands	Category focus-multiple brands
Country scope	Single country	Global perspective
Brand manager's communication role	Coordinator of limited options	Team leader of multiple communication options
Communication focus	External/customer	Internal as well as external
Driver of strategy	Sales and share	Brand identity

Figure 1.9: Brand Leadership – The Evolving Paradigm (Aaker & Joachimsthaler, 2009)

Omega took on a brand leadership role by virtue of its strategic and successful adoption of the brand leadership model. In doing so, the brand positioned itself as a bellwether in the luxury watch industry. The researcher looks at how the brand was able to assume this position and discusses the implications of this position on its strategic brand initiatives.

1.2.3 Brand building

Brand building is explained as the process of creating awareness of the brand and enhancing brand equity using innovation, creativity, value, testing, and the delivery of great experiences for a company's consumers. For this study, the researcher explores how Omega builds its brand by analysing the content the brand shares to Instagram. The researcher also considers how brand identity needs to be established before brand building can commence. The researcher also briefly discusses Aaker's Brand Identity System model (Aaker, 1996) in the second chapter, before analysing Omega's brand identity using Aaker's model in the fifth chapter as part of the interpretation of the study's findings.

1.2.4 Brand differentiation

The brand differentiation section focuses on the ways in which brands distinguish themselves from their peers. The researcher will focus on brand differentiation specifically, since the luxury watch industry is filled with numerous brands that are all vying for the attention of the same group of customers. Brand differentiation is therefore one of the most important tools at a brand's disposal.

This section expresses the similarities between differentiation, distinctiveness and uniqueness, before explaining how companies differentiate themselves. Luxury, rarity, and Veblen goods, three aspects that are key to brand differentiation in the luxury watch industry, are discussed. These aspects are related to how luxury watch brands are positioned within the market. As such, they each have an important role to play in how Omega considers positioning and differentiating its brand from that of its competitors.

1.2.5 Narrative Transportation Theory

Green (2008) postulates that attitudes and intentions change when consumers lose themselves in stories – a finding that forms the basis of the research on Narrative Transportation Theory conducted for this study. This section features a number of

definitions and explanations in order to contextualise this theory and its relevance to the study. This theory was specifically selected as it explains how content can be used to immerse, transport and ultimately convert followers into brand advocates. The researcher also touches on the elements that have an impact on Narrative Transportation, namely information gathering, the Internet, and social media and customer engagement. These sections explain how customers gather information about watch brands, where they go to search for this information, and how this information is delivered to them, subsequently transporting them into the world of the brand. This is of particular importance to the study, as it explains how and why Omega's narrative-driven content strategy is effective.

1.2.6 Transient Competitive Advantage

Coined by Prof. Rita McGrath (2013a), the concept of Transient Competitive Advantage refers to the idea that companies should move away from thinking that their traditional competitive advantages will deliver them guaranteed long-term success. Instead, it is imperative to create consistent short-term advantages by innovating and acting on opportunities quickly and frequently as they arise (McGrath, 2013a). This section explains why Transient Competitive Advantages are vitally important in the context of the luxury watch industry. This section also explores how Omega exploits these advantages, as illustrated through several examples. The research will show that Transient Competitive Advantages is an important concept that plays a significant part in shaping Omega's brand building activities.

1.2.7 Conceptual framework

To summarise the most important aspects of the theoretical framework, the researcher created a conceptual framework. This framework will be used as the lens through which the researcher will analyse the research findings in the fifth chapter. To create this framework, the researcher drew upon the theories and academic research sources from the literature review. The conceptual framework illustrates how the most important aspects of the study integrate and synthesise with each other. This framework will be discussed in the following chapter.

1.3 Rationale

As previously mentioned, the Deloitte Swiss Watch Industry Study of 2021 found that brand image is the overriding factor influencing luxury watch purchases, with social media, brand ambassadors and influencers playing key roles. Brand association and the message these associations portray to buyers are the top purchasing criteria. Technical aspects like the watch's movement and the design of the watch are also considerations that lead to purchases. Storytelling was another important factor identified in the Deloitte Swiss Watch Industry Study of 2021. In order for watch brands to differentiate themselves in a saturated market, they must be unique and consistent in the ways in which they communicate their brand story across all channels. With consumer preferences constantly evolving, brands should consider their image and understand how their traditional values are perceived in a modern landscape (Szegedi & Boudrand, 2021).

In the Deloitte report, Richemont's Chief Transformation Officer, Frank Vivier, also articulated a strong belief that watch brands should no longer distinguish between online and offline activities, because their customers do not. Vivier suggested that brands should consider this evolution and adapt to customer's lifestyles and the ways in which they interact with brands. Millennials and Generation Z are starting to purchase more and more luxury watches. Considering that members of these demographics are digital natives, brands will need to adapt digital strategies across all touchpoints to better service their needs. Traditional sales funnels, target personas and a straight-forward decision-making process are no longer as important as they once were. Today's luxury watch customers want to interact with brands based on their individual needs, and want to purchase watches based on their own terms. Luxury watch brand executives should keep these factors in mind when considering their digital transformation and brand building activities (Szegedi & Boudrand, 2021).

The luxury watch landscape has changed significantly since the advent of COVID-19. Almost every brand now has a digital presence – some use these tools to greater effect than others. Today, many luxury watch brands sell their watches online, either through their own e-commerce store or through that of a third-party reseller. Based on

the researcher's observations, many watch brands also embrace Instagram as a brand building platform; use influencers and sponsor sporting events. A number of watch brands also use product scarcity and small production numbers as strategies to stimulate sales by decreasing supply and increasing demand. In terms of their brand building activities, very few brands are doing anything unique or revolutionary. This is where Omega's use of Transient Competitive Advantages enabled them to differentiate themselves from the rest of the brands operating in the luxury watch industry.

As previously mentioned, when it comes to outright status and brand recognition, Rolex is the leader of the luxury watch industry. On the higher end of the price spectrum, Patek Philippe also occupies a leadership position. These two behemoths, characterised by desirability and curated brand strategies, have yet to be overtaken. This is where the divergent strategy employed by Omega becomes apparent. Omega was not the first watch brand on Instagram, nor was it the first brand to sell watches online. However, Omega consistently ranks second for most watch sales by wholesale value each year – after Rolex. What then, is Omega doing right?

Omega has perfected the art of persuading Instagram followers to become brand advocates by sharing with them stories about the Omega brand and its comprehensive list of achievements. These tales and successes relayed in vivid story formats for easy ingestion enable Omega's followers to assume advocacy roles for the brand. The sales data in figure 1.9 seems to illustrate that the brand's strategy is working.

For this study, the researcher investigated Omega's brand building activities on Instagram during the 2019 calendar year. As previously mentioned, social media, brand ambassadors and influencers have a significant impact on the purchase decision-making process of luxury watch customers. The 2019 calendar year was an important year for Omega, filled with many momentous achievements, stories and accomplishments that were shared with its followers on Instagram. The content from this period worked together to influence the brand's followers, slowly turning them into brand advocates. In turn, these brand advocates will inspire another wave of followers, enticing them and repeating the brand advocacy process.

Morgan Stanley's report on the performance of Swiss watches in 2020 showed an increase in Omega's market share (Goulard, 2021; Pitsch, 2021). This increase can be attributed to strong marketing and sales performance off the success of its 2019 brand building activities. Pitsch (2021) takes Omega's increase in market share a step further, suggesting that it can reach the double-digit range in 2021 or 2022, thanks to its adoption of the Master Chronometer designation that will be rolled out across its entire range.

In summary, the Deloitte Swiss Watch Industry Study of 2021 suggests that storytelling gives life to brands by exhibiting their history, personality, values and unique selling points. Consumers connect with authentic stories and consistent experiences across all the brand's touchpoints, which helps to reinforce these connections. Brands should therefore focus on creating highly specific channel strategies that create connections with customers in order to truly resonate with them. A brand's heritage and values can influence the customer's decision to purchase a brand's watch. Therefore, brands need to understand how their values and heritage align with that of their customer.

Although rarity and exclusivity have worked well up until this point, younger generations seem to be more interested in social attributes like sustainability and inclusivity. Omega is incorporating aspects like these in its brand building activities through the use of various influencers from different backgrounds and ethnicities, supporting numerous non-profit organisations and using different types of story angles to communicate with its followers. These findings may be seen as early warning signs to brands like Rolex, Patek Philippe, Audemars Piguet and Richard Mille, whose current success can be attributed to the perception of scarcity and exclusivity of their watches (Szegedi & Boudrand, 2021).

1.3.1 Research intent

In a world where some of the top-selling watch brands' products have become unobtainable due to scarcity and exclusivity (Broer, 2022), one brand is taking a decidedly different approach. Focusing instead on its technical expertise and proud

history, Omega has chosen a different direction and has further solidified its position as a leader brand. Today luxury brands are using Instagram to communicate to the same customers, making differentiation vital to a brand's success.

In light thereof, luxury brands can use storytelling and Transient Competitive Advantages to differentiate themselves significantly. The researcher intends to make a valuable contribution to the available literature on luxury watch brand strategies by exploring the ways in which Omega creates brand advocates through its brand building activities on Instagram.

1.3.2 Research purpose

In the second chapter of this study, the researcher discusses a selection of literature as it pertains to the luxury watch industry and Omega's role in it. It also touches on the different aspects that influence the industry and how Omega responds to these influences. One of the important findings of this literature review is that online brand building activities can lead to followers becoming brand advocates. Conversely, brand advocates' behaviours can lead to the creation of brand loyalty, which can ultimately result in increased sales of the brand's watches, thereby increasing the brand's equity. Taking these factors into account, the researcher formulated the research purpose as follows:

The aim of the research is to explore how Omega creates brand advocacy on Instagram by analysing its strategic brand initiatives through the lenses of Transient Competitive Advantage and Narrative Transportation Theory.

This overarching research purpose is broken down into four distinct research questions.

1.3.3 Research questions

Considering the literature review and the researcher's research purpose, the researcher stipulated:

Question one:

Which key concepts and constructs in the existing brand literature will yield greater insight into how Omega utilises Instagram to create brand advocacy?

This question will be explored in the literature review as outlined in the theoretical framework (illustrated in figure 2.1) and then narrowed down in the conceptual framework (illustrated in figure 2.8) at the end of chapter two. The conceptual framework will act as a lens with which the final research findings will be analysed in chapter five.

Following on question one, the three additional research questions will be explored using qualitative content analysis and qualitative counts analysis.

Question two:

Which storytelling elements, themes and media types does Omega employ when sharing content with its followers on Instagram that may elicit brand advocacy?

Question three:

How does Omega employ Narrative Transportation Theory in its storytelling activities on Instagram to elicit possible brand advocacy?

Question four:

How does Omega use Transient Competitive Advantage on Instagram to elicit possible brand advocacy?

1.4 Methodology

The methodology section explains what approaches, methods and frameworks the researcher used to conduct the research, and how these methods assisted the

researcher in answering the research questions (Wright, O'Brien, Nimmon, Law & Mylopoulos, 2016).

1.4.1 Research approach

The researcher's purpose was to understand how Omega approaches online brand building activities on Instagram as they relate to the creation of brand advocacy. The researcher concluded that a qualitative approach is most appropriate for this study. Qualitative research is relative in nature and allows the researcher to explore phenomena in depth (Babbie, 2010). In this instance, the phenomena are Omega's unique online brand strategies, brand messages (both latent and manifest) and brand building techniques.

1.4.2 Paradigm

Taking the researcher's ontology, epistemology and axiology into consideration, the researcher concluded that the interpretivist paradigm is the most relevant paradigm for this study. The researcher is aware that experiences shape a person's perspective (Cohen & Manion, 1994: 36), and the researcher was mindful of how unique experiences may have influenced the research that was gathered. The decision to adopt the interpretivist paradigm was inspired by the need to analyse and interpret a substantial body of data and identify latent and manifest themes in the data (Willis, 2007:4).

1.4.3 Study type and reasoning approach

Although three types of research studies exist (exploratory, descriptive and explanatory), the researcher set out to investigate a case that had not been researched before. Therefore, exploratory research was the most appropriate type of research for this study, enabling the researcher to explore and discover insights about Omega's brand building activities on Instagram (Decarlo, 2018).

Throughout the initial process, the researcher used an inductive reasoning approach.

This approach allowed the data to guide the analysis (Marczyk, De Matteo & Festinger, 2017).

1.4.4 Research population and recruitment methods

The researcher selected the method, sample and procedure best suited to gathering the data that would yield the most insightful findings (Decarlo, 2018; Gentles, Charles, Ploeg & McKibbin, 2015; Babbie, 2010). The raw data of the primary research consisted of the content on Omega's Instagram profile. The researcher used purposive, non-probability sampling to select Omega's Instagram posts over the course of the 2019 calendar as the research sample. The unit of analysis for this research was a single Instagram post from the 2019 calendar year.

1.4.5 Research method

The researcher chose to investigate and understand a complex issue: the way in which Omega approaches and executes brand building strategies on Instagram as it relates to brand advocacy. Case studies provide researchers with the perfect tool for this kind of study by allowing them to focus on a specific phenomenon over a selected period. The qualitative study method is used in this instance to answer the question: *how* does Omega create brand advocacy on Instagram. Since no other research was found in the English language, the case study method allows the researcher to improve and advance this specific body of knowledge (Stufflebeam, Madaus, & Kellaghan, 2000: 283).

The researcher studied the brand's Instagram posts and explored manifest and latent themes along with other phenomena hidden in the data. By working inductively and using qualitative content analysis and qualitative count analysis, the raw data yielded information that contributed to a greater understanding of the research purpose. A conceptual framework was devised that allowed for stronger focus and refinement. This framework was used to assist the researcher with a final assessment of the research findings.

1.5 Ethical considerations

The research for this specific study was solely conducted by the researcher without any external input. The researcher therefore had complete control over the research process. The researcher adhered to the ethical guidelines of The Independent Institute of Education (IIE)—the parent company of the IIE-Vega School—and conducted honest research based on ethical principles as outlined in the IIE’s postgraduate handbook (The IIE, 2022). The researcher’s two supervisors were also both acquainted with and trained in accordance with the IIE’s ethical guidelines. The researcher always acted with integrity during the research process. The researcher welcomes criticism and new research ideas and acknowledges the intellectual property of all the sources used in the study (Decarlo, 2018).

1.6 Limitations and delimitations

A number of limitations and delimitations have influenced the way in which this study was conducted. Examples of limitations include: the research was conducted from the brand strategist’s point of view as opposed to that of the consumer; possible different interpretations by different researchers; and a lack of sufficient literature on several key elements in this study.

Examples of delimitations include: limiting the research to Instagram; limiting the sample to one year’s worth of Instagram content; and the decision to not work with Omega employees. These limitations and delimitations are discussed in the fifth chapter.

1.7 Significance of the study

The Deloitte Swiss watch industry report by Szegedi and Boudrand (2021) concluded that brand image is the most prominent factor that influences purchase decision-making in the luxury watch industry. Taking this finding into consideration, the research by Ko, Costello and Taylor (2019) which found that luxury brands can build a brand image and enhance purchase intentions through the strategic use of social media as a brand building platform is of particular importance. Ko *et al.*’s (2019)

research also showed that, although it has enjoyed more interest in recent years, very little research has been done into how luxury brands can effectively engage their customers using social media channels.

Oliveira and Fernandes (2020) also postulated that social media marketing is still a nascent part of the marketing mix of luxury brands, but that these channels could be better used to build their brand image and enhance purchase intention. The Deloitte report found that social media, brand ambassadors and influencers are playing key roles in the decision-making process of luxury watch buyers, yet Oliveira and Fernandes (2020) called for further research into the social media marketing activities of luxury brands to better understand how luxury brands should use these platforms. These findings point to a clear gap in the available literature.

Considering this gap, this study will be the first to explore Omega's strategic brand initiatives on Instagram with specific reference to eliciting brand advocacy. A novel study that addresses this gap would have implications for both brand practitioners as well as for the academic field. This study will therefore make a significant contribution to a currently under-served research area.

The researcher acknowledges a previous study by Courvoisier and Roederer (2019) which explored Omega's launch of the two "Speedy Tuesday" Speedmaster models on Instagram. Their study focused on the emerging trend of a "hybridisation" of communication and distribution channels and use the Speedy Tuesday launch for investigation. Their study therefore considered a different aspect of Omega's strategy that is not directly related to this specific research.

1.8 Chapter outline

This section outlines the content in each of the five chapters of this research study. It also explains how each of the chapters segue into one another. This outline explains the rationale behind each chapter, and how it integrates into the whole.

1.8.1 Chapter one

An introduction to the luxury watch industry; a literature overview; the research rationale and methodology; ethical considerations; limitations and delimitations; and a chapter outline.

In this introductory chapter, a general overview of the luxury wristwatch industry is considered. The different tiers of the watch industry will be explained with specific reference to the positioning of brands along various price points. This chapter will also introduce relevant concepts such as branding, brand advocacy, brand loyalty, brand leadership, brand building, brand differentiation, luxury, rarity, and Veblen goods. It will also consider the theoretical concepts of Narrative Transportation Theory, finishing with an introduction to Transient Competitive Advantage. Next, the rationale for the study is explained, along with the research intent, the research purpose, and the research questions. The methodology section will then focus on the research approach; paradigm; the study type and reasoning approach; the research population; recruitment method and the research method. Lastly, ethical considerations and the limitations and delimitations of the study will be discussed.

The first chapter contextualises this study by explaining how the luxury watch industry functions and who the main stakeholders are. It describes the current industry trends and operational realities and clarifies Omega's role in this industry. This chapter also explains how the researcher will go about exploring Omega's brand building activities by briefly touching on the research decisions. The next chapter will take the study's positioning and purpose into consideration and explain the theoretical framework the researcher will use to conduct the research.

1.8.2 Chapter two

A thorough and in-depth literature review.

This chapter will focus on the body of work the researcher chose to use as the theoretical foundation for this study. This chapter will unpack and operationalise concepts such as branding, brand advocacy, brand loyalty, brand leadership, brand

building, brand differentiation, luxury, rarity, and Veblen goods. It will then discuss in detail the theoretical concepts of Narrative Transportation Theory, along with its sub-sections: information gathering, the Internet, social media and customer engagement. This chapter then focuses on Transient Competitive Advantages within the context of Omega's operational activities.

Finally, the researcher shares and explains the conceptual framework constructed using the theoretical framework as a base. The second chapter provides the study's backbone and explains in detail which theories, models and elements are most appropriate for this specific study. The theoretical framework and subsequent conceptual framework allow the researcher to focus on constructing the research plan in the form of the research methodology. The methodology for this research will be discussed in the following chapter.

1.8.3 Chapter three

The research methodology.

This chapter will outline the methodology according to which research will be conducted. It will explain the research design, research purpose and the ontology, epistemology and axiology the researcher selected. Next, it will discuss the chosen research paradigm, type of study and the reasoning approach. The next section will unpack the methodological approach, which includes the research method and procedure. The research procedure has two parts: a literature review and a primary research component. Under the primary research component, the researcher discusses the sampling method, reasoning approach and the research analysis.

Thereafter, ethical considerations will be mentioned, and the research evaluation section will be discussed. The third chapter explains how the researcher will conduct this study; the research purpose and questions are discussed; the chosen methodology is explained, as are the steps the study follows. At the end of this chapter the researcher has a clear research plan. This plan enables the researcher to start with the primary research which will be discussed in the following chapter.

1.8.4 Chapter four

The research analysis process.

In this chapter, the researcher unpacks the research process and discusses the findings. The researcher explains the data gathering methods used and discusses and summarises the code groups he identified in the data. Next, he touches on the ways in which the codes and resultant themes were grouped, and explains, from start to finish, how he moved from the raw data source through to the final themes. Thereafter, he explains how and why he decided to count specific words, instances and patterns in the data, and finishes the chapter off with a discussion on the research evaluation.

The fourth chapter explains how the researcher conducted this research. It shows, with practical examples and illustrations, how the researcher moved through each step of the research process and navigated the discoveries. At the end of the chapter, the researcher identifies four main themes that summarise the inspiration behind Omega's strategic brand initiatives. These themes are discussed and unpacked in the following chapter using the conceptual framework as a guideline or lens.

1.8.5 Chapter five

Discussion, conclusions, research limitations and implications for future research.

In this chapter, the research data is discussed and interpreted within the context of the conceptual framework outlined in the literature review chapter. In the final chapter, the researcher interprets the four condensed themes he identified in the previous chapter. The conceptual framework ensures that the researcher considered all the aspects that enabled the researcher to answer the research questions and fulfil the research purpose. Once all the research findings were interpreted, a conclusion was drawn based on the findings that were made. This conclusion led to practical implications which can assist other brand custodians from the luxury goods industry to improve their brand building strategies. In turn, these strategies can help other luxury brands to turn their followers into brand advocates.

These insights can be used not only to influence future business expansions, brand introductions and product launches (with specific reference to the preservation and promotion of brand equity), but also as a form of benchmarking and best practice in the luxury wristwatch industry. Furthermore, this chapter will explain the relevant research limitations, shed light on the implications for the luxury wristwatch industry and make recommendations about additional topics that should enjoy further research.

1.9 Conclusion

In this chapter, the researcher explains the context in which this study was conducted. The researcher considered the luxury watch industry as a whole; focused on different watch brands at various price points; explained which external factors influence the industry; and investigated how Omega responds to these factors and conducts its business. The researcher used a qualitative case study to explore how Omega created brand advocacy on Instagram by analysing its strategic brand initiatives through the lenses of Transient Competitive Advantage and Narrative Transportation theory. Considering the prevalence of online brand building and the use of digital channels to facilitate exchanges between consumers and brands at multiple touchpoints, the relevance and importance of this study cannot be overstated. In conclusion, the researcher will consider the academic literature used to demarcate and delineate this study, which will be explored in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

The purpose of this study is to explore how Omega creates brand advocacy on Instagram. The brand's activities will be analysed through the lenses of Transient Competitive Advantages and Narrative Transportation Theory – two concepts that form part of the conceptual framework that will be used to interpret the research findings in the fifth chapter. To explore this topic, the researcher requires a thorough understanding of the literature that relates to this specific field of research. A review of pertinent research indicated a gap in the literature on *how* luxury brands can use social media channels to build their brands (Szegedi & Boudrand, 2021; Oliveira & Fernandes, 2020; Ko *et al.*, 2019). This study will contribute to fill that gap.

In contrast to other industries, the luxury watch field has been slow to adapt its operations and strategies to the digital age (Batat, 2019: 23). In reference to their description of the “Internet Dilemma”, Kapferer and Bastien (2012) cited the Internet's mass accessibility as a reason why luxury brands on the Internet cannot be perceived as being exclusive. However, the COVID-19 pandemic, along with the subsequent cancelation of one of the watch industry's longest-running trade fairs, Baselworld, has forced watch brands to adopt digital channels in order to survive (Kalaighnam, Tuli, Kushwaha, Lee & Gal, 2021; Neumann, 2021; Szegedi, & Boudrand, 2021; Thompson, 2020; Bues, 2020).

Previous research by Gfrerer (2014) also rejected Kapferer and Bastien's (2012) views on the “Internet Dilemma” as her research found that many luxury goods brands are in fact using the Internet without damaging or diluting their brands. Ko *et al.*'s (2019) work found that luxury brands can in fact build their brand image and enhance purchase intentions through social media marketing.

The debate about whether or not digital channels and strategies are the way forward for luxury watch brands has to a large extent been neutralised. This realisation has led

the researcher to focus on a pertinent topic: given that luxury watch brands now know that digital channels and strategies are crucial for their survival, how should they go about using these digital channels to build their brands? The motivation behind this study is to find the answer to this question. The aim of the research is to explore how Omega creates brand advocacy on the influential social media platform Instagram by analysing its strategic brand initiatives through the lenses of Transient Competitive Advantage and Narrative Transportation Theory.

Firstly, the researcher wishes to explore which key concepts and constructs in existing brand literature will give greater insight into how Omega utilises Instagram to create brand advocacy. This theoretical grounding will enable the researcher to explore and analyse Omega's brand building activities to understand how the brand has attained a leadership position in the luxury watch industry. Secondly, which storytelling elements, themes and media types Omega employs when sharing content with its followers on Instagram. Thirdly, the researcher aims to understand how Omega employs Narrative Transportation Theory in its storytelling activities on Instagram to elicit possible brand advocacy. Finally, the researcher aspires to investigate how Omega uses Transient Competitive Advantage on Instagram to elicit possible brand advocacy.

To conduct this study, the researcher consulted a comprehensive spectrum of sources. The luxury goods industry is complex and multi-faceted and covers an extensive range of products. The researcher therefore worked through a large volume of literature that touches on branding and its related aspects; luxury goods marketing; product rarity and scarcity; information gathering; the Internet; social media and customer engagement; storytelling theories and business strategy. Through this process, the researcher identified key concepts and referenced seminal works by Aaker, Keller, Kapferer and other leading authors. This process led to the creation of the theoretical framework illustrated below.

The theoretical framework in figure 2.1 served as the basis from which to undertake the literature review. The research in this literature review lays the foundation for the study and culminates in a conceptual framework to be used when analysing the data in the fifth chapter.

(Pizzitola, 2020). At a more granular level, the American Marketing Association (1960) defines a brand as a name, symbol, term, sign or design, or a combination of the above that identifies and differentiates the products and services of different sellers.

Kapferer (2008) summarised the fundamental description of brands by suggesting that they are names that have the power to influence customers. Keller (1998) refers to a brand as a set of associations in the mind of the consumer, which influences how they judge the value of a certain product or service. Kapferer (2008) again refers to brands as intangible assets that can create additional benefits for a company. He also suggests that to ensure these associations relate to exclusivity and desirability within the mind of the consumer, the associations should be unique and positive. This ability to influence consumers and create the perception of value is of particular importance in the luxury watch industry.

Over time, brands create bonds in the minds of their consumers. These bonds lead to an increase in the likelihood that customers would purchase from such brands. This likelihood to purchase is not affected by the price of a watch or the number of annual price increases across a range. When considering price elasticity of demand, the demand for these watches are therefore inelastic. These are the types of bonds that luxury Swiss watch brands Patek Philippe, Audemars Piguet, and Rolex have been building for decades (Milton, 2022a; Gomelsky, 2021; Steiger, 2021; IWS Team, 2020). On a macro level, “Swiss Made” is a brand in itself. The Swiss watch industry is known the world over as the home of high-quality watchmaking. This statement is reinforced by the popularity and sense of prestige that accompanies a luxury wristwatch adorned with the phrase “Swiss Made” on the dial (Hidden, 2018).

For brands that have traditionally relied on their connection with the “Swiss Made” label as one of their unique selling propositions, an increasingly digital and globalised world is making brand differentiation exceedingly complicated. Extreme competition makes standing out from the crowd more difficult, and brands rely more and more on intangible elements such as their logo, brand and customer experience across the servicescape to differentiate themselves (Pop & Zottu-Z, 2016). In addition to these factors, pricing strategies also form part of a brand’s toolkit in its quest for differentiation.

Kapferer (2008) suggests that the financial value of a brand can be measured when looking at the additional revenue that is created when customers are willing to pay a premium for a brand. Since the 1990s, the core of the Swiss watch market's competitiveness was centred on a brand leadership strategy that positioned watches as luxury items. In the last two decades, the average value of a Swiss watch has increased from \$158 (156 CHF) in 1995, to \$1256 (1171 CHF) in 2020 (Federation of the Swiss Watch Industry FH, 2021; Donzé, 2018). This rise of almost 700% in price over 25 years can, in large part, be attributed to the luxury strategy the Swiss brands have been driving.

This drive towards repositioning Swiss watches within the luxury segment is not only visible on a brand level, but on a portfolio level as well. Richemont, a preeminent figure in the luxury watch industry, owns a number of the most valuable watch brands in the world. These brands include Cartier, IWC, Jaeger-LeCoultre, Panerai and Vacheron Constantin. In order to increase brand value, Richemont reinforced the fact that expert craftsmanship is at the heart of every one of these brands' identities (Terasaki & Nagasawa, 2013). Richemont's approach stands in contrast to that of Moët Hennessy Louis Vuitton SE (known as LVMH), whose brands (which include Hublot, TagHeuer, and Zénith) are considered to be more fashion oriented (Terasaki & Nagasawa, 2013). The Swatch Group follows a different brand strategy. Their portfolio of brands includes entry-level brands (like Swatch), mid-tier brands (like Omega) and high-end brands (like Breguet) – all of which are positioned according to their respective levels of exclusivity (Donzé, 2018).

2.2.1 Brand leadership

Aaker (1996) first introduced the concept of brand leadership in 1996. Aaker found that brand leadership is a reflection of the competitive advantages a specific firm has over competing brands, and is dependent on specific actions of the company in order to maintain this position. Aaker and Joachimsthaler (2000) further postulate that brand leadership refers to supportive brand processes, as well as the brand's ability to achieve excellence on a consistent basis. Miller and Mills (2011) expand this view and

suggest that the perception of a brand being a leader in its field is dependent on whether consumers see the brand as being successful, luxurious and visionary.

The concept of brand leadership enables researchers to investigate market dynamics in order to develop strategic perspectives. These perspectives then enable researchers to investigate perceived competitive relationships between leader and follower brands in any given industry. Leader brands exemplify success and positively influence other brands (Chang & Ko, 2014). This finding further informs this research and explains why a deeper understanding of Omega's strategic brand initiatives is necessary in order to fill the research gap. Brand leadership entails a series of cues that relate to the brand assuming the position of a role model, exhibiting social power, or being perceived as a trendsetter. Customers choose to associate themselves with a brand when they perceive that brand to be a leader. In doing so, they are enhancing their social status (Chang, Ko & Leite, 2016).

Chang and Ko (2014) suggest that, once the perception of leadership has been developed among the target audience, brand leadership assists a brand to create and maintain a loyal customer base. The authors take this understanding a step further by suggesting that consumers perceive a brand to be a leader when it is able to continuously achieve excellence through a combination of trendsetting and positioning within a specific industry. Leader brands therefore serve as inspiration for follower brands when they possess and exude attributes that are worthy of being imitated (Chang & Ko, 2014). In light of the importance of cultivating a brand leadership position, Aaker and Joachimsthaler (2009) postulate that the classic brand management system manages a brand and harnesses the work of many people, but struggles to deal with the complexities of emerging markets, increasing competition, channel dynamics, global forces, multiple brands within a market, and brand extensions. These issues are typically attributed to the luxury watch industry.

Instead, the authors proposed a different model—the brand leadership model—which combines strategy, tactics, brand identity and sales. This model focuses on brand equity measures; relates to multiple products and markets; takes on a global perspective and focuses on both internal and external communication. Brand identity forms the basis of this strategy, and brand custodians in the brand leadership model

are visionary and strategic in the ways they manage these brands. These custodians determine what the brand should stand for in the customers' eyes and then communicate that specific identity consistently, efficiently and effectively (Aaker & Joachimsthaler, 2009). This study shows that Omega has adopted the brand leadership model.

Topic	Classic Brand Management Model	Brand Leadership Model
Perspective	Tactical and reactive	Strategic and visionary
Brand Manager Status	Less experienced, shorter time horizon	Higher in the organisation, longer time horizon
Conceptual Model	Brand image	Brand equity
Focus	Shorter-term financials	Brand equity measures
Product-market scope	Single products and markets	Multiple products and markets
Brand structures	Simple	Complex brand architectures
Number of brands	Focus on single brands	Category focus-multiple brands
Country scope	Single country	Global perspective
Brand manager's communication role	Coordinator of limited options	Team leader of multiple communication options
Communication focus	External/customer	Internal as well as external
Driver of strategy	Sales and share	Brand identity

Figure 2.2: Brand Leadership - The Evolving Paradigm (Aaker & Joachimsthaler, 2009)

When analysing the growth of Omega's position in the market since the quartz crisis, it becomes apparent that the management teams were inspired by the brand leadership model (see figure 2.1). Omega's management took a broader, strategic and longer-term view of the watch industry by focusing on the technical expertise of their watchmakers. In doing so, they ignored the short-term profits on offer by selling cheap quartz watches during the quartz crisis. This decision led to the future success of the brand. Omega, armed with a substantial product catalogue, focused on building brand equity through a number of global marketing activities that were all perfectly aligned with its core identity. Aaker (2002: 7-9) defines brand equity as a set of assets and liabilities that are linked to the name of a brand, as well as symbols that influence the value a product or service provides to a firm or customers. When consumers perceive a brand to be a leader brand, this perception influences brand equity, which ultimately results in consumption behaviour (Chang & Ko, 2014).

2.2.2 Brand building

Brand building is the process of creating awareness of the brand and enhancing brand equity through the use of various campaigns and strategies. The main goal is to create brand equity through the use of innovation, creativity, the offering of value,

constant testing and the delivery of great consumer experiences (MBA Skool, 2019). Activities such as advertising and promotions contribute towards brand building (Aaker, 1991) and lead to knowledge being transferred to the memory of the appropriate audience. These memory structures lead to awareness as well as thoughts and images of the brand, which result in positive attitudes toward the brand (Keller, 2003).

Global trends and rapid technological advancements influence the ways in which luxury watch brands conduct business. As a result, developing brand core competencies often take years to complete (Anwar, 2008, cited in Deresky, 2008; Anwar, 2007; Anand & Girotra, 2007). Core competencies can include any kind of proprietary research; new technologies; existing brand portfolios or proven innovations (Anwar, 2008, cited in Deresky, 2008).

Jean-Claude Biver's work with Blancpain and Omega provides one of the best examples of brand building and business acumen in the luxury watch industry to date. As explained previously, at the height of the quartz crisis in 1983, Biver (a former executive at Omega) bought the rights to the oldest surviving watch brand in the world: Blancpain. The company had gone bankrupt due to poor management, but Biver brought the brand back to life by focusing on the brand's history of innovation and technical expertise. This strategy proved immensely successful for the brand (Raffaelli & DeJordy, 2019).

Since the early 1990s, Swiss watch companies have adopted numerous strategies to build and add value to their brands. Many of these strategies relied on the use of Swiss watchmaking culture as the main source of inspiration for marketing initiatives (Donzé, 2018). The creation of core competencies has proven indispensable for brands as part of their brand building strategies. The connection to Swiss watchmaking culture ties into the core competencies of most of the Swiss mechanical watch brands (Anwar, 2008, cited in Deresky, 2008; Anwar, 2007; Anand & Girotra, 2007).

The moon landing has been central to Omega's brand building activities for decades. One of the most important events of the 20th century, the moon landing has captured

the imaginations of millions of people around the world (Dunbar & Loff, 2022). The Speedmaster watch that accompanied the Apollo 11 crew to the moon has become one of the brand's most iconic watches. Synonymous with the moon landing, the Speedmaster has been used by NASA's astronauts for all six missions to the moon (Lütgens, 2021). When NASA requested proposals for a watch that could be used for its space program, four storied watch brands entered their products: Omega, Rolex, Hamilton and Longines-Wittnauer. Watches from these brands had to withstand tests relating to fluctuating temperatures, humidity, gravity, shock, acceleration and decompression. Due to its unimpeachable focus on quality and precision, only the Speedmaster passed all these tests. This result led to its selection as the official watch to be used by all NASA astronauts on the Apollo programme (Bazemore, 2022).

In light of the historical significance of the Apollo 11 mission, along with Omega's part in it, the brand has used the Speedmaster and the moon landing as the basis for some of its most successful and emotive brand building campaigns. For astronauts on the Apollo 13 programme, the Speedmaster was also much more than a device that told the time; it was a tool that brought its crew back to earth safely. After an accident in space left their space craft damaged, the astronauts were drifting off course. The craft would eventually have entered the earth's atmosphere at the incorrect angle and gravity would result in the craft being pushed back into space with no rescue plan available. Since the equipment onboard their craft was not working properly, the astronauts had to resort to their Speedmaster watches.

The astronauts used the chronograph function on one of their Speedmaster watches to time a 'burn', which refers to a sequence where the craft's engines are ignited to propel the craft forward at speed. The burn was initiated for exactly 14 seconds; just enough time to correct the craft's course and allow it to enter earth's atmosphere at the correct angle for safe re-entry. This manoeuvre was a success and the crew returned to earth safely. Years later Omega memorialised this iconic moment by releasing a special commemorative watch to celebrate the 45th anniversary of the Apollo 13 mission. Called the Speedmaster Professional Apollo 13 Silver Snoopy Award chronograph, this specific watch has been revered by Omega customers across the globe (DeMarco, 2015).

The Speedmaster remains an exceedingly successful watch for Omega, and the number of special-edition versions further add to the excitement surrounding this watch. Omega's masterful use of Instagram to share rich media related to the Speedmaster and the moon landing is an example of how other luxury brands can refine their approach to online brand building.

2.2.2.1 Brand Identity

Before brand building takes place, the identity of a brand needs to be established. Aaker (1996: 68) defined brand identity as a set of brand associations that are unique to a brand. These associations signify a brand promise which exemplifies what the brand stands for. Brand identity therefore contributes to establish a relationship between a customer and a brand through the generation of a value proposition that involves functional, emotional, or self-expressive benefits. Aaker (2002: 68) expanded his definition of brand identity as something that gives a brand meaning and purpose whilst providing direction. Understanding how to develop a brand identity is one of the most critical aspects of brand building (Aaker, 2002: 35).

In addition to the work of Aaker, Kapferer (2007: 99) defined brand identity as the ways in which brands hope to be perceived. Customers' perceptions of a brand are vital to its success, and brands need to create positive associations that customers know and trust. This process requires associations that consumers are able to recognise, without any discrepancies in brand elements. Brand identity is therefore generated on the giver's side (the side that tells a story or relays a message), and is interpreted as brand image on the receiver's side (the recipient of the story or message). This study will show how Omega creates and maintains its unique brand identity by utilising relevant storytelling elements, themes and media types on Instagram, which is then perceived by the followers as Omega's brand image.

In *Building Strong Brands*, Aaker (1996) introduced the now-famous Brand Vision Model, originally known as the Brand Identity Model. The Aaker model postulates that a brand stands for multiple ideas, attributes or associations. The importance of these elements vary depending on their centricity to the brand's identity (Meyerson, 2019a). Aaker's model differs from that of Kapferer's Brand Identity Prism (Lombard, 2018) and Neumeier's Brand Commitment Matrix (Meyerson, 2019b) in that it does not

require the inclusion of brand personality or brand purpose and brand values (Meyerson, 2019a).



Figure 2.3: Brand Identity System (Aaker, 1996: 79)

Aaker's (1996) Brand Identity model suggests that a brand's identity consists of twelve dimensions that are organised around four different perspectives. These perspectives are brand as product, brand as organisation, brand as person and brand as symbol. Furthermore, brand identity structure also includes both a core and an extended identity. The core identity refers to the central, timeless essence of the brand and is most likely to persist as the brand moves between markets and products. The extended identity includes elements of the brand's identity that are grouped together to form meaningful, cohesive categories. In the context of this study, Aaker's Brand Identity model is vitally important. Aaker's model serves as the basis from which the researcher will analyse Omega's brand identity. The research will shed light on the messaging pillars the brand uses when communicating with its followers and will be applied to answer the research questions and address the research purpose.

2.2.3 Brand differentiation

Once a brand's identity has been defined, brand managers, strategists, planners, communicators and custodians need to differentiate that brand from its competitors. In Hem's (2019) work, the researcher observed that most of the research focusing on differentiation does not include a definition, and uses the concept of *differentiation* interchangeably with *distinctiveness* and *uniqueness*. To better understand brand

differentiation, it is thus important to understand uniqueness as well. Traditionally, as part of the brand positioning process, unique associations helped to distinguish brands from their competitors and justify brand choice (Broniarczyk & Gershoff, 2003; Keller, 2001; Brown & Carpenter, 2000; Dhar & Sherman, 1996). Netemeyer, Krishnan, Pullig, Wang, Yagci, Dean, Ricks and Wirth (2004) define brand uniqueness as the extent to which consumers perceive the brand as being distinctly different from the other brands in its field. This uniqueness adds value by illustrating how and why these differences matter.

Shaw first described differentiation as a way for companies to better meet the needs of consumers. In his view, differentiation resulted in an increase in demand for the company's product, as well as the ability to increase the product's prices (Shaw, 1912, cited in Hem, 2019). Chamberlin defined differentiation as a way of distinguishing between different producers' products based on consumer choice and preference (Chamberlin, 1965, cited in Hem, 2019). In reference to uniqueness, Keller (2008) suggests that companies with unique brand images are favoured by consumers due to the positive perceptions they have of these brands. Webster and Keller (2004) explain that unique brands have attributes and benefits that differentiate them from their competitors.

When referring to differentiation from the customer-based brand equity theory perspective, Keller (2012, 1993) suggests that brand differentiation is the result of the unique associations customers have with a brand. It is clear then that the concepts of differentiation and uniqueness are used interchangeably in a variety of studies and have traditionally been seen as positive and necessary steps to help customers identify and choose between different brands. However, more recent studies suggest that this traditional view of differentiation and uniqueness may no longer be as important as it once was. Recent studies have shown that in some instances differentiation negatively influences the ability to identify a brand that offers a specific product or service (Hem, 2019; Romaniuk, Sharp, & Ehrenberg, 2007). These instances are often related to examples where products are purposefully created to differ from that which consumers have come to expect from certain brands.

Given the similarities in the definitions of these concepts, differentiation and

uniqueness are thus often interpreted as the same concept, and this interchangeable use makes it more difficult to interpret the results of the studies in which they are used. However, Hem (2019), suggests that uniqueness is also only one form of differentiation: categorical differentiation. Based on Hem's (2019) work, this study will consider uniqueness as a form of differentiation, rather than as a concept itself. The study will henceforth refer to brand differentiation as all the activities a brand conducts to separate and identify itself in relation to its competitors. Although the researcher is aware of the works of Hem (2019); Datta, Ailawadi and Van Heerde (2017); Stahl, Heitmann, Lehmann and Neslin (2012); Keller (2012, 1993); Romaniuk and Gaillard (2007); and Romaniuk *et al.* (2007), this study considers brand differentiation as important in relation to Omega's brand building activities. The following section will focus on three key aspects of brand differentiation within the context of this study: luxury, rarity and Veblen goods.

2.2.3.1 Luxury

For decades, the luxury industry has been concerned about losing its aura of exclusivity (Yap, 2018). The Oxford dictionary defines luxury as: 'A state of great comfort or elegance, especially when involving great expense', whereas exclusivity is defined as: 'The state of catering for or being affordable by only a few, select customers' (Lexico, 2022a; Lexico, 2022b). When defining luxury, it is important to understand that the concept is dependent on context and culture, and its definition changes over time. For decades, luxury referred to the ownership of sports cars, yachts and the consumption of caviar and champagne (Yeoman & McMahon-Beattie, 2011, cited in Yeoman & McMahon-Beattie, 2011). Today, with increased affluence and fewer barriers to entry, luxury is more concerned with experiences and authenticity (Yeoman, Brass & McMahon-Beattie, 2007).

Luxury is a term used to describe products and services that are intensely aspirational and omnipresent, yet always reserved for a select few. As a result of a variety of factors and social constructs, the meaning of 'luxury' differs based on the perceptions and experiences of the target audience. Brands such as Ferrari, Gucci, Rolex, and Louis Vuitton share a certain universal appeal as archetypes of luxury in their respective industries, even forming part of the core definition of luxury. These companies highlight the power of a strong brand and can be seen as market leaders

within their segments.

The link between perceived luxury and high prices is also well documented, (Hennigs, Wiedmann & Klarmann, 2012; Okonkwo, 2009). Here, the high prices charged for luxury wristwatches also account for intangible elements such as tradition, history, heritage and origin. Luxury watch brands do not just sell watches, they sell intangible value and a dream that is intertwined with their name and the type of lifestyle they represent. This phenomenon can be described as the brand's "dream value" (Dubois & Paternault, 1995). Swiss watches combine tradition, beauty and technical excellence with a sophisticated European image. Tradition and heritage are two examples of the pillars on which the Swiss watch industry built its competitive advantage over decades (Raffaelli, 2013; Kebir & Crevoisier, 2008).

Jeannerat and Crevoisier (2011) labelled the marketing-driven transformation of Swiss watch brands towards the luxury accessory segment as a "non-technological innovation". This type of innovation cannot be measured in terms of progress brought about by the skills of watchmakers or advances in technology, but rather as an innovative way of promoting a product. Swiss watch brands strongly focus on communicating a luxury brand image built on craftsmanship, heritage and history. To reinforce their luxury brand positioning, the watch brands in the premium segment of the market command prices that correspond with the luxury image they portray. Watches are seen as being culturally significant (Porch, 1985) and are often worn out of necessity, as well as for its luxury attributes (Barret, 2000). Haussermann (2007: 15) suggests that mechanical watches allow their wearers to view them not as tools, but as works of art and craftsmanship.

During periods of economic uncertainty, luxury watchmakers have experienced a certain level of safety due to the unique attributes of their watches (Simonian, 2009). This reinforces the notion that luxury is an enduring concept and brands that operate in this segment are often immune from the challenges faced by brands in the commercial, non-luxury segment. The level of financial safety in times of economic turmoil reiterates the idea that the price of certain luxury watches is inelastic. This is further evident in the fact that the Swiss watch industry had its best year ever in 2021, despite the COVID-19 pandemic and its substantial impact on the world economy

(Forster, 2022). In the luxury watch market, the concept of luxury is often based on a brand's heritage, product pricing and brand building initiatives, which are all used and directed towards creating the aura of exclusivity and appeal. Looking at the strategies Biver implemented on some of the brands in The Swatch Group shows just how meticulously planned the repositioning towards the luxury segment needs to be in order to be successful (Raffaelli & DeJordy, 2019).

2.2.3.2 Rarity

Closely intertwined with luxury is the concept of rarity, which points to the lack of availability of a certain product or range of products within a specific industry or market. Kapferer (2012) coined the phrase “abundant rarity” which refers to the perception of exclusivity rather than actual exclusivity. Some of the tactics used in the luxury watch trade include limited editions and capsule collections. Numerous studies have focused on the principle of rarity in luxury brands (Phau & Prendergast 2000; Dubois & Paternault, 1995), as well as consumers’ yearning to express themselves as being unique with regards to their luxury consumption (Kastanakis & Balabanis, 2012; Kim, Ko, Bing & Hann, 2012; Wiedmann, Hennigs & Siebels, 2009, 2007).

Due to the strong demand for luxury products, luxury brands have been negatively affected by the emergence of a substantial market for counterfeit luxury products, which threatens to damage their brands’ image (Poddar, Foreman, Banerjee & Ellen, 2011; Wilcox, Kim & Sen, 2009; Yoo & Lee, 2009). Counterfeit watches play a role within this trade, with numerous copies of TagHeuer and Rolex watches being available for purchase from informal vendors all over the world (Roulet, 2021). As the market for luxury products continues to grow, another trend named “Masstige” has emerged.

Kapferer and Bastien (2009) describe Masstige (mass prestige) as the phenomenon where luxury products become affordable to less affluent consumers due to market expansion. This poses a different kind of threat for the traditional luxury segment’s brand value (Wan & Mattila, 2014). As entry points into various luxury brands, Masstige products enjoy considerable demand and due to their relatively low cost, these products are purchased and flaunted on social media platforms for the world to see. As more and more consumers enter the middle class and have more disposable

income available, a perpetual cycle is created (Riddell, 2014). The concept of Masstige is further discussed in chapter five.

Rarity in the luxury wristwatch market also has a significant influence on the price of a number of watches in the used market. Certain watches made by Omega, Rolex and Patek Philippe, to name a few, are made in small quantities, but the demand for these watches far outstrips the supply. Some of these watches are purposefully made as part of a special, set run of watches which is communicated to consumers from the start, whereas others are manufactured in limited quantities in order to sustain the demand for those pieces. Some examples include the Omega Speedmaster Apollo 13 Silver Snoopy Award discussed earlier, the Rolex Submariner 116610LV (affectionately named “Hulk”) and the Patek Philippe Nautilus 5711. These watches, in new or used condition, sell for a significant premium on the used market where they are highly coveted. Their rarity directly influences the price customers are willing to pay to acquire one of these pieces (Bazemore, 2019; Mischuk, 2019; Corder, 2019).

2.2.3.3 Veblen goods

In 1899, Thorstein Veblen published a seminal work on the “leisure class”. In this book, titled *The Theory of the Leisure Class*, Veblen postulated that the wealthy consume conspicuous goods and services to showcase their wealth. This is done in an attempt to achieve greater social status. Veblen’s work was so influential that the term “Veblen effect” was coined. This term refers to the willingness of consumers to pay more for a product that has a level of functionality similar to that of a less expensive product.

The reasoning behind this behaviour is centred on the concept of showcasing wealth for all to see (Veblen, 1899, cited in Bagwell & Bernheim, 2001). In an effort to graphically explain Veblen goods, the Veblen curve was developed. This curve illustrates that, when the price of an item increases, so does the exclusivity and sense of status connected to that product. In simple terms, the more expensive a product becomes, the more desirable it becomes (Habacon, 2014).

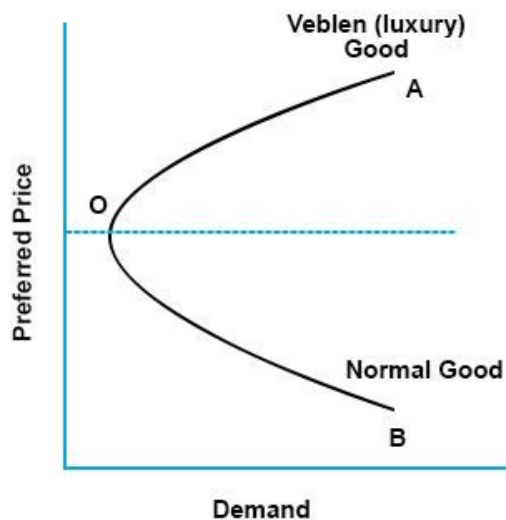


Figure 2.4: Veblen curve (Thakur & Vaidya, n.d.)

Thakur and Vaidya's (n.d.) graphical example shows that the Veblen curve contradicts the traditional law of demand, where an increase in the price of a product leads to a decrease in its demand. Veblen goods generally include luxury goods such as designer handbags, luxury watches, diamonds, jewellery and luxury travel. In the context of this study, the Veblen curve can be used to explain how Omega's brand building activities on Instagram influence the subjective value of its watches, allowing the brand to increase its prices without suffering a drop in demand (Thakur & Vaidya, n.d.).

At \$6 400, its Speedmaster Professional Moonwatch allows customers to own a legendary watch, identical to the first timepiece ever worn on the moon (Omega, 2022b). At \$5 400 Omega's Seamaster Diver 300M also offers customers the much lauded and now-legendary Co-Axial escapement in a rugged, utilitarian guise (Omega, 2022c). These watches both tell the time in the same way a \$50 quartz watch or a cell phone would. On the other end of the spectrum, a number of luxury watches are available at a price point similar to that of Omega, but few have such an interesting, rich and important history that influences the subjective value of pieces as much as the Speedmaster and the Seamaster. Omega's digital brand building activities allow the brand to convey its brand story to its customers in a way that truly resonates and transports them into the brand's world. This "dream value", as referenced by Dubois and Paternault (1995), results in its watches being perceived as offering value that transcends that of a pure utilitarian nature, in order to meet higher

levels of self-actualisation.

Catellier (2020) references a number of reasons why certain luxury watches hold or appreciate in value, and why other watches decrease in value. The watches that hold or increase its value are often rare (whether artificially or by their nature); purpose-built (when people purchase it to fulfil a specific task); made by a great watch brand; or when they have a specific, unique look or function. Cagau, a custom watch and jewellery specialist in Dubai, mentioned that despite global lockdowns due to COVID-19, the asset value and demand of luxury watches rose during the pandemic (Cagau, 2021).

Rau (2021) conducted research into the price of the Audemars Piguet Royal Oak Jumbo Ref. 15202ST during lockdown. His findings indicated that the retail price of the watch was €23 100 when he started his research in October 2020. At the time, due to its limited availability, owners of these watches were able to sell theirs for around €50 000 on the used market. Thirteen months later, the second-hand market price for the watch shot up to €110 000, which retailed just over €30 000 at that stage. This meant a 376% difference from the retail price, and a 141% increase in the market price in just over a year.

Despite regular price increases far above inflation and a global pandemic that has disrupted all business sectors, the Swiss watch industry still had its best year ever in 2021. The value of all Swiss watches exported in 2021 amounted to CHF 22.3 billion, more than the previous all-time record of CHF 22.25 billion in 2014. The market for luxury watches is clearly thriving.

2.2.4 Brand advocacy

The Oxford Learner's dictionary refers to advocacy as the public support given to an idea, a belief or a specific course of action (n.d.). Kemp, Childers, and Williams (2012) suggest that brand advocacy refers to favourable communication around a specific brand. Park and MacInnis (2006) refer to it as a recommendation of a specific brand to other people, and Keller (2007) suggests that the defence of a brand when under attack, constitutes brand advocacy.

Stokburger-Sauer *et al.* (2012) postulate that brand advocacy occurs when customers make an effort to promote, support or recommend a specific brand. Their definition is similar to that of Howard and Kerin (2013), who refer to brand advocacy as a positive attitude towards a product by a satisfied customer. Wilder (2015) also suggests that brand advocacy combines the customer-motivated behaviours, brand recommendation and defence, in order to maintain the relationship the customer has with the brand, whilst also promoting the brand to others in the process. Melancon, Noble and Noble (2011) suggest that brand advocacy forms part of relational behaviour, extra-role behaviour (Park, MacInnis, Priester, Eisingerich & Iacobucci, 2010) or elective behaviour (Ahearne, Bhattacharya & Gruen, 2005).

The importance of brand advocacy is shown in a number of research studies. Stokburger-Sauer *et al.* (2012) has linked brand advocacy to consumer-brand identification; Liang and Zhang (2012) connected it to satisfaction; Munnukka, Uusitalo, and Jokinen (2014) linked it to brand loyalty and Bagozzi and Dholakia (2006) found a link to purchase intent. Bhattacharya and Sanker Sen (2003) indicated that consumers who experience a brand as being similar to their concept of self, tend to enter into long-lasting relationships with that brand. Kim and Park (2001) suggests that these brand followers actively promote the brand's values to other people. Given this insight, it is clear why brand advocacy has become a crucially important tool for brand managers. Bughin, Doogan and Vetvik (2010) postulate that peer recommendation influences between 20% and 50% of all decisions to purchase specific products. According to Fuggetta (2012), brand advocates actively evangelise the brands they have experience with, and Wilk, Soutar and Harrigan (2019) suggest that this type of communication can occur both offline and online.

Brand advocacy's influence on long-term business success is also not a new concept. John Arndt, a professor at the Columbia School of Business, already understood in 1967 that brand communication shared among peers is possibly the most important form of brand information (Arndt, 1967). The work of Bendapudi and Berry (1997), Burke, Wilson and Salas (2005) and Wuring (2008) also found that the creation of a group of brand advocates is vital to the sustained success of a business in the market.

The proliferation of digital devices throughout society has led to an increasingly interconnected world – one in which modern consumers are aware and sceptical of brand communication driven by marketers (Pini & Pelleschi, 2017; Kotler, Kartajaya & Setiawan, 2016; Laran, Dalton & Adrade 2011; Campbell & Kirmani, 2008). This hesitance towards marketer-led communication, and the acceptance of the recommendations of others has resulted in brand advocacy becoming one of the most important and influential forms of marketing.

Keller and Berry (2003) found peer-to-peer information exchange to be a very important tool given consumer's growing distrust of marketer-led brand communication. Edelman (2010) suggests that, since modern technology has enabled consumers to recognise and filter traditional advertising, product and service recommendations by their peers have become an increasingly valuable tool for acquiring new customers. Brand advocacy is now more important than ever before.

2.2.5 Online brand advocacy

Given that most businesses are building their brands online today, the measurement of these brand building activities should be investigated from a different perspective. This view should take into consideration the unique properties of the Internet, as well as the ways in which brand advocacy behaviour differs between the offline and online spheres. As such, a new construct for brand advocacy has recently been measured and operationalised. Called online brand advocacy (OBA), this construct builds on the foundation of brand advocacy, but adds an additional layer of complexity and definition. (Wilk *et al.*, 2019; Wilk, Harrigan & Soutar, 2018a). Wilk *et al.* (2019: 419) defines online brand advocacy as “strong, influential, purposeful and non-incentivised, online representation of a brand and that brand's best interest by a brand-experienced customer (either past or current), which includes ‘standing up for’ and speaking on behalf of the brand”.

OBA differs from offline brand advocacy in several ways. OBA is a multidimensional construct, featuring cognitive, affective and virtual, visual cues dimensions (Wilk *et al.*, 2018a), of which the latter does not form part of offline brand advocacy (Wilk *et al.*, 2019). Virtual cue expressions (which refer to the use of capital letters, exclamation

marks and emoticons in posts) allow the brand advocate to convey more emotion in their exchanges (Riordan, 2017). Furthermore, offline brand advocacy generally occurs at a specific time and place and is directed towards one person or a small number of people. In contrast, OBA is executed on digital platforms that can reach a global audience on a permanent basis and is therefore highly visible for all to see (Wilk *et al.*, 2019). OBA is also a naturally occurring phenomenon in online environments, where prosumers engage in OBA behaviour when socialising with others (Lawer & Knox, 2006). Given the nature of the Instagram platform and its ability to share images and videos with enormous amounts of people, it is the perfect platform for brand advocates to use.

Research studies are referencing OBA in some or other form more frequently (Parrott, Danbury & Kanthavanich, 2015; Leventhal, Wallace, Buil & de Chernatony, 2014; Wallace, Buil & de Chernatony, 2012). These references often include electronic word-of-mouth (Cheung & Lee, 2012; Hennig-Thurau, Gwinner, Walsh & Gremler, 2004); social media brand advocacy (Keylock & Faulds, 2012); consumer-brand engagement (Brodie, Ilic, Juric & Hollebeek, 2013); and user-generated content (Smith, Fischer & Yongjian, 2012). However, although these constructs refer to examples or aspects of OBA, they should not be used to substitute it altogether (Wilk *et al.*, 2019; Graham & Havlena, 2007).

Wilk, Soutar and Harrigan (2021) postulate that OBA differs distinctly from electronic word of mouth and consumer-brand engagement. OBA is integrated into the advocate's life, resulting in it being a reflection of the consumer-brand relationship (Wilk *et al.*, 2018a). OBA is also more complex than just a simple exchange of online information about the brand, distinguishing it from electronic word of mouth (Hennig-Thurau *et al.*, 2004). OBA suggests that brand advocates share in-depth knowledge about a brand based on their own experience; they stand up for a brand online; and, in many ways, they live the brand. OBA is therefore purposeful, impactful and elaborate, further it from electronic word-of-mouth. (Wilk *et al.*, 2021). When differentiating OBA from consumer-brand engagement, Wilk *et al.* (2019, 2018a) also suggest that OBA does not have to refer to an engagement *with* a brand, but rather to a favourable previous brand engagement. This brand engagement leads to a specific behaviour: favourable communication *about* a brand to other consumers.

As mentioned earlier, social media has resulted in the creation of an increasingly connected world, where user-generated content and interactions have led to rich brand-related exchanges that influence the behaviour of others (Keylock & Faulds, 2012; Adjei, Noble & Noble, 2010). Research suggests that only 20% of online customers trust online advertisements, whereas 92% of customers place their trust in online brand advocates, and 75% of consumers' purchase decisions are influenced by these online brand advocates' activities (Geyser, 2021; Mathison, 2017). Brooks (2021) found that two thirds of shoppers use social media as part of their pre-purchase research. Given this context, it is vitally important for businesses to cultivate a group of online brand advocates who are able to motivate others to consider the brand by singing its praises. Instagram provides the perfect platform from which this can be done.

Another benefit of OBA over traditional, offline brand advocacy lies in the environment in which it occurs. Due to its nature, OBA can be received and then acted on in a matter of seconds. This instantaneous nature means that the decision-making journey for the recipient of OBA behaviour is shortened significantly. This enables the recipient to verify the information given by clicking through to the brand's website or its presence on another digital platform (Wilk *et al.*, 2019). Sun, Youn, Wu and Kuntaraporn (2006) also found that OBA givers (people who engage in the process of advocating for a brand) are also OBA receivers (people who receive advocacy messages), implying that they move between these two roles frequently. This is echoed in the work of Madupu and Cooley (2010) who suggest that, for those who participate online, the roles of OBA giver and receiver are not mutually exclusive and that a person can fulfil both those roles simultaneously. Due to the online nature of Omega's strategic brand initiatives, online brand advocacy will become the focus of this study.

2.2.5.1 Brand loyalty

When assessing OBA, previous research on brand attachment found a positive relationship between brand advocacy and brand loyalty. Brand advocacy leads to the creation of deeper customer-brand relationships, resulting in the creation of brand loyalty (Malär, Krohmer, Hoyer & Nyffenegger, 2011; Park *et al.*, 2010; Lawer & Knox,

2006). Brand loyalty is a state of attachment to a certain brand that resists time and does not decrease even though a price difference exists between the brand's product and that of a similar competitor's product (Kapferer, 2008). Brand loyalty has both marketing and financial advantages, such as lower marketing costs, a larger audience, and a string of new customers (Aaker and Biel, 1993). The value of a brand is largely attributable to the amount of customer loyalty the brand commands. A large amount of customer-based brand loyalty can create a relatively predictable stream of profit (Aaker, 2002: 21). As a result of brand attachment, lifestyles and consumption, Anwar (2012) suggests that brand loyalty is high in the realm of luxury goods.

Wilk *et al.*'s (2021) study also found that consumer-brand identification and brand loyalty often lead to OBA. Their study was also the first to show that consumers who identify with a specific brand have a higher likelihood of becoming brand loyal, resulting in them spending time online on discretionary or extra-role behaviours. This is what is meant when referring to online brand advocacy. This suggests that a circular relationship exists between brand loyalty and OBA, and also between OBA and brand loyalty. The relationship between these two concepts serves as one of the main reasons why Omega's brand building activities on Instagram are so important. By slowly feeding its followers with branded content over an extended period of time, Omega's followers could become brand loyal, and its existing brand advocates' level of satisfaction and immersion could be strengthened even further. This loyalty towards the brand could then be operationalised as these brand loyal followers and advocates participate in extra-role behaviours, advocating for the brand online.

Wilk *et al.* (2021) found that OBA had a strong impact on both brand loyalty and purchase intent. By publicly verbalising and portraying a consumer-brand relationship through OBA, brand advocates become more connected and loyal to a brand, and intent on purchasing the brand's products. Park *et al.* (2010) and Malär *et al.* (2011) further state that OBA strengthens advocates' loyalty to a brand by enhancing their self-representation online. Based on these findings, the more Omega's loyal followers and existing brand advocates engage in extra-role behaviours, the stronger their relationship with the brand becomes. The strength of these relationships then influences their intent to purchase the brand's watches. Furthermore, the more followers engage in extra-role behaviours and advocate for the brand, the more new

followers could be drawn in, repeating the cycle of immersion in the brand's content. This immersion could then lead to the creation of new brand advocates who are fiercely loyal and highly intent on purchasing the brand's watches.

Xie, Richard and Kjell (2019) found that brand advocacy elevates the overall level of a brand's trustworthiness. This elevation occurs as the public experiences the support brand advocates display towards a brand without expecting anything in return. At the same time, this type of behaviour puts the brand under pressure to maintain its quality control so that its advocates don't receive products that don't perform as expected (Khamwon & Pongsuraton, 2020). However, given the quality and sophistication of the Omega brand's watches (Farmelo, 2021; Prestige Time, n.d.), the likelihood of product satisfaction is high. Subsequently, the likelihood of brand satisfaction is concomitantly high, further increasing the chances of customers turning into loyal brand advocates.

2.3 Narrative Transportation Theory

Great brands tell stories that their customers relate and feel drawn to. Engagement with and immersion in these stories can turn followers into loyalists. The use of storytelling in the digital era has become increasingly prevalent. In the field of branding alone, storytelling is frequently used as a strategy to engage customers (Hughes Bandoni & Pehlivan, 2016; Presi, Maehle, & Kleppe, 2016; Luedicke, Thompson & Giesler, 2010; Cova & Pace, 2006; Holt, 2004; Salzer-Mörling & Strannegård, 2004). A host of luxury brands in a variety of industries already pursue narrative-driven customer engagement. These include, among others, Johnnie Walker; Chanel, Moët & Chandon; Mercedes Benz and Prada (Van Laer, Feiereisen & Visconti, 2019; Ryu, Lehto, Gordon & Fu, 2019; Huang, Ha and Kim, 2018; Kim, Lloyd and Cervellon, 2016).

Storytelling as a luxury brand building tool is therefore not new. This research will explore how Omega utilises narrative-driven content strategies on Instagram to turn its followers into brand advocates. This will be done by analysing its strategic brand initiatives through the lens of Narrative Transportation Theory. Omega uses Instagram as a brand building platform since it offers the brand the opportunity to tell stories to its followers in vivid and immersive ways that are not possible on other platforms. The

brand's activities on Instagram were therefore selected for this study as it set a benchmark for other brands to follow.

Narrative Transportation Theory explains how people engage with and interpret information found in different types of media. This theory suggests that persuasion can take place when people are sufficiently immersed in a specific object or context (Green & Brock, 2002). The extent to which a story's plot activates or engages a person's mind and subsequently allows them to experience an idealised version of reality constitutes Narrative Transportation Theory (Van Laer, De Ruyter, Visconti & Wetzels, 2014). The researchers (2014) also describe Narrative Transportation as an experiential response to the narrative and operationalise it according to how much the story receiver empathises with the characters in the narrative.

Van Laer *et al.* (2019) explain Narrative Transportation as a type of customer engagement that results in narrative persuasion. It involves the story receiver's journey into a narrative and focuses on how they actively co-create these narratives in their own imagination (Van Laer, De Ruyter, Visconti & Wetzels, 2014; Chronis, 2008). Huang, Ha and Kim (2018) found that Narrative Transportation has a high likelihood of occurring through the advertising of luxury brands on social media platforms. They suggest that when consumers engage with messages embedded in photos and videos on the social media platforms of luxury brands, they develop mental images and become immersed in the brand's story. This leads to positive responses toward the brand and its products.

The consumption of said story leads to its conversion into a narrative (Van Laer *et al.*, 2014), which ultimately results in the receiver losing themselves within the story (Nell, 1988). Narrative Transportation leads to the development of enduring persuasive effects that are formed subconsciously, without argument evaluation or a great deal of scrutiny (Van Laer *et al.*, 2014). When the story receiver is immersed in a narrative, their affective and cognitive responses, attitudes, beliefs and intentions are influenced. During this process, they are swept away by the narrative, which results in perception change (Green & Brock, 2002). The effect that Narrative Transportation has on the story receiver could also remain consistent or even increase over time (Appel & Richter, 2007). This phenomenon could result in higher returns on advertising spend

(Van Laer *et al.*, 2019).

An example of how Narrative Transportation Theory is successfully being applied to convert social media followers into brand customers in the luxury wristwatch industry comes from the first Fratello Watches and Omega collaboration. Fratello Watches, a leading online watch publication in the Netherlands, was approached by Omega to help the brand create the Omega Speedmaster “Speedy Tuesday” watch (figure 2.5). In 2012, Fratello Watches’ founder, Robert-Jan Broer, started posting photos of his Omega Speedmaster watch to the Fratello Watches online channels, accompanied by the hashtag *#SpeedyTuesday*. Over time, Broer and Fratello Watches’ followers started doing the same, and the *#SpeedyTuesday* movement gained in popularity. Omega, having observed the popularity of this very niche subset of wristwatch fans, developed a special Speedmaster model to commemorate this social movement. In early 2017, a total of 2 012 watches were created. Omega opted to sell these pieces on the same platform that gave birth to the trend—the Internet—using its own website to facilitate the sale (Broer, 2017). This experiment serves as a lesson in brand building with Omega creating and nurturing a consumer-brand relationship. This collaboration also delivers a powerful example of integrated brand communication that is delivered well, resulting in a brand building strategy that is impactful.



Figure 2.5: *Omega Speedmaster “Speedy Tuesday”* (Omega, 2022a)

For the launch of this watch, Omega created a dedicated and in-depth webpage that tells the Speedy Tuesday story. The webpage explains the link between the limited

edition watch and the original 1978 Speedmaster Alaska III model that was made for NASA. The page also shows comparison images (figure 2.6) between the original model and the new model; provides insight into the design decisions that inspired the new model; focuses on the watch's movement; explains the unique stylistic and functional features and showcases the packaging and storage solution (Omega, 2022a).



Figure 2.6: Comparison between the Omega Speedmaster Alaska III and the “Speedy Tuesday” (Omega, 2022a)

Omega’s Speedmaster “Speedy Tuesday” launch was supported by a similar article on Fratello Watches’ website. It was also featured on different online-only watch publications (Hodinkee and Monochrome Watches). A variety of social media posts from both Omega and Fratello Watches also helped to promote the release. All 2 012 limited edition Omega Speedmaster “Speedy Tuesday” watches were sold out within a few hours (SJX, 2017) and also became the first Omega watch to officially be sold online by the brand itself (Goulard, 2017).

The success of this campaign unequivocally demonstrated that, after engaging in the content on these brands’ channels, customers became so well acquainted with Fratello Watches and Omega’s digital presences (and the *#SpeedyTuesday* movement in particular) that they were willing to purchase a luxury watch, unseen, over the Internet.

The success of the initial *#SpeedyTuesday* campaign led Omega to repeat the

process, this time with the Speedmaster Speedy Tuesday 2 'Ultraman'. This watch (figure 2.7) is inspired by the Professional Speedmaster watch made for the Japanese market in 1968 and pays tribute to a character in the Japanese Ultraman TV series decades ago (Doskocz, 2021).



Figure 2.7: Omega Speedmaster "Speedy Tuesday Ultraman" (Omega, 2022f)

As with the original Speedy Tuesday series, all 2 012 watches were sold out in a few hours, directly through Omega's website (Broer, 2018). Regardless of their decades' worth of experience and vast networks of customers, no Omega retailers or stand-alone Omega boutiques were used to promote these watches. And yet, within hours, all 4 024 watches from the two editions were sold: a prime example of how Narrative Transportation Theory can be utilised within the context of the luxury wristwatch industry.

To further illustrate Omega's successful use of Narrative Transportation Theory, Thompson's (1997) view that a story always needs to include both a giver (the brand or brand advocate) and a receiver (the consumer) is particularly important. The process of interpreting and attributing meaning to a story leads to the creation of a narrative. Van Laer *et al.* (2014) state that a story and a narrative are two distinct elements of the story-telling process, separately relating to the production and consumption of a story. The receiver of a story simultaneously consumes and interprets the story, authoring it in the process. Van Laer *et al.* (2014) defines this

process as a 'narrative'. This is consistent with Fishbein and Yzer's (2003) view.

By using brand ambassadors, influencers, publications and numerous trade and media partners, Omega has meticulously controlled the story around its watches whilst influencing the narrative as needed by using story elements that resonate with the desired target audience. The brand's control over the narrative has allowed it to communicate in different ways on different channels and with different partners, whilst always staying true to its core identity and allowing its customers to also construct the narrative (Weiss, 2021; Corder, 2021; Forster, 2018; Broer, 2017; Clymer, 2017; Karmali, 2017; Europa Star, 2009). This illustrates once again the importance for brands to understand their customers' unique needs and to provide them with relevant content on the appropriate channels.

In a world where information is primarily shared through digital channels, the customer's control over the content they consume is also continuously changing. Through the use of brand characters, visuals and a variety of other cues, brands stimulate consumers to help them to create their narratives from the brands' stories. This process of interpreting stories helps customers to strengthen their social identity (Holt, 1995) and influence their own consumption experience (Bahl & Milne, 2010). Therefore, narrative persuasion differs from other customer engagement outcomes in that it mentally transports story receivers to the desired state (immersion in the brand that leads to purchase) by influencing their emotional responses and reducing their counter-arguing ability (Green & Brock, 2002).

The effects of Narrative Transportation in social media platforms have also shown to be stronger when the message giver (luxury brands or brand advocates) has closer ties with the message receiver (the consumer) (Seo, Li, Choi, & Yoon, 2018). Omega customers are able to access and immerse themselves in a vast amount of content and information on different social media platforms. In doing so, they enter into a virtual relationship with the brand where they can construct narratives that they personally deem relevant. In the eyes of the customer, this process strengthens the bond between the brand and themselves.

Omega and its editorial and content partners produce content based on different

customer types – all of which ultimately contribute to persuade its followers to purchase the brand's watches. Yet, the use of narrative content as a tool for persuasion is only successful when story receivers are not aware of the story's real intention and are not sceptical about the story's message (Escalas, 2007). The two vital components that lead to narrative persuasion are the stories the brand tells its customers, and the unique characteristics of the customers who receive these stories (Van Laer *et al.*, 2014).

When a story is being told, the two elements that lead to consumers' transportation are empathy and mental imagery. Empathy refers to the ability to understand the story character's experience (Slater & Rouner, 2002). Mental imagery refers to the ability to create a mental image of the story in such a way that consumers almost experience it vicariously (Green & Brock, 2002). For persuasion to take place, these two elements need to connect in a meaningful way.

In 1965, when NASA declared Omega's Speedmaster qualified for all space missions, it marked the start of a new chapter in the brand's history. Omega seized the opportunity to make space exploration the central theme of its Speedmaster marketing communications and capitalised on all the subsequent interest NASA's missions (those in space and on the moon itself) brought to the brand. For decades now, the brand has focused on the part it played in the moon landing and a number of NASA missions (Swithinbank, 2019; Broer, 2019).

Omega has been releasing different Speedmaster iterations ever since and are constantly immersing its followers in its space-themed brand building activities up to the point where the brand has become synonymous with space travel and the moon landing (Clymer, 2015). The effect of its customers' immersion in and fascination with Omega's space-themed content is underscored by the definition of Narrative Transportation Theory as postulated by Van Laer *et al.* (2019), Van Laer *et al.* (2014) and Green and Brock (2002).

When customers are sufficiently immersed, story receivers experience an enhanced, transported version of reality (Van Laer *et al.*, 2014). Narrative Transportation thus increases the long-lasting persuasive effects these stories have on the story receivers,

and when transportation takes place successfully, it changes and reframes the story receiver's view of the world (Van Laer *et al.*, 2014). Green and Brock (2000) and Braverman (2008) echo these findings by suggesting that Narrative Transportation influences the beliefs of the story receivers, and Green (2004) as well as Green and Brock (2000) further state that story receivers become more disconnected from their current beliefs the more transported they become.

Van Laer *et al.*'s (2019) work on storytelling in the digital era suggests that the effect of Narrative Transportation on the story receiver is dependent on the domain in which storytelling takes place. They also found that the Narrative Transportation effect is more significant when the story being told is (1) of a commercial nature; (2) engages non-brand stakeholders in the storytelling process and (3) the story receiver experiences the story in isolation, away from the influence of their peers. These three factors perfectly summarise why Omega's brand advocates are so important in its efforts to build the brand. These advocates are able to relay the brand's stories in authoritative, personal ways based on their unique experiences with the brand.

The success of the Speedy Tuesday campaign can thus be supported by Van Laer *et al.*'s (2019) work, where stakeholders (Robert-Jan Broer and his followers) not in the employ of the brand, shared their admiration for Omega Speedmaster watches on the Internet over a period of time. Their efforts were well-received by a large community of watch lovers, which ultimately warranted the creation of the special limited-edition watch. This type of brand advocacy, combined with the immersive nature of the digital world, fosters an environment conducive to storytelling.

The luxury industry and the branding sphere are two fields in which storytelling is particularly successful. Central to the success of Omega's brand building activities is its ability to tell vivid stories that showcase its watches from different perspectives and are backed by real life historic achievements. These stories can create transformational experiences when the story receivers (its customers) are fully immersed (Phillips & McQuarrie 2010), which results in changes in the cognitive and affective responses, attitudes, intentions and beliefs of the story receiver (Van Laer *et al.*, 2014).

The work of Huang, Ha and Kim (2018) was the first to validate the extended transportation-imagery model (Van Laer *et al.*, 2014) when luxury brands promote their brand on social media platforms. The authors also explained how luxury brands persuade consumers through their activities on social media platforms. Keeping the authors' work in mind, a strong focus will be placed on interpreting Omega's astute practical application of Narrative Transportation Theory in its brand building activities with specific focus on its Instagram posts.

2.3.1 Information gathering

In the context of this study, information gathering refers to how customers search for and find information related to luxury wristwatch brands. This study will investigate how Omega shares content and information with its customers on Instagram to aid them in their search for brand-related information. Mitchell and Papavassiliou (1997) conducted an empirical study into the factors that lead to consumer confusion when attempting to purchase wristwatches. Their study suggested that the availability of too much information created confusion and information-overload, which led to the postponement of sales.

However, customers were willing to gather even more information when they could not choose an option. The confusion was related to the vast variety of different options, each being very similar, but a lack of clarity regarding the purchasing goal seemed to be the main source of confusion (Mitchell & Papavassiliou, 1997). Seeing as their research was conducted long before watch brands used the Internet to market their products, Mitchell and Papavassiliou's (1997) research was related exclusively to offline information gathering.

Bughin, Doogan and Vetvik (2010) found that the customers of luxury brands generally seek more information and take longer to make decisions than customers of non-luxury brands. This difficulty in making decisions can be based on the fact that product pricing still has a significant role to play in the purchase decision. Luxury customers who shop online also trust customer reviews and reputable online retailers, whilst in-store luxury customers trust the physical environment more (Liu, Burns & Hou, 2013). However, even though Mitchell and Papavassiliou's (1997) study further

suggested that asking a salesperson for advice was the way to clear up any indecision, many of the respondents in Liu *et al.*'s (2013) study did not trust the advice of the salesperson in luxury jewellery stores.

When observing repurchasing behaviour, Pappas, Pateli, Giannakos, and Chrissikopoulos (2014) also found that customers with a significant amount of experience tend to gather product information from different sources, while customers with less experience tend to rely on their previous experiences. Li (2021) found that luxury consumers are aware of the many luxury brands in the market. As such, they will use digital channels to access large amounts of information from various sources on their chosen brands and consume content from OBAs before deciding what to purchase. This finding supports the researcher's point of view that, once customers become accustomed to purchasing luxury goods, they start varying their behaviour and experimenting with their search process. The study will explore the concept of information gathering by investigating how Omega tells its brand stories and makes product information available online through its activities on Instagram.

2.3.2 The Internet

The Internet has fundamentally changed the ways in which people go about their daily lives. Referred to as a system architecture that allows numerous computer networks around the world to connect to each other, the Internet has unequivocally revolutionised communications and commerce (Kahn, 2022). The Internet is therefore a technology that enables communication to take place and new mediums to exist.

When discussing business objectives, the Internet used to be referred to as a sales channel. However, since the Internet in its entirety is a combination of different platforms and is not just limited to a single sales channel, this view is incorrect. In fact, the Internet is a completely heterogeneous platform that is home to different stakeholders (Dennis & Kahn, 2018). Technologically, it is an infrastructure network that enables millions of computers to share data, and allows users to instantly obtain and exchange data (Ohiagu, 2011; Kraidy, 2009; Morris & Ogan, 1996). In the broader scheme, the Internet is a giant ecosystem that allows any person or business to create and tailor systems, experiences and applications that suit their various needs

(Dennis & Kahn, 2018).

For the purposes of this study, the Internet is defined in purely functional terms. The internet is a system that connects global computer users in one inter-connected network (Lee, 2015; Dennis, n.d.). As part of Kapferer and Bastien's (2012) description of the "Internet Dilemma", they define the Internet as a mass medium that is incapable of being perceived as exclusive due to the supposed ease with which customers can access products and services. However, many luxury goods brands are already successfully using the Internet without damaging or diluting the image of their brands (Gfrerer, 2014). The COVID-19 pandemic accelerated this trend furthermore, with even more luxury brands incorporating e-commerce into their sales strategies (Neumann, 2021; Szegedi & Boudrand, 2021).

As with any offline marketplace, the Internet is infinitely complex and fragmented. A category difference exists and a paradigm shift occurs when moving from the digital promotion of, for example, office supplies to bespoke safari experiences. On the Internet, the audience plays an active role by choosing how and when to engage with a brand's content. They seek entertainment, information or transactions when it suits them, and ignore anything that hinders their process. Brand experiences created through the Internet can often be more powerful than other types of marketing (Aaker & Joachimsthaler, 2002: 233). Developing and maintaining brand experiences on the Internet is also much more complex than in traditional media campaigns. The brand is no longer as safe as it once was in a location-specific offline space (Aaker & Joachimsthaler, 2002: 233).

The brands of the modern era that will build longevity are those that utilise the Internet as a tool for brand building in innovative ways. A brand's website is one of its most powerful brand building tools, because it can be tailored to the brand's needs, and can be adapted based on the customer-brand relationship (Aaker & Joachimsthaler, 2002: 239). The Internet has allowed businesses such as Amazon and eBay to simultaneously build dominant business models and create strong brands. A brand's Internet presence serves as the glue that brings all the other types of marketing communication together (Aaker & Joachimsthaler, 2002: 230). In addition to the brand's website, the other digital platforms it uses to communicate its brand story also

play an important part in convincing its customers to purchase its products. Within the context of this study, Instagram, a social media platform on the Internet, will be explored as the primary medium through which Omega is successfully turning its followers into brand advocates.

2.3.3 Social media and customer engagement

For the purpose of this study, social media refers to any digital social network customers use to gather information about brands or engage with brands for entertainment purposes. Huang *et al.* (2018) found that social networks with photo and video sharing capabilities have grown into effective platforms for the promotion of branded content because they allow luxury brands to showcase aspirational experiences highly desired by consumers. Luxury brands often use stories that vividly communicate their brands' unique selling points. This process, implemented on social media platforms, motivates and persuades customers to purchase these brands.

The work of Chahal and Rani (2017) suggests that consumer factors such as individual differences and personality traits could predict customers' interactions with brands' social media presence. On the other hand, the characteristics of the content that brands promote through social media, such as lifestyle-orientated product photography and in-depth video reviews, can influence the degree to which consumers engage with these brands (Rohm, Kaltcheva & Milne, 2013). The use of social media channels for storytelling proves to be very successful due to the real-time availability and ubiquitous, dynamic nature of these channels (Hennig-Thurau, Malthouse, Friege, Gensler, Lobschat, Rangaswamy & Skiera, 2010), which has led to an increased demand for narrative content (Van Laer *et al.*, 2019). The emergence of a host of new technologies such as Augmented Reality (AR), Virtual Reality (VR) and Artificial Intelligence (AI) could continue to enhance the effect that Narrative Transportation has on the story receiver (Van Laer *et al.*, 2019).

In the past, push advertising played a major part in the marketer's toolkit. Push advertising is a traditional marketing approach where high visibility advertising is shared with a large audience through the use of, for example, television; radio; billboards; and more recently, email campaigns and display advertising, with the intent

to sell a product with an existing supply (Rouse, 2013; Robertson, 2019). Push advertising is not to be confused with the use of push notifications on mobile devices where smartphone users are served with messages.

The digital world has made redundant most forms of push advertising, favouring pull advertising instead (Unni & Harmon, 2007). Pull advertising is a marketing approach where businesses use various strategies to create a demand for their products, which results in customers actively seeking out or 'being pulled' towards the brand (Robertson, 2019). This approach perfectly taps into the customer's need for content to consume, which is also a more appropriate way for marketers to engage with and persuade an audience (Brown & Patterson, 2010).

The creation of tailored social media marketing campaigns that target different consumer profiles could lead to multiple gains for a luxury goods company (Tak, Pareek & Rishi, 2017). This reinforces the findings of Ramadan, Farah and Dukenjian's (2018) research, which suggests that the needs of all the different types of luxury brand consumers cannot be fulfilled with a single approach to social media marketing. Huang *et al.* (2018) suggest that the ideal way of combining the exclusivity of luxury brands with the accessibility social media offers is to create a storytelling experience that allows consumers to use digital branded content to mentally experience these brands. Omega deploys a myriad of narrative directions when weaving rich narratives for its followers to craft different types of stories, aimed at promoting different watches to different types of customers.

Social media is a frequently used tool to entice customer engagement in the digital era of brand building. Dessart, Veloutsou and Morgan-Thomas (2015) postulate that customer engagement as a concept can be broken down into three types: affective engagement (characterised by enthusiasm and enjoyment); cognitive engagement (characterised by attention and absorption) and behavioural engagement (characterised by sharing, learning and endorsing). Current literature suggests that factors related to advertisements (such as the emotional sentiment of a message) and factors related to social media platforms (social identity and the platform's characteristics) serve as antecedents of the luxury consumer's content engagement (Barger, Peltier & Schultz, 2016; Soares & Pinho, 2014).

Media format (social media vs. traditional media) and corporate reputation have also been found to influence the effects that social media advertising have on brand equity and consumer attitudes (Morra, Ceruti, Chierici & Gregorio, 2018; Boateng & Okoe, 2015). Ramadan *et al.* (2018) use customer engagement as a benchmark for segmenting different social media users. Sashi (2012) suggests that customer engagement is a cycle that starts when users follow a brand on social platforms, start interacting, feel satisfied and enraptured, become brand loyal and finally, brand advocates.

Customers who follow brands on social media only become fully engaged when the cycle suggested by Sashi (2012) is completed. Thus, Ramadan *et al.* (2018) suggest customers' level of brand engagement depends on their position within the cycle. Some luxury customers still value the process of touching and feeling products before purchasing them (Hennigs *et al.*, 2012). Brands should therefore use social media platforms to create vivid virtual brand experiences that create a different kind of allure (Huang *et al.*, 2018).

Taking the above into consideration, this study aims to understand how Omega uses Instagram to connect with its customers and immerse them in its brand story. As part of its brand building strategy, Omega uses Instagram to share its vivid narratives with followers on a platform that is conducive to storytelling and persuasion. The researcher selected Instagram as the primary data source for this study for a number of reasons: it has the highest engagement rate when compared to other similar platforms and is especially suited to posting images and videos. In general, brands also use Instagram to post mostly original content, as opposed to resharing older content. Instagram is therefore the ideal platform for visual storytelling (The European Business Review, 2021; Jackson, 2019; Ellis, 2018; Sharma, n.d.).

2.4 Transient Competitive Advantage

As traditional barriers to entry are continuously broken down, businesses are entering various industries at a rapid pace. In numerous markets around the globe, companies from different industries are competing for the same customers (Leavy, 2014):

Amazon Prime vs. Netflix for video streaming services; Apple vs. PayPal for Internet payments, Google vs. Tesla for self-driving vehicles. As globalisation and technical evolution pushes more businesses into new markets, the more their competencies will need to be restructured.

Traditionally, business strategy revolved around the identification and exploitation of a company's competitive advantage to extract the maximum benefit from its available resources. At the same time, companies benefit from a smaller pool of competitors that influence their business. For much of the 1960s and 1970s—when companies in India, China and the USSR were not trading outside of their borders—this strategy worked well for businesses operating in the United States. During this period, US-based companies were able to operate and conduct business largely uninhibited by outside competition. This allowed them to establish barriers to entry which enabled them to defend their competitive advantages and ultimately maximise their profits (see video blog: *The End of Competitive Advantage 2014* | Rita McGrath, 2018).

According to Karakaya (2002), these barriers to entry included the cost advantages that benefited the incumbent; the incumbent's established economies of scale; its product differentiation and the capital required by a new business to enter an existing market. During this period, businesses mainly competed on a national level and exploited their unique strengths without interference (Leavy, 2014). It was these stable, low-risk times that led Porter to establish the concepts of industry analysis, competitive positioning and periodic realignment (Porter, 1980; Porter 1996). The focus of this era was on creating sustainable competitive advantages, which Leavy (2014) refers to as a long cycle advantage, as companies could exploit these advantages for decades without any real threats to their businesses.

The companies that were successful over an extended period often didn't feel the need to innovate or challenge the ways in which they conducted business. They continued to invest in the same methods and maintained their advantages using traditional strategies. This type of thinking has led to the demise of numerous companies (Nokia, BlackBerry, Kodak) where executives tried to protect their archaic strategies even when the markets had moved on (McGrath, 2013a). Prof. Rita McGrath suggests that this traditional view of competitive advantage was dangerous,

as it caused firms to neglect the customer and rather focus their attention on the competition. These firms would focus on stability, rather than on change and dynamic reaction. They would stay fixated on their industry, rather than on the arenas in which they are competing for customer resources (see Rita McGrath: Want a competitive edge? Ignore stability, 2014).

The structures, systems and cultures established over the past few decades are simply not meeting the demands of global business (Kotter, 2014). Most companies still subscribe to the idea that creating a sustainable competitive advantage should be the core focus of their business strategy. Yet this strategy is becoming less relevant to a lot of organisations. To be successful in today's rapidly changing environment, business leaders should capitalise on *short-term* business opportunities immediately as they arise (McGrath, 2013b).

Central to McGrath's (2013a) book is the idea of continuous reconfiguration of the business – a process that enables a company to move from one competitive advantage to the next in an ongoing and fluid manner. Kotter (2014) suggests that today's well-established companies are driven towards increasing efficiency instead of focusing on implementing and managing strategic agility. Although this approach has served businesses well in the past, it is no longer serving companies in the rapidly developing business environment.

In light of this, McGrath (2013a) postulated the idea that companies should move away from the search for a competitive advantage and rather focus on creating Transient Competitive Advantages. A Transient Competitive Advantage refers to a phenomenon where businesses prioritise rapid innovation to create a pipeline of competitive advantages (Mar, 2013). Companies create Transient Competitive Advantages when they can seize and exploit opportunities as and when they arise.

Businesses can also create Transient Competitive Advantages by innovating and becoming a bellwether in their industries. Businesses that prioritise the exploitation or creation of Transient Competitive Advantages quickly move on to the next when their current opportunities have been exhausted. Due to hyper-competition, today's advantages often disappear in less than a year, and companies cannot invest time in

crafting strategies that will be outdated when implemented. The speed with which new opportunities are exploited is becoming crucial to the success of these businesses in today's globalised world (McGrath, 2013b).

As companies shift towards the exploitation of Transient Competitive Advantages, innovation becomes imperative. Companies need a process that enables them to launch new ideas frequently, and therefore, innovation should become a routine capability. To stay nimble and ahead, businesses should launch numerous initiatives and exploit several Transient Competitive Advantages at the same time (McGrath, 2013b). McGrath aims to fuse the disciplines of innovation, competitive strategy and change management to assist companies in creating and exploiting Transient Competitive Advantages whenever they arise. Traditionally, new technologies and product features helped businesses to create advantages, but these advantages are no longer sustainable in a highly competitive global environment (McGrath, 2013a).

Throughout its history, the Swiss watch industry has seen competitive advantages being built up and destroyed in dramatic fashion. Swiss watch brands' successes and failures, therefore, make the case for Swiss watch brands to establish Transient Competitive Advantages of their own. Switzerland is home to most of the world's largest, most successful and innovative luxury watch companies. For more than a century, watchmakers' competitive advantages were based on their skills and technological know-how (Landes, 1983). Scholars have identified four reasons for the sustained success of such a specialised industry in such a small country. Amongst these reasons, the most impactful and relevant to this study is product innovation (Donzé, 2018).

Urbanisation and industrialisation of the Western world led to the need for accurate time measurement, and the Swiss flourished for decades as the world's largest exporter of watches. Watches were also being worn as fashion accessories, and watch brands were competing for market share by catering to both the aesthetic and technical needs of different foreign markets. The ability to remain competitive was related to the brands' ability to create new mechanical innovations (Donzé, 2018).

Despite decades' worth of knowledge and insight, the Swiss brands' competitive advantages were nullified virtually overnight with the advent of the quartz crisis (Landes (1983). The world's first quartz watch—the gold-cased Astron from the Japanese brand Seiko, limited to 100 pieces—was launched on the 25th of December 1969. Although it was met with some scepticism at first, it set off a chain of events that changed the face of watchmaking for decades to come (Thompson, 2017a).

The quartz revolution was driven by the quartz watch which had a battery-powered movement and quartz oscillator to regulate its timekeeping (Thompson, 2017a). Quartz watches are generally considered to be much more accurate than mechanical watches and are sold at a considerably lower price point. However, since owning a mechanical watch is about celebrating the craftsmanship and authenticity (Margolis, 2014), mechanical watches are still considered more interesting and impressive works of mechanical achievement (Green, 2016).

Initially, the Swiss completely ignored the quartz trend, thinking it may be a fad. Seiko, a Japanese watch company founded in 1881 (Seiko, 2018) with a rich history in mechanical watchmaking, radically retooled its factories and retrained its staff to manufacture circuit boards, batteries and LCD panels (Thompson, 2017a). Seiko focused on preparing to automate its watchmaking process and invested in robots to achieve high-volume production facilities.

The quartz 'fad' endured, and by 1977, Seiko was the largest watch company in the world based on revenue, with the American watch brand, Timex, in second place (Thompson, 2017a). The Swiss reluctantly—and at great cost—started to shift production towards quartz watches in the hopes of catching up with the rest of the world, but were unable to reach mass production (Donzé, 2018). Seiko created its own Transient Competitive Advantage when it created the first quartz watch.

The launch of quartz watches effectively ended the centuries-long dominance of the Swiss in the global watch market. As a result, various new watch technologies and innovations were implemented by numerous watch brands throughout the 1970s and 1980s. This process created Transient Competitive Advantages for these brands as it enabled them to take advantage of broader cultural trends which eschewed the

traditional in favour of the futuristic. Electronic technology ushered in a new product life cycle for watches in a time when mechanical watch technology was perceived as outdated (Donzé, 2018).

During the 1970s, the rise of quartz watches massively impacted upon the success of the Swiss watch brands, with watch companies from Japan and Hong Kong flooding the global market with cheap timepieces (Donzé, 2018). A large number of Swiss watch brands—Cortébert, Enicar, Lemania, Nivada to name a few—closed their doors for good (Connor, 2019). However, during the 1990s, Swiss mechanical watches made a major comeback on the global scale thanks in large part due to product innovation – something the industry prided itself on centuries before (Donzé, 2018).

This comeback enabled brands to take advantage of a broader cultural trend toward handmade, artisanal products once again. Jeannerat and Crevoisier (2011) suggest that the Swiss brands started using watchmaking culture as a resource and began to implement new marketing strategies aimed at creating desirable product narrations of their mechanical watches. They adopted a brand leadership approach, which focused on predominantly marketing-related innovation and started to shift the positioning of mechanical Swiss watches towards the luxury market. Together with this repositioning towards the luxury market, Omega also focused on technical innovations in materials, manufacturing and watchmaking prowess. The success of the Co-Axial escapement is an example of these endeavours (Omega, 2020b; Thompson, 2017b).

The evolution of the Swiss luxury watch industry was partly driven by the shift away from industrial districts (independent manufacturers and craftsmen making watch components) towards multinational enterprises. Throughout its lifecycle, the unique capabilities of a company go through many evolutionary stages. During this process, these companies seek vertical integration and reduce costs whilst increasing profit in their value chains (Jacobides & Winter, 2005: 395). By strategically concentrating production in Switzerland, whilst relocating other units abroad through foreign direct investment and independent suppliers, Swiss companies were able to control their costs whilst becoming better equipped to compete against the Japanese watch brands (Donzé, 2018). Thanks to The Swatch Group's integrated manufacturing facilities and the sheer number of its brands, the company continued to innovate and challenge the

norms prevalent at the time, whilst maintaining efficiency in its supply chain (Alt, Österle, Reichmayr & Zurmühlen, 1999).

In the recent past, Omega in particular has been at the forefront of seizing opportunities as and when they arise. The case of Omega and George Daniels' joint development of the Co-Axial movement, and the subsequent implementation in most of its mechanical watches, shows that the drive towards innovation is based on the brand's core messages of innovation, technical excellence and tradition of craftsmanship (Thompson, 2017b). This refocusing led to the creation of Transient Competitive Advantages in other areas as well. Being able to adapt the newest technologies, the brand launched the 2019 Seamaster Aqua Terra "Ultra Light" mechanical sports watch that weighs only 55 grams. It also created a successful short-term brand partnership with Fratello Watches, which resulted in the two collectable Speedmaster "Speedy Tuesday" watches.

Omega remain at the forefront of market innovation by initially selling the Speedmaster "Speedy Tuesday" watches through its website before formally launching its e-commerce store in numerous markets. At the same time the brand is also selling its watches online through established e-commerce store, Hodinkee. Omega further capitalises on existing brand partnerships with the likes of the James Bond franchise and the Olympic Games, releasing limited-edition watches that perfectly complement the relationship with both these parties.

Omega's production department has been able to use numerous innovations in design, materials and processes to ensure that its watches are always at the cutting edge of product innovation. Its marketing department has also perfected the ability to capitalise on every themed watch release, brand collaboration, launch strategy and brand building exercise it enters into. This relentless focus on innovation and adaptability in all spheres of the business forms the cornerstone of the Omega brand's ethos and is in itself a Transient Competitive Advantage.

The Swiss watch industry as a whole has also created a Transient Competitive Advantage over its Japanese, Chinese, American and other European competitors by radically changing how it communicates information about its products to its

customers. Since 2000, numerous Swiss brands have significantly increased their research and development activities and focused on innovation in new materials and mechanisms, driven mainly by their marketing strategies (Donzé, 2018).

The Swiss watch industry has experienced a number of disruptions throughout its long and storied history. Today's successful luxury watchmakers are mostly niche-oriented firms that market their products based on their luxury attributes, technological advancements and brand differentiation (Anwar, 2012). Swiss watch brands have also been able to maintain their competitive edge by reinforcing their stringent quality standards, driving their value chain efficiencies and increasing the quality of their distribution networks (Buchanan, 2009). The Swiss brands' strategy of promoting luxury, technology and differentiation, worked. By 2010, 71.9% of the value of all watch exports from Switzerland could be attributed to mechanical watches, and by 2016, that figure increased to 80% (Donzé, 2018; Thompson, 2017b). In 2021, the Swiss watch industry had their strongest year, exporting more watches by value than ever before (Forster, 2022).

The innovation that led to this resurgence in the popularity of mechanical watches was not derived from product innovations alone—as was the case decades before—but also from a branding perspective, which changed how these watches were being portrayed and perceived by the market. This natural progression in strategy shows that the Swiss watch industry of today is nimble and ready to adapt. This study will therefore investigate how Omega creates Transient Competitive Advantages on Instagram by constantly adapting its branding strategies based on where opportunities arise.

2.4.1 Brand agility

In recent years, digital transformation, new marketing channels and the availability of vast amounts of consumer data has impacted how marketing professionals conduct their business (Kalaiganam *et al.*, 2021). In turn, the ways in which consumers interact with brands have changed (Swaminathan, Sorescu, Steenkamp, O'Guinn & Schmitt, 2020). The COVID-19 pandemic has further exacerbated these challenges (Kalaiganam *et al.*, 2021), which led some analysts to call for a complete reshuffle of

marketing models to compensate for such disruptions (Boudet, Gordon, Gregg, Perrey & Robinson, 2020). This phenomenon underscores the importance of creating Transient Competitive Advantages, which allow businesses to adapt or pivot their strategies.

In response to these tumultuous operating conditions, Kalaighnam *et al.* (2021) found that a company's marketing activities should be agile. Marketing agility refers to the idea that a business should move quickly between understanding where the market is headed, and executing marketing strategies to adapt to these market changes. The authors postulate that marketing agility requires four key concepts: sensemaking, iteration, speed and marketing decisions.

However, in striving to create marketing strategies that are agile, marketers should consider brand image consistency. Consistency is necessary to maintain existing brand associations in the minds of consumers. Distorted brand associations, brought about through constant experimentation with marketing strategies, could potentially erode brand meaning in the eyes of consumers. Although these strategies could help differentiate a brand, it could also dilute the meaning and relevance of a brand (Kalaighnam *et al.*, 2021).

Niessing and Aaker (2015) found that the pressure to focus on agile marketing instead of on the brand's core values is a difficult balancing act for brand custodians, as agile marketing actions could hurt the meaning of a brand. As previously mentioned, it is vital to create consistency in how a brand's identity is portrayed. In 2015, Landor (2015), a leading brand consultancy firm, released an important report on brand agility. The report, titled *The Agility Paradox*, found that the world's strongest brands share a set of two contradictory dimensions: "leading" and "true".

"Leading" refers to the activities and attributes that make a brand unique and act as a differentiator for a brand. This includes acts of changing business strategy, adopting new branding strategies or creating new product lines to capitalise on changes in the market. Brands who possess this characteristic are often up to date and visionary. In contrast, "true" encompasses a consistency in brand strategy and includes the attributes of authenticity and striving towards being the best. "True" includes drivers of

relevance that make a brand useful for consumers while remaining true to its core brand identity.

Landor's (2015) report found that brands who possess both of these characteristics often occupy the leadership position in their category. The combination of these dimensions has also been a powerful predictor of brand strength over the last several years, allowing these brands to be fast-moving and able to adapt while remaining true to their core tenets. Successful brands navigate this tension between striving for change and ensuring continuity. These brands embrace the agility paradox in order to remain leaders in their categories.

Successful companies are able to balance the paradox of agile marketing and a consistent brand identity in the creation of an agile brand. Aaker (2016) refers to brand agile firms as those that can detect significant changes in the marketplace and respond to them quickly and strategically. Omega is a wonderful example of a brand agile firm. The brand consistently pre-empted and detects changes in the luxury watch industry and adapts accordingly.

The Omega brand encompasses both "leading" and "true" dimensions: "leading", since it is at the forefront of innovation and technical expertise; "true", since it is authentically aligned with its heritage, positioning and brand promise. In the case of Omega, the dimensions work together to position the brand as an agile leader brand that can seamlessly move from one Transient Competitive Advantage to the next, while still remaining true to its core values. An example of how Omega transcended and responded to the agility paradox will be discussed in chapter five.

2.5 Conceptual framework

The researcher created a conceptual framework to demonstrate the strong dynamic between the most important aspects of the theoretical framework. In creating this conceptual framework (figure 2.8), the researcher considered all theories and sources from the literature review as suggested by the first research question. This question centred on exploring the key concepts and constructs in the existing brand literature that will yield greater insight into how Omega utilises Instagram to create brand

advocacy. The researcher subsequently selected those elements most appropriate for answering the research purpose and the remaining three research questions. It is important to note that this conceptual framework only serves as a visual representation of the guideline the researcher used to interpret the findings in the fifth chapter.

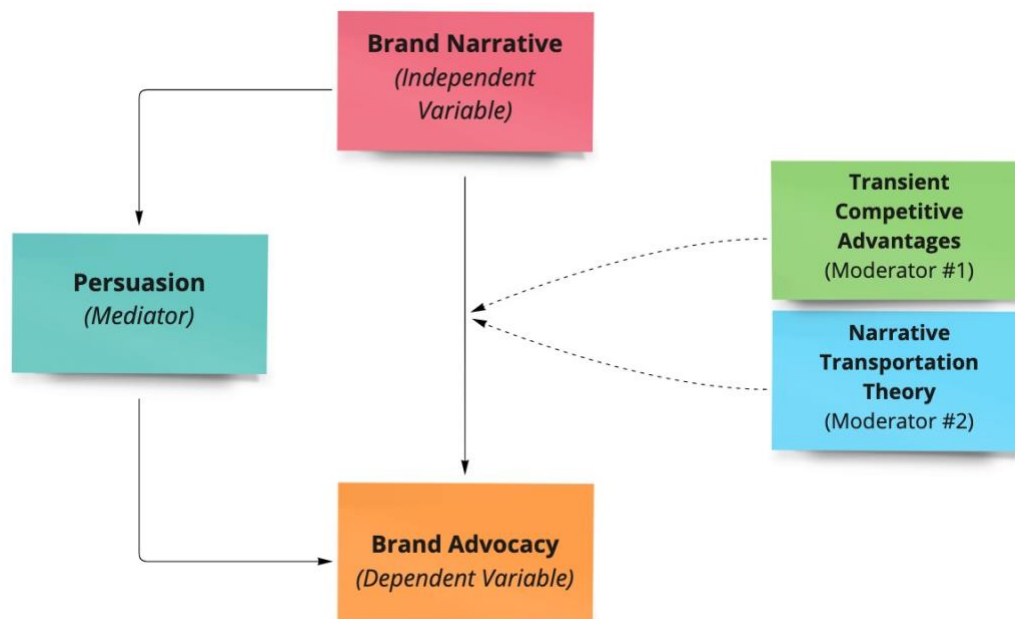


Figure 2.8: Conceptual framework

Although similar in appearance to that of a framework used in a quantitative research study, this conceptual framework serves only as a mind map of how an Omega brand strategist could reason when devising a content strategy for the brand's Instagram profile. This framework therefore allows for clarity and focus when qualitatively interpreting the research findings in chapter five.

2.5.1 Dependent and independent variables

As shown in figure 2.8, the conceptual framework serves as a visual representation of the relationship between the variables that are relevant to this study. The researcher is exploring Omega's creation of brand advocacy through the use of storytelling on Instagram. The researcher identified *brand advocacy* as the dependent variable and *brand narrative* as the independent variable. In this relationship, brand advocacy is therefore dependent on brand narrative that is shared through immersive stories.

Without brand narrative, brand advocacy cannot be created.

2.5.2 Mediating variable

In this framework, persuasion is a mediating variable. Persuasion links the dependent variable, brand advocacy, with the independent variable, brand stories. These links help to better explain the relationship between these variables. In this instance, persuasion affects the dependent variable, brand advocacy: the more persuasion occurs, the more brand advocacy is created. The mediator, persuasion, therefore explains why brand stories lead to brand advocacy and strengthens the relationship that exists between the dependent and independent variables.

Since several studies have already proven that storytelling can lead to persuasion (Van Laer *et al.*, 2019; Huang *et al.*, 2018; Kim *et al.*, 2016; Van Laer *et al.*, 2014; Appel & Richter, 2007; Green & Brock, 2002), the researcher did not set out to prove this relationship again. Instead, in the context of this study, the researcher works from the premise that Omega's content does in fact persuade its followers. The researcher therefore investigates how the brand persuades its followers through the content it shares on Instagram.

2.5.3 Moderating variables

In the conceptual framework, the researcher added two moderating variables. Transient Competitive Advantages serve as the first moderator, followed by Narrative Transportation Theory. A moderating variable influences the effect an independent variable has on a dependent variable. In this instance, brand stories can possibly lead to brand advocacy. Transient Competitive Advantages affect the relationship between brand stories and brand advocacy by influencing the type of brand stories shared. These types of advantages are unique strategic advantages the brand uses to inform its brand building activities on Instagram. They allow Omega to create unique and purposeful content with the intention to inform and persuade its followers. Therefore, Transient Competitive Advantages have a moderating effect on the creation of brand advocacy.

The second moderating variable is Narrative Transportation Theory. Once Narrative Transportation Theory is added, the influence that brand stories can have on brand advocacy increases. This is because Narrative Transportation Theory dictates how brands can go about persuading their followers. By incorporating this theory into the brand's Instagram activities, Omega's brand stories can have a more significant influence on the creation of brand advocacy.

2.5.4 Application of the conceptual framework

The conceptual framework was created in response to the first research question and will assist the researcher in applying the appropriate theoretical lens when interpreting the findings in chapter five. This framework, consisting of dependent, independent, mediating and moderating variables, will subsequently be used to answer the three remaining research questions pertaining to Omega's digital brand building activities in chapter five. The answers to these research questions will then allow the researcher to explore how exactly Omega creates brand advocacy on Instagram by analysing its strategic brand initiatives through the lenses of Transient Competitive Advantage and Narrative Transportation Theory.

2.6 Conclusion

The purpose of this research is to understand how Omega creates brand advocacy through its brand building activities on Instagram. In order to explore the research purpose, the researcher completed a thorough literature review on a variety of topics. The research was conducted from a brand strategist's point of view, which served as a limitation that dictated the direction the research could take. The literature review is an important research tool that enabled the researcher to answer the first research question, namely exploring which key concepts and constructs in the existing brand literature revealed significant insight into how Omega utilises Instagram to create brand advocacy. It is also crucial to the research purpose, which is that of analysing such strategic brand initiatives through the lenses of Transient Competitive Advantage and Narrative Transportation Theory.

As a luxury brand, Omega operates in an industry that is characterised by complexity. The researcher therefore needed to consider a wide range of sources which covered topics such as luxury goods marketing; product rarity and scarcity; information gathering; the Internet; social media and customer engagement; storytelling theories and business strategy. In order to aid the researcher with the research process, a theoretical framework was created that integrated all the theories, elements and concepts identified in the research that are relevant to this study. The theoretical framework illustrates how Omega's brand activities are combined to create brand advocacy, which ultimately culminates in the attainment of a brand leadership position.

In the literature review the researcher established that, in order for Omega to successfully compete with other luxury watch brands, the brand has to differentiate itself successfully. The ability to create the perception of value that can then be used to influence consumers and differentiate the brand is especially important within the luxury watch industry. To do so, a set of strong brand associations related to exclusivity and desirability needs to be established, which constitutes the brand's identity (Keller, 1998; Aaker, 1996: 68). The research shows that brand identity forms the basis of the brand leadership model Omega adopted. The brand maintains its unique brand identity through the use of relevant storytelling elements, themes and media types on Instagram, as analysed through Aaker's (1996: 79) Brand Identity model.

In the literature review, the difference between the concepts of brand differentiation, distinctiveness and uniqueness is explored. The researcher concludes that brand differentiation refers to all the activities the brand engages in to identify itself in relation to its competitors (Hem, 2019). Considering that Omega is positioned within the luxury watch industry, the brand's customers are willing to pay significant amounts of money for these aspirational luxury watches (Hennigs, Wiedmann & Klarmann, 2012; Okonkwo, 2009). The "dream value" (Dubois & Paternault, 1995) surrounding these watches are often related to intangible elements such as tradition, history, heritage and origin, and are important driving forces behind the appeal of these luxury timepieces.

The research also shows that rarity and Veblen goods are important concepts that influence how Omega watches are perceived in the market. Certain Omega watches that are manufactured as part of limited-editions are rare, which subsequently leads to a scenario where these pieces can be classified as Veblen goods – a phenomenon where customers are willing to pay more for a product that has similar functionality to that of a cheaper product (Bazemore, 2019; Mischuk, 2019; Corder, 2019; Veblen, 1899, cited in Bagwell & Bernheim, 2001).

For this research, the researcher analyses Omega's narrative-driven content strategies employed on Instagram through the lens of Narrative Transportation Theory – a type of customer engagement that results in narrative persuasion. Narrative Transportation Theory explains how narratives are actively co-created in the minds of story receivers (Van Laer *et al.*, 2019, 2014; Chronis, 2008) through the use of brand characters, visuals and a variety of other cues. This process helps customers strengthen their social identities and influences their consumption experience (Bahl & Milne, 2010; Holt, 1995).

The researcher also explores the ways in which Omega uses its Transient Competitive Advantages to communicate its unique brand identity to its followers on Instagram. These types of advantages can occur when businesses prioritise rapid innovation to create a pipeline of competitive advantages as and when they arise. Transient Competitive Advantages are often fleeting and need to be seized quickly in order to extract their maximum benefit (Mar, 2013). The literature review explains how these advantages come to be and how the brand uses them to stay nimble and agile in the way it communicates.

At the core of this chapter is the idea that Omega uses Instagram to facilitate an emotional engagement between its brand, its content and the consumer by using Transient Competitive Advantages as content inspiration and Narrative Transportation Theory as a communication strategy. This engagement between content and consumer enables the brand to capture its followers' attention both emotionally and psychologically to the extent that persuasion can occur and followers are converted into brand advocates. The research shows that brand advocacy occurs when

customers actively promote, support or recommend a specific brand (Munnukka *et al.*, 2014; Stokburger-Sauer *et al.*, 2012; Liang & Zhang, 2012; Bagozzi & Dholakia, 2006).

Since Omega builds brand advocacy on Instagram, the concept of online brand advocacy is vital to this study. As a multidimensional construct, online brand advocacy features cognitive, affective and virtual visual cues dimensions, and is executed on digital platforms where it can reach a global audience on a permanent basis (Wilk *et al.*, 2019). The research has shown that brand advocacy leads to the creation of enhanced customer-brand relationships which results in the creation of brand loyalty (Malär, Krohmer, Hoyer & Nyffenegger, 2011; Park *et al.*, 2010; Lawer & Knox, 2006). The literature review also shows that a circular relationship exists between brand loyalty and online brand advocacy. This finding serves as one of the reasons why Omega's brand building activities on Instagram are vitally important (Wilk *et al.*, 2021).

The literature review has indicated that digital channels and brand building strategies are indeed the way forward for luxury watch brands. The researcher identified a clear gap in the research on how luxury brands can use social media channels, and specifically Instagram, to build their brands. Given this gap, the researcher will explore how Omega creates brand advocacy on Instagram by analysing the brand's strategic brand initiatives through the lenses of Transient Competitive Advantage and Narrative Transportation Theory. The methodology selected for this study will be discussed in the next chapter where the researcher explains the choices made regarding the research approach, design and method.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter will explain the research methods used to explore Omega's brand building initiatives on Instagram. The researcher will discuss the sampling procedures, data collection method, data analysis process and the ethical considerations that are relevant to this study. The research design will introduce the research approach, research paradigm, the research type and research procedure relevant to this study.

3.2 Research design

The purpose of this study is to understand how Omega creates brand advocacy on Instagram by analysing its strategic brand initiatives through the lenses of Transient Competitive Advantage and Narrative Transportation Theory. A thorough literature review answers the first research question: which key concepts and constructs in the existing brand literature will yield greater insight into how Omega utilises Instagram to create brand advocacy? The researcher then set out to answer three additional research questions pertaining to Omega's digital brand building activities. The second research question is: which storytelling elements, themes and media types does Omega employ when sharing content with its followers on Instagram? Thirdly, how does Omega employ Narrative Transportation Theory in its storytelling activities on Instagram to elicit possible brand advocacy? And finally, how does Omega use Transient Competitive Advantage on Instagram to elicit possible brand advocacy? An exploratory qualitative case study that follows an interpretivist paradigm is the most appropriate approach to answer the research questions. The researcher worked inductively when conducting qualitative content- and counts analysis of a full year's worth of Omega's Instagram posts (Myers, 2008). The data analysis process and findings are discussed in chapter four and interpreted in chapter five by integrating the theoretical and conceptual frameworks to reach conclusions and possible implications for both academia and the industry. Figure 3.1 represents the research design.

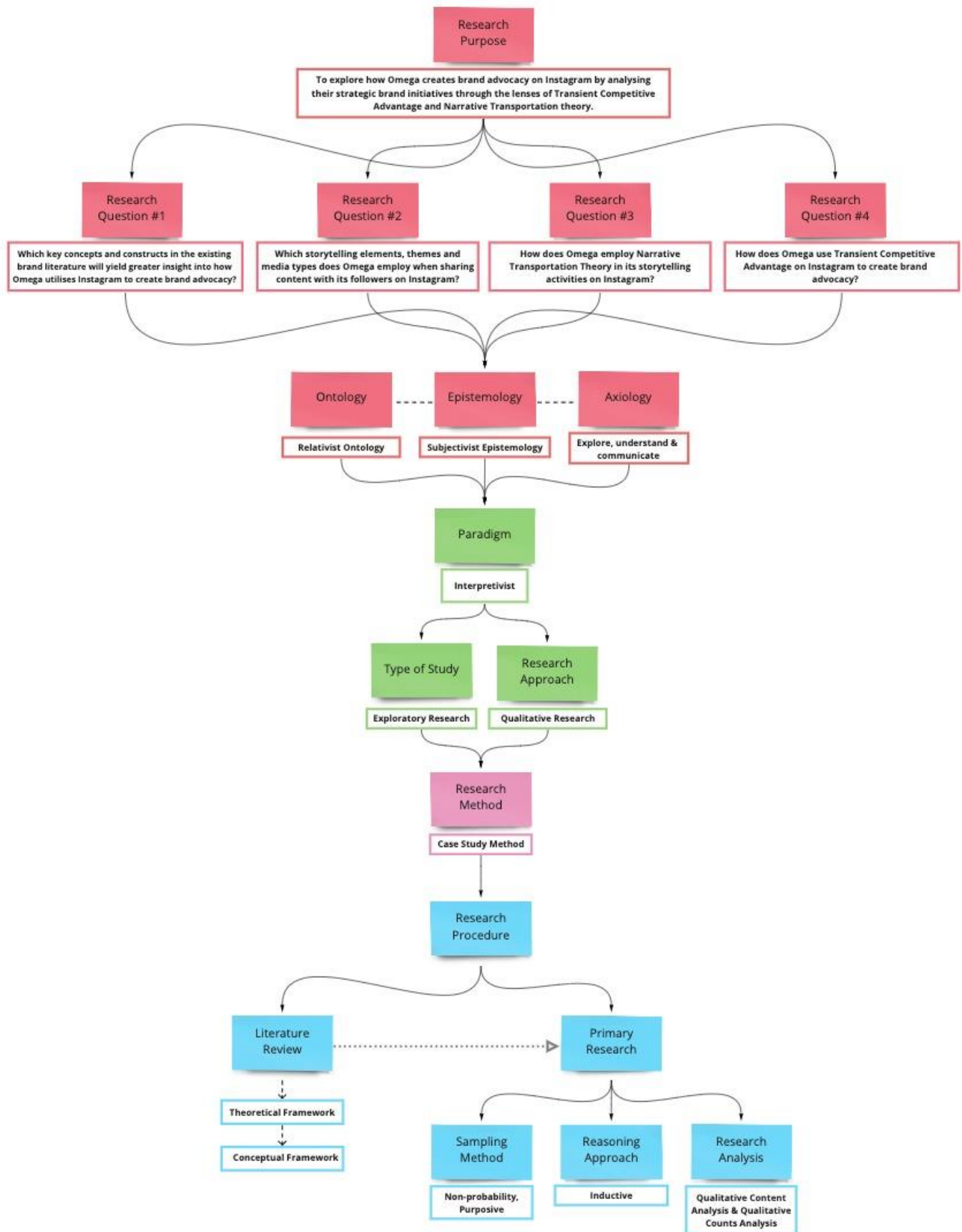


Figure 3.1: A visual representation of the research design

To enable the researcher to understand how Omega creates brand advocacy on Instagram, the research design aims to guide the researcher to conduct the most accurate and insightful research possible. The following section analyses each step of the research process as illustrated in figure 3.1 above.

3.2.1 Research purpose

After a substantial body of literature was explored to address the first research question, it emerged that although many luxury brands understand the need for using Instagram as a brand building channel, there is not sufficient literature available that explains *how* luxury watch brands successfully utilise this platform. Considering the work of Oliveira and Fernandes (2020), the researcher aspired to bridge this research gap. The researcher also paid close attention to the work of Wilk *et al.* (2021) on the interrelated nature of brand loyalty, online brand advocacy and purchase intent, which further supported his desire to understand how luxury watch brands can create brand advocacy through their strategic brand initiatives on Instagram.

Considering the link between online brand advocacy and purchase intent (which will result in financial benefits for brands) as identified in the research of Wilk *et al.* (2021), this research would be of particular importance to luxury watch brands. Given the context in which luxury watch brands are currently operating—as discussed in chapter one—the researcher identified the need for a framework that will assist luxury watch brands to purposefully use digital channels to successfully build their brands.

The purpose statement was formulated in order to explore how luxury watch brands can increase brand advocacy online. The research goal highlights the approach the research will take (exploratory); the phenomenon under investigation (strategic brand initiatives); the desired outcome (brand advocacy) and the theoretical lenses from which these initiatives will be analysed (Transient Competitive Advantage and Narrative Transportation Theory). The research purpose reads as follows:

The aim of the research is to explore how Omega creates brand advocacy on Instagram by analysing its strategic brand initiatives through the lenses of Transient Competitive Advantage and Narrative Transportation Theory.

Omega has been utilising Instagram as a brand building channel for several years, along with several other luxury watch brands. However, the researcher selected the Omega brand for this study because of its masterful application of storytelling as a strategic brand initiative, as well as its ability to exploit its Transient Competitive Advantage in its online branding. The 2019 calendar year celebrated the 50th anniversary of NASA's moon landing – an achievement in which Omega played an integral part. This meant that the brand's 2019 Instagram calendar would be filled with rich and engaging stories about one of mankind's most daring achievements. Given Omega's propensity for telling immersive stories, along with a momentous anniversary, Omega's 2019 Instagram activities created the perfect case study on the successful use of digital brand building platforms.

Furthermore, one of the most important findings identified in the literature review was that online brand building activities—when executed well—lead to brand followers becoming online brand advocates. Online brand advocates exhibit extra-role behaviours by sharing in-depth knowledge of a brand with their followers online (Wilk *et al.*, 2021). These behaviours can lead to the creation of brand loyalty, which in turn, results in repeat purchases and increased profits for the brand (Aaker, 2002: 21). As such, the researcher concluded that the creation of online brand advocacy is key to Omega's strategy of maintaining a brand leadership position. This research is conducted from a brand strategist's point of view, and not from the consumer's point of view.

3.2.2 Research questions

Question one:

Which key concepts and constructs in the existing brand literature will yield greater insight into how Omega utilises Instagram to create brand advocacy?

With the first research question, the researcher wished to understand which key concepts and constructs in existing brand literature will give greater insight into how Omega utilises Instagram to create brand advocacy. During this process, the

researcher identified a lack of sufficient literature specifically explaining how luxury watch brands could utilise Instagram as a brand building platform. Considering this gap, the second research question was aimed at understanding *how* Omega creates and shares content to Instagram. This research question specifies the types of brand strategy techniques the researcher should analyse on Omega's Instagram profile.

Question two:

Which storytelling elements, themes and media types does Omega employ when sharing content with its followers on Instagram that may elicit brand advocacy?

The third and fourth research questions expanded on the second by explicitly focusing on how both storytelling and Transient Competitive Advantage are utilised to create brand advocacy on Instagram. "How" was included when phrasing these questions to explore what inspired the brand to create its content.

Question three:

How does Omega employ Narrative Transportation Theory in its storytelling activities on Instagram to elicit possible brand advocacy?

Question four:

How does Omega use Transient Competitive Advantage on Instagram to elicit possible brand advocacy?

The *which* and *how* questions provided the researcher with the ability to qualitatively explore the brand building activities of Omega. This enables the researcher to gain in-depth knowledge about a phenomenon that is increasingly important in the luxury watch industry today: to understand how to create brand advocacy on Instagram. The choice of a research paradigm is a critical step in the research design process as it dictates which research techniques and methods the researcher will follow. To assist the researcher in selecting the appropriate research paradigm, he selected the most suitable ontological, epistemological and axiological perspectives.

3.2.3 Ontology: relativist

Ontology, also referred to as the study of *being*, (Denzin & Lincoln 2000; Crotty, 1998: 10) enables researchers to understand the nature or the truth of their research objects. Lincoln and Guba (2000) refer to ontology as the study of the thinking that exists around the nature of reality. The researcher agrees with Moon and Blackman (2017) that multiple realities exist, and that reality is constructed within the human mind. Denzin and Lincoln (2005) also postulate that reality is a subjective experience. Considering that human experience shapes reality, the researcher adopted a relativist ontological stance for this study as it allows researchers to construct their own interpretation of reality whilst analysing the research data (Levers, 2013).

According to Wright *et al.* (2016: 1), the researcher's worldview, as well as the philosophical perspectives required by the study, should be defined before the researcher starts the research process. In doing so, the lenses with which the researcher views reality, and in turn the data, are identified. The Instagram posts are interpreted from a brand strategist's perspective as opposed to a consumer's perspective. These posts were also analysed from the researcher's personal point of view while acknowledging the research approach appropriate to this study. Therefore, the coding map the researcher used to curb this relativism is important. The researcher was acutely aware of personal bias and subjective interpretation when conducting the research.

3.2.4 Epistemology: subjectivist

Epistemology is closely related to ontology and is known as the study of *knowing*; of beliefs regarding the origin and acquisition of new forms of knowledge (Hofer, 2004; Denzin & Lincoln, 2000). This theory of knowledge is concerned with understanding how phenomena are uncovered to produce valid information (Hiller, 2016; Giacomini, 2010: 131).

Epistemology is also referred to as the study or theory of knowledge that focuses on

all aspects of collecting and interpreting data. Epistemology explains how and where researchers conduct their research (Moon & Blackman, 2017). Hiller (2016) summarises epistemology as the process of addressing “how we come to know that which we believe we know”.

While ontology refers to what information can be acquired, epistemology refers to the approach that can be used to acquire this information (Hiller, 2016). As this was an exploratory case study, the researcher followed an in-depth, subjectivist epistemology. This allowed the researcher to gain a thorough understanding of the research goal.

A more specific and detailed description of procedures used during data gathering and analysis, as well as the interpretation, will follow later in the next two chapters. The decision to analyse a years’ worth of Instagram posts using qualitative content analysis and qualitative counts analysis was made to understand how Omega’s brand strategy is executed on Instagram.

3.2.5 Axiology: to explore, understand and communicate

Axiology, also referred to as the study of the nature of value, combines the elements of ethics and aesthetics to understand what the researcher values in the research. Denzin and Lincoln (2000) suggest that, in relation to the researcher’s ontology (*being*) and epistemology (*knowing*), axiology is the assumption of *acting* within the context of a research study. Hiller (2016) states that axiology refers to the values the researcher brings to the research. Working from the interpretivist paradigm, the aim of the research is to explore, understand and then relay the data in a way that underscores the research objective (Deane, 2018).

The work of Neuman (1997) shows that the axiological perspective is concerned with illustrating the level of consistency and reliability of knowledge, or the reconstruction or extensions of existing theories and constructions. As discussed, the relativist, subjective and exploratory nature of this case study pointed towards an interpretivist paradigm as the only appropriate option for this research.

3.2.6 Paradigm: interpretivist

A research paradigm constitutes a certain set of beliefs that define the nature of the researcher's worldview (Aliyu, Singhry, Adamu & Abubakar, 2015). Within the context of academic research, paradigms can be described as a combination of values, beliefs, attitudes, procedures and techniques that together create frameworks researchers can use to formulate theoretical explanations when conducting research (Trochim & Donnelly, 2006). The context in which research is conducted influences the way in which the data can be interpreted: research paradigms play an important role in stipulating how the research process unfolds. Most research paradigms emerge from positivism (a quantitative approach), interpretivism (a qualitative approach) or pragmatism (a mixed method approach) (Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017).

Abel (1948) and Rudner (1966) suggest that interpretivism is an interactive process of empathic identification, where researchers allow themselves to understand the psychological state of the stakeholders being researched (Omega's brand strategists in this case) to uncover their methods and motivations. Researchers that work within the interpretivist paradigm understand that experiences shape a person's perspective (Cohen & Manion, 1994: 36), and through their actions, people play their part in influencing the fabric of society (McQueen, 2002:54).

As previously mentioned, interpretivist researchers take multiple perspectives into consideration when making sense of their gathered data (Thanh & Thanh, 2015). Being mindful of the characteristics of the interpretivist paradigm allowed the researcher to interpret the data in a meaningful way. The researcher envisaged the Omega brand strategists' motivations and actions to understand their choices of posts on Instagram as part of their overall online branding strategy. In the context of this study, the interpretivist paradigm gave the researcher the freedom to use the conceptual framework when explaining how Omega has taken on a brand leadership role through its online brand building activities (Willis, 2007). The interpretivist paradigm was therefore the most appropriate choice as it allows researchers to identify differing perspectives and uncover multiple versions of the truth (Willis, 2007: 4).

The researcher worked with a relativistic ontology, a subjectivist epistemology and an axiology focused on exploring, understanding and communicating the data gathered through this research. These concepts necessitated the selection of the interpretivist paradigm to best explore the research purpose and meet the research objective. Next, the researcher selected the type of study that would best combine all of these concepts in order to finalise an appropriate research approach.

3.2.7 Type of study: exploratory research

Three types of research exist: exploratory, descriptive and explanatory. Exploratory research is typically conducted when not a lot of information on a specific topic exists. This research type is used to understand the variables at play in a specific research field. Descriptive research, in turn, is used when the researcher needs to define a specific phenomenon. This type of research is conducted when the researcher wants to properly articulate a situation, an event or an occurrence. The third research type, explanatory research, is used when the researcher wants to explain a specific topic by asking “why”. This type of research helps the researcher to identify the reason why a phenomenon is explored (Decarlo, 2018).

Even though numerous studies have been conducted on Narrative Transportation Theory and storytelling in various luxury contexts (Van Laer *et al.*, 2019; Ryu *et. al*, 2019; Ok, 2018; Huang, Ha & Kim, 2018; Kim, Lloyd & Cervellon, 2016), none of them have specifically addressed the issue of brand advocacy in the luxury watch industry. Huang, Ha and Kim’s (2018) study was the first to validate the extended transportation-imagery model that Van Laer *et al.* (2014) created within the context of luxury brands’ advertising on social media platforms. Their study also provided insight into how luxury brands persuade consumers through social media platforms. Research by Huang *et al.* (2018) was therefore particularly important for laying the groundwork for this study.

The phenomenon under investigation—the ways in which Omega uses Transient Competitive Advantage and storytelling as a tool for creating brand advocacy— has not been investigated before. The researcher could not use descriptive research to describe the phenomenon, or explanatory research to explain the phenomenon.

Therefore, a benchmark study is necessary.

The research questions were aimed at investigating and understanding a specific phenomenon. Given this fact, exploratory research was the ideal research type, as it would aid the researcher in discovering insights and shed light on Omega's brand building activities – an outcome that would not have been possible using either descriptive or explanatory research types.

3.2.8 Research approach: qualitative research

A qualitative research approach was necessary to measure phenomena that include strategies, approaches, messages and techniques pursued by Omega when posting to Instagram. The qualitative research approach was ideal for this study, since qualitative research—in contrast to quantitative research—emphasises the qualities of entities, processes and meanings that cannot be measured simply in terms of quantity, amount, intensity or frequency (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005:10).

In contrast to qualitative research, quantitative research can define variables in isolation before the data is collected. Quantitative research methods are most appropriate when data is necessary to answer a specific research question; when variables can be defined in isolation; or when variables can form hypotheses before data is collected (Streefkerk, 2022). However, to answer this case study's research questions, qualitative research was the best choice.

Qualitative research is an interactive process where the scientific community achieves improved understanding of a topic by discovering compelling insights resulting from increased closeness to the phenomena under investigation (Streefkerk, 2022; Aspers & Corte, 2019). To reiterate, this specific study was conducted from the brand strategist point of view, not from the consumer's point of view. The researcher's in-depth focus on the Instagram data Omega posted in 2019 enabled the researcher to discover noteworthy insights.

This ability to get close to the data in such a way that significant distinctions can be made, makes qualitative research ideally suited when researching a multi-faceted

case such as a luxury watch brand's online presence. As illustrated in the conceptual framework in the previous chapter, the interpretation of richly layered data was the most important criteria used to understand how variables are interconnected.

The researcher therefore had to systematically collect the data, after which the researcher had to organise, describe and interpret textual and visual data. These steps were based on the researcher's unique research perspective, as formed by the theoretical framework and brand strategist point of view. Due to these very specific requirements, a research method that allowed for flexibility and academic rigour was necessary, such as the qualitative research approach (Hammarberg, Kirkman & de Lacey, 2016).

The next step was to consider different research methods to select the appropriate option that would best suit this specific research goal. There are many kinds of qualitative research methods: naturalism; ethnomethodology; grounded theory; case studies and the extended case method; ethnography action research; narrative analysis and discourse analysis (Köhler, Smith & Bhakoo, 2022; Babbie, 2010). However, the case study method was the most appropriate choice for this study.

3.2.9 Research method: case study method

As a research method, case studies are effective when researchers want to investigate and understand complex issues as they occur in the real world (Crowe, Cresswell, Robertson, Huby, Avery & Sheikh, 2011). Baxter and Jack (2008) describe qualitative case studies as research methodologies that enable researchers to explore a phenomenon in a particular context through a variety of data sources. This research method enables researchers to use several different lenses through which to explore the phenomenon, revealing multiple facets of the phenomenon in the process.

Merriam Webster (2022) defines a case study as an analysis of a single unit—the Omega brand's activities on Instagram in this instance—and the developmental factors that influence this unit in relation to the environment. In the context of this study, the developmental factors are the ways in which Omega's brand associations are built to create brand advocacy. The definition further states that a case study is a

report that focuses on a person, group or situation which has been analysed over a period – in this instance, one years' worth of Omega's Instagram posts. Lexico (2022c) adds to the Merriam Webster definition by suggesting that a case study is an instance of analysis in order to illustrate a principle. The researcher aimed to better understand the meaning of Omega's Instagram messaging by conducting an in-depth analysis of this specific "case" (Green & Thorogood, 2009:284).

Case studies can explain, explore and describe phenomena as and when they occur by enabling researchers to answer important *how*, *what* and *why* questions as they pertain to the research (Yin, 2009). Since this research features an in-depth analysis of the data collected from every post Omega made to its Instagram profile over a one-year period (a case), the researcher was able to answer the *how* and *which* questions he set out to investigate. This focus on the "how" is particularly important when selecting a research method, as case studies can also focus on improving a specific body of knowledge within specific domains (Stufflebeam *et al.*, 2000: 283). In this instance, the case study method enabled the researcher to explain how brands can use Narrative Transportation Theory and Transient Competitive Advantage to turn their followers into brand advocates. The decision to analyse a year's worth of Omega's Instagram posts gave context to the study and allowed the researcher to examine this case within a specified timeframe.

Willis (2007) suggests that researchers working within the interpretivist paradigm prefer to use qualitative methods such as case studies, as these methods allow researchers to understand the context (as explained above) within which data are being gathered. This is vitally important, because qualitative case study research is exploratory in nature, and the data are interpreted inductively. Therefore, the researcher's understanding of the context in which the data was gathered was crucial during the analysis phase. The researcher proceeded to use qualitative content analysis and frequency counts analysis to code the data for both latent and manifest themes. He used an inductive approach when conducting the primary research, not being guided by the theoretical framework or brand premise, enabling the data to speak for itself. This approach allowed the data to determine the direction of the research and assisted the researcher to discover deeper meaning in the data (Lester, 1999).

3.2.10 Research procedure

The research for this case study was conducted in two parts. Firstly, through a thorough literature review that enabled the researcher to establish a conceptual framework. Secondly, through substantive primary research, where the researcher worked through a year's worth of Omega's Instagram posts. The primary research component of this study was conducted using qualitative content analysis and qualitative counts analysis.

3.2.11 Literature review

In response to the first research question, the literature review lays the foundation for this study. The researcher understands that the luxury goods industry is multi-faceted and complex and therefore a wide spectrum of sources were consulted to create the theoretical framework for this study. The researcher used the theoretical framework to create a conceptual framework, which includes the most relevant variables as they relate to the research purpose and questions. The researcher used this conceptual framework to interpret the research findings in chapter five.

3.2.12 Primary research

The primary research for this study was conducted by analysing Omega's brand building activities on Instagram, focusing on the content posted during 2019.

3.2.12.1 Sampling method: non-probability, purposive

The availability of time and resources dictates the number of people or elements that can be included in a research sample. In the context of this study, the research population was Omega's Instagram posts made over several years: from its first Instagram post until the end of the 2019 calendar year. The research sample was Instagram posts from the 2019 calendar year, and the unit of analysis for this study was the content of a single Instagram post from the 2019 calendar year.

Within the context of a qualitative study, non-probability sampling is often used when the researcher needs to conduct exploratory research in search of a general understanding of a phenomenon (Decarlo, 2018). Several non-probability sampling methods exist, including purposive, quota and snowball sampling (Babbie, 2010). However, purposive sampling is often the preferred choice when conducting a qualitative study, as it allows the researcher to be intentional about the sample they wish to use, as was the case in this study (Gentles, Charles, Ploeg & McKibbin, 2015). Patton (2002) defines purposive sampling as a technique for selecting information-rich cases that allow for the most effective utilisation of limited resources.

The purposive research sample selected for this case study was data collected from Omega's Instagram profile which included all the permanent content the brand posted to its main profile feed between 1 January and 31 December, 2019. Instagram was specifically selected for this study since it enjoys a higher engagement rate than that of Facebook, with people spending more time liking, sharing and commenting on other posts via the app. It also specifically allows brands to share original media that engages their audiences (The European Business Review, 2021; Jackson, 2019; Ellis, 2018; Sharma, n.d.).

The 2019 year was one of the most significant years in Omega's illustrious history. The content Omega posted to its Instagram profile included features of all its main watch ranges; its brand ambassadors; new releases; editorial pieces; brand building activities and brand partnerships. The content told the brand story in various ways. Omega thus uses Instagram as a vital tool for brand building, and not as an additional sales channel. Omega's Instagram profile acts as a brand contact point that allows the brand to entice and invite its followers into its world, transforming them into brand advocates in the process. The comprehensive approach Omega takes on its Instagram profile provided the researcher with a rich, diverse and highly relevant data set that could be broken down, analysed and interpreted to understand how Omega is able to adopt a brand leadership role within the luxury watch industry.

3.2.12.2 Reasoning approach: inductive

Research can be conducted inductively, deductively or using a combination of both. Hussey and Hussey (1997: 13) define inductive research as a type of study where

theories are developed when empirical reality is observed. In this research type, general conclusions are made from *specific* observations in the data. This contrasts with deductive research, where conclusions are made from *general* observations in the data (Hussey & Hussey, 1997: 19)

A deductive approach is applicable when a specific theory or hypothesis is either proven or disproven by the research. Conversely, inductive reasoning is used when the researcher approaches the data without a predetermined theory or hypothesis, opting to rather let the data guide the analysis (Marczyk, De Matteo & Festinger, 2017). In the inductive research process, the researcher moved from pure data to theoretical explanations and insights based on what the selected data dictated (Decarlo, 2018). Cavaye (1996: 236) suggests that inductive and deductive reasoning can also be used simultaneously in the same study when the research warrants such an approach.

In this case study, the researcher opted to work from an interpretivist paradigm while conducting an exploratory study. This meant that the researcher approached the raw data without any preconceived idea of what he expected to find. The researcher's sole purpose was to investigate a phenomenon based on the research objective. Using an inductive approach meant that he allowed several themes and concepts to emerge from the raw data which informed the findings (Marczyk *et al.*, 2017). Once the data collection had been completed, the researcher took a broad overview of all the data and looked for patterns.

Inductive reasoning was therefore well suited to the needs of the researcher. This method enabled the researcher to inductively identify themes in the data, thereby meeting the research objective. In summary: taking advantage of the research design's ontology and epistemology, the researcher used the interpretivist paradigm to conduct an exploratory qualitative case study. This enabled the researcher to use an inductive research approach applying qualitative content and counts analysis to arrive at the research findings.

These themes were then interpreted according to the conceptual framework to reach the research conclusion discussed in chapter five.

3.2.12.3 Research analysis: qualitative content and counts analysis

For this study, the researcher used two qualitative analysis tools: qualitative content analysis and qualitative counts analysis. Qualitative content analysis is a research tool that enables researchers to systematically code and categorise a large amount of data to discover trends that are relevant to their research. This tool also allows researchers to identify patterns by analysing word frequency, the relationships between certain words and the structures of communication (Gbrich, 2007; Pope, Ziebland & Mays, 2006, cited in Pope & Mays, 2006; Mayring, 2000). Content analysis of words, images and videos allowed the researcher to discover four overarching themes and subthemes in the final analysis.

In addition to these insights, the researcher chose to count specific keywords and themes within the data in order to add further depth to the analysis. As these counts enhanced the qualitative data and helped to identify latent themes, the researcher decided to continue with these counts as part of an enriched qualitative research method. It is for this reason that the researcher did not embark on a mixed method or quantitative research path. The researcher is aware of the hesitance of qualitative researchers to include figures and counts in their work (Hannah & Lautsch, 2010; Maxwell, 2010; Sandelowski, 2001; Morgan, 1993). However, according to Sandelowski (2001), the use of numbers in qualitative research can also assist the researcher to generate meaning from the data and verify and test the interpretation of the data.

Sandelowski (2001) further states that counting is vital to the analysis process in that it enables researchers to identify patterns (and deviation from patterns) within the data, whilst also allowing the opportunity to draw analytic generalisations from the data. The counting of data also ensures descriptive, interpretive and theoretical validity (Maxwell, 1992). Sandelowski, Voils and Knafl (2009) define the process of assigning nominal or ordinal values to qualitative data as *quantitising*. They suggest that quantitising should not just be attributed to mixed methods research, as the use of quantitising in qualitative research is a matter of preference.

When qualitative research is conducted and qualitative data is converted into quantitative data, the researcher is able to recognise patterns in the data while simultaneously forming meanings. This ensures that all the data is considered by recording analytical decisions which guarantee that the interpretations can be verified (Sandelowski, 2001; Ryan & Bernard, 2000; Miles & Huberman, 1994). When conducting research using quantitative content analysis, the aim of counting the data codes is to make a summary of everything that is known about the data and then presenting these results as they are.

Qualitative content analysis takes the counting of codes a step further by allowing the researcher to interpret the patterns found within these codes and make sense of these patterns. Furthermore, Maxwell (2010) has noted several benefits of using numbers within a qualitative research study. These benefits include the ability to generalise the claims made by a qualitative researcher; the ability to identify and describe the diversity of the actions, beliefs or perceptions within the group being studied; the ability to help the researcher identify certain patterns in the data that would not have been spotted otherwise, and allowing the researcher to provide proof that they have correctly interpreted the data.

Researchers can use content analysis to describe the data coding process and interpret counted codes to reveal new contexts that may not have been discovered otherwise (Vaismoradi, Turunen & Bondas, 2013; Morgan, 1993; Downe-Wamboldt, 1992). When conducting qualitative research using content analysis, the data can thus be analysed qualitatively while also being quantified at the same time (Gbrich, 2007). According to Smith (1993: 120), interpretivist researchers subscribe to the notion that there is no specific path to knowledge, and that no specific research method automatically enables the researcher to make academic discoveries. Therefore, the researcher ascertained that using quantitative counts within this qualitative research study—with the express purpose of finding hidden meanings and strategies—benefited the study as a whole.

Quantitative researchers express their data with numbers and graphs with the aim of confirming or rejecting theories and hypotheses. In contrast, qualitative researchers express their research in words, and aim to understand concepts by gathering in-

depth insights into topics which may otherwise not have been identified (Streefkerk, 2022).

To that end, the researcher acknowledges Maxwell's (2010) concerns about the problems that might arise when using quantitative data in a qualitative study. These include the idea that the use of numbers in qualitative research could lead to inappropriate generalisations being made; that the use of numbers could lead to a shift towards variance thinking and that numbers could be used to dress up a report so that it looks more rigorous. The researcher took great care to ensure that this is not the case with this study by clearly documenting each step followed; showing every count made; explaining how the researcher conducted the counting process and backing up the researcher's findings with clear and coherent reasoning based on the data.

To compile the raw data needed to conduct the research, the researcher manually copied and pasted the dates, captions and URLs of every post Omega made to its Instagram platform in 2019 into an empty Microsoft Word document. When this process was completed, the researcher engaged with the data in order to become familiar with the content. The researcher initially planned to use thematic analysis to analyse the data. Braun and Clarke's (2006) thematic analysis guide was followed, but after an initial read-through and a first attempt at coding the data, the researcher realised that there might be additional insights hidden in the data. These additional insights could only be identified by organising, analysing and interpreting the data and then assigning quantitative counts and values to some of the qualitative data. Based on these newly identified requirements, the researcher decided to adopt a content analysis strategy instead, as discussed earlier in this chapter.

The researcher used Erlingsson and Brysiewicz's (2017) qualitative content analysis guide as a starting point. The raw data was imported into ATLAS.ti, a premium computer software suite that qualitative researchers use to dissect and analyse large data sets (Atlas.ti, n.d.). After purchasing the software, the researcher had to spend a considerable amount of time learning how to use ATLAS.ti to extract the maximum benefit from it. The coding was done within the software in search of latent themes. In addition to the codes that were identified and analysed, the researcher also counted

the frequency with which a number of words were used within the data. The codified data included the *watch family names* that were most frequently mentioned, the *topics* that were most frequently spoken about, the *type of content* that was most frequently posted and the *form of content* that was used for specific types of messages.

By counting and then analysing numerical data, the researcher was able to identify a number of patterns. These patterns showed how certain topics were discussed much more frequently than others, and that some ideas and concepts were specifically chosen to reinforce certain perceptions about the brand. These will be further discussed in the next two chapters. The analysis focused on understanding the unique nature of Omega's utilisation of its Instagram presence.

The researcher aimed to explore how Omega's captivating content—which is a combination of different types of mediums—engages consumers and eventually converts them into brand advocates. Within the context of this study, Omega's Instagram profile embodies the quintessence of the brand. Through a combination of emotive storytelling, beautifully executed media and clever brand strategy, its Instagram profile creates a fictitious portal through which consumers become immersed in the brand, laying the groundwork for narrative transportation to occur.

This qualitative exploratory case study was therefore conducted to gain a deeper understanding of how Omega uses a narrative-driven content strategy in combination with Transient Competitive Advantage to turn its followers into brand advocates. To achieve this research goal, qualitative content and qualitative counts analysis was used. Qualitative content analysis and qualitative counts analysis allowed the researcher to analyse both qualitative and quantitative data, resulting in the systematic collection and analysis of an enormous data set. This then enabled the counting of relevant topics and themes, and an accurate and in-depth reporting of results.

3.3 Ethical considerations

As the research was completely dependent on the actions of the researcher, only the researcher could influence the ethics of the study. The researcher declares that the

research was conducted in an honest and objective manner while adhering to the ethical guidelines of the Independent Institute of Education, the parent company of the IIE-Vega School (The IIE, 2022). The researcher used valid sources and always acted with integrity. The researcher's supervisors were also trained in accordance with the ethical guidance of the IIE. This allowed the supervisors to confirm that all the steps the researcher took adhered to the appropriate ethical guidelines. The researcher is open to receiving criticism and new or alternative ideas and acknowledges the intellectual property of all the sources used in the study (Decarlo, 2018).

The way the research was executed was also unobtrusive since Omega itself was not involved. Due to the systematic nature of the research processes that were followed, other researchers in the future can replicate the study, which improves its reliability. The research was conducted solely by analysing content found in the public domain on the Internet, in books and research papers, which afforded the researcher the flexibility to collect the data at any time and from any location.

3.4 Research evaluation

Once research has been completed, it needs to be evaluated to ensure that its contribution to academia is credible and worthy of consideration. Rigour and trustworthiness are the appropriate measures of qualitative research and refer to the extent to which the research is credible (Merriam (1998: 199). Within the context of this study, trustworthiness is ensured by careful examination of how the concepts of credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability are applicable to this specific study.

3.4.1 Credibility

Credibility refers to the extent to which the data is believable and trustworthy. It can also refer to internal validity. Within the context of this study, credibility will be ensured if the data itself, as well as the data analysis methods, are reliable. As previously explained, the researcher used the interpretivist paradigm to conduct the research. When using this paradigm, understanding is created based on the researcher's

perspective that an objective truth to which the results can be compared does not exist (Decarlo, 2018).

However, the trustworthiness or true value of this research lies in the fact that the researcher thoroughly explained the research design and research methodology, and also openly shared all the steps he followed whilst conducting the research. This process endeavours to increase the credibility of the primary research and ensures that the research and subsequent results are trustworthy (Decarlo, 2018).

3.4.2 Transferability

Transferability refers to the extent to which qualitative research results can be transferred to other settings. The ability to extrapolate the findings of the study to different settings is dependent on the researcher's ability to describe the research context and assumptions that were vital to the study. Research is transferable when it can be generalised into different contexts outside of the initial study. However, it is important to note that the extent to which it is transferable is dependent on whether the researcher wishes to generalise the findings for a different context (Trochim, n.d.).

Keeping a detailed record of the research methods, settings, context and underlying premise enhanced the transferability of this case study. Researcher bias was kept to a minimum by exploring a broad and diverse literature review and having a critical self-awareness during the examination of the data in order to report truthfully within the research context. These actions were taken to ensure that future researchers would be able to apply the findings of this study to different contexts (Trochim, n.d.).

3.4.3 Dependability

Dependability refers to the consistency with which the same findings can be observed under similar circumstances in separate contexts (Merriam, 1998: 205). The dependability of this study can be influenced by other researchers' interpretations, therefore it is important to ensure that the results obtained are consistent with the data that was collected in the primary research. Other researchers could use the same

analysis methods—qualitative content analysis and qualitative counts analysis—to determine if they would come to the same conclusions. However, their worldview, research perspective and personal bias will still play a role.

To reiterate, the primary research was conducted from the researcher's own perspective when he interpreted Omega's digital brand building activities. This means that the possibility exists that other researchers might interpret the brand's activities differently. Therefore, the researcher thoroughly described the process followed, data obtained and the analysis procedure so that future researchers are able to interpret and replicate this process. Thus, auditing the researcher's data, methods and decisions, and thoroughly describing the contexts and circumstances under which the research was conducted would ensure the dependability of the research.

3.4.4 Confirmability

Confirmability refers to the neutrality of the study, suggesting that the data is strong enough to stand on its own. Confirmability also refers to the extent to which the findings of this research can be confirmed or endorsed by other researchers. Within the context of this study, confirmability will be ensured when other researchers can agree with the findings (Korstjens & Moser, 2018; Trochim, n.d.). To ensure that the results are confirmable, all the research steps need to be documented. This will ensure that the data can be checked again as needed, proving that the results obtained were based on the data itself, and not a fabrication in the mind of the researcher (Korstjens & Moser, 2018). The researcher explained in detail that he worked with an inductive approach to allow the data to speak for itself and he was acutely aware of any possible bias he may have had in the interpretation of the data. To further enhance the neutrality of the research, the researcher fully documented the research methods and procedures.

3.5 Conclusion

Chapter three opened with the research purpose, which indicated the direction the researcher wished to follow. Based on the research purpose, the research design and

methodology that was used to steer the study was investigated. The researcher utilised the work of Wright *et al.* (2016: 1), Moon and Blackman (2017) and Deane (2018) as the basis for the ontology, epistemology, and axiology appropriate for the study. By working from an interpretivist paradigm with a relativist ontology, a subjectivist epistemology and an axiology focused on exploring, understanding and reporting the gathered data, the researcher found that an inductive reasoning approach would be best suited to his research.

The aforementioned considerations culminated in a qualitative research methodology, which the researcher used to conduct an exploratory case study. The researcher established that the research population included all the years that Omega was active on Instagram, and the research sample was all the content posted during the 2019 calendar year. The unit of analysis for this study was a single Instagram post. Since he conducted an exploratory case study, the researcher used qualitative content analysis and qualitative counts analysis to gather, systemise and analyse the raw data, namely the Omega brand's Instagram post content. The researcher conducted an extensive literature review to create a conceptual framework, which he used in chapter five as a lens to interpret the primary research findings. Finally, the researcher addressed the research evaluation methods of credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability to establish the trustworthiness and rigour of the research methods. In the next chapter the researcher will explain in greater detail how he conducted the research as outlined in this chapter, as well as the resultant findings which will then be interpreted in chapter five.

CHAPTER 4

RESEARCH ANALYSIS

4.1 Introduction

In the following chapter, the researcher explains how this research was conducted. This chapter starts with a description of the data analysis process, where the researcher explains the rationale behind the selection of Instagram as the raw data source. The research population, research sample and unit of analysis are reiterated, and the researcher explains why the content from the 2019 calendar year was selected for this analysis.

The data gathering process is discussed, along with an explanation of how the qualitative research software, ATLAS.ti, was used to code and analyse the data. The resultant category and descriptive code groups are explored, and the different code and theme groupings are discussed. The researcher also touches on the counting of certain elements of the qualitative data. Finally, the four research themes are identified and briefly introduced before the research evaluation is explained. These four themes are analysed in-depth in the fifth chapter.

4.2 Data analysis process

The research process commenced with the selection of Omega's Instagram profile as the raw data source. There are a number of large social media platforms with hundreds of millions of users, including Facebook, Youtube, WhatsApp, Instagram, Facebook Messenger, WeChat and TikTok. In terms of core functions, Facebook is a social networking site, Instagram is a photo-sharing platform, and Youtube is a video-sharing platform. Messenger, WhatsApp and WeChat are instant messaging platforms (Chaffey, 2022). WeChat has a lot more functionality, but it can still be classified as an instant message platform for the purpose of this study. TikTok, a video-sharing platform, focused mainly on the teenage demographic in 2019 and was not yet widely

used by brands or older generations as it is now (Hutchinson, 2021; Baig, 2021; Byron, 2021).

There are a few defining factors that lead to the selection of Omega's Instagram profile as the primary data source for this study. Although Instagram has a smaller user base than Facebook, it has the highest engagement rate, meaning that audience members are much more active on the platform and are liking, commenting and interacting with posts more frequently than they would on Facebook. Instagram is also especially suited to posting images and videos, whereas Facebook is primarily used to share information in various forms.

In general, brands use Instagram to post original content that tells their brand story, whereas Facebook is often used as a tool for communicating business-specific information, news and updates. Youtube, on the other hand, is often used for longer-form videos on a variety of topics, but the platform does not offer image sharing functionality like Instagram and Facebook. For visual story-telling, Instagram is therefore the superior platform, hence its selection as the data source for this study (The European Business Review, 2021; Jackson, 2019; Ellis, 2018; Sharma, n.d.). The researcher chose not to analyse the size of the brand's following on Instagram in relation to its competitors, or look at Omega's engagement metrics (likes, comments and shares). This decision was made in order to place particular focus on understanding Omega's content strategy from a brand strategist's point of view.

The total population for this study included all the years in which Omega had been active on Instagram. The 2019 calendar year was selected as a research sample and the unit of analysis was a single Instagram post from the 2019 calendar year. There are a number of reasons for the selection of this specific research sample. Firstly, 2019 was an important year for Omega, since it marked the 50th anniversary of NASA's Apollo 11 moon landing in 1969. Omega's involvement in this landmark event is well documented, having supplied all the astronauts with the brand's Speedmaster watch for use during the mission (Pearlman, 2021; Bazemore, 2020; Buettner, 2015; Goulard, 2014). The brand celebrated this anniversary by releasing two special, limited-edition commemorative watches (Naas, 2019), while sharing a large number of

posts specifically focused on reliving and remembering the achievements of that mission.

The year 2019 also saw Omega make history when it partnered with Victor Vescovo on the Five Deeps Expedition – a mission dedicated to exploring the deepest parts of our oceans. Vescovo was issued a purpose-built Omega watch: the Seamaster Planet Ocean Ultra Deep Professional. Using the Deep Submergence Vehicle *Limiting Factor*, Vescovo had two of these watches strapped to the submersible vessel's robotic arms, and a third to an external robotic lander. The vessel descended to a depth of 10 925m in the Eastern Pool of Challenger Deep in the Marianas Trench – the deepest dive in history. After the mission had been completed, the three watches were all keeping perfect time, and subsequently passed the METAS Master Chronometer test (Omega, 2021c; Goulard, 2019; The Five Deeps Expedition, n.d.; Davis, 2019; Heaton, 2019). An impressive feat, showcasing once again Omega's technical expertise and spirit of adventure.

In addition to celebrating the Apollo 11 mission anniversary as well as the world's deepest dive, Omega also marketed and released limited-edition watches for the 2020 Tokyo Olympic Games and the release of the 25th James Bond film, *No Time To Die*, during 2019. A number of additional events, product showcases, storylines and new releases were also celebrated during the year. The researcher therefore selected the 2019 calendar year for this study. However, even though the brand had milestone events on its calendar, the type of content shared during this year did not differ from the types and volume of content shared in other years. Omega's brand identity is deeply rooted in the celebration of its history. This element of its core identity is therefore consistently referenced in all the content the brand posts to Instagram across all the years that it has used the platform. The 2019 calendar year serves as a pertinent example of how core brand identity is translated into relevant content.

Furthermore, the uncertainty surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic influenced the content the brand shared on Instagram during 2020. As global sporting events and other in-person occasions were cancelled, the brand could not physically interact with its followers in the same way it usually does. As such, the 2020 calendar year would likely not feature newly-created content of this nature. It is possible that the brand was

not able to commission new content for a period of time. To compensate for this, the brand may have reused older content and focused more on close-up watch shots to illustrate product features. The brand planned the 2019 calendar year's content in advance so this period accurately reflects its brand strategy pre-pandemic.

With the postponement of the 2020 Tokyo Olympic Games, the postponed release of the 25th James Bond film, and the cancellation of numerous sporting, cultural and entertainment events, the planned 2020 content calendar would have been adjusted to compensate for the impact the pandemic had on the brand's global marketing activities. A McKinsey & Company article (Achille & Zipser, 2020) mentioned that the absence of fashion weeks and trade shows—two segments where Omega was well represented—had a substantial impact on the way luxury brands could connect with their followers and share new product launches. Since there were significantly fewer in-person events during 2020, the 2019 calendar year thus marks the final pre-COVID-19 sample year, and further qualifies its selection for this study. However, it is important to note that Omega still creates content around its four brand identity elements (human achievement; product innovation; brand experience; aesthetic value) regardless of the year. The underlying messages brought across in its posts will therefore be consistent every year.

The research for this study was conducted using qualitative content analysis. There are a number of different sources that describe how the qualitative content analysis process can be undertaken (Erlingsson & Brysiewicz, 2013; Vaismoradi *et al.*, 2013; Berg & Lune, 2012; Burnard, Gill, Stewart, Treasure & Chadwick, 2008; Schilling, 2006; Hsieh & Shannon, 2005: 1277-1288; Graneheim & Lundman, 2004: 105-112). Erlingsson and Brysiewicz's (2017) guide was followed, since it provided the researcher examples as well as a detailed description of how each step of the research process should be conducted. Erlingsson and Brysiewicz's (2017) content analysis guide was inspired by the work of Hsieh and Shannon (2005:1277-1288), Elo and Kyngäs's (2007:107-115) and Graneheim and Lundman (2004:105-112). The work of Sandelowski (2001) and Maxwell (2010) also paved the way for the researcher to use qualitative counts analysis to analyse the data.

Figure 4.1 illustrates the steps of the research process that were followed for this study. These steps—inspired by Erlingsson and Brysiewicz’s (2017) work—allowed the researcher to operate with a clear guideline that he could reference along the way. The process the researcher followed is explained in detail using examples in this chapter. The final themes that emerged from the process outlined in figure 4.1 will be explained in greater depth in chapter five.

Steps	Research Process	Description
Step 1	Gathering data from the source	Copying each Instagram post to a Word document
Step 2	Coding the source data	Coding the data for both manifest & latent themes
Step 3	Creating code groups	Combining similar codes together into descriptive & category groups
Step 4	Combining groups into themes	Creating overarching themes from descriptive code groups
Step 5	Creating final themes	Condensing overarching themes into final themes

Figure 4.1: A representation of the research process

The following sections explain exactly how the researcher gathered, analysed and interpreted the data to arrive at the final four themes. Next, the research process will be described in full, using examples to illustrate the process and guide the reader through the body of work.

4.3 Data gathering

The unit of analysis for this research was a single Instagram post. In 2019, Omega shared 293 individual posts to its Instagram feed, starting on January 1 and ending on December 31. The researcher manually copied and pasted the text of every post onto a Microsoft Word document, along with the date the post was made and a link to the post itself (see figure 4.2). The link would later be used to open the post again so that the researcher could study the image together with the text whilst coding each entry. The size and scope of the work cannot be disputed, as a year’s worth of Instagram posts shared a large amount of content and context to shed light on the brand’s storytelling strategies.

JANUARY 1, 2019

Ruffled shirts aren't to everyone's taste, but they do add an element of old-school romance. A golden rule is to always pair with a tuxedo (never a suit) and bow tie. Featured watch: [#OMEGA#Speedmaster Professional](#) [#Moonwatch](#).

<https://www.instagram.com/p/BsGRGozA3cA/>

Figure 4.2: An example of a single Instagram post copied to a working document

4.3.1 First coding draft

The researcher did not take the study's theoretical foundation or the research purpose into consideration when coding the data for the first time. The aim was to focus purely on what the researcher saw in the data, thus following an inductive approach. After reading through all the posts and looking at the accompanying images several times, the next step was to start the coding process.

The researcher coded each post based on the manifest content visible in the image and text. The codes therefore described surface level observations in the data, for example: *Olympic rower*, *brand collaboration* and *water sport*. The researcher also coded based on the topic the post referred to. These topics included: *Seamaster range*, *Diver 300m model* and *A Collected Man*.

JANUARY 15, 2019

[#Seamaster](#) Episode 4: The Rower and his Seamaster. Head out on the river with Olympic rower and Royal Navy officer [@PeteReed](#) OBE in this film by [@A_Collected_Man](#) x [#OMEGA](#). After a few false starts to his sporting career, Pete went on to become a triple gold medallist and still feels most alive when he's out on the water. Watch the full movie by clicking on the link in our bio.

https://www.instagram.com/p/BsqT_b2BUUN/

Code: Olympic rower, Royal navy officer, triple gold medallist, brand collaboration, instalment in a series, water sport

Topic: Seamaster range; Diver 300m model; A Collected Man

Figure 4.3: An example of an Instagram post being coded in a working document

Coding according to this method took a considerable amount of time. The researcher was also wary that this method of manually coding on a working document would be challenging to analyse later. When using this method, all frequency counts of the data

would also have to be conducted manually, which could have led to human error that might have tainted the data. The researcher then decided to purchase a licensed copy of ATLAS.ti – a sophisticated computer software suite that qualitative researchers use to arrange, manage and analyse large bodies of data in systematic ways (Atlas.ti, n.d.).

4.3.2 Coding with ATLAS.ti

Once the researcher learnt how to use the software, he uploaded an unedited copy of the Word document featuring all Omega’s Instagram posts and proceeded to code the data again. He did not use the previous coded data, opting rather to start afresh. Before starting the coding, the researcher created a coding map (see Figure 4.4) to assist with the process. In this instance, he also looked for direct examples of Narrative Transportation elements that could be identified in the data. This map was used as a guideline during the coding process. ATLAS.ti’s software functionality expedited the coding process.

Coding Map
Topic:
Part of series: Type / standalone
Featured:
Copy: Statement / question / invitation / instruction
Content: Image / video / carousel
Reason for post: Inform / tell a story / launch / showcase product versatility
NTT:

Figure 4.4: A coding map used during the first round of ATLAS.ti coding

Coding the data involved the following steps:

1. The researcher would analyse the image and text of each post and then assign a topic to that post.
2. Next, he would see if the post was part of a series of posts or just a standalone entry.
3. Then he looked at what type of product was featured in the post; whether the copy used made a statement; asked a question; invited the reader to participate in an activity, or invited the reader to act. He would also note

whether the post was supposed to inform the reader about a specific event or topic, tell a story, launch a new product, or showcase a product's versatility.

4. Finally, he would comment on whether Narrative Transportation elements were directly present in a specific post.

After the researcher coded each post according to the coding map, he looked for manifest themes in each post's image and text, as done in the original Microsoft Word document. He added codes that described what he saw in the images and what he read in the text, paying close attention to each media type and text's unique narrative. The researcher followed this process until all 293 posts were analysed. After the first coding round with ATLAS.ti was completed, the researcher realised that because only manifest themes were being identified, the data lacked depth and substance. The context found in latent themes was missing, which meant that a considerable amount of insight and richness was lacking from the data. The researcher also identified that Narrative Transportation Theory was relevant to all the Instagram posts, and not only selected posts as initially assumed.

4.3.3 Coding for latent themes

For the second round of in-depth coding with ATLAS.ti the researcher updated the coding map to unearth even more detail. He formalised the list, added examples of what each entry might be, and then created a new framework. This updated coding map (figure 4.5) left less room for interpretation. As a result, the researcher opted instead to set hard and fast rules to code the data in a systematic way. This would result in more robust and accurate codes.

Instagram Content Coding Map	
Section	Comments
Topic:	
The topic or subject matter of the post	<i>Moon landing; dressing up; calibre 321</i>
Part of series:	
The series this entry belongs to	<i>Where multiple series on the same topic exists, additional instalments are numbered</i>
Featured:	
The specific watch family featured	<i>Speedmaster, Seamaster etc.</i>
The type of strap	<i>NATO, leather etc.</i>
The type of jewellery	<i>Earrings, cufflinks etc.</i>
The type of accessory	<i>Sunglasses etc.</i>
Copy:	
Statement	<i>General information conveyed</i>
Announcement	<i>Important event or details shared</i>
Question	<i>How, why, who, when, other</i>
Invitation	<i>Explore, come, join, welcome, meet, watch, give, check out</i>
Content:	
Image	<i>Single image</i>
Image carousel	<i>Multiple images</i>
Video	<i>Single video</i>
Video carousel	<i>Multiple videos</i>
Image & video carousel	<i>Multiple images and videos</i>
Reason for post:	
Share general content	<i>Posts about the brand and general lifestyle aspects.</i>
Tell a story	<i>Ambassadors, History, Events, Watch used for specific achievement</i>
Launch a product	<i>Introduce a new product to the market</i>
Showcase product features	<i>Talking about an Omega watch, its attributes and its components, or any other Omega product</i>
Omega feature:	
Ambassadors	<i>Actors, astronauts, sports stars, models, influential people, sporting achievements</i>
Events	<i>Space travel, Olympic games & other sporting events, Museum, Exhibitions</i>
Product type	<i>Watch family</i>
Brand collaboration	<i>A Collected Man</i>

Figure 4.5: An updated, formalised coding map used during the second round of ATLAS.ti coding

To differentiate between the codes that describe familiar entries that occur multiple times throughout the data, and codes that are used to describe individual occurrences in the data, the researcher divided all the codes into two overarching groups. The codes in this updated coding map will be referred to as *category codes*, as they are used on numerous occasions throughout the data to describe familiar patterns. In contrast, codes used to describe specific occurrences or unique instances will be referred to as *descriptive codes*. These codes are discussed in detail later on in this chapter.

The second round of coding within ATLAS.ti focused on looking for latent themes layered inside each post. The researcher spent a significant amount of time on every post, ensuring that each entry was carefully analysed in search of latent themes in addition to the existing manifest themes. In a few instances, there were only superficial observations to be made, but on other occasions, the researcher picked up on highly specific latent themes. In addition to the standard observations penned

according to the updated coding map, the researcher would also write a detailed sentence on how he personally interpreted each post. Each entry had at least two descriptive codes, depending on how much information was being relayed within each post. This process was diligently followed to ensure that meaningful data was being collected.

4.4 Category code groups

The category code groups used during this research were selected to bring order and structure to the data to enable further analysis. By utilising a set of category code groups (see figure 4.5), the researcher was able to see hidden trends emerge from the data. The main category code groups were: *copy*, *content*, *topic*, *featured*, *Omega-featured*, *part of series* and *reason for post*. The category code groups are as follows:

4.4.1 Copy (four codes)

These posts were grouped based on what the copy (written brand content) referred to. The *copy* code group consisted of the following options:

- *Announcements* (when important events or details were shared)
- *Invitations* (included keywords like explore, come, join, welcome, meet, watch, give, check out)
- *Questions* (included keywords like how, why, who, when)
- *Statements* (when general information was conveyed)

4.4.2 Content (five codes)

Posts were grouped based on the type of media *content* used in each instance. The following codes were included in this group:

- *Images* (when a single image was used)
- *Image carousels* (when multiple images were used)
- *Videos* (when a single video was used)
- *Video carousels* (when multiple videos were used)

- *Image and video carousels* (when a combination of images and videos were used)

4.4.3 Topic (47 codes)

Here, posts were grouped based on the general *topic* visible in the copy and media. The intention was to highlight what each specific post was about. Some code examples included *007* (when the post touched on the brand's partnership with James Bond); *the Apollo 11 mission* (when a post referred to the NASA Apollo 11 mission itself); *Omega Golf* (when the post highlighted Omega's connection to the sport of golf), and *Tokyo 2020 Olympic games* (when the post referred to the brand's involvement in the 2020 games). All the other entries under the topic section followed the same logic.

4.4.4 Featured (15 codes)

The *featured* section referred to the specific Omega products shown in each post. Here, the researcher selected the watch family name (*Seamaster*, *Speedmaster*, *De Ville*, or *Aqua Terra*) instead of referring to a specific model (*Seamaster Diver 300m Co-Axial Master Chronometer Chronograph: America's Cup edition*). In addition to the specific watch families, the researcher also noted posts that referred to Omega's jewellery line and leather or NATO straps collections. Some of the posts also did not feature any specific Omega product, which was indicated using the description, *None*.

4.4.5 Omega-featured (ten codes)

For the *Omega-featured* section, the researcher referred to instances, events, activities or characters that help build and reinforce the brand's identity. The name of this code group was chosen specifically to refer to planned interventions the brand initiated in order to utilise the tools in Omega's brand building toolkit. This group consists of a number of codes including *ambassadors* (the brand uses a variety of actors, models and sports stars); *astronauts* (NASA's astronauts are included in a number of Omega's posts); *brand collaborations* (when the brand posts content in

collaboration with another brand); *incredible achievements* (like the deepest ocean dive ever recorded); *space travel* (supporting NASA's missions), and *special exhibitions* (the brand's museums and special exhibits).

4.4.6 Part of series (59 codes)

Here, posts were grouped together as *part of a series* – posts that directly followed one another. The shortest series of posts included two entries, and the most extended series included 20 entries. When another series separated two series of the same type of posts, then the second instalment would be labelled with Roman numerals: *Moonwatch*, *Moonwatch II* and *Moonwatch III*. A handful of posts were part of more than one series at a time — this was when specific features were combined and promoted simultaneously. In one instance, this overlap was present in a feature of both *OmegaGolf* and *Moonwatch* category codes and again during three posts that featured *Calibre321 II* and *Moonwatch IV* category codes.

4.4.7 Reason for post (four codes)

In this section, the posts were grouped according to the primary purpose behind the existence of each entry. This group included the following codes:

- *Launch a product* (when a new product was introduced to the market)
- *Share general content* (when posts were made about the brand and general lifestyle aspects)
- *Showcase product features* (when referring to an Omega watch, its attributes or components, or any other Omega product)
- *Tell a story* (when the brand featured ambassadors; brand history; events and watches used for specific achievements)

4.4.8 Summary

Some posts were coded more than once in the six of these seven category code groups (excluding *Omega feature*). This is because there was too much information and context to be allocated to only one category. *Omega feature* was the exception

because not every post could be connected to one of the categories in this code group. The codes in the *Omega feature* code group were only allocated 202 times, whereas codes from the other groups were allocated more than 293 times – the number of posts the brand made during the 2019 calendar year.

4.5 Descriptive code groups

Out of the 1107 unique codes used during this research, 144 were category codes. Therefore, 963 codes were descriptive. These descriptive codes helped to illustrate in great detail the messages that Omega's posts were conveying. Some of these codes are relatively short and clear, whereas others go into detail when a great deal of context is shared. Only a handful of these codes were applied to more than one post, with the majority of those codes only being used once.

4.5.1 Multiple-use codes

The following descriptive codes serve as an example of the codes allocated to a number of posts throughout the research. These codes were all relevant to the post in question and did not warrant the creation of another, very similar code:

- Using the watch outside during a winter holiday (5 posts)
- 125th anniversary of Omega brand (4 posts)
- Masculine pose (4 posts)
- Omega's history, driven by innovation achievement and excellence (4 posts)
- Celebrating the brand's illustrious past (3 posts)
- Inviting the viewer into the brand's history (3 posts)
- Olympic rower (3 posts)
- Sophisticated ambassador wearing an Omega watch (3 posts)
- Vibrant colours used throughout carousel signifies boldness (3 posts)
- Watch design inspired by the waves of the ocean (3 posts)
- Reproduction of iconic watch movement (2 posts)
- Accessories used during winter holiday (2 posts)

4.5.2 Single-use codes

The following examples show what unique descriptive codes look like within the context of this research. Additions in italics were made to explain what the researcher meant with these codes. These codes give additional context to each post. **Codes were edited afterwards for clarity:*

- Behind the scenes of the shared history between Omega and NASA*
- Stylish outfit in bold colours that supports the watch's design
- Comparing the watch to other iconic New York themes of movies, songs and stories. The watch is seen as being equally as special
- Strong focus on the colour red – fitting for the brand
- Focus on the crown of the watch that features the Omega symbol – a symbol of craftsmanship and engineering prowess
- George Clooney and Charlie Duke discuss the engineering behind the Apollo 11 mission*
- Individualists wearing Omega watches to express their identities
- Museum was created to immerse customers in the brand's history
- Showing the *(watch)* movement again *(the mechanical device that powers the watch)*, which suggests that the movement is at the heart of everything Omega does. It's the soul of the brand*
- Omega is proud of its heritage and authenticates vintage watches on behalf of its clients
- Omega watches can be personalised to better suit the *(tastes of the)* wearer and express their *(individual)* personality*
- One of man's *(humankind's)* most important achievements*

4.5.3 Coding examples

Using the “code” functionality in ATLAS.ti, the researcher would pin a series of codes to each entry. These codes would then stay grouped by post until they were analysed later. The below set of images illustrates this process for an entry that did not have a latent theme, but still shared a very powerful message. The “caseback to the future”

post suggests that this is a watch for future astronauts, physicists and the Stephen Hawkings of the world.

This post emphasises brilliance, genius, excellence and the understanding and exploration of space – some of the core pillars of human achievement. This post featured a special edition watch made to honour the Stephen Hawking Medal for Science Communication winners at the Starmus Festival.

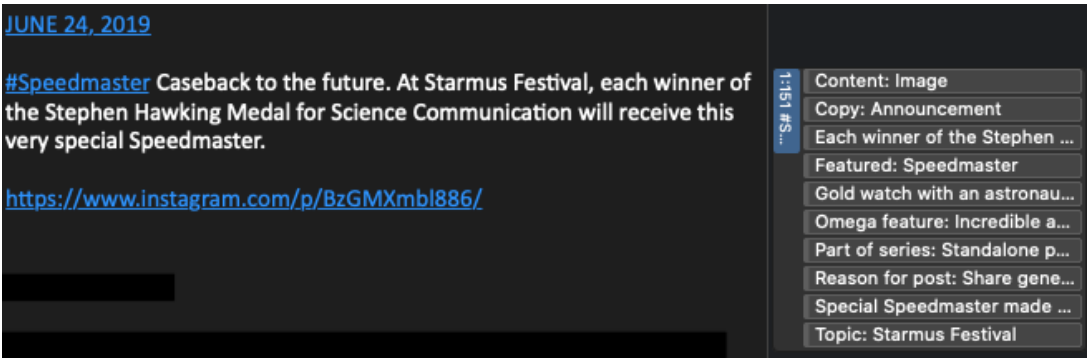


Figure 4.6: An example of a coded post from June 24, 2019 within ATLAS.ti during the second round of coding

The following image is attributed to the post from June 24, as shown above. The researcher would look at this image and read the text several times before writing the codes. **Omega’s Instagram profile is the source of all the images below, unless otherwise stated (Omega, 2019).*



Figure 4.7: The image that accompanied the text of the June 24, 2019 post, coded within ATLAS.ti

The codes attributed to this specific post about the Starmus Festival watch were:

Content: Image
Copy: Announcement
Each winner of the Stephen Hawking Medal of Science Communication will receive this watch
Featured: Speedmaster
Gold watch with an astronaut on the caseback
Omega feature: Incredible achievements
Part of series: Standalone post
Reason for post: Share general content
Special Speedmaster made for winners at the Starmus Festival
Topic: Starmus Festival

Figure 4.8: The codes attached to the June 24, 2019 post, coded within ATLAS.ti

In the example above, the researcher referred to the physical appearance of the watch, the fact that it was made specifically for the Starmus Festival and that each winner of the award would receive it as a gift. The Starmus Festival is an annual international gathering of the brightest astronauts, Nobel Prize winners, scientists and artists from around the world, in celebration of science (Eicher, 2019). These *descriptive* codes were thus focused on addressing the observable aspects of the post. The *category* codes referenced the fact that the post included an image; the copy was in the format of an announcement; the image featured a Speedmaster watch; it highlighted one of Omega's incredible achievements; it was a standalone post (not part of a series of posts all referring to the Starmus festival), and the post topic was the Starmus festival.

In another example from January 22, 2019, Omega posted a video showing one of its ambassadors, Eddie Redmayne, explaining how the brand's name came to be. In the video, Redmayne talks about the 125th anniversary of the brand's name; the brand's most precise watch movement at the time, and how this movement influenced the watchmaking industry. Redmayne also explains in great detail how a pocket watch can be worn, and the video concludes with him showing how he wears his own Omega pocket watch, subtly influencing the viewer and drawing them into the love that Redmayne has for his Omega. That specific post was coded as follows:

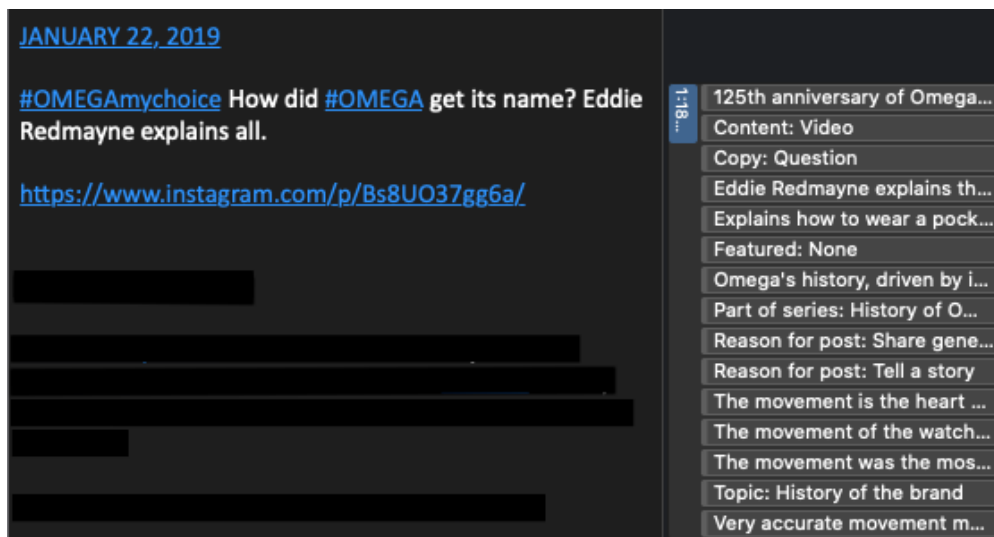


Figure 4.9: An example of a coded post from January 22, 2019, within ATLAS.ti during the second round of coding

The following image is a screengrab from the video in which Eddie Redmayne discusses the 125th anniversary of the brand's name. Notice the period-correct chair, side table, books and suit, as well as the red background – Omega's corporate colour. These elements are juxtaposed with a young and famous actor at the forefront of this craft in the modern era, 125 years later. This constant tension between heritage and modernity is prevalent throughout most of the brand's communication on Instagram, highlighting its storied past and cementing its vision of the future.



Figure 4.10: The video that accompanied the text of the January 22, 2019 post, coded within ATLAS.ti

The codes attributed to Eddie Redmayne's post were as follows:

125th anniversary of Omega brand
Content: Video
Copy: Question
Eddie Redmayne explains the history behind the brand
Explains how to wear a pocket watch - ultimately about what suits your unique personality
Featured: None
Omega's history, driven by innovation, achievement and excellence
Part of series: History of Omega
Reason for post: Share general content
Reason for post: Tell a story
The movement is the heart of the watch, the centre of innovation for the brand
The movement of the watch signifies progress and innovation during an era characterised by great achievements
The movement was the most precise of the time
Topic: History of the brand
Very accurate movement made by pioneering engineers

Figure 4.11: The codes attached to the January 22, 2019 post, coded within ATLAS.ti

In this instance, the post had many subtle cues hidden in the narrative. Redmayne connected the brand's achievements of its 125-year-old watch movement to its focus on precision and quality in the modern-day and age. By focusing on the watch movement as a central theme in the video, the brand can humanise a mechanical object in such a way that it becomes the heart of Omega's story. This is fitting, as the movement is also the "heart" of its mechanical watches, ceaselessly ticking away, building the brand's story. A more detailed interpretation of what the coding exercise brought to light is discussed in the following chapter.

4.6 Code summary

After the coding process was completed, the researcher read through the resultant data 12 times, checked it for accuracy and made necessary changes. After the data was cleaned, the researcher was left with 1107 unique codes, including both category and descriptive codes. The category codes were used numerous times for different posts (for instance, when describing the type of watches in different posts, labelled as "Featured: Speedmaster"), but most descriptive codes were unique to the posts they referred to. In some instances, two category codes would be assigned to a specific post. This would occur when a post had more than one theme; featured more than one Omega product, or had more than one manifest message to bring across. The following post from February 19, 2019, serves as an example:

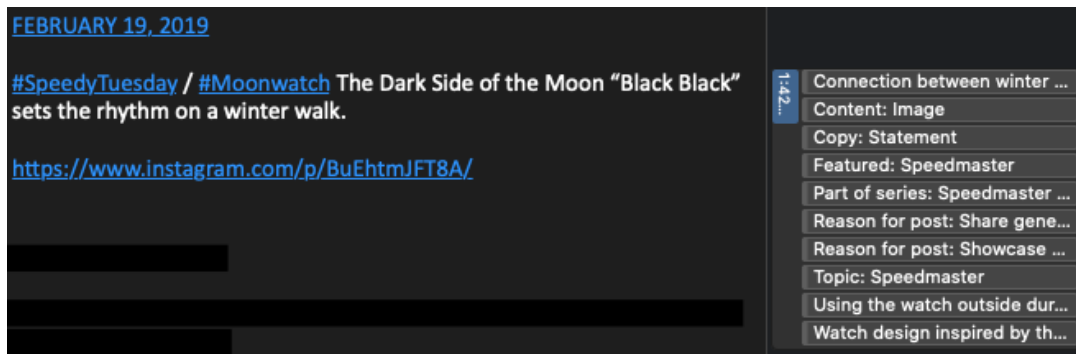


Figure 4.12: The codes attached to the February 19, 2019 post, coded within ATLAS.ti

There are two distinct "Reason for post" category code entries in this post: *Showcase product features* and *Share general content*. The image from figure 4.13 below shows a man wearing an Omega Speedmaster 'Dark Side of the Moon' special edition watch. The image is cropped around his hand to pull the viewers' attention towards the watch. However, the blurry background reveals that the man is outside in the snow, confirmed by the post's copy: "...sets the rhythm on a winter walk." This post thus shares general lifestyle content (a man walking outside in the snow whilst wearing an Omega watch), but the closeup crop on his hand also illustrates the watch's all-black design and leather strap in stark contrast to the ice white background. The choice of clothing on the model also adds to the tension, showing the dark jacket in stark contrast to the light jersey. Throughout this body of research, several posts were treated similarly.



Figure 4.13: The codes attached to the February 19, 2019 post, coded within ATLAS.ti

4.7 Code grouping

Once all the coding of the data in ATLAS.ti was complete, the researcher organised the codes together in groups from which the themes emerged. This labour intensive process involved reading through all the codes a number of times to obtain a good understanding of what the codes were portraying. Codes were initially grouped together into clusters featuring two or three entries. These clusters then evolved into larger code groups as more codes were added. During this code grouping process, a clear pattern began to emerge: a large number of the codes were similar in that they all related to similar topics.

Many codes referred to the brand ambassadors used in the posts; the inspiration behind the watches' designs; references to the actual visual designs of the watches; comments on the materials used to manufacture the watches, and the fact that Omega watches make wonderful gifts. Instead of having one code group housing 100 codes related to brand ambassadors, the researcher broke this large group up into numerous smaller groups. These smaller groups still fell under the overarching *brand ambassador* group scope but were labelled according to the specific ambassadors in question. The same process was followed with the *design inspiration*; *gift Omega*; *watch design*, and *watch materials* code groups.

The overarching *brand ambassador* code group was broken down as follows:

- Brand ambassadors: Alessandra Ambrosio
- Brand ambassadors: Annina Frey
- Brand ambassadors: Buzz Aldrin
- Brand ambassadors: Charlie Duke
- Brand ambassadors: Cindy Crawford
- Brand ambassadors: Eddie Redmayne
- Brand ambassadors: George Clooney
- Brand ambassadors: Kaia Gerber
- Brand ambassadors: Lifestyle: men
- Brand ambassadors: Lifestyle: women
- Brand ambassadors: Liu Shishi

- Brand ambassadors: Nicole Kidman
- Brand ambassadors: Rory McIlroy
- Brand ambassadors: Sport
- Brand ambassadors: Vianney

The *design inspiration* code group was broken down as follows:

- Design inspiration: brand
- Design inspiration: elegance
- Design inspiration: history
- Design inspiration: locations & architecture
- Design inspiration: moon & space
- Design inspiration: ocean
- Design inspiration: sport
- Design inspiration: utility

The *gift Omega* code group was broken down as follows:

- Gift Omega: Aqua Terra watch as gift
- Gift Omega: Constellation watch as gift
- Gift Omega: De Ville watch as gift
- Gift Omega: Globemaster watch as gift
- Gift Omega: Ladymatic watch as gift
- Gift Omega: Omega as a gift
- Gift Omega: Seamaster watch as gift
- Gift Omega: Speedmaster watch as gift

The *watch design* code group was broken down as follows:

- Watch design: lady's classic watch
- Watch design: lady's sport watch
- Watch design: men's classic watch
- Watch design: men's sport watch

The *watch materials* code group was broken down as follows:

- Watch materials: ceramic
- Watch materials: diamonds
- Watch materials: exotic
- Watch materials: gold
- Watch materials: titanium
- Watch materials: other

Once these groupings were completed, the researcher also grouped the other codes. These code groups were similarly organised by combining closely related codes into small code groups. When two or more of these small code groups had the same overarching theme, these groups were combined into a larger code group. This process of refining and combining code groups ultimately resulted in fewer small code groups with the same meaning. In doing so, the analysis process was simplified. The remainder of the code groups were as follows:

- A beautiful watch
- Additional elements that enhance the experience
- Aesthetic value of the watch
- Anniversary of Apollo 11
- Apollo Missions
- Artisans & craftsmanship
- Astronaut using an Omega
- Attention to detail
- Behind the scenes
- Brand building activities
- Comments on the look of the watch
- Everyday life with an Omega
- Express personality with watch
- Express style & personal taste
- History of the brand

- Incredible achievements with Omega watches
- Innovation, research & development
- James Bond
- Moon landing
- More than the sum of its parts
- Mystery behind the brand
- NASA & Omega's partnership
- New watch launch
- Olympic Games
- Omega exhibition
- Omega museum
- Omega used in space
- Omega watches for adventures
- Omega watches last a lifetime
- Personalise the look of your watch
- Professional sports
- Quality of the watches
- Soul of the brand
- Space travel
- Special connection to the watch
- Speedmaster used on Apollo missions
- Technical aspects of the watch
- The watches are desirable
- Tool watch for outdoor activities
- Tools for professionals
- Tough & beautiful watch
- Watch can withstand magnetism
- Watch used by soldiers
- Watches for any gender
- Watchmaker

Finally, the researcher had compiled 93 different code groups (including the category code groups). By dividing 1107 codes into 93 code groups, there was an average of

11.9 codes per group. The researcher then exported all the code data into Excel to facilitate further analysis. The next step was to create pivot tables for the groups so that all codes could be hidden below the group name, allowing the researcher to analyse code group names in isolation. This process led to the emergence of patterns that indicated pivotal themes.

4.8 Theme grouping

The next step in the research process was to group the code group names into broad research themes. To do this, the researcher copied all the code group names from the pivot table sheet into a new Excel sheet. The researcher also removed all the category code groups (see figure 4.5) from this analysis, as these code groups were only used for analysis later.

For the theme analysis part of the study, the researcher collapsed each of the *brand ambassador*; *design inspiration*; *gift Omega*; *watch design*, and *watch materials* code group variations into single code groups. In doing so, the final theme groupings would be more concise without losing inherent context or richness. After this initial process had been completed, the researcher was left with eight different themes.

Each code group was allocated only to one theme, and the themes covered various topics. The resulting themes were all representative of the code groups they subsumed. The following section shows how each theme was constructed:

4.8.1 Theme One: Aesthetic value

- A beautiful watch
- Aesthetic value of the watch
- Comments on the look of the watch
- Tough & beautiful watch
- Personalise the look of your watch

4.8.2 Theme Two: Space travel

- Anniversary of Apollo 11
- Apollo Missions
- Astronaut using an Omega
- Moon landing
- NASA & Omega's partnership
- Omega used in space
- Space travel
- Speedmaster used on Apollo missions

4.8.3 Theme Three: Technical expertise

- Watchmaker
- Watch materials
- Watch design
- Design inspiration

4.8.4 Theme Four: Product innovation

- Innovation, research & development
- Artisans & craftsmanship
- Attention to detail
- Technical aspects of the watch
- Quality of the watches

4.8.5 Theme Five: Tool watches

- Watch can withstand magnetism
- Tools for professionals
- Tool watch for outdoor activities
- Omega watches for adventures

- Omega watches last a lifetime
- James Bond

4.8.6 Theme Six: Brand experience

- Behind the scenes
- Brand building activities
- Additional elements that enhance the experience
- History of the brand
- Omega exhibition
- Omega museum
- Brand ambassadors
- Gift Omega
- Everyday life with an Omega
- Express personality with watch
- Express style & personal taste
- New watch launch

4.8.7 Theme Seven: Brand mystery

- Mystery behind the brand
- More than the sum of its parts
- Soul of the brand
- The watches are desirable
- Special connection to the watch

4.8.8 Theme Eight: Human achievement

- Professional sports
- Olympic games
- Incredible achievements with Omega watches

The themes were then further distilled to ensure greater clarity and focus. Four final themes were identified by combining subthemes within each main theme. These four themes are arranged according to the number of subthemes in each group. The *human achievement* theme includes three subthemes, which means that more codes are attributed to this specific theme than any of the other themes. *Product innovation* and *brand experience* follow with two sets of subthemes each, and *aesthetic value* sits in the final position:

- Themes two (*space travel*), five (*tool watches*) and eight (*human achievement*) were combined to create one theme: *human achievement*
- Themes three (*technical expertise*) and four (*product innovation*) were combined to create one theme: *product innovation*
- Themes six (*brand experience*) and seven (*brand mystery*) were combined to create one theme: *brand experience*
- Theme one (*aesthetic value*) remains as is

This process results in the creation of the following condensed themes:

- Theme one: human achievement
- Theme two: product innovation
- Theme three: brand experience
- Theme four: aesthetic value

4.9 Unpacking the creation of themes

The following figure (4.14) shows how the researcher worked with a data source. It documents the qualitative content analysis process used to arrive at the final themes.

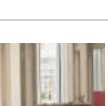
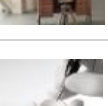
Source Image	Source Text	Code	Code Group	Theme	Final theme
	#Moonwatch Explore the surface of our striking Apollo 11 tribute.	Inviting the viewer to explore and appreciate the design of the watch	Aesthetic value of the watch	Aesthetic value	Aesthetic value
	#MasterChronometer The DeVille #OMEGATresor displays endless elegance in motion, with seamless interactions between space and shape. @Wannerstedt	The use of pink in the background adds a soft and elegant touch to the already elegant watch	Comments on the look of the watch	Aesthetic value	Aesthetic value
	#SeamasterAquaTerra / #OMEGA Golf Orange stripes to play the greens. Check out our full golf collection.	A colourful NATO strap adds a touch of personality to the watch	Personalise the look of your watch	Aesthetic value	Aesthetic value
	#Seamaster The world's deepest watch 10,925m! Thanks to our pioneering spirit and the most advanced engineering and technology, OMEGA has broken a new world record. Today in London, we reveal the extraordinary Planet Ocean Ultra Deep Professional.	Advanced engineering and technology makes Omega watches indispensable tools for professionals	Innovation, research and development	Product innovation	Product innovation
	#MasterChronometer Twelve hours and one observatory. The #OMEGAGlobemaster receives its golden touches.	Watchmaker applies index to dial with a small tweezer – indicates the precise nature of watchmaking	Watchmaker	Technical expertise	Product innovation
	LATEST RELEASE! We blended a precious metal with a captivating mineral and created this!	Blending precious metal and a rare mineral to create a beautiful and special watch	Watch materials	Technical expertise	Product innovation
	#OMEGAmymchoice PARIS – Timepiece of choice for rapidly rising French star @VianneyMusique. #OMEGA's striking new Paris-inspired #Seamaster. Explore the city. Discover the watch.	Talks about exploring the city and the watch in the same context, suggesting that both have more to offer than meets the eye	Mystery behind the brand	Brand mystery	Brand experience
	#OMEGAMuseum Take a look inside our amazing new @OMEGAMuseum. Better still, come and visit.	The brand lets its history take center stage and uses its museum to tell stories from its illustrious past	History of the brand	Brand experience	Brand experience
	#OMEGAConstellation On the Constellation Manhattan, every diamond and star is a refined work of art.	Omega watches are more than just the sum of their parts. They are works of art, made by skilled artisans	More than sum of its parts	Brand mystery	Brand experience
	#Seamaster The surprisingly slim profile and distinctive manta lugs of #OMEGA's Ultra Deep. After reaching a record-breaking depth of 10,925m, it was subjected to the toughest watch tests on land – and certified as a Master Chronometer.	After diving to the greatest depth ever recorded, the watch still passed all laboratory tests	Incredible achievements with Omega watches	Human achievement	Human achievement
	#Speedmaster Eye-catching contrast. The dark subdials and opaline silvery dial of the 18K Sedna™ gold Speedmaster.	Special edition watch to celebrate the first Omega that went to space	Space travel	Space travel	Human achievement
	#OMEGA007 / #BondWatch In stores – February 2020 The wait is over. Set your sights on James Bond's @007 newest style. It's a Diver – but not as you know it! #NoTimeToDie #Bond25	The watch is featured on a rock, signifying its tough, toolwatch nature and its ability to transition from the ocean to the mountains	Tool watch for outdoor activities	Tool watches	Human achievement

Figure 4.14: An overview of the coding process from source to the final theme

Figure 4.14 shows how the researcher approached the theme grouping process by highlighting a single code per post. In practice, a number of codes were used for each post, but for the purpose of this example, the researcher selected a single code. This figure visually displays how the researcher started with the source material, taking both the media and the text components into consideration.

After analysing both sources, the researcher performed descriptive coding to capture the essence of the post and describe what the post entailed and elicited with the viewer. Next, he allocated these codes to higher-order code groups.

The next step was to condense these code groups into logical themes, after which the themes were distilled further into final themes. The same logic that applied to these examples was used throughout all the data.

4.10 Counting qualitative data

As part of the qualitative content analysis process, the researcher counted the frequency with which different codes and keywords occurred in the data. These counts enriched the qualitative data by identifying patterns in the source material, which led to the discovery of latent themes, additional context and a more comprehensive understanding of the content strategies Omega employed in 2019. The following section explains the counting process. The meaning and importance behind these counts are discussed in chapter five.

The researcher created seven different category code groups: *copy*; *content*; *featured*; *topic*; *Omega-featured*; *part of series*, and *reason for post*. Each of these code groups holds a different number of codes, depending on the type of data measured. This section will analyse the entry counts in each of these groups to extract additional meaning from the data. Each section will be different, as the number and frequency of entries differ based on the measured data.

4.10.1 Copy

The *copy* section refers to the written content found in the posts and has four main entries: *statements*, *invitations*, *announcements* and *questions*. From the counts' data in figure 4.15, we can see that Omega relied heavily on posting *statement*-based copy to its Instagram profile.

Statement	196
Invitation	75
Announcement	15
Question	9

Figure 4.15: Copy category code counts data

Invitations were used less than half as frequently as *statements*. Omega also seldomly used *announcements* and *questions* in its posts. Figure 4.16 shows how significant the difference between *statements* and *invitations* were.

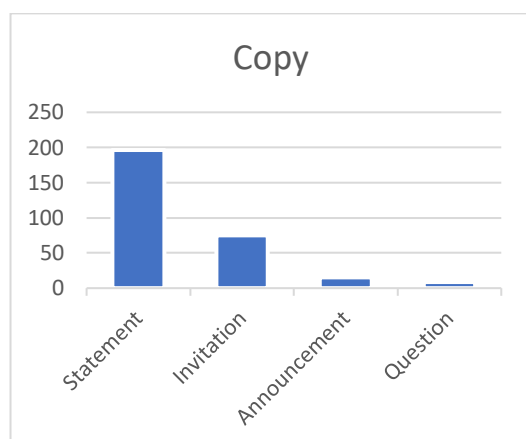


Figure 4.16: Copy category code counts chart

By mainly using *statements*, the brand delivers curated, authoritative messages on various topics while passively addressing the audience. This process is occasionally interrupted by using *invitation*-based copy that elicits a certain level of interactivity, urging the viewer to interpret and mentally respond to the content on offer. An example of a statement found in the copy was: “On the Constellation Manhattan, every diamond and star is a refined work of art.” An example of an invitation in the copy was: “Take a look inside our amazing new Omega Museum. Better still, come and visit”.

4.10.2 Content

The *content* section referred to the visual content found in the posts. There were five different entries: *images*, *image carousels*, *videos*, *video carousels*, and *image and video carousels*. The data counts in figure 4.17 show that Omega predominately shared standalone *images* and frequently used *image carousels* and *videos*.

Image	142
Image carousel	77
Video	58
Image & video carousel	14
Video Carousel	2

Figure 4.17: Content category code counts data

Although *images* were used most frequently, *image carousels* and *videos* were also utilised to great effect on several occasions. *Image and video carousels*, as well as *video carousels*, were used sparingly. Figure 4.18 visually represents the differences in usage between these content types.

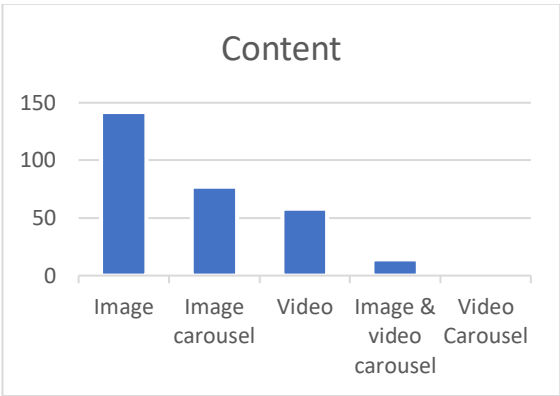


Figure 4.18: Content category code counts chart

Standalone *images* are easily consumable and share a good amount of information. Combined with *statement*-based copy, standalone *images* convey a specific message with clarity and focus. *Image carousels* consist of two or more *images* on the same post and allow the brand to share more visual information with the viewer.

Videos allow the brand to share additional context with the viewer and bring the content and topics to life in ways that images and image carousels cannot do. By using standalone *images*, *videos* and a *mixture of images and videos* in carousel format, Omega can vary the pace and intensity with which it shares stories with its viewers, keeping them engaged. An example of a standalone image post is shared [here](#), and a video featuring an Omega ambassador, Rory McIlroy, can be found [here](#). An example of a series of images used in a carousel format can be found [here](#). An example of a carousel featuring a combination of videos and images can be found [here](#).

4.10.3 Featured

There were 15 different topics in the *featured* section. These topics refer to the specific Omega product ranges that were featured in the content throughout the year. Interestingly, figure 4.19 shows a significant difference regarding the number of times each of these topics were counted in the data.

Speedmaster	75	Ladymatic	4
Seamaster	66	Globemaster	3
Constellation	38	Jewellery	3
None	37	Railmaster	3
Aqua Terra	32	De Ville	2
Trésor	20	Straps	2
Planet Ocean	14	Ploprof	1
NATO strap	6		

Figure 4.19: Featured category code counts data

The least occurring topic, the *Ploprof* watch, was featured only once, whereas the most frequently occurring topic, the *Speedmaster* watch, was featured 75 times. Figure 4.20 visually represents this data.

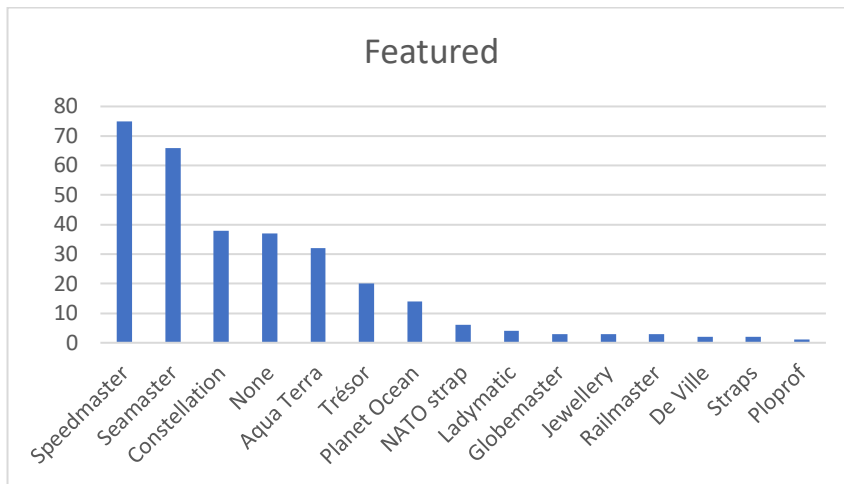


Figure 4.20: Featured category code counts chart

The Speedmaster watch family has been featured most frequently during this period, closely followed by the Seamaster watch family. The Constellation watch family; posts that featured no specific Omega product, and the Aqua Terra watch family made up the other top five most frequently featured category codes. Omega's CEO, Raynald Aeschlimann, stated that the brand is focusing on streamlining its product range around its four main collections. This strategy revolves around removing older models, cutting down on limited editions and focusing on bringing special watches to market. According to Aeschlimann, the Speedmaster is at the forefront of the brand's product strategy due to its global popularity and connection with NASA and the moon landing (Bishop, 2021; Green, 2018).

4.10.4 Topic

This section had 47 different *topic* entries. These entries counted the number of times specific *topics* were featured in the brand's posts. The counts' data in figure 4.21 shows that the majority of *topics* were used between one and three times and that the top five *topics* alone were almost referenced as much as all the other *topics* combined.

Speedmaster	44	Watches + 3D animation	6	Tokyo 2020 olympic games	3
Constellation	38	Dressing up	5	Vintage Omega	3
Seamaster	38	NATO strap	4	World's deepest watch	3
Aqua Terra	24	19-linge "Omega" calibre	3	Apollo 11 anniversary celebration	2
Gifting	17	Apollo 11 mission	3	De Ville	2
Boutique Exclusive	12	Astronaut in space	3	Rockets at the Kennedy Space C	2
Trésor	12	Dressing up at Pitto Uomo	3	Apollo 11 launch	1
History of the brand	11	Ex-soldier	3	Astronauts ready for boarding a r	1
Moon landing	11	Jewellery	3	Calibre 8928 Ti	1
007	9	Olympic athlete	3	George Clooney speaks to Buzz	1
Planet Ocean	9	Omega Golf	3	Globemaster	1
Kennedy Space Center	7	Railmaster	3	Ploprof	1
Calibre 321	6	Space travel	3	Saturn V rocket	1
Exclusive Preview (New watches	6	Special occassion - opening of ex	3	Starmus Festival	1
Swiss heritage	6	Special occassion - Paris Fashion	3	Timeless style example	1
Watch components	6	Special occassion - Valentine's D	3		

Figure 4.21: Topic category code counts data

Below, figure 4.22 shows how the post frequency dramatically skews to the left.

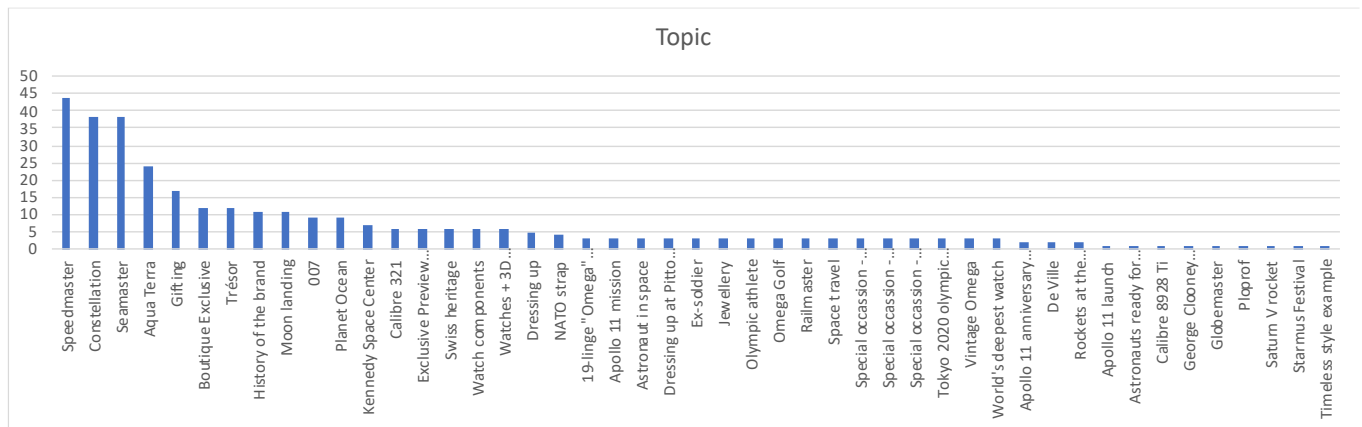


Figure 4.22: Topic category code counts chart

As with the featured section, the Speedmaster watch family was the most frequently referenced *topic* in the posts, followed by the Seamaster watch family. *Gifting* also featured prominently again. The remainder of the counted entries covered a wide variety of *topics*.

4.10.5 Omega-featured

For the *Omega-featured* section, there were ten different entries. The data counts in figure 4.23 show that *space travel* was the most referenced topic, followed by *ambassador activities* and *incredible achievements*.

Space travel	52	Brand collaboration	6
Ambassadors	48	Special exhibition	6
Incredible achievements	45	Calibre 321	3
Astronauts	26	Olympic athlete	3
James Bond	10	Olympic games	3

Figure 4.23: Omega-featured category code counts data

There was a significant difference between the most frequently occurring entry, *space travel*, and the least occurring feature, the *Olympic games*. Figure 4.24 demonstrates the frequency difference between these two features and compares them to the other entries.

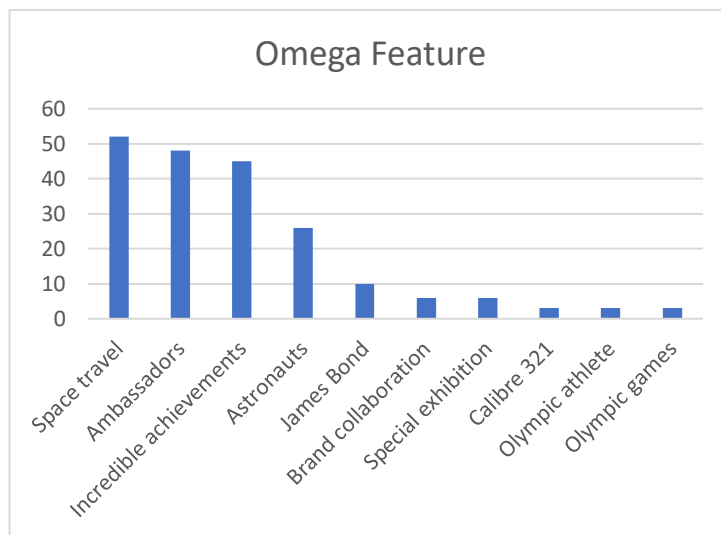


Figure 4.24: Omega-featured category code counts chart

Space travel was the most frequently occurring theme in the *Omega-featured* category section. In most instances, the Speedmaster watch family is directly connected to NASA's *space travel* activities – especially in 2019 when the brand celebrated the 50th anniversary of the Speedmaster. Most of the posts Omega made about Speedmaster watches thus revolve around the theme of *space travel*.

This is closely followed by the topic of *ambassadors* – a very prominent theme in the brand's activities. The brand also consistently referenced the *incredible achievements* astronauts, athletes and a variety of people who were able to accomplish incredible feats whilst wearing Omega watches.

4.10.6 Part of series

The *part of series* section had 59 entries. These entries each served as a summary of the number of individual counts in a specific series of posts. Figure 4.25 shows the counts data for each of these series of posts.

Moonwatch	20	Watch components	6	OmegaGolf	3
Gifting II	14	Watches + 3D animation	6	OmegaMyChoice II	3
Moonwatch IV	12	Dressing up	5	OmegaMyChoice III	3
OmegaMyChoice	12	Constellation His & Hers	4	Paris Fashion Week	3
Constellation Manhattan	9	007	3	PittiUomo	3
Constellation Manhattan II	9	A Collected Man	3	Railmaster	3
Constellation Manhattan III	9	A Collected Man II	3	Seamaster 300	3
History of Omega	9	AquaTerra on a boat	3	Seamaster 1948	3
Moonwatch II	9	Calibre 321	3	Seamaster Diver	3
Moonwatch III	9	Calibre 321 II	3	Seamaster Lapis Lazuli	3
OmegaGolf II	9	Ceramic & titanium Seamaster	3	Seamaster Malachite	3
007 II	6	Change of season	3	Shanghai exhibition	3
Brown & rose gold watches	6	Constellation Citizen K	3	Speedmaster	3
Exclusive Preview	6	Constellation Manhattan IV	3	Valetine's day	3
Moonwatch V	6	De Ville Trésor	3	Vintage Omega	3
Seamaster 300M	6	De Ville Trésor II	3	World's deepest watch	3
Seamaster His & Hers	6	Gifting	3	Speedmaster Moonphase	2
Seamasters by the sea	6	Jewellery	3	Speedy Tuesday	2
Speedmaster winter getaway	6	Olympics	3	Standalone post	2
Swiss made	6	Omega Museum	3		

Figure 4.25: Part of series category code counts data

Figure 4.26 shows that the difference between the series containing the most posts, *Moonwatch*, and the series containing the least posts, *standalone post*, is relatively large at 18 posts.

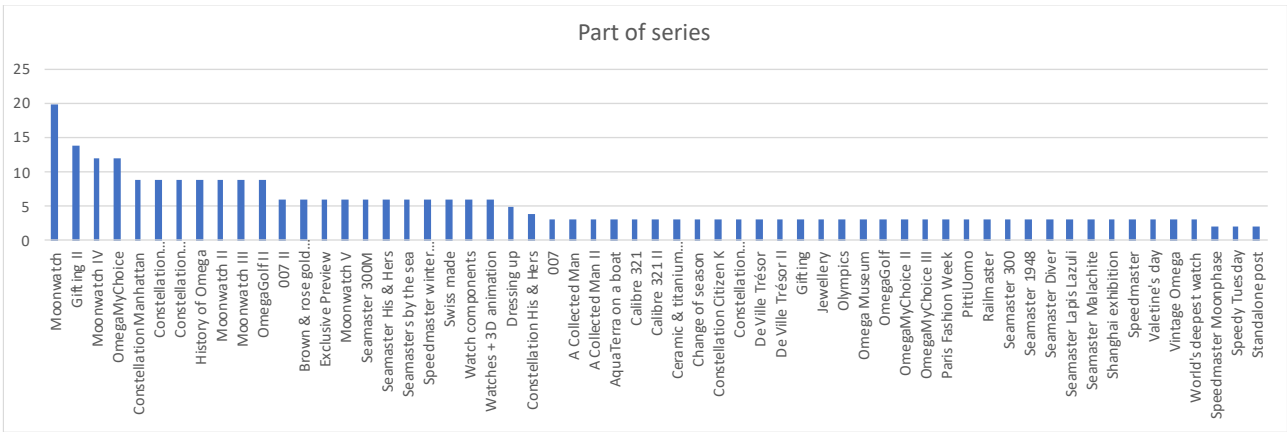


Figure 4.26: Part of series category code counts chart

Moonwatch has been the series of posts with the highest number of individual entries. This was followed by the second instalment of the *gifting* series and then the fourth instalment of the *Moonwatch* series. The *OmegaMyChoice* series was also very popular with a run of 12 entries, followed by three runs of the *Constellation Manhattan*, all featuring nine entries.

As with a number of the previous category code groups, Speedmaster (*Moonwatch*) related content consistently scores high in all these categories, indicating a concerted effort by the brand to capitalise on the popularity of this specific watch family.

4.10.7 Reason for post

The *reason for post* category had four different topics: *tell a story*, *showcase product features*, *share general content* and *launch a product*. Figure 4.27 shares the accumulated counts of each of these entries.

Tell a story	111
Showcase product features	98
Share general content	78
Launch a product	48

Figure 4.27: Reason for post category code counts data

The counts' data show that these four category topics were all used relatively frequently. Figure 4.28 shows the relationship between these entries.

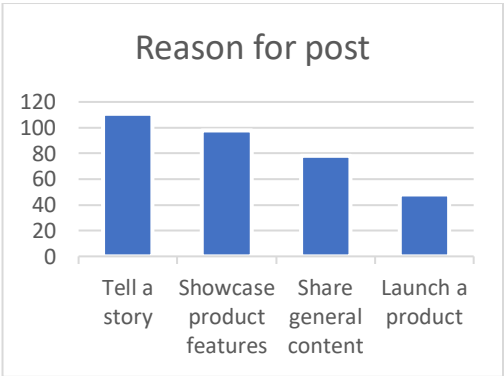


Figure 4.28: Reason for post category code counts chart

Omega used all four of these *reason for post* topics to plan its posts. These four topics summarised the reasoning behind every post it made during that year. The data shows that Omega's strategy is rooted in storytelling as a mechanism to communicate with the brand's followers on Instagram. The brand combines its ability to *tell a story* with posts that *showcase product features* to great effect, creating an astute mixture between exciting and aspirational content (*tell a story*) and functional and informative (*showcase product features*). It used *share general content* frequently to differentiate between the first two *reasons for post* topics, and also *launches a product* as determined by its product strategy.

4.10.8 Summary

After analysing the results across all seven categories (*copy, content, topic, featured, Omega-featured, part of series and reason for post*), the researcher created a table featuring the top three results in each code group.

<u>Category</u>	<u>First Position</u>	<u>Second Position</u>	<u>Third Position</u>
Copy	Statement	Invitation	Announcement
Content	Image	Image carousel	Video
Featured	Speedmaster	Seamaster	Constellation
Topic	Speedmaster	Constellation	Seamaster
Omega featured	Space travel	Ambassadors	Incredible achievements
Part of series	Moonwatch	Gifting II	Moonwatch IV
Reason for post	Tell a story	Showcase product features	Share general content

Figure 4.29: Category code group summary chart

The results (Figure 4.29) showed that Omega mainly used *statements* and *images* in posts to tell viewers a story. Speedmaster watches were the topic of many of these stories, and the *copy* and *content* of these posts also featured Speedmaster watches. These posts were generally *part of a series* which focused on the Moonwatch (a Speedmaster model), and touched on Omega's involvement in space travel.

The second most occurring set of entries suggests that Omega used *image carousel* and *invitation*-based copy to showcase the product features of Seamaster watches. These posts were also aimed at promoting the Constellation family of watches; the brand used ambassadors to great effect throughout this content. Several posts explained how Omega watches make the perfect gifts over the festive season.

The third most occurring set of entries suggests that Omega used *video* and *announcement*-based copy to share general content with its viewers. These videos often featured Constellation watches or were focused on the Seamaster family of watches. These posts showcased Omega's incredible achievements, and several other posts that were part of the Moonwatch series.

Although these three summaries do not refer to specific, actual posts, they set an example of the types of posts the brand would share to its Instagram page based on the data gathered and the interpreted counts. These findings are discussed in greater depth in the following chapter.

4.11 Research themes

All the research conducted as part of this qualitative content analysis process culminated in a set of four main themes. These themes summarise the data in a way that provides a great degree of clarity, which enables a deeper understanding of the motivations behind Omega's brand strategy. In order of importance, the final themes that emerged from the data are:

- Theme one: human achievement
- Theme two: product innovation
- Theme three: brand experience
- Theme four: aesthetic value

4.11.1 Theme one: human achievement

Human achievement is a key component of the Omega brand identity. The human achievement theme combined three themes: **space travel**, **tool watches** and **human achievement**. This theme thus includes the following category code groups: *anniversary of Apollo 11; Apollo missions; astronaut using an Omega; moon landing; NASA and Omega's partnership; Omega used in space; space travel; Speedmaster used on Apollo missions; watch can withstand magnetism; tools for professionals; tool*

watch for outdoor activities; Omega watches for adventures; Omega watches last a lifetime; James Bond; professional sports; Olympic games, and incredible achievements with Omega watches.

Some of the most important achievements in human history have been made whilst wearing an Omega watch. These achievements have been the starting point for a large number of Omega's marketing activities through the years. All of NASA's missions in space have counted on Omega's watchmaking expertise to equip their astronauts with the best tools for timekeeping. All Olympic records since 1932 have been timed and confirmed by Omega's technology (SwissWatchExpo, 2021; Chan, 2018). Athletes and soldiers rely on the watches' accuracy to complete their events and missions, and professionals in various fields use Omega watches to execute their daily duties.

Omega's unwavering focus on achieving engineering perfection to support human adventure continues to advance its aim of building the most precise timekeeping tools in the world. These qualities are what draws customers to the brand. By constantly reinforcing the idea that people achieve incredible things whilst wearing Omega watches, viewers are captivated by the brand and immersed in its stories of human achievement. These brand building activities ultimately help to position Omega as the pre-eminent watch brand for aficionados; those interested in watchmaking, and customers intent on purchasing watches that have stood the test of time. Omega's CEO, Raynald Aeschlimann, said that his brand's watches are for achievers: watches with substance that people wear with pride (Hartov, 2022).

4.11.2 Theme two: product innovation

Product innovation is at the core of Omega's watchmaking ethos. This theme is a combination of two themes: *technical expertise* and *product innovation*. These two themes included the following category code groups: *watchmaker; watch materials; watch design; design inspiration; innovation; research and development; artisans and craftsmanship; attention to detail; technical aspects of the watch, and quality of the watches.*

Omega's technical expertise is undisputed. The brand mass-produces the Co-Axial escapement, manufactures movements that received the world's first METAS-certified Master Chronometer rating, and builds watches that can withstand 15 000 gauss of magnetism (SwissWatchExpo, 2021; Chan, 2018). Omega's state-of-the-art manufacturing facilities in Switzerland are a testament to the brand's relentless focus on innovation. With multiple manufacturing and assembly facilities, skilled watchmakers and artisans use a variety of machines, tools and skilled labour to craft 1478 different types of watches made with steel, gold, alloys, ceramic, titanium, diamonds and exotic stones. Attention to detail—informed by innovation, research and development—as well as the most stringent quality standards enable the brand to craft watches of the highest order, designed to withstand the most intense challenges (Omega, 2021b; Ho, 2016; SJX, 2016; O'Neil, 2014).

This focus on producing watches of the highest quality has allowed the brand to become a true industry leader, the only real challenger to the Rolex watch brand and a beacon of technical innovation and expertise (Gomelsky, 2017). Omega watches have survived some of the harshest conditions known to man—the moon, the North and South poles and the deepest part of earth's oceans—proving the brand's watchmaking excellence (SwissWatchExpo, 2021; White, 2019).

4.11.3 Theme three: brand experience

The Omega brand connotes much more than just watchmaking: its products demand to be experienced. This theme combined the two themes of *brand mystery* and *brand experience*. The *brand experience* theme includes the following category code groups: *mystery behind the brand; more than the sum of its parts; soul of the brand; the watches are desirable; special connection to the watch; behind the scenes; brand building activities; additional elements that enhance the experience; history of the brand; Omega exhibition; Omega museum; brand ambassadors; gift Omega; everyday life with an Omega; express personality with watch; express style and personal taste, and new watch launch.*

Few brands have such an illustrious past as Omega. By being involved in a variety of disciplines, the brand's marketing and stories have reached audiences the world over.

The brand's achievements have been memorialised in a number of exhibitions, museums and brand experiences. These activities enable Omega to share a part of the brand with its audiences in real life: both online and in person. Omega uses these brand building tools and activities to strengthen its brand identity and promote the Omega lifestyle – one filled with adventure, excitement and achievement.

When considering its museums and pop-up exhibitions; its sponsorship of elite sporting and lifestyle events; its contributions to society through its support of NGO's such as Orbis International and the GoodPlanet Foundation; its extensive involvement with the entertainment industry, and the execution of its brand plans through social media and other digital platforms, the Omega story is tangible, highly aspirational, and appeals to a wide range of individuals and organisations with similar values. The brand's strategy aims to translate these stories of Omega's historic legacy and modern excellence into experiences that its customers can immerse themselves in, resulting in a highly engaged and committed audience.

4.11.4 Theme four: aesthetic value

As a visual representation of Omega's outlook on watchmaking, the aesthetic value of its watches is of the utmost importance to the brand. This theme included the following category code groups: *a beautiful watch*; *aesthetic value of the watch*; *comments on the look of the watch*; *tough and beautiful watch*, and *personalise the look of your watch*. However, this specific theme touches on more than just the visual appearance of Omega's watches. At present, Omega has 1478 different watches in its catalogue (Omega, 2021a). An average customer would likely not find all of these watches appealing, as the value of Omega's watches is relative to the tastes and perceptions of the person wearing them. The large and diverse Omega catalogue is calibrated to cater to the sophisticated and refined tastes of luxury watch customers around the world.

The aesthetic value of Omega watches is centred on the emotional connotations people form with them. Omega watches can thus be described as functional jewellery pieces through which customers can express and enhance their identities. Omega watches are not just technical tools that tell the time but also signifiers of cues and

messages the wearer wishes to communicate to those around them. The watch thus becomes an extension of the person wearing it: a companion. The act of wearing the watch also merges the identity of the owner with the brand identity of Omega.

4.12 Research evaluation

In order for the data in this study to be of value, the rigour and trustworthiness of the data had to be ensured. This was done by carefully considering the credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability of the research. The following section describes each of these four factors as they relate to the data analysis of the study.

4.12.1 Credibility

Credibility is a measure of the trustworthiness of the data and also refers to the internal validity of the data. In qualitative research, credibility is ensured when the data itself, as well as the research methods, are trustworthy (Decarlo, 2018). Trustworthiness of the data was ensured by carefully copying each data entry directly from Instagram onto a document, without altering any copy, media or links. Furthermore, the research methods used—a case study, qualitative content analysis and qualitative counts analysis—are commonly accepted and utilised by numerous researchers. By actively sharing the exact process the researcher followed and using references where appropriate, the researcher showed that he used credible methods to collect and analyse the data. The researcher ensured that the research and subsequent results are trustworthy and credible by following a systematic and transparent process (Decarlo, 2018).

4.12.2 Transferability

The transferability of the research refers to the extent to which the research can be transferred to different contexts outside of the initial study. To do so, the researcher needed to describe the research context and assumptions. In the context of this study, the selection of the research sample and the unit of analysis from the entire research population was described in detail (Trochim, n.d.). The sampling method—purposive,

non-probability sampling—was discussed together with the researcher’s perspective and the theoretical framework from which the research was conducted. The data gathering, analysis and interpretation steps were all explained and discussed. The use of different research methods was explained and detailed along the way. All these steps ensure the transferability of this study’s results. This implies that the results from this study may be applied to other luxury brands outside of the luxury watch industry where the intent is to create brand advocates through strategic initiatives on Instagram.

4.12.3 Dependability

The dependability of the research refers to the extent to which the researcher’s findings can be replicated under similar circumstances (Merriam, 1998: 205). Since each researcher’s background and perspective will be different based on their lived experiences and theoretical approach, the possibility exists that each researcher might come to differing conclusions when reproducing this study. In order to ensure that the research was dependable, the researcher documented the entire research process while also making all biases and chosen theoretical frameworks known. Thorough record-keeping and in-depth descriptions of the research process ensured the dependability of this study. These actions ensure that other researchers could replicate the results of this study using similar data and research procedure at a later stage (Merriam, 1998: 205).

4.12.4 Confirmability

Confirmability refers to the degree of neutrality in the research findings and is based on the actual data as opposed to the researcher’s biases. Throughout the research process, the researcher endeavoured to be self-aware and mindful of personal bias. This ensured that bias did not skew the research findings. This was done by letting the data itself control the narrative; checking and re-checking the data to make sure there is no personal bias, and using ATLAS.ti to keep a clear and concise record of how each post was coded. By using the same research methods, theoretical foundation and following the same research process, the researcher is confident that future

researchers will come to the same conclusions the researcher made (Korstjens & Moser, 2018; Trochim, n.d.).

4.13 Conclusion

This chapter explained the research process the researcher followed when conducting primary research, with specific focus on the inductive data analysis process and the findings uncovered in the raw data. The researcher used qualitative content analysis to code all of Omega's 2019 Instagram posts. This method enabled the researcher to code each post based on a pre-determined coding guideline. When coding the data, the researcher searched for both manifest and latent themes. The codes from these posts were then sorted into descriptive and category code groups for further analysis, before being combined to create overarching themes. Finally, the initial eight themes were condensed to create four main themes that form the culmination of the primary research findings. The researcher also used qualitative counts analysis which contributed to a much richer understanding of Omega's Instagram brand strategy. The researcher's personal perspective was considered while meticulously documenting the research process so as not to skew the data. Doing so allowed the researcher to answer the research goal of understanding Omega's approach to brand building on Instagram.

The four themes identified in this chapter, as well as the insight uncovered through the use of qualitative counts analysis, are discussed in the following chapter in relation to the research objective, the research questions, the theoretical grounding, and the lenses of Narrative Transportation Theory and Transient Competitive Advantage. Throughout this study, the researcher was intent on ensuring the credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability of the research. The detailed research process used in this study ensures that future researchers will be able to replicate the study and come to similar conclusions. In addition to the in-depth discussion on the findings, the following chapter focuses on the limitations of this study, recommendations for further research, and the significance of the study.

CHAPTER 5

RESEARCH RESULTS DISCUSSION

5.1 Introduction

The final chapter of this study begins with a review of the conceptual framework. Thereafter, the researcher discusses the findings of the study, taking into consideration everything he has analysed and ascertained from the raw data and literature review. Finally, the researcher makes recommendations for other brand strategists to follow, discusses the possible limitations of the study and suggests areas for future research.

5.2 Conceptual framework

The first research question culminated in the creation of the theoretical and conceptual frameworks. The researcher created the conceptual framework to analyse the research findings. In this framework (figure 5.1), the researcher identified *brand narrative* as an independent variable. This entails Omega sharing selected narratives through the use of storytelling on Instagram with images, videos and text orchestrated around specific messages the brand wishes to convey to its followers. *Brand advocacy* was identified as the dependent variable in the framework. The creation of brand advocacy is therefore dependent on the success with which brand narratives are shared with followers. In this framework, *persuasion* was identified as the mediator in the relationship between brand narrative and brand advocacy. Persuasion dictates the extent to which brand narrative leads to brand advocacy. When followers are persuaded by the content the brand shares on Instagram, brand advocacy can be created.

The researcher acknowledges that a number of studies have already proved that storytelling can lead to persuasion (Van Laer *et al.*, 2019; Huang *et al.*, 2018; Kim *et al.*, 2016; Van Laer *et al.*, 2014; Appel & Richter, 2007; Green & Brock, 2002). A narrative-driven content strategy can result in followers becoming immersed in and

subsequently persuaded by brand narratives. When persuasion occurs, it can lead to positive affective responses towards a brand and its products (Huang *et al.*, 2018).

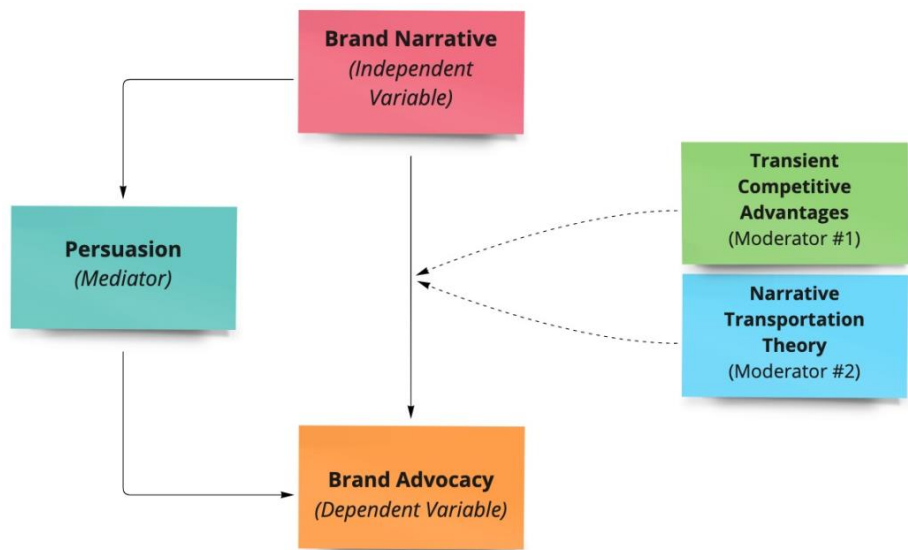


Figure 5.1: Conceptual framework

As previously mentioned, positive affective responses towards a brand often lead to favourable communication about that brand. Furthermore, the recommendation of a brand's products to other people and the defence of a product when under attack are all examples of brand advocacy behaviour (Kemp *et al.*, 2012; Keller, 2007; Park & MacInnis, 2006). For persuasion to occur, the brand's followers need to engage with the brand. Dessart, Veloutsou and Morgan-Thomas (2015) postulated that the concept of customer engagement has three elements: affective engagement (enthusiasm for and enjoyment of the content), cognitive engagement (attention to and absorption in the content) and behavioural engagement (sharing, learning and endorsing the content). When these three types of engagement occur, the brand's followers could have a higher likelihood of being persuaded by the content. Given these insights, the extent to which brand narrative can result in brand advocacy is mediated by the extent to which narrative persuasion occurs.

In addition to persuasion as the mediator, Transient Competitive Advantage and Narrative Transportation Theory were also added as moderators in the relationship between brand narrative and brand advocacy. In this framework, these two variables moderate the effect that the independent variable, brand narrative, has on the

dependent variable, brand advocacy. Omega uses its Transient Competitive Advantage to create content that is uniquely positioned to immerse its followers in the brand. Sharing brand narratives based on these advantages allows the brand to illustrate its unique selling points in an authentic way. The more enticing the transient content, the higher the likelihood that brand narrative will lead to the creation of brand advocacy.

The second moderating variable, Narrative Transportation Theory, moderates the relationship between brand narrative and brand advocacy by proposing how exactly the brand should share content on Instagram. This specific theory explains how immersion in a narrative can result in a viewer losing themselves in a story (Nell, 1988), before persuading that viewer and changing their perception about the brand (Green & Brock, 2002). This positive change can remain consistent or increase over time (Appel & Richter, 2007) and ultimately leads to the creation of brand advocacy. Narrative Transportation Theory therefore moderates the relationship between brand narrative and brand advocacy by interpreting/influencing the success with which Omega's stories on Instagram results in brand advocacy behaviour.

In the following section, the researcher interprets the findings of the primary research using the conceptual framework as a lens.

5.3 Interpretation of research findings

This section discusses the four themes identified in the research. Before the interpretation can commence, the researcher reiterates once more the research purpose and questions to contextualise the interpretation of the findings:

The aim of the research is to explore how Omega creates brand advocacy on Instagram by analysing its strategic brand initiatives through the lenses of Transient Competitive Advantage and Narrative Transportation Theory.

The first research question created a theoretical grounding that enabled the researcher to explore and understand Omega's brand building activities that lead to the brand's leadership position in the luxury watch industry.

Question one:

Which key concepts and constructs in the existing brand literature will yield greater insight into how Omega utilises Instagram to create brand advocacy?

After the theoretical and conceptual frameworks were created in response to the first research question, the researcher defined the three primary research questions that related to Omega's brand building activities:

Question two:

Which storytelling elements, themes and media types does Omega employ when sharing content with its followers on Instagram that may elicit brand advocacy?

Question three:

How does Omega employ Narrative Transportation Theory in its storytelling activities on Instagram to elicit possible brand advocacy?

Question four:

How does Omega use Transient Competitive Advantage on Instagram to elicit possible brand advocacy?

The primary research conducted using qualitative content analysis and qualitative counts analysis resulted in the identification of four main themes with subthemes. These themes form the core identity of Omega and will be interpreted using the conceptual framework. The final themes that emerged from the data are:

- Theme one: human achievement (which combined space travel, tool watches and human achievement)
- Theme two: product innovation (which combined technical expertise and product innovation)

- Theme three: brand experience (which combined brand mystery and brand experience)
- Theme four: aesthetic value

5.3.1 Theme one: Human achievement

The first theme identified in the research, human achievement, represents everything Omega wearers have achieved throughout the brand's illustrious history. This includes both influential people who are featured in Omega brand narratives as well as the brand's customers who create their own memories wearing the brand's watches. As a theme, human achievement summarises the daring spirit of adventure that so many of its customers possess or aspire to. Omega has become much more than a watch brand – it has become an exemplification of human excellence. This theme supports the core idea that Omega inspires its customers to achieve the impossible.

For the first theme, the researcher combined the themes space travel, tool watches and human achievement into a final theme: human achievement. This theme includes the following category code groups: *anniversary of Apollo 11; Apollo missions; astronaut using an Omega; moon landing; NASA and Omega's partnership; Omega used in space; space travel; Speedmaster used on Apollo missions; watch can withstand magnetism; tools for professionals; tool watch for outdoor activities; Omega watches for adventures; Omega watches last a lifetime; James Bond; professional sports; Olympic Games, and incredible achievements with Omega watches.*

5.3.1.1 Brand narrative

Some of humankind's greatest achievements have been accomplished while wearing Omega watches. Through the Olympic Games, the brand has been present for the breaking of more records than any other watch brand. Omega has accompanied astronauts into space to land on the moon and return to earth. The brand was also present for the deepest ocean dive to date (SwissWatchExpo, 2021; Chan, 2018). Through these and other remarkable achievements, Omega has solidified its position as the watch of choice for adventurous professionals who believe in pushing beyond the limits. Human achievement forms the foundation of this drive towards achieving

the impossible: a trait Omega has become known for and which serves as the inspiration for its brand narratives on Instagram.

As part of the research process, the researcher created a category code group that referred to instances, events, activities or characters that help build and reinforce the brand's identity. Ten code groups were identified in the data (figure 5.2) and the number of instances each code group was referred to was counted. Seven of the ten code groups were related to the human achievement theme, and 72% of all the posts that were divided into these code groups referred to human achievement. Omega actively promoted the human achievement theme in most of its brand building content. The counts data affirms that human achievement is the leading theme that embodies the Omega brand's essence.

Space travel	52	Brand collaboration	6
Ambassadors	48	Special exhibition	6
Incredible achievements	45	Calibre 321	3
Astronauts	26	Olympic athlete	3
James Bond	10	Olympic games	3

Figure 5.2: Omega-featured category code counts data featuring human achievement-focused topics

As previously mentioned, Omega watches are not bought for their status as investment pieces, and neither are they sold using scarcity tactics to push up their prices on the second-hand market. For decades, Omega has been bought because it is the watch of choice for those who wish to achieve the impossible and challenge the *status quo*.

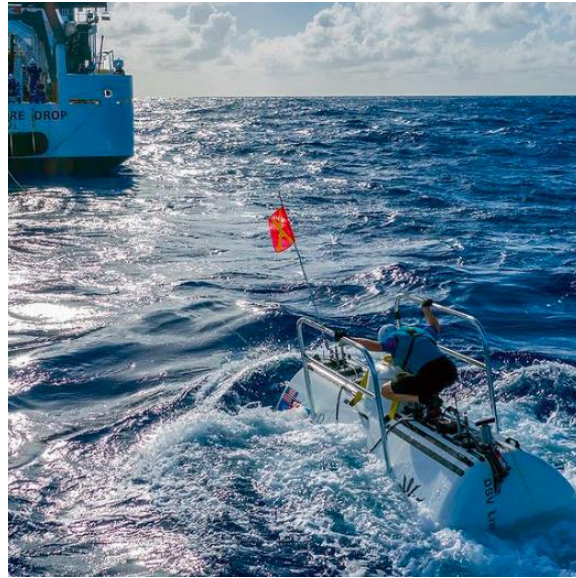
Omega's emphasis on celebrating human achievements in its brand building activities allowed it to keep its existing customers engaged and immersed. At the same time the brand's successful creation of Transient Competitive Advantage captured the imagination of a new generation of watch enthusiasts by making its traditional values relevant to the modern landscape (Szegedi & Boudrand, 2021). By combining heritage with its unwavering focus on achievement, the brand seizes new opportunities as they arise – the Five Deeps mission with a special Omega watch being a prime example (seen [here](#), [here](#) and [here](#)).

Another instance is when the triple Olympic gold medallist rower, Pete Reed Officer of the British Empire (OBE), was featured. Over a series of three posts ([here](#), [here](#) and [here](#)) featuring an image, a video and an image carousel, Reed told viewers about his sporting journey and how an Omega watch was on his wrist when he won his first gold medal.

In another example, Omega shared three posts about an author and ex-SAS (Special Air Service, an elite British military force) member under the pseudonym James Deegan. These posts were shared in the same format of an image, video and image carousel ([here](#), [here](#) and [here](#)). In this example, Omega shows that its watches are also worn by people who achieve incredible things outside of the sporting and lifestyle arenas that the brand is associated with. These examples indicate that the brand is not satisfied with only its successes of the past, but rather with its limitless future. Omega watches are for tomorrow's visionaries – those who choose the best watch for the job, as proven by those before them.

Every two years, the brand creates a special watch dedicated to the summer and winter Olympic Games (Omega, 2022d). These anticipated watches are built in celebration of the event that is the pinnacle of the international sporting calendar. The watches are adored, collected and enjoyed by many wanting their own piece of Olympic glory. The watch is their ticket to the experience; their chance to feel greatness. Examples of these watches made for the Olympic games can be seen [here](#) and [here](#).

Two images from the 2019 calendar year (figures 5.3 and 5.4) act as examples of how Omega immerses its followers. The first image (figure 5.3) shows an astronaut on the moon's surface, wearing his Omega Speedmaster while saluting the USA flag. This image is significant and historic; it celebrates humankind's striving for greatness, while also solidifying America's role in getting humans to the moon.



From left to right: Omega (2019)

Figure 5.3: Astronaut on the surface of the moon wearing an Omega Speedmaster

Figure 5.4: The Five Deeps submersible surfacing after completing its record-breaking dive

The second image (figure 5.4) was taken after the Five Deeps submersible made its record-breaking dive. Together, these images show the highest point in space and the deepest point in the ocean that humans have ever explored. These images and achievements are especially noteworthy, as Omega was present in both instances. The various examples confirm the brand narrative that Omega is at the forefront of human achievement.

5.3.1.2 Narrative Transportation Theory

Since the dawn of time, humans have celebrated victories and mourned losses through emotive storytelling. Today, people have become adept at using stories for commercial gain: narratives shared through storytelling have the ability to engage and subsequently persuade customers to take action. These immersive brand stories can also create experiences that are transformational for consumers (Van Laer *et al.*, 2019; Phillips & McQuarrie, 2010). Few stories are as impactful as that of the Apollo 11 mission.

Not many events have captured the fascination of people around the globe quite like the 1969 moon landing. One small step for man turned out to be one giant leap for Omega too; the brand used its involvement in that historic event as the basis for a

substantial amount of its marketing activities in the decades that followed. As previously mentioned, 2019 was the 50th anniversary of the Apollo 11 mission that put man on the moon for the first time. To celebrate this momentous occasion, Omega dedicated a considerable portion of its 2019 content plan to all things space related.

The researcher's data showed that Omega used the moon landing and a number of other NASA missions to catapult its watches into the limelight in 2019. During that year, Omega featured Speedmaster watches in its content more than any other watch from its catalogue (figure 5.5). This finding suggests that Omega actively uses the Speedmaster as the exemplification of its core brand identity of achieving the impossible. The *Omega-featured* category code counts data also shows that *Space Travel* and *Astronauts* codes combined accounted for almost 40% of all the codes in this group. When adding *Incredible Achievement* codes to this, these three code groups account for almost 61% of all codes in the *Omega-featured* category.

The *Speedmaster* was also the most frequently referenced topic in Omega's content plan, and *space travel* was the most frequently occurring brand building theme in the posts (figure 5.5). The longest series of posts during the year (totalling 20) also focused on the Moonwatch. The Speedmaster played an integral part in the brand's past, and it will also play a part in its future. A very special Speedmaster-themed project was launched in March 2022, which made the model and the brand more accessible and more appealing to a wider audience. This project will be discussed later in the chapter under the *brand experience* theme.

<u>Category</u>	<u>First Position</u>	<u>Second Position</u>	<u>Third Position</u>
Copy	Statement	Invitation	Announcement
Content	Image	Image carousel	Video
Featured	Speedmaster	Seamaster	Constellation
Topic	Speedmaster	Constellation	Seamaster
Omega featured	Space travel	Ambassadors	Incredible achievements
Part of series	Moonwatch	Gifting II	Moonwatch IV
Reason for post	Tell a story	Showcase product features	Share general content

Figure 5.5: Category code group summary chart

Throughout the 2019 calendar year, Omega took its viewers on a journey with NASA (figures 5.6 to 5.9). The brand visited NASA's control room, launch sites, warehouses and rockets through various photos and videos. The content gave viewers a glimpse

behind the scenes of an astronaut's life, and provided historical clips from NASA's archives along with interviews and features of the astronauts.

Throughout the content, Omega highlighted its part in this journey, explained how their Speedmaster was selected, tested and then used for the Apollo missions, and confirmed that its watches always performed exactly as needed. The brand also used George Clooney as the main narrator who frequently interviewed the astronauts Dr Buzz Aldrin and Charlie Duke. This extended coverage by one of the world's most famous actors attributed to the credibility and relevancy of the stories.



From left to right: Omega (2019)

Figure 5.6: NASA control centre at the Johnson Space Centre

Figure 5.7: One of NASA's rockets

Figure 5.8: A NASA astronaut wearing an Omega Speedmaster over his suit in space

Figure 5.9: George Clooney discussing space travel with Dr Buzz Aldrin

When referencing figure 5.5 (which summarised the top three most frequently occurring data points in Omega's Instagram activities), it becomes apparent that most of Omega's content focused on the Speedmaster. Through its connection with the Apollo space programme, this specific watch is the exemplification of humankind's aim to achieve the impossible.

In Omega's posts during the 2019 calendar year, the brand celebrated human achievement more than any other theme, and as the examples illustrate, this theme allowed the brand to create transformational and immersive storytelling experiences. In order to assist the brand in creating these content pieces, Omega utilised the unique opportunities at its disposal in the form of Transient Competitive Advantage.

5.3.1.3 Transient Competitive Advantage

At the core of Transient Competitive Advantage lays the notion that businesses should move from one advantage to the next, before the competition catches up to them (see Video Blog: The End of Competitive Advantage 2014 | Rita McGrath, 2018). In the case of Omega and its Speedmaster watch's connection to the Apollo programmes, its competitive advantage is virtually set in stone: no other brand can take this achievement away from Omega. And yet, as time goes on, fewer people will understand the relevance and magnitude of the Apollo mission. As technology progresses, so too does the perception of progress, and in time, NASA and Omega's achievements on the moon will be relegated to the history books. In the context of this study, the moon landing itself was not a Transient Competitive Advantage; the 50th anniversary of the event was, and the brand exploited it perfectly.

How then can Omega use its role in this incredible story to create Transient Competitive Advantage? By moving onto the next chapter of the story. In addition to selling a reissue of the watch that went to the moon, Omega updates its Speedmaster catalogue by adding new iterations and interpretations based on the latest technology. In 2019 alone, the brand released two special edition Speedmaster models in celebration of the 50th anniversary of Apollo 11 (figures 5.10 and 5.11).



Figure 5.10: Omega Speedmaster Apollo 11 50th Anniversary Limited Edition in steel (Bues, 2019)



Figure 5.11: Omega Speedmaster Apollo 11 50th Anniversary Limited Edition in yellow gold (Stacey, 2019)



Figure 5.12: Omega Speedmaster Moonwatch (Omega, 2022b)

These watches joined an already expansive Speedmaster collection, inspired by the successes in space, but guided by modern tastes, materials and manufacturing techniques. With the idea of space travel becoming ever more popular—especially amongst the wealthy—Omega is well positioned to capitalise on this burgeoning industry. This insight can be supported from a historical perspective considering its legacy of supplying the Apollo missions, as well as from a technical perspective.

As the research has shown, Omega is always yearning for more: new technologies, new partnerships, new ambassadors, and new opportunities to innovate. It is precisely this human endeavour of striving towards progress that underpins the brand's essence of achieving the impossible. As an exceptionally agile brand, Omega responds to the opportunities it is presented with. Changing global trends and rapid technological advancements influence the market in which Omega operates, but its ability to seize Transient Competitive Advantage reinforces the notion that Omega is a leader brand in the luxury watch industry.

5.3.1.4 Persuasion

In the context of the Olympics' motto, "faster, higher, stronger - together", the words *faster*, *higher* and *stronger* are used to describe the ultimate in human achievement. Used together, these words push athletes to perform to the best of their abilities. The idea of achieving the impossible also serves as the guiding principle for the creation of Omega's Instagram content: the most aspirational and inspirational stories, shared with conviction and enthusiasm, constantly pushing boundaries and redefining the customer-brand relationship. *Together*, then, serves as a signifier of the brand's followers within this relationship. Value for both parties is created through the process of consumer immersion in the content, which then leads to the creation of brand advocacy. This brand advocacy, in turn, draws more followers to the brand, which completes one cycle and starts another (Ramadan *et al.*, 2018; Sashi, 2012). The "togetherness" of both parties in this relationship is therefore an integral part of the brand's strategy – one that has been refined and perfected and serves as an example for other companies to see.

Omega's celebration of the 50th anniversary of the moon landing in 2019 was shared with followers on a number of occasions throughout the calendar year using actors,

astronauts, special edition watches and an array of original and archive content. The brand's followers were treated to one of the most storied celebrations of a brand partnership (Omega x NASA) in the watch industry. As previously mentioned, the work of Bughin *et al.* (2010) found that customers interested in purchasing luxury goods want to absorb more information and take more time to make their purchase decisions. Considering this insight, the brand's decision to spread the 50th anniversary celebration out across the calendar year meant that the brand's followers were exposed to a significant amount of Speedmaster-themed content over the period: enough to become immersed and persuaded.

Considering the breadth, depth and frequency with which the brand spoke about the involvement of the Speedmaster in the Apollo programmes, it is no surprise that followers could have been drawn into this narrative (Van Laer *et al.*, 2014; Phillips & McQuarrie 2010). Within the growing online watch enthusiasts community, there is this notion that a watch becomes more than just a watch once it is connected to something larger and more important (Pennington, 2021). For many people, wearing an Omega Speedmaster makes them feel like they are astronauts themselves. This type of roleplaying completely captivates audiences and makes them feel part of something bigger than themselves (Pennington, 2021; Stacey, 2021).

This notion can be extended to the Omega watches worn by the film character James Bond. The partnership with the Bond franchise started in 1995, with Bond (played by Pierce Brosnan) wearing a Seamaster 300M Quartz watch with a blue dial. Nine films later, and Bond has worn nine different Omega watches. For the first seven films of the partnership, Bond wore Omega watches straight from the catalogue, some of which were fictitiously upgraded with special gadgets in the films. Fans of the franchise could therefore purchase these watches and channel their inner Bond in the process. Through the years, Omega has also released a few special-edition Bond-themed watches to great fanfare.

For the two most recent Bond films, *Spectre* and *No Time To Die*, Omega created two watches specifically designed for the films (figure 5.13 and 5.14). Made with input from Bond actor Daniel Craig, these watches were also released to the public, making it even easier to wear James Bond's watch (Goulard, 2021; 2015). The Seamaster

300M “007” Edition is a non-limited watch intended to feature in the Omega line-up for a long time. Speaking of said watch, the Chief Executive Officer of Watches of Switzerland (a British retailer of Swiss luxury watches), Brian Duffy, said the group experienced a “huge demand” for this particular watch after the release of *No Time To Die* – both in the UK and the USA (Bourke, 2021). This is exactly the power that narrative-driven content strategies can have when executed well.



Figure 5.13: Omega Seamaster 300 “Spectre” on a NATO strap (Broer, 2015)



Figure 5.14: Omega Seamaster 300M “007” Edition on a titanium bracelet (Stacey, 2019)

The success of the Speedmaster series of watches and the James Bond watches can be attributed in part to the persuasion that occurs when these stories are shared on Instagram. The human achievement theme, which represents achieving the impossible, is executed through immersive narratives that are often inspired by Omega’s Transient Competitive Advantage. The work of Huang *et al.* (2018) proved that persuasion is likely to occur through luxury advertising on social media platforms. In Omega’s case, its followers are persuaded when they are immersed in the narratives, which results in the development of mental images that ultimately lead to positive affective responses towards the brand’s watches. These positive affective responses, in this case, may contribute to the creation of brand advocacy.

5.3.2 Theme two: Product innovation

The second theme focused on the innovation that goes into building Omega’s watches. For this study, “product innovation” refers to all the technical innovations and manufacturing capabilities the brand employs to build watches that last a lifetime.

Referred to as the heart of the watch, the watch's movement enables the hands to function and to tell the time. On an engineering level, creating a movement is a technically exacting task that takes skill, experience and dedication. In addition to the movement, the watch case, bracelet and all the subcomponents need to be carefully considered and manufactured.

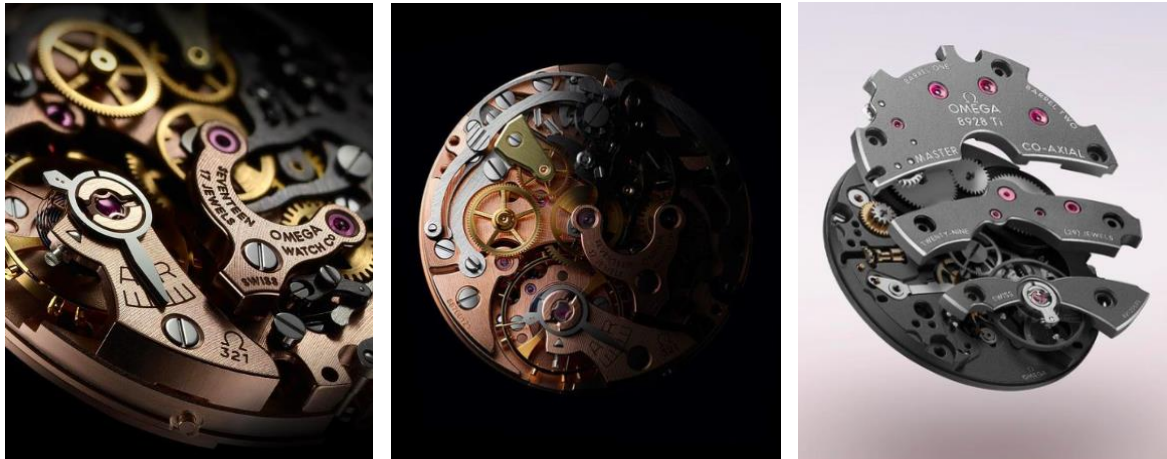
During the qualitative content analysis phase, the researcher identified two themes related to Omega's manufacturing capabilities. These themes are *technical expertise* and *product innovation*, which includes the following category code groups: *watchmaker*; *watch materials*; *watch design*; *design inspiration*; *innovation*; *research and development*; *artisans and craftsmanship*; *attention to detail*; *technical aspects of the watch*, and *quality of the watches*. Due to the inherent similarities between these two themes, the researcher combined the themes into one: product innovation.

5.3.2.1 Brand narrative

The researcher identified a number of different instances where Omega shared information related to product innovation with its followers. This was often done in subtle ways so as not to alienate a non-technical audience, but still direct enough to satisfy a more informed consumer group. The following images serve as examples of the product innovation-focused content the brand shared to Instagram. Donzé (2018) described product innovation as one of the most important reasons behind the success of the Swiss watch industry. He postulated that the ability to remain competitive was linked to the ability of luxury watch brands to create new mechanical innovations. This section explores how Omega communicated its product innovations. Here, the data will show how the brand explains complex concepts and technical information within the context of a story that is filled with glamour, beauty and the spirit of adventure, making it intriguing, aspirational and even relatable in some instances.

These types of posts touch on specific examples of watchmakers assembling watch movements or adding components to watches – explaining how certain alloys are combined to create special materials for use in the watch; how a specific watch was designed or which elements inspired the design of the watch; how research and development lead to certain innovations; how artisans and craftsmen work to create different components for Omega's watches; how attention to detail is paramount when

creating these high precision tools; how the technical aspects of the watch work in tandem to ensure a fully functional piece, and how Omega subtly refers to the quality of its watches. Figures 5.15 to 5.17 show how the brand used three different posts about watch movements to convey different messages.



From left to right: (Omega, 2019)

Figure 5.15: Reincarnation of the iconic Calibre 321 mechanical watch movement

Figure 5.16: Calibre 321 photographed to resemble a moon in a half-moon phase

Figure 5.17: Omega's first-ever movement made from titanium: Calibre 8928 Ti

In the post featuring the image used in figure 5.15, the watch movement is introduced with the following copy: *"3... 2... 1... We have lift-off! #OMEGA is proud to announce that the famous Calibre 321 is back in production!."* This movement is a reproduction of the movement used in Speedmaster watches decades ago; the same movement was used in astronaut Eugene Cernan's Speedmaster during the 1972 Apollo 17 mission (Omega, 2019). This reincarnated movement is also currently being utilised in a newly-launched Omega Speedmaster model.

The movement's name (Calibre 321) is also a direct reference to the countdown sequence used when NASA's rockets are sent into space. The name further connects the movement to Omega and NASA's partnership over the years. In keeping with the space travel theme, the image in figure 5.16 shows the same movement photographed in a way that mimics a half-moon; the way the moon looks when the earth moves in behind the sun and casts its shadow onto the moon. Combined with the copy: *"Celebrating the first step with an exciting leap back. The extraordinary 321*

returns!”, this is another subtle reference to Omega’s expertise in equipping astronauts with mission-ready tools that are at the forefront of product innovation.

Figure 5.17 shows the first Omega movement to be made from titanium. Dubbed “Calibre 8928 Ti”, this watch movement is a product of research and development into material technologies. Made specifically for use in the new Omega Seamaster Aqua Terra “Ultra Light”, this movement is constructed from titanium in order to bring the weight of the watch down. Referred to by Omega as the “ultimate athlete’s watch”, the watch was designed to be as light as possible to ensure that athletes can perform their chosen sport unencumbered while wearing this timepiece (Omega, 2022e).

Figures 5.18 to 5.20 show Omega’s Seamaster 300 Lapis Lazuli watch from different perspectives. For the launch of this watch, the brand used a rare Lapis Lazuli stone to create the dial of the watch. The brand goes on to tell followers that the deep blue coloured stone was adored by Cleopatra, Marco Polo and royalty alike, going on to suggest that its followers can feel like royalty too by wearing this watch. The brand’s ability to utilise a precious stone in the context of watchmaking and then connect it to the illustrious image of royalty further adds to the intrigue and appeal behind this specific watch.



From left to right: (Omega, 2019)

Figure 5.18: Side profile of the Omega Seamaster 300 Lapis Lazuli’s dial, bezel, case and crown

Figure 5.19: Full image of the Omega Seamaster 300 Lapis Lazuli watch

Figure 5.20: The face of the Omega Seamaster 300 Lapis Lazuli watch

Another example of the brand using special materials for its watches are the features of the Seamaster 300 in yellow gold with a malachite dial. These posts are available [here](#), [here](#) and [here](#). In this instance the brand specifically references the fact that this watch was created using two different types of special material, further adding to the prestige of owning such a watch.

Another example of the brand's focus on product innovation comes in the form of the three posts (an image and two image carousels) it shared about the Planet Ocean Ultra Deep Professional watch made for Victor Vescovo's record-breaking dive shared [here](#), [here](#) and [here](#). The technical proficiency required to create a watch that can withstand the ocean's pressure more than 10km under water is undeniable. One of these three posts referenced the shape of the lugs (the arms that attach the strap to the watch case). These lugs were purposefully designed in this way since a traditional spring bar (a pin used to hold watch straps and bracelets against the watch case) would not have been able to securely hold the strap to the case. These manta-shaped lugs on the Planet Ocean Ultra Deep Professional were designed in such a way that any pressure-related changes in the case will not cause the strap to become dislodged.

Most of Omega's posts regarding product innovations formed part of a larger series. For instance: the brand conducted a 20-post feature on the Speedmaster Moonwatch. Within that series, there were nine instances where the brand dedicated a shorter, multi-post feature to specifically talk about content related to product innovation. This included specific materials used to make Omega watches, watch components, and a special movement the brand brought back to life. These nine different series, as well as the instances per series, are highlighted in figure 5.21 below. Each of these highlighted codes directly refer to product innovation.

In addition to these nine instances, the brand also referred to product innovation in a number of other series as well. The many Moonwatch series of posts would refer to product innovation elements as part of the focus on the Moonwatch itself. The product innovation messaging was therefore shared on its own in a dedicated series of posts and also as part of general series of posts.

Moonwatch	20	Watch components	6	OmegaGolf	3
Gifting II	14	Watches + 3D animation	6	OmegaMyChoice II	3
Moonwatch IV	12	Dressing up	5	OmegaMyChoice III	3
OmegaMyChoice	12	Constellation His & Hers	4	Paris Fashion Week	3
Constellation Manhattan	9	007	3	PittiUomo	3
Constellation Manhattan II	9	A Collected Man	3	Railmaster	3
Constellation Manhattan III	9	A Collected Man II	3	Seamaster 300	3
History of Omega	9	AquaTerra on a boat	3	Seamaster 1948	3
Moonwatch II	9	Calibre 321	3	Seamaster Diver	3
Moonwatch III	9	Calibre 321 II	3	Seamaster Lapis Lazuli	3
OmegaGolf II	9	Ceramic & titanium Seamaster	3	Seamaster Malachite	3
007 II	6	Change of season	3	Shanghai exhibition	3
Brown & rose gold watches	6	Constellation Citizen K	3	Speedmaster	3
Exclusive Preview	6	Constellation Manhattan IV	3	Valetine's day	3
Moonwatch V	6	De Ville Trésor	3	Vintage Omega	3
Seamaster 300M	6	De Ville Trésor II	3	World's deepest watch	3
Seamaster His & Hers	6	Gifting	3	Speedmaster Moonphase	2
Seamasters by the sea	6	Jewellery	3	Speedy Tuesday	2
Speedmaster winter getaway	6	Olympics	3	Standalone post	2
Swiss made	6	Omega Museum	3		

Figure 5.21: Part of series category code counts data featuring product innovation-focused series

When interpreting these counts, it becomes apparent that the brand focuses on promoting its product innovations as part of its core brand identity. The counts analysis has illustrated the influence product innovation has had on the brand's strategy. A number of posts touched on the different types of materials the brand uses in its watches as well as the components used to create these watches. These features are highly informative, but are still done in such a way that does not alienate followers who are not interested in technical information. The fine balance between informative, educational content surrounding the brand's technical expertise and product innovation, and general, entertainment-focused content is therefore executed well and to great effect.

An example of Omega's ability to translate very technical information into a digestible message comes across in the first three posts it shared about the Seamaster Aqua Terra Ultra Light ([here](#), [here](#) and [here](#)). This watch is the lightest model in its catalogue and was specifically designed for sport stars – a number of whom wore the watch at the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games (Doerr, 2021; Time and Tide, 2021).

Instead of explaining how and from what material the case was constructed (a mixture of gamma titanium and ceramic) or that the watch only weighs 55 grams (Brendan,

2019), the brand simply stated that the watch was designed for sporting comfort and that it featured the brand's first-ever titanium movement.

Instead of sharing potentially dull technical information with its followers, the brand used abstract imagery in one image carousel ([here](#)) to show the watch case and dial in detail. Another image carousel was used ([here](#)) to show followers the very technical titanium movement that looks simple.

Omega understands that the characteristics of the content it shares on Instagram influences the extent to which consumers will engage with Omega on the platform (Rohm, Kaltcheva & Milne, 2013). This strategic decision to portray such a technically advanced watch in a way that is easy to digest and admire speaks to the brand's calculated approach of subconsciously influencing and immersing its followers.

5.3.2.2 Narrative Transportation Theory

As previously mentioned, Omega imbues many of its Instagram posts with messages that speak to product innovation. This is often done overtly by directly referring to specific technical achievements the brand has made or innovations the brand has championed. Examples here include Omega's use of different materials, metals and alloys in a watch, and the attainment of the Master Chronometer designation for its watches. Figures 5.22 and 5.25 show how the brand often combines different materials into its watches. Figures 5.24 and 5.25 show how the brand posted about the Master Chronometer designation of its watches.



From left to right: (Omega, 2019)

Figure 5.22: Omega Seamaster 300M made with Titanium, Tantalum and Sedna gold

Figure 5.23: Omega Seamaster 300M made with Titanium and ceramic, featuring a rubber strap

Figure 5.24: Omega Speedmaster Moonphase with Master Chronometer designation

Figure 5.25: Omega Master Chronometer-certified movement visible through the caseback of a watch

In other instances, the brand would subtly reference its technical abilities as part of a post about a seemingly different topic. An example here includes Omega's ability to make a ladies watch case very thin—an incredible feat of engineering—and then promote the “sleek appearance” of the watch as the selling point, as opposed to focussing on the watch's case and movement design that led to this achievement. The copy used with figure 5.26 was a quote from Nicole Kidman, who stated: *“I wear the Constellation most of the time. It's so streamlined and can be worn during the day and then into the evening”*.

Figure 5.27 featured a quote by Cindy Crawford that read: *“What I really like is how sleek it is. It feels more like a bracelet than a watch. It's just so comfortable and kind of goes with anything.”*



From left to right: (Omega, 2019)

Figure 5.26: Nicole Kidman wearing an Omega Constellation Manhattan

Figure 5.27: Cindy Crawford wearing an Omega Constellation Manhattan

In another example, the brand created a series of posts featuring different iterations of the Speedmaster Moonwatch (figures 5.28 and 5.29). In one of these posts, the brand referred to memories lasting as long as Omega's watches: a lifetime. This powerful

statement astutely captures the attention of the audience and solidifies the idea that the brand's watches are of the highest quality, without directly mentioning any of its technical innovations.

By showing images of two models wearing Speedmaster watches outside in the snow it reiterates the resilient quality of Omega watches that are designed to outlast the wearer. Wherever an Omega customer travels, their watch will be able to survive the environment. This gives them the peace of mind that these watches are manufactured at the highest level of quality, always utilising the latest advances in material and manufacturing technology.



From left to right: (Omega, 2019)

Figure 5.28: Omega Speedmaster Dark Side of the Moon Black Black watch with a vintage camera

Figure 5.29: Omega Speedmaster 38 outside in the snow

The mixture of direct examples and subtle cues that portray the brand's technical achievements draws consumers into the brand's mechanical world behind the face of the watch. Technical expertise and product innovation form the cornerstone of the brand's Instagram content, and allow the brand to share posts that consistently communicate its watchmaking skills to its audience.



Figure 5.30: Omega Seamaster Diver 300m dropped into a pool of water (Omega, 2019)

In figure 5.30 the brand refers to the ceramic dial of the watch that features laser engraved wave patterns. These patterns are exaggerated through the use of water to reinforce the connection between the watch and the ocean.



From left to right: (Omega, 2019)

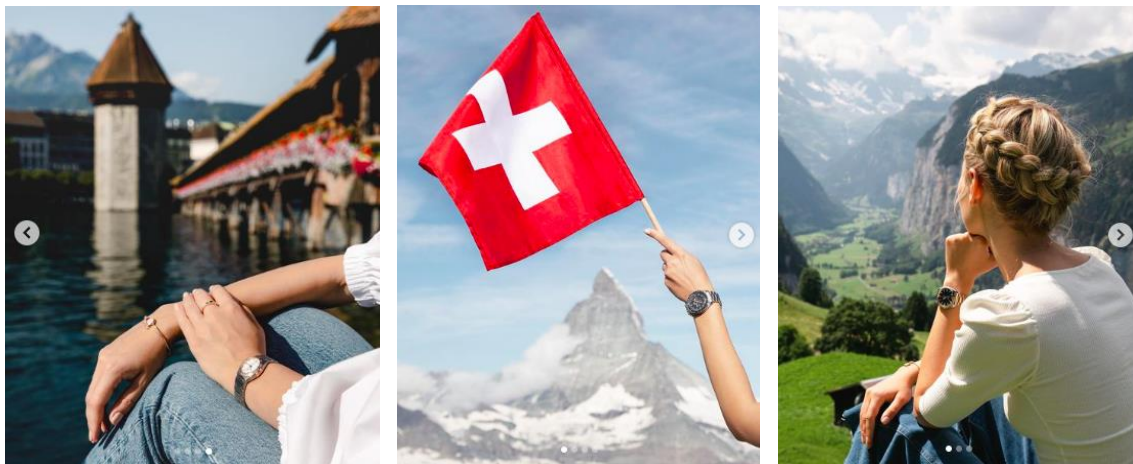
Figure 5.31: Omega Seamaster Diver 300m on a rubber bracelet

Figure 5.32: Omega Seamaster Diver 300m on a NATO strap bracelet

Figures 5.31 and 5.32 show the same watch photographed with two different straps. In this carousel post, the brand uses the caption: “*#SeamasterDiver. The Diver goes dark in our newest model built from black ceramic and titanium.*” Here, the reference

to the watch material is secondary to the aesthetic theme of watch: the dark model. For these two images, the brand plays with moody lighting and a black backdrop to create a dramatic contrast between the watch and the rest of the image. This is another example of how the brand shares information in a subtle yet immersive way.

As part of the discussion on product innovation, the brand championed the Swiss-made label and everything it represents through six posts specifically referencing the country of Omega's origin. As previously explained, the Swiss have been at the forefront of mechanical watchmaking for decades. The Swiss-made label itself has become a brand that signifies product innovation, excellence and technical expertise.



From left to right: (Omega, 2019)

Figure 5.33: Model sitting next to the river in Lucerne wearing an Omega Constellation Manhattan

Figure 5.34: Model with a Swiss flag in front of Matterhorn Mountain wearing an Omega Speedmaster

Figure 5.35: Model in Bernese Oberland wearing an Omega Seamaster Aqua Terra

Figures 5.33 to 5.35 show images from carousels used in these posts, where Omega watches are photographed in iconic Swiss settings – the Swiss flag was also used in one instance. The copy employed for these posts used the #SwissMade hashtag while referencing specific Swiss landmarks. The intent here was likely not to advertise watches, but connect the brand to its country of origin to benefit from the brand equity that the Swiss-made label connotes. This brand equity connotations include reliability, trust, expertise and the ability to create intricate watches at an unrivalled level. These posts therefore infer that Omega is the watch to wear for any person who appreciates Swiss watchmaking.

Throughout the 2019 calendar year, *product innovation* was subtly and effectively communicated in a consistent manner in Omega's Instagram posts. In doing so, the brand stimulated the story receiver's affective and cognitive responses which may have resulted in a perception change and possible persuasion (Green & Brock, 2002). The next section considers the Transient Competitive Advantage that served as the inspiration behind numerous posts.

5.3.2.3 Transient Competitive Advantage

A report by McKinsey and Company (De Smet *et al.*, 2020) found that, amid the COVID-19 pandemic, directors and business executives are making dramatic changes to their organisations. These changes are aimed at increasing the speed with which their businesses can deploy resources, implement new business decisions and adjust their strategic direction. Here, speed of implementation is the currency that matters. Their report goes on to state that organisations that focus on implementing speed in their business decision-making processes outperform their competition on profitability, resilience, organisational health and business growth. This renewed focus on increasing operational speed results in the need to increase the speed of brand building operations too. This allows leader brands to capitalise on Transient Competitive Advantage in the market.

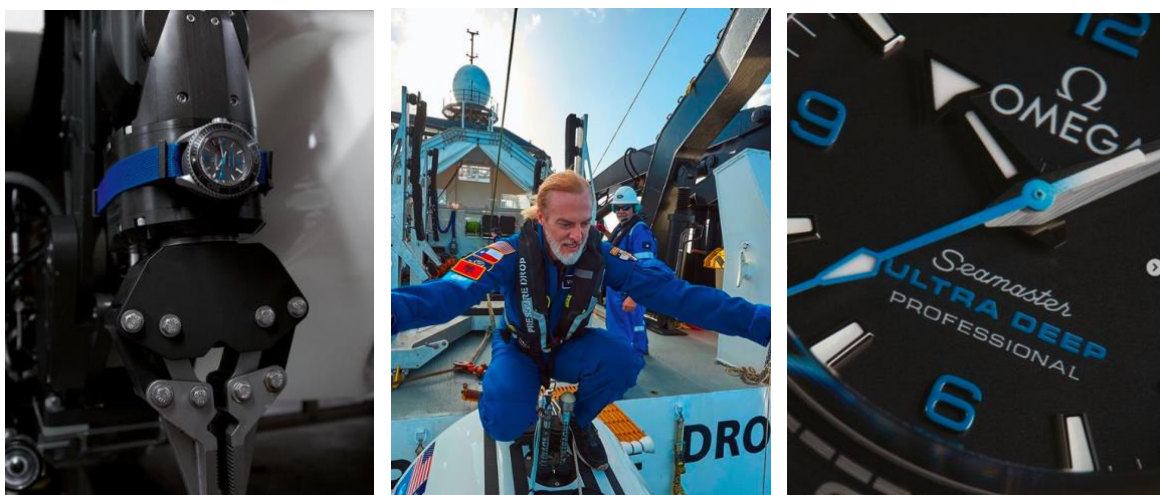
In the luxury watch industry, it often takes brands years to develop their core competencies (Anwar, 2008, 2007; Anand & Girotra, 2007). These core competencies can include new technologies; proprietary research; existing brand portfolios, or sure-fire innovations that support business activities (Anwar, 2008). Omega takes this notion of core competencies a few steps further. The brand has positioned itself as one which often reaches into the past in order to build its future. As shown through the multitude of its achievements and storied successes, innovation and progress are operational needs for Omega.

Always on the forefront, creating and testing new watch materials, inventing and improving new technology, upgrading its production lines, and strengthening its market position, the brand creates competitive advantages by design (McGrath, 2013a). Resting on its laurels is not part of the brand's DNA. Omega continues to bring new innovations to market; partner with individuals at the forefront of their craft;

revolutionise the ways in which a watch brand markets itself, and push the boundaries of watchmaking.

The collaboration between Omega and NASA might just be one of history's greatest brand stories. The partnership started as a business transaction: NASA purchased Speedmaster watches at retail prices, effectively functioning as consumers. That such a relatively small instrument could play such an integral part in a number of NASA missions, made a lasting impression on the minds of watch aficionados. The Omega Speedmaster became the *de rigeur* watch for connoisseurs – one that elicits an almost primal appreciation from anyone with knowledge of the field (Ritson, 2022). Yet, this study shows that Omega invests in the technical innovation of all its watches and not just its Speedmaster line.

As previously mentioned, in 2019 Victor Vescovo partnered with Omega to conduct a record-breaking dive. Vescovo used a Deep Submergence Vehicle called “Limiting Factor” to reach the Eastern Pool of Challenger Deep in the Marianas Trench in the Western Pacific ocean. Using purpose-built Omega watches—the Seamaster Planet Ocean Ultra Deep Professional—strapped to the side of the Limiting Factor, Vescovo descended to a depth of 10 925m. Figures 5.36 to 5.38 show the images Omega shared as part of a carousel post about the watch it made for this project.



From left to right: (Omega, 2019)

Figure 5.36: Omega Seamaster Planet Ocean Ultra Deep Professional strapped to the arm of the submersible

Figure 5.37: Victor Vescovo climbing into the Five Deeps submersible

Figure 5.38: A closeup shot of the dial of the Omega Seamaster Planet Ocean Ultra Deep Professional

Once back on the surface, all three Seamaster Planet Ocean Ultra Deep Professional watches used for the dive still kept perfect time and subsequently passed the stringent METAS Master Chronometer test (Omega, 2021c; Goulard, 2019; The Five Deeps Expedition, n.d.; Davis, 2019; Heaton, 2019). The engineering prowess and technical innovation required to send a mechanical watch to a depth of 10km in the ocean is an incredible feat.



From left to right: (Omega, 2019)

Figure 5.39: Omega Seamaster Planet Ocean Ultra Deep Professional pictured in water

Figure 5.40: Side angle of the Omega Seamaster Planet Ocean Ultra Deep Professional

Figure 5.39 shows that, although the watch was designed to reach some of the deepest parts of the ocean, it still looks like a typical watch in Omega's core collection. A project like this would usually take a brand years to prepare. Omega designed and built the watch in less than six months – a true testament to the brand's focus on product innovation (Heaton, 2019). In that time, it designed, manufactured and tested a watch that could withstand 1 500 bar of pressure. That amount of pressure is equivalent to the pressure felt 15 000m below the surface of the waves.

Omega's engineers designed the watch with a 25% safety margin; allowing the watch to reach a depth 25% deeper than the dive would go. Figure 5.40 shows a side angle of the watch. In this image, followers can see how the brand designed the watch to be

thicker than a standard watch in order to withstand the pressure. The goal of this project was to build a watch that could meet the challenge head-on by using technology that could be industrialised in the future (Omega, 2021c). A few years later, Omega did just that.

To commemorate the success of the project and to celebrate the excitement around the achievement, Omega launched a commercial version of the Seamaster Planet Ocean Ultra Deep (sans “Professional”) in March 2022. The new watch is smaller in size (down from 55mm to 45.5mm) and is available in two materials – titanium and a brand-new steel alloy dubbed “O-MEGASTEEL”. The smaller size resulted in a reduction of the maximum depth the watch can withstand: 6 000m. However, the 6 000m depth rating is still significantly deeper than all other commercially-available, non-limited production model watches (Stacey, 2022). Figures 5.41 and 5.42 show two examples of these commercially available Ultra Deep models. In this instance, Omega has been able to create a Transient Competitive Advantage by taking a significant achievement—its contribution of a watch for the deepest dive in history—and turning that event and technology it into a new competitive advantage. Stories like these capture the attention of watch lovers the world over.



From left to right: (Stacey, 2022)

Figure 5.41: Omega Seamaster Planet Ocean Ultra Deep pictured on the wrist

Figure 5.42: Full frontal view of the Omega Seamaster Planet Ocean Ultra Deep

Through using these types of events as inspiration and then utilising proprietary technology and product innovation to create new watch families is a fitting example of how the brand creates Transient Competitive Advantage in the luxury watch industry.

5.3.2.4 Persuasion

Omega makes a concerted effort to promote its focus on product innovation in the content it shares to Instagram. At its core, a mechanical watch is a piece of mechanical engineering that requires specialised skills to create. Considering the price range in which Omega's watches fall, customers have come to expect value for their money. Through its pioneering approach to watchmaking, driven by product innovation, the brand excels at delivering new inventions and excellent technology. The issuing of Master Chronometer certificates for many of the brand's watches is but one example of how Omega actively promotes its relentless focus on precision. These insights are shared in immersive ways with its followers throughout the brand's content on Instagram.

Over time, these activities result in the audience understanding that Omega's watches are accurate and highly advanced. These messages are conveyed without boring followers with technical details that would potentially make them lose interest rather than become more engaged. The eloquent and unobtrusive way in which Omega conveys technical information reinforces the message that the brand's watches are the perfect choice for the discerning customer who values product innovation and technical expertise. These messages reassure the wearer that they purchased a watch made by skilled watchmakers using the best materials and the most precise technology. By sharing posts about the watches' movements, dials, cases and other technical aspects (figures 5.15 to 5.17 and 5.22 to 5.25), Omega involves its followers in the creation of the watches, immersing them deeper and deeper into the brand's world.

Mechanical watches require hundreds of parts that are manufactured to work together seamlessly. They represent decades' worth of research and development and celebrate the skills of highly accomplished watchmakers. Considering the expertise required to manufacture these timepieces, product innovation is one of Omega's core focus areas. This focus allows the brand to consistently create some of the most

accurate and reliable watches in the market. The next theme considers how the Omega brand is communicated to its followers, and how Omega immerses its followers in its brand's story.

5.3.3 Theme three: Brand experience

For the third theme of this study, the researcher looked at the Omega brand experience as a whole. Brand experience refers to all the activities and initiatives the brand specifically engages in to build its brand. These activities and initiatives include museums, tradeshow, exhibitions and brand activations. The following section highlights the ways in which Omega enables or encourages customers to experience the brand online.

The Omega brand has a rich history, filled with inspiring tales of enterprise, human endeavour and a consistent drive towards achieving perfection. These pillars have allowed Omega to build a globally recognisable company that has stood the test of time and is growing from strength to strength. The *brand experience* theme combined the subthemes of *brand mystery* and *brand experience*. This overarching theme includes the following category code groups: *mystery behind the brand*; *more than sum of its parts*; *soul of the brand*; *the watches are desirable*; *special connection to the watch*; *behind the scenes*; *brand building activities*; *additional elements that enhance the experience*; *history of the brand*; *Omega exhibition*; *Omega museum*; *brand ambassadors*; *gift Omega*; *everyday life with an Omega*; *express personality with watch*; *express style & personal taste*, and *new watch launch*.

5.3.3.1 Brand narrative

The Omega watch brand was formally founded in 1848 and has subsequently been at the forefront of innovation in the luxury watch industry for more than 170 years. The extended history of the brand includes a number of market-leading milestones that truly differentiate the brand from its competitors.



From left to right: (Omega, 2019)

Figure 5.43: A selection of vintage Omega print advertisements

Figure 5.44: Omega pocket watch powered by the iconic 19-ligne “Omega” calibre

Figure 5.45: The iconic 19-ligne “Omega” calibre

Jeannerat and Crevoisier (2011) postulate that Swiss brands actively started to promote their watchmaking culture as inspiration for both their watchmaking and brand building activities. Having adopted the brand leadership model of Aaker and Joachimsthaler (2009) as the foundation of its brand building activities, Omega has focused on how its traditional values and watchmaking culture are perceived in the current landscape it operates in (Szegedi & Boudrand, 2021). Considering its history, the brand has actively made its heritage an integral part of its brand building activities. The following section explores how the brand uses its brand heritage as the basis for the creation of its rich and immersive brand experiences.

Figure 5.43 shows a selection of vintage Omega print advertisements. These historic advertisements reinforce the message that Omega has been in the watch business for a long time. Figures 5.44 and 5.45 show the pocket watch that gave the brand its name. The iconic 19-ligne movement from 1894 was the most precise at the time and was dubbed “*Omega*”. These images are examples of the posts the brand would share to educate followers on the brand’s history, while still keeping the content relevant and on-brand.

Omega calls on its past when needed, whilst simultaneously building a future in which it can reign supreme by seizing opportunities as they arise. During the 2019 calendar year, the brand participated in a number of specific brand building activities. These

activities included the opening of a new museum in Biel/Bienne; the launch of a new watch commemorating the 2020 Olympic Games; the relaunch of one of the brand's most famous watch movements, the Calibre 321; the release of a watch for the James Bond film, *No Time To Die*; the launch of a new, technologically advanced watch for golfers, and the launch of a number of global boutique-exclusive watches.

When considering the qualitative counts analysis in relation to the *brand experience* theme, the researcher found that a significant portion of the topics from Omega's Instagram posts focused on showcasing different brand building activities. These posts were aimed at inspiring the audience and drawing them into the brand by sharing these experiences in vivid, immersive ways. As an example pulled from figure 5.46 below, the brand created a series of 17 posts broken down into two instalments on gifting Omega watches to loved ones over the Christmas period.

Speedmaster	44	Watches + 3D animation	6	Tokyo 2020 olympic games	3
Constellation	38	Dressing up	5	Vintage Omega	3
Seamaster	38	NATO strap	4	World's deepest watch	3
Aqua Terra	24	19-linge "Omega" calibre	3	Apollo 11 anniversary celebration	2
Gifting	17	Apollo 11 mission	3	De Ville	2
Boutique Exclusive	12	Astronaut in space	3	Rockets at the Kennedy Space Cr	2
Trésor	12	Dressing up at Pittu Uomo	3	Apollo 11 launch	1
History of the brand	11	Ex-soldier	3	Astronauts ready for boarding a r	1
Moon landing	11	Jewellery	3	Calibre 8928 Ti	1
007	9	Olympic athlete	3	George Clooney speaks to Buzz	1
Planet Ocean	9	Omega Golf	3	Globemaster	1
Kennedy Space Center	7	Railmaster	3	Ploprof	1
Calibre 321	6	Space travel	3	Saturn V rocket	1
Exclusive Preview (New watches	6	Special occasion - opening of ex	3	Starmus Festival	1
Swiss heritage	6	Special occasion - Paris Fashion	3	Timeless style example	1
Watch components	6	Special occasion - Valentine's D	3		

Figure 5.46: Topic category code counts data featuring brand experience-focused topics

These gifting posts featured a variety of entries that used standalone images and one video. The idea behind these posts was to invite followers to gift Omega watches to their loved-ones over the festive season. Figures 5.47 and 5.48 serve as two examples of posts that featured classic Omega branding elements: the colours red and gold with the watches featuring prominently as the main attraction in each instance. The copy that accompanied the 17 posts related to the gifting theme. The post featured in figure 5.47 stated: *"#OMEGAGlobemaster. On the wish list of gents all over the world. The Globemaster."*



From left to right: (Omega, 2019)

Figure 5.47: An Omega Globemaster in a Christmas-themed post

Figure 5.48: An Omega Ladymatic in a presentation box as part of a Christmas-themed post

In turn, the copy that accompanied the image in figure 5.48 stated: *“#Ladymatic / #OMEGATresor. Give something glamorous whilst wearing something classic, or vice versa.”*

The video post as well as a number of the other gifting-related posts can be found [here](#), [here](#), [here](#) and [here](#). In one of these posts, the accompanying copy refers to the recipient being “over the moon” upon receiving an Omega watch. This copy suggests the weight of receiving an Omega as a gift, and also subtly reminds followers about the brand’s history with the Apollo programme. This reiteration of the moon landing refers back to the brand’s essence, which is based on the idea of achieving the impossible.

In another post, the copy refers to the diamond paving on the watch case. Here, the brand’s followers are reminded that precious stones and metals are used when manufacturing these watches. Simultaneously, the copy insinuates that the receiver of an Omega watch will cherish the person who gifted them the watch.

The brand uses images and carousels much more frequently than it does videos. However, when using videos the brand is able to add context, drama and insight that would require numerous images in order to communicate the same amount of information. Considering the relatively low frequency with which video content is used, the brand seems to reserve this media type for occasions where it actively wishes to engage its viewers and transport them into narratives that could result in persuasion (Van Laer *et al.*, 2019; Green & Brock, 2002).

The deeper meaning behind these gifting posts is centred on the idea that each person has different tastes, and that there is an Omega watch for each loved one (Tak, Pareek & Rishi, 2017). The act of gifting an Omega also signifies the idea of giving someone a product with a long, storied history. In turn, the giving of an Omega watch can lead to the creation of a new brand advocate. That watch can then become an extension of the receiver, allowing them to create their own narrative whilst wearing and enjoying their watch (Phillips & McQuarrie 2010; Bahl & Milne, 2010; Green & Brock, 2002; Holt, 1995).

Considering that the brand has been making watches since 1848, there are a large number of Omega watches all over the world: some brand new and some decades old. As a testament to its appreciation of its customers and an acknowledgement of the important role vintage watches play for the brand, Omega offers Certificates of Authenticity.

Customers send their vintage Omega watches to the brand's headquarters in Switzerland, where a dedicated team of experts will authenticate them before issuing the certificates. These certificates include detailed information on each Omega watch that left the factory, and acts as an extra sign of product confidence from the brand's perspective. These activities enhance the Omega brand identity's integrity. Figures 5.49 and 5.50 shows the images used for these kinds of posts.



From left to right: (Omega, 2019)

Figure 5.49: A vintage Omega watch in a vintage red box with a Certificate of Authenticity



Figure 5.50: A vintage Speedmaster laying on papers that feature watch specifications

Omega uses the Certificate of Authenticity to communicate the idea that Omega's watches are made to last several lifetimes and that the brand will continue to support its customers throughout their lifecycle with the brand. This offering creates another touchpoint from which customers can experience the Omega brand while instilling confidence in the brand. The *brand experience* theme relies heavily on the portrayal of the brand's heritage, quality and integrity through its content, which leads to a sense of trust in the brand. This study has indicated how Omega utilises the brand's history as the inspiration for a number of initiatives that allows it to immerse its followers in its brand narrative.

5.3.3.2 Narrative Transportation Theory

When Omega commits to a specific cause, it does so with the intent to maximise the value it offers whilst doing its heritage proud. One of the stand-out examples of its focus on brand experience comes from the brand's 125th celebration of the Omega name. Although the company was founded in 1848, the Omega name was only adopted from 1894 onwards after the Brandt brothers launched the 19-ligne OMEGA calibre visible in figure 5.51 (Chia, 2019). In the context of luxury brands, tradition and

heritage have historically been the two pillars upon which these brands have built their competitive advantages (Raffaelli, 2013; Kebir & Crevoisier, 2008) and by extension their brand identities. This section will elaborate on Omega's execution of this brand strategy.

As part of the celebrations, Omega partnered with the British actor Eddie Redmayne, who is one of Hollywood's brightest stars. As one of its most famous ambassadors, Redmayne featured in a number of posts and at a number of events for the brand during that year. On one occasion, the actor delivered a monologue on the history of the brand name and the appropriate way to wear an Omega pocket watch. The actor sat perfectly dressed in a traditional three-piece suit on a vintage chair in a vintage-inspired scene featuring Omega's colour red.



From left to right: (Omega, 2019)

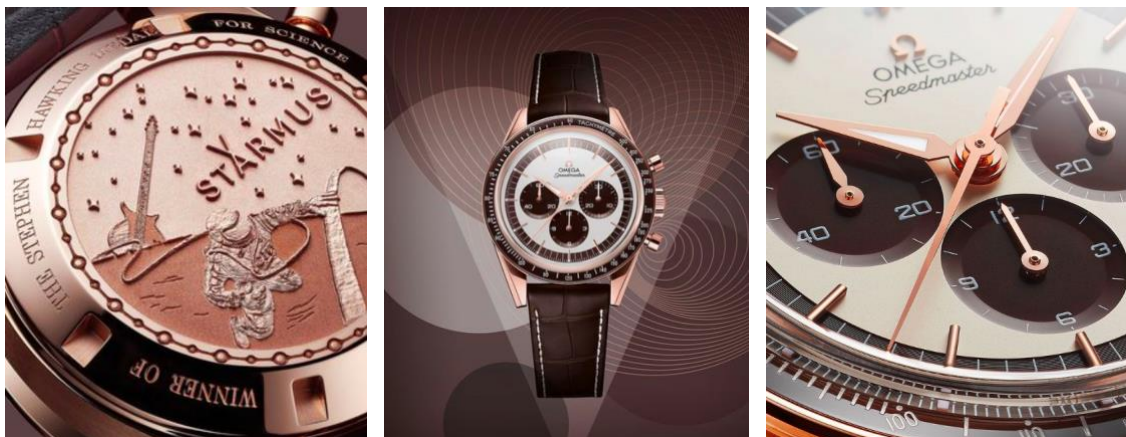
Figure 5.51: A disassembled version of the 19-ligne OMEGA calibre

Figure 5.52: Video screengrab of Eddie Redmayne explaining the origin of the Omega name

The scene draws viewers into Redmayne's world, which coincidentally is Omega's world (figure 5.52). In the video the actor explains that the brand launched the 19-ligne OMEGA calibre in 1894 during the Victorian age: a time when people attempt to fly higher than anyone else and reach the earth's poles before anyone else. During this period, the world was fascinated by adventure and imagination. These values were carried over into the creation of this watch movement. Not only was it extremely

precise for that period, but it was made by pioneers who made their competitors rethink their strategies. The 19-ligne OMEGA calibre is an exemplification of the striving for greatness that was echoed in all the brand's activities during this period. This insight has permeated through the brand's initiatives over the years, becoming a guiding principle. The video for this post, which is available [here](#), allows viewers to experience the mystery and excitement that surrounds Omega as a heritage brand by showing them a scene with Redmayne delivering the illuminating narrative.

The brand's posts about the Starmus Festival serves as another example of how Omega creates brand experiences through its content shared to Instagram. This global festival for science communication brings the brightest minds in the world together in celebration of scientific brilliance. For the 2019 edition of the festival, the brand created a special version of the iconic Speedmaster (figure 5.54). Each winner of the Stephen Hawking Medal for Science Communication received one of these watches, which featured a unique design and a commemorative caseback to celebrate their achievements (figure 5.53).



From left to right: (Omega, 2019)

Figure 5.53: The caseback of the special Starmus Omega Speedmaster watch

Figure 5.54: A shot of the gold Omega Speedmaster Starmus watch

Figure 5.55: The dial and sub-dials of the special Starmus Omega Speedmaster watch

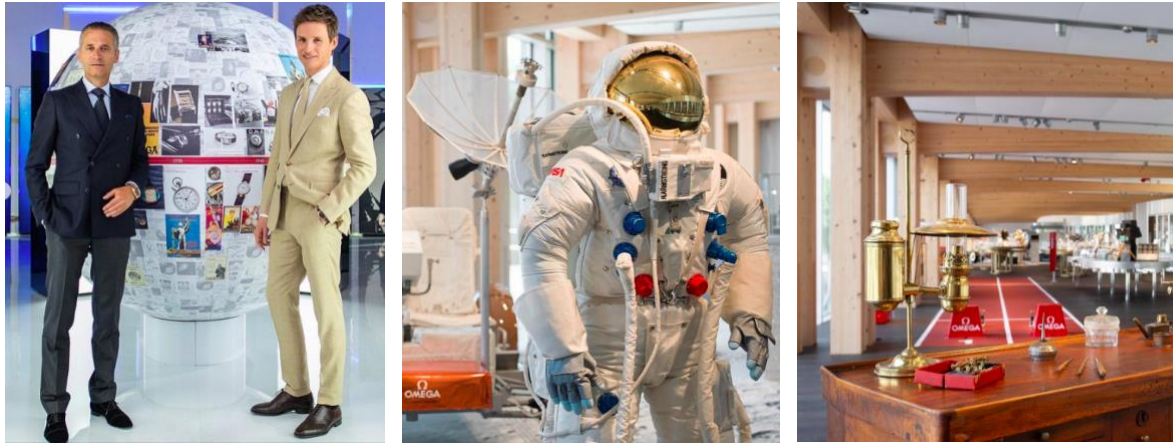
These posts were especially powerful in their effort to draw people into the brand. It helped to connect some of the smartest people of the scientific world with some of the most talented artisans in the watchmaking world. The small details on the dials of these special edition watches (figure 5.55) pay tribute to the intricacies and detailed

work of the scientists and visionaries who are celebrated at this festival. The posts allowed followers to see images of a watch that would only be worn by recipients of the Starmus award. This sense of rarity helps to underscore the importance of the awards bestowed at the Starmus Festival. Although they were not physically present at the event, the brand's followers felt like they were a part of the event through the posts.

It is also no coincidence that Eddie Redmayne portrayed Stephen Hawking in the 2014 film, *The Theory of Everything*. This fact brings the partnership and these connections full circle. Redmayne was also used to open a new interactive brand exhibition in Shanghai during 2019. This exhibition focused on bringing various elements of the Omega brand to life in ways that followers could connect with and be moved by. In figure 5.56, Eddie Redmayne and Omega President and CEO Raynald Aeschlimann are photographed next to a globe that represents the brand's history. This image formed part of a carousel on the exhibit which can be found [here](#). The brand also shared a video clip with highlights from the exhibition [here](#). These posts bring the exhibit to the brand's followers, inviting them to experience a piece of the magic on their screens (Green & Brock, 2002).

Omega also shared content about the Omega museum in Biel/Bienne to Instagram. Figures 5.57 and 5.58 show glimpses of what the brand's followers can expect to find in the museum. Here, the brand combined astronaut suits with Olympic timing equipment and watchmaker benches. A video highlight from the museum was also shared [here](#), allowing followers to experience the space in an almost visceral way.

Wilk *et al.* (2018a) suggest that exhibiting online brand advocacy behaviour is an integral part of the brand advocate's life. This process results in brand advocacy behaviour reflecting the consumer-brand relationship. In the context of Omega's activities on Instagram, sharing immersive content focused on museums, exhibitions and interviews helps to support and deepen the consumer-brand relationship.



From left to right: (Omega, 2019)

Figure 5.56: Eddie Redmayne and Raynald Aeschlimann at an Omega exhibition in Shanghai

Figure 5.57: The space suit of a NASA astronaut at Omega's Museum in Biel, Switzerland

Figure 5.58: An Olympic running track and watchmaker's bench at the Omega Museum

These are just some of the examples of how Omega purposefully immerses its audiences in content about the brand heritage that can truly engage them and deepen the connection they have with the brand. Omega's specific brand building activities provide the groundwork for immersion and persuasion to take place, ultimately turning followers into brand advocates.

5.3.3.3 Transient Competitive Advantage

When discussing Omega's brand experience, it is clear that all of its initiatives are meticulously planned. With such a rich history, the brand has numerous options to consider when preparing for new campaigns. In light of this, the brand has consistently been able to create Transient Competitive Advantage by using significant events from both its history books and its pioneering activities in the present day. The brand has become strategically astute at using milestone events as lenses through which to launch and promote new watches with great success, creating a pipeline of competitive advantages in the process (McGrath, 2013a).

As previously mentioned, the year 2019 was an important one for Omega – it celebrated the 50th anniversary of its part in the Apollo 11 moon landing. When considering the 2020 Omega watch sales figures as previously discussed, the success with which the brand commemorated the Speedmaster during that year had a marked influence on its followers. In 2022, off the back of the success of the 50th

anniversary, Omega again used the Speedmaster as the starting point for a new market-leading project.

In March 2022, Omega partnered with the very company that saved the Swiss watch industry during the quartz crisis. Swatch—not to be confused with the parent company of both these brands, The Swatch Group—released a co-branded homage to Omega’s most iconic watch, the Speedmaster. Titled the “MoonSwatch”, this watch is made from a bio-ceramic material and features an inexpensive quartz movement. Released in 11 different iterations and colourways, the MoonSwatch is an almost-exact copy of the iconic Omega Speedmaster that features both the Omega and Swatch logos on the dial, along with all the sub-dials and other features visible on the Omega Speedmaster. Figures 5.59 and 5.60 show both the Swatch MoonSwatch “Mission to the Moon” and the Omega Speedmaster Moonwatch next to each other.



From left to right:

Figure 5.59: Swatch MoonSwatch “Mission to the Moon” (Swatch, 2022)

Figure 5.60: Omega Speedmaster Moonwatch (Omega, 2022b)

The collection of 11 watches is inspired by planetary objects from our solar system: the Sun, Mercury, Venus, Earth, the Moon, Mars, Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus, Neptune and Pluto (Swatch, 2022). Figures 5.61 to 5.64 show a few examples of these watches. Apart from the bio-ceramic case and quartz movement, the Swatch MoonSwatch is delivered on a velcro strap, whereas the Omega Speedmaster Moonwatch is delivered on a steel bracelet. Furthermore, each of the MoonSwatch watches feature different design elements based on the specific planetary body it depicts. The “Mission to Mars” watch (figure 5.64) has rocket-shaped hands on the sub dials, whereas the “Mission to the Sun” watch (figure 5.61) has a striking yellow dial and orange hands. The “Mission to Earth” watch, in turn, (figure 5.62) features a green case to mimic our planet’s vegetation.



From left to right: Swatch (2022)

Figure 5.61: Swatch MoonSwatch “Mission to the Sun”

Figure 5.62: Swatch MoonSwatch “Mission on Earth”

Figure 5.63: Swatch MoonSwatch “Mission to the Moon”

Figure 5.64: Swatch MoonSwatch “Mission to Mars”

Despite a few sceptics pointing out that Omega is damaging its brand with this collaboration, a large portion of the watch world has been ablaze with praise and admiration for this watch. It is important to consider that the MoonSwatch contains a quartz movement, which means that this specific watch cannot be seen as a true replacement for a mechanical Omega Speedmaster watch. Sold exclusively through selected Swatch Boutiques at present (with plans to make the watch available through all Swatch Boutiques, both in store and online), the initial release weekend was a resounding success. Buyers camped out in front of Swatch stores for hours in anticipation of the release, and once doors opened across the world, the watches sold out in an instant. So successful was the hype created around this launch, that police were called to control crowds outside Swatch stores in both Melbourne and

Singapore. A Swatch Boutique in London had to close its doors on launch morning due to concerns around the health and safety of customers and staff, and a boutique in Toronto saw more than 1 000 hopeful customers line up over three city blocks for the chance to purchase a MoonSwatch (Corder, 2022a; Milton, 2022b).

All the MoonSwatch watches in stock around the world sold out on launch date. This resulted in a number of these watches ending up on eBay and other similar sites at prices more than ten times the retail price of \$260. The market stabilised since hearing that these watches will not be limited editions, but will rather form part of the standard Swatch line-up (Corder, 2022b). Since these are two brands competing in completely different market segments, there is no direct overlap between the types of customers they service. As this study has explained, the Swatch brand occupies a completely different segment of the watch market.

The launch of this collaboration was so successful that sources with knowledge of Omega's sales figures have reported an increase in sales of Omega watches ever since. The collaboration breathed new life into the Swatch brand, and simultaneously introduced the Omega brand to a new, younger audience. Reports have also indicated that existing Omega Speedmaster customers have purchased Swatch MoonSwatch watches, clearly pointing to a symbiotic relationship between two vastly different products that share the same design language and origin story (Broer, 2022; Kay, 2022).

Brand collaborations in the luxury space are not new. The Omega President and CEO, Raynald Aeschlimann, was heavily involved in the process of creating these watches, stating that time and effort has gone into getting all the details right. Not concerned about any negative impact the collaboration might have on Omega, Aeschlimann praised this collaboration as a fun project for an industry that traditionally takes itself too seriously (White, 2022).

The Omega x Swatch collaboration serves as another example of how Omega consistently creates and exploits Transient Competitive Advantage while reiterating why it is a leader brand. The definition of "masstige" states that the brand value of luxury brands is negatively impacted when products are made available to less

affluent customers at more affordable prices (Wan & Mattila, 2014; Kapferer & Bastien, 2009). Instead of directly releasing a cheaper watch under the Omega moniker, the brand partnered with Swatch for this project. By enticing a new generation of watch buyers with a MoonSwatch that is inspired by one of the most iconic watches of all time, Swatch helped to create a pool of future Omega customers. This collaboration has the ability to serve as a conduit for future Omega brand advocates.

The collaboration also explicitly shows how agile the Omega brand is. Based on Aaker's (2016) view of a brand agile firm, Omega was able to respond strategically to an opportunity it saw in the marketplace. To eschew all previously held notions of a brand partnership, Omega demonstrated how a brand can partner with another in ways not done before to create a product that benefits the customers of both companies. Landor (2015) suggests that brands that are able to execute these types of agile strategies are often considered to be leader brands. Landor (2015) also found that these brands have successfully solved the agility paradox described in chapter two, as they are simultaneously leading (by charting a new course for luxury brand partnerships) and true (by still adhering to the core tenets that makes the Speedmaster and the brand unique).

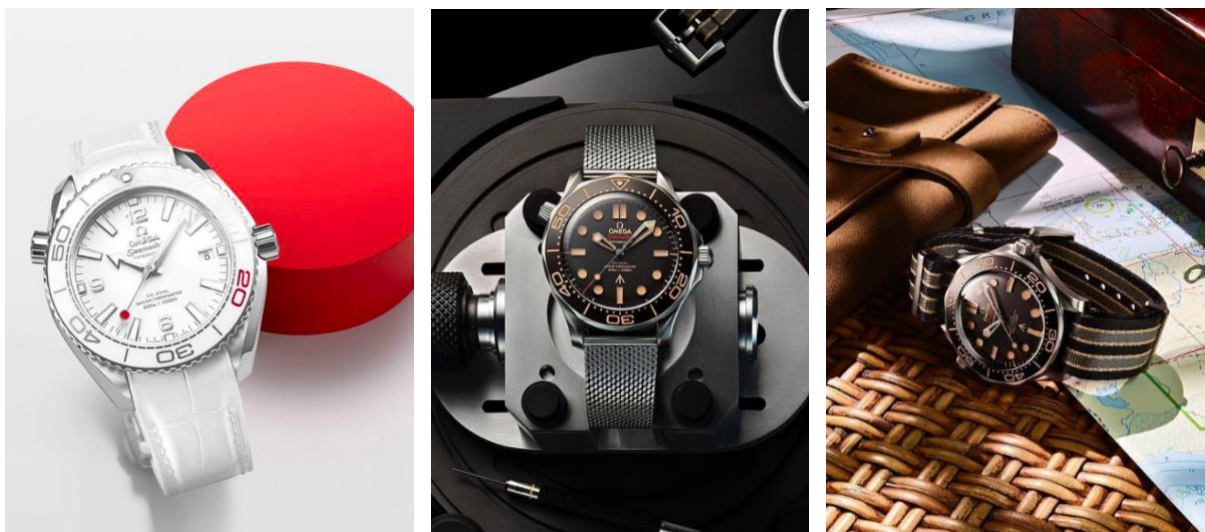
When a new generation sees MoonSwatch watches on the wrists of thousands of customers, the result will be an increase in excitement and aspiration towards the watch that started it all (Grapper, 2022). The Omega x Swatch collaboration might well be the Transient Competitive Advantage that eventually topples Omega's giant competitor: Rolex. By putting its own spin on the concept of *masstige*, Omega has used the phenomenon to its advantage.

5.3.3.4 Persuasion

Considering the *brand experience* theme, the research shows that persuasion can take place when a brand's followers are sufficiently immersed in a specific context (Green & Brock, 2002). Omega immerses its followers through multiple posts that create gripping narratives focused on core brand identity. When executed well, this immersive content includes cognitive, affective and virtual, visual cues dimensions, which combines to create online brand advocacy (Wilk *et al.*, 2018a). The possible

persuasion that occurs when Omega creates these brand experiences on Instagram is illustrated in the following examples.

As mentioned previously, special edition watches are created in preparation for every Olympic Games. The watch created for the 2020 Tokyo Olympics is visible in figure 5.65. In 2019, Omega also paid homage to its long-standing relationship with the world's most famous spy, James Bond, by working with actor Daniel Craig to create a watch to celebrate the film, *No Time to Die* (figures 5.66 and 5.67).



From left to right: (Omega, 2019)

Figure 5.65: The Omega Planet Ocean made for the 2020 Tokyo Olympic Games

Figure 5.66: The Omega Seamaster 300M “007” Edition watch for the film “No Time to Die”

Figure 5.67: Omega Seamaster 300M “007” Edition watch in a lifestyle setting

The video shared [here](#) gives followers a look at the finer features of the watch. The use of closeup video and images creates the visual intrigue and excitement necessary to draw customers into the story of this watch, which may lead to persuading them to acquire a watch or to become a brand advocate. In purchasing one of these watches, the brand's customers are able to step into a Bond persona.

Understanding the importance of immersive storytelling in the current era, Omega also partnered with Fratello Watches to create the SpeedyTuesday Speedmaster watches in 2017 and 2018, as well as Hodinkee in 2018 to create a special 10th anniversary edition Speedmaster (Clymer, 2018; Broer, 2017; Hughes *et al.*, 2016; Presi, Maehle, & Kleppe, 2016; Luedicke *et al.*, 2010; Cova & Pace, 2006; Holt, 2004; Salzer-Mörling

& Strannegård, 2004). Omega has perfected the generation of demand for special watches that are tied to momentous occasions in its history. Omega uses Transient Competitive Advantage as opportunities to create content that is relevant to each of the special edition watches, and deliver it in a way that persuades its followers. By connecting the inspiration behind these watches with the celebration of the brand's history, followers are able to experience the essence of the brand; the watches are a physical manifestation of the brand's history.

In addition to celebrating its history, Omega also immerses its followers in the settings, contexts and events in which it plays an important role. The images below show how Omega used its connection with golf to promote its watches. Figure 5.68 features the brand's Seamaster Aqua Terra Golf watch. The green seconds hand, Seamaster typeface on the dial and green accents on the material NATO strap mimic the grass on the fairway of a golf course. Figure 5.69 shows how the brand used the PGA Championship to launch the Speedmaster Apollo 11 50th Anniversary limited edition watch.



From left to right: (Omega, 2019)

Figure 5.68: The Omega Seamaster Aqua Terra Golf watch

Figure 5.69: The Omega Speedmaster Apollo 11 50th Anniversary watch promoted in partnership with the PGA championship

The brand uses this connection to golf as an exemplification of its approach to watchmaking. Over a number of posts (seen [here](#), [here](#), [here](#), [here](#), [here](#) and [here](#)), the brand explained how its followers can use the watches to express their personalities on the golf course. All the watches featured in these posts have coloured NATO watch straps and four of the six posts feature watches with vibrant seconds hands. The copy in these posts is aimed at encouraging the brand's followers to put their own unique twist on their outfits for the golf course, and to tailor their watches' aesthetic to their own. These are some of the different digital branding techniques used to experience the Omega brand personally and viscerally.

Partnerships with sporting events are important brand building opportunities for Omega. When customers themselves play these sports, they are able to connect with the brand in an organic way. Visibility at sporting events therefore helps the brand to strengthen its connections with its followers. More importantly, the brand's sport-focused content touches on the brand's essence: its watches enables the wearer to achieve the impossible. This message is communicated through sport-focused content pieces because the brand knows that persuasion occurs when people lose themselves in a narrative (Van Laer, De Ruyter, Visconti & Wetzels, 2014; Chronis, 2008). Considering the nature of luxury watches, visual appearances play an important role in overall appeal. Central to the appearance of watches is how the aesthetic value is portrayed in the brand's content.

5.3.4 Theme four: Aesthetic value

This theme focused on the aesthetic value of Omega's watches. Within the context of the luxury watch industry, "aesthetic value" refers to all aspects of a watch's appearance, including the case, dial, hands, movement, bracelet or strap and the presentation box. All these parts make up the whole, and the result—a finished watch—attracts the eye and captures the attention of consumers. When connecting this theme back to the literature review, aesthetic value can be discussed in relation to brand differentiation, luxury, rarity and Veblen goods.

During the qualitative content analysis phase, the researcher combined several codes and code groups that related to the aesthetic value of Omega's watches. The final

code groups that made up the theme were: *a beautiful watch*; *aesthetic value of the watch*; *comments on the look of the watch*; *tough & beautiful watch*, and *personalise the look of your watch*.

5.3.4.1 Brand narrative

When referencing the literature review, it becomes apparent why Omega places a large emphasis on the visual appearance of its watches. The unique aesthetic value of a watch differentiates it from its competitors which then influences the brand's image in the mind of the consumer (Keller, 2012; Webster & Keller, 2004; Keller, 1993). Watches are innately personal objects, often purchased for their luxury attributes to celebrate milestones and special occasions (Barret, 2000). People also wear watches as a means to express their personalities (Kastanakis & Balabanis, 2012; Kim *et al.*, 2012; Wiedmann, Hennigs & Siebels, 2009, 2007). The following selection of images (figures 5.70 to 5.72) shows how luxury watches are used to accessorise outfits and express personal taste.



From left to right:

Figure 5.70: Man wearing an Omega De Ville with an oversized T-shirt and blue glasses (Spangle, 2021)

Figure 5.71: Woman wearing an Omega Diver 300M “007” Edition with blue jeans, a tracksuit top and a hunting jacket (Baker, 2022)

Figure 5.72: Man wearing an Omega Speedmaster with chinos and a jacket (Hodinkee, 2021)

Luxury watches also allow wearers to convey messages about themselves to others. Due to the relatively high cost associated with purchasing these pieces, people

wearing luxury watches are often perceived as being successful. The wearer is often aware of this assumption. This feeling of being recognised for owning a luxury watch often supports the wearer's self-image. As an accessory, luxury watches are associated with the enhancing of a person's aspirations and sense of self.

Another message that is portrayed through a watch is power. Figure 5.73 shows Cindy Crawford wearing a solid gold Omega Constellation Manhattan watch. In addition to her career as an actor, her outfit suggests that she might be a successful leader with a bold personality. Paired with a powerful stance, the solid gold watch on her wrist portrays an image of someone with exquisite taste who is confident and driven. The lack of any vibrant colour in the image is also a departure of Omega's use of bold colour. This suggests that Cindy's personality brims with confidence, brought to the fore through wearing her watch. In figure 5.74, Nicole Kidman is seen wearing an Omega Constellation Manhattan made of steel. Drawn in by a playful pose, the viewer's attention is then diverted to the watch on her wrist. Kidman's natural and universally acknowledged beauty is further echoed in the appearance of the watch, creating a sophisticated and understated symbiotic relationship. Images like these allow followers to imagine themselves in Kidman's position or admire the qualities she, and by association the watch, portrays.

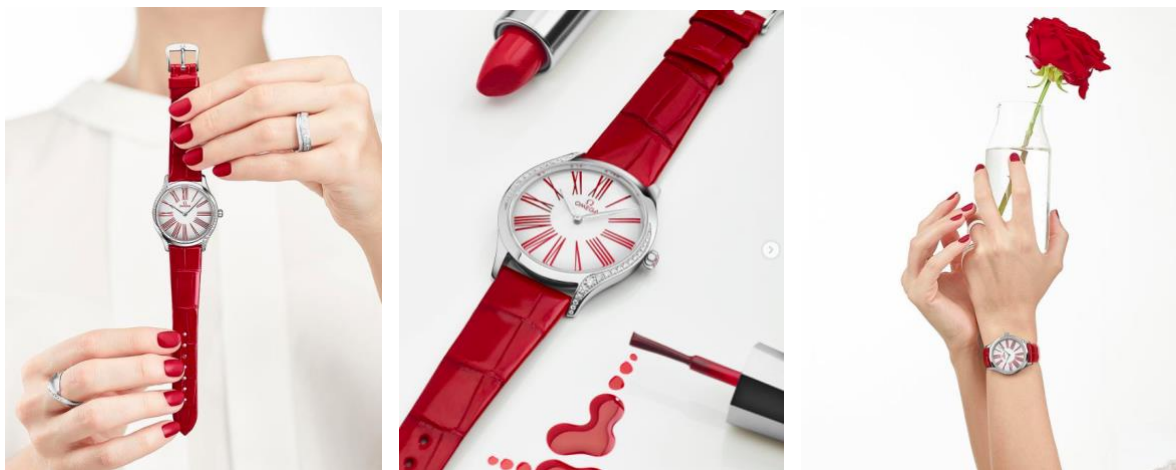


From left to right: (Omega, 2019)

Figure 5.73: Cindy Crawford wearing a gold Omega Constellation Manhattan

Figure 5.74: Nicole Kidman wearing an Omega Constellation Manhattan in steel

In keeping with the theme of aesthetic value, the brand shared a sequence of three posts on the Omega Trésor watch (figures 5.75 to 5.77). This specific Trésor watch features a red crocodile leather strap and red numerals on the dial. To contextualise the watch, the brand used its colour red to dress the image backgrounds. The red fingernails on the first image, the lipstick and nail varnish on the second and the red rose on the third all work in tandem with the watch to reinforce the idea that beauty can be bold and breath-taking. When looking at the psychology of colour, red attracts the attention of the viewer, signifies strength and power, and connotes images of love and passion (London Image Institute, 2020).



From left to right: (Omega, 2019)

Figure 5.75: An Omega Trésor on a red leather strap held by a model with red nails

Figure 5.76: An Omega Trésor on a red leather strap with red lipstick and nail varnish

Figure 5.77: An Omega Trésor on a red leather strap on the wrist of a model holding a red rose

The use of the colour red in these and other Omega images drives home this message that Omega watches stop people in their tracks. For many people, just the aesthetic value of a watch is enough to drive purchase behaviour. The ability to use an Omega watch to accentuate an outfit or even create the main focus point speaks to the power of this brand. Customers are also able to alter the appearance of these watches by changing the straps. This customisation further underscores the aesthetic value these pieces portray, allowing the wearer to express their identity through the watch (Yeoman *et al.*, 2007).

However, watches don't have to portray a powerful message all the time. For many people, wearing a luxury watch is about enjoyment and embracing their passion for horology. Figures 5.78 to 5.80 shows three different men all wearing Speedmaster watches. These three men were featured in the brand's posts about Pitti Uomo, a bi-annual gathering for menswear retailers, editors and enthusiasts in Florence, Italy.

Here, the brand showed how different men from different backgrounds all wear the brand's watches in their own unique ways. With these posts, the brand reminds followers that personal style is a way to express each person's unique identity. The wearer can create a narrative for themselves, just by selecting a specific watch. This freedom of expression, along with the ability to create an identity through a watch are some of the reasons why these timepieces have become such an integral part of our lives.



From left to right: (Omega, 2019)

Figure 5.78: A man dressed in a casual blue suit wearing a straw hat and an Omega Speedmaster

Figure 5.79: A man dressed in a khaki suit wearing an Omega Speedmaster on a NATO strap

Figure 5.80: A man dressed in a grey suit wearing an Omega Speedmaster on a leather strap

When reviewing the qualitative counts analysis data in relation to the *aesthetic value* theme, it becomes apparent that a large number of Omega's posts focus on the visual aspect of the brand's watches. Under the *Reason for Post* category (figure 5.81), 98 of the 335 entries (29.25%) focus on the *Showcase product features* topic. This topic explicitly displays design elements and visual features of the brand's watches.

Tell a story	111
Showcase product features	98
Share general content	78
Launch a product	48

Figure 5.81: Reason for post category code counts data

The *design inspiration* code group alone contains 102 direct and indirect references to visual aspects that influenced the design of the brand's watches. The *watch design* code group also contained 90 references to specific elements of the watches' design, such as the case, dial, hands and crown. Consider also the numerous direct and indirect references to the brand's aesthetic elements throughout its posts: the brand's colour red being used as a design element in various contexts; the use of beautiful models and ambassadors when promoting the watches; the connection between the watches and natural and man-made landscapes; the representation of the brand's watches at Fashion Week, and the showcasing of specific visual features of the watches. The researcher therefore found that the visual identity of the brand's watches permeates throughout its content in a variety of ways. Examples of these types of posts are shared [here](#), [here](#), [here](#), [here](#) and [here](#).

5.3.4.2 Narrative Transportation Theory

As previously mentioned, Green and Brock's (2002) work suggested that immersion in content needs to occur before persuasion can take place. Given this context, the researcher analysed the Instagram content that had a direct influence on the aesthetic value of the watches. When taking a broad overview of the Instagram posts from the entire 2019 calendar year, the researcher found that the brand frequently posted content that referenced the aesthetic value of its watches.

The counts analysis in figure 5.73 pointed out that almost 30% of all the codes in the *Reason for Post* category were related to the showcasing of product features. As mentioned, this category refers to attributes of the watches being shared with viewers. The reason behind this high number of posts lies in the fact that people are drawn to beautiful objects that make them feel good. Watches allow people to escape into the beauty of the timepiece, and given the subjective value of these timepieces, the ways in which they are perceived differs from person to person.

Of the *showcase product features*, *share general content* and *launch a product* category code counts data, a large number of these posts also touched on the aesthetic value of the watches. Omega has shared several consecutive posts that all touch on a specific aspect of the watches' visual identity, which indicates how important it believes Narrative Transportation Theory to be. For example, the brand would feature a series of posts that referenced the ocean's waves as the inspiration behind the design of a specific watch's dial (figure 5.82), or publish multiple posts featuring strong, independent and beautiful female ambassadors wearing Omega watches. This connects visually appealing, feminine watches with beautiful female ambassadors (figures 5.83 and 5.84) .



From left to right: (Omega, 2019)

Figure 5.82: The wave-inspired dial of an Omega Seamaster

Figure 5.83: Liu Shishi wearing a gold Omega Constellation Manhattan

Figure 5.84: Alessandra Ambrosio wearing a gold Omega Constellation Manhattan

In contrast to the use of female ambassadors, the brand also shares posts that feature watch movements. Omega focuses on highly specific aspects of the watch (figures 5.85 to 5.87), like the rotor, the movement and the assembled movement with the dial attached, bringing these small details to life in visually stunning ways – signifying their importance as part of the overall watch's design.

The way in which Omega created these posts (figures 5.85 to 5.87) enabled it to share content that is both aesthetically pleasing and informative. Content like this speaks to both the emotional and cognitive sides of the consumer's mind and enables the brand to relay a message about a complicated component in a visually appealing way. By consistently using aesthetic value as a theme for sharing brand content,

Omega reinforces the narrative that its watches exude a sense of visual sophistication, beauty and intrigue. Given the aforementioned examples, aesthetic value is manifested throughout the content in various ways, highlighting its importance as part of the thematic mix that underpins all the brand's activities on Instagram.



From left to right: (Omega, 2019)

Figure 5.85: The rotor (winding mechanism weight) of a mechanical watch movement

Figure 5.86: A mechanical watch movement, held by the winding stem

Figure 5.87: The dial and movement assembly from an Omega Constellation Manhattan

The way in which the brand consistently utilises aesthetically focused content invites its followers into a beautiful world. In combination with the breath-taking imagery, the brand also used copy that explained just how technical and intricate its watch movements are, and how important these achievements are to the brand:

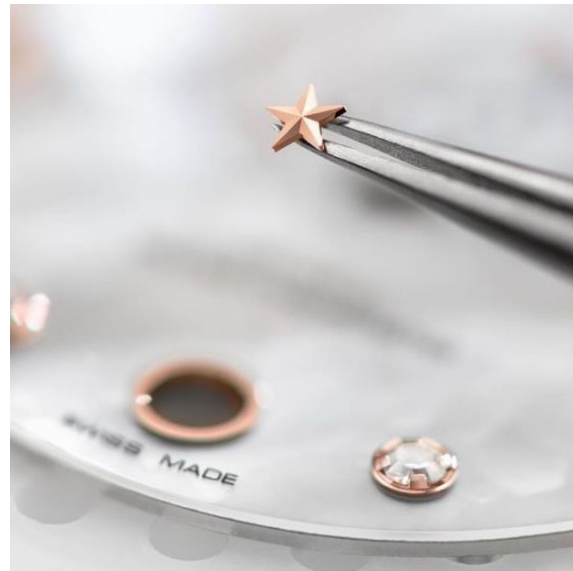
“#MasterChronometer, Perfection in every piece. #OMEGA accepts nothing less.”

“#MasterChronometer. We’ve been dedicating ourselves to the art of precision since 1848. Today’s Master Chronometer movements have achieved our highest ever standard.”

5.3.4.3 Transient Competitive Advantage

In addition to the Transient Competitive Advantage that Omega exploited with the anniversary of the moon landing, the brand also celebrated the relaunch of its Constellation Manhattan range. The beacon of the brand's focus on precision, the Constellation Manhattan range (an example can be seen in figure 5.88) offers customers a different aesthetic in comparison to the rest of the range. This elegant

and sophisticated watch was heavily promoted in 2019 using famous actresses, models and a number of product-focused posts. Here, Omega foregoes the obvious angle of focusing on the watch's precision, opting rather to sell the intangible quality of luxury and sophistication.



From left to right: (Omega, 2019)

Figure 5.88: The dial, date window, and bezel of a steel and gold Omega Constellation Manhattan

Figure 5.89: The star of an Omega Constellation Manhattan, held with a watchmaker's tweezer

Omega has more than a century's worth of experience in crafting watches of the highest quality and design. Yet, to sell these mechanical luxury watches, the visual appearance plays a critical role in the purchase decision-making process. As an example, the Omega Constellation Manhattan—first launched in 1952—was the first watch line from any brand to consist of only Chronometer-certified timepieces. This was a significant show of intent, reaffirming Omega's position as one of the world's foremost watch brands (Watchonista, 2020; Hong Kong Tatler, 2019; DeMarco, 2018).

The Constellation Manhattan was dubbed the “star” of Omega's catalogue. From a design perspective, the Constellation Manhattan range offers a significant departure from the rest of the brand's watch families. Instead of emphasising the watch's history of technical excellence, the brand opted to use an aesthetically driven strategy (figure 5.88). The newly relaunched range of watches all feature a golden star on the watch's dial (figure 5.89), signifying the watch's importance as the star of the Omega range. The star also refers to one of the eight records for precision the brand achieved: two

at the Kew-Teddington in England in 1933 and 1936, and six more at the Geneva Observatory between 1945 and 1952 (Watchonista, 2020).

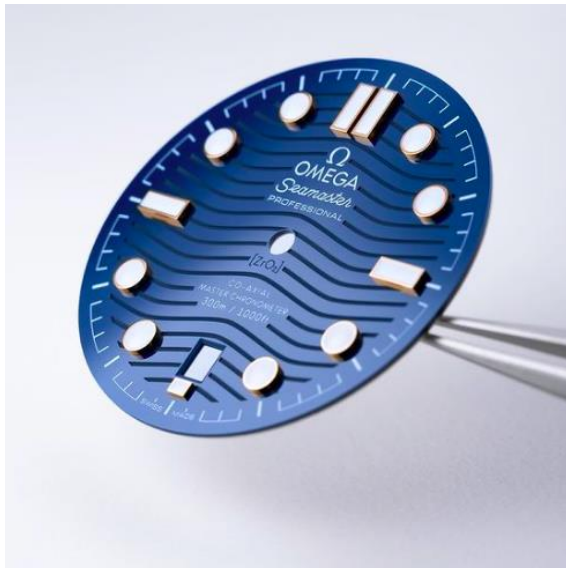
The brand relaunched the range in late 2018 and dedicated a significant amount of coverage to this watch line during the 2019 calendar year, re-affirming in a different world and with a new generation of consumers its leadership position. In order to make this retro-styled watch appealing for the current generation of Omega consumers, the brand had to find ways of making the watch relevant and desirable again. Omega positioned the Constellation Manhattan as the benchmark for visual beauty within its product range; not only as the 'star' in accuracy, but also in aesthetic appeal.

The brand used iconic brand ambassadors (Cindy Crawford, Nicole Kidman, Alessandra Ambrosio and Liu Shishi) to reiterate the idea that this range of watches is for strong, bold women who chart their own course and celebrate their individuality. In the posts, Omega shared statements from these women, referring to the fact that these watches are versatile, streamlined, beautiful and able to transition between different scenarios.

The advantage Omega has created here lies in the fact that it has been able to put a modern spin on a product with a rich history. This example shows how the brand is able to repackage a message and product from bygone days and make it relevant and highly aspirational in the same way it did with the Moonwatch and the Calibre 321 reissue in the same year.

5.3.4.4 Persuasion

Branding plays a key role in how a watch is presented and portrayed on Instagram. Figures 5.90 and 5.91 show how the same element (a watch dial) can be shared with the brand's audience. When considering the *aesthetic value* theme, figure 5.90 would most likely traditionally appeal to a more masculine audience who appreciate the strong, clean lines and bold use of colour. Whereas figure 5.91 would possibly be more appreciated by a feminine audience that enjoys the finer, luxurious touches that the gold and diamond finish brings to the look of the watch. In both cases the brand shared watch dials, but the audience and the presentation differed.



From left to right: (Omega, 2019)

Figure 5.90: The dial of an Omega Seamaster, held with a watchmaker's tweezer

Figure 5.91: The dial, date window, and bezel of a gold Omega Constellation Manhattan

Figures 5.90 and 5.91 show two examples where the emphasis is on the aesthetic appeal of Omega's watches. In both images, the brand used close-up shots with muted or no background to exhibit the finer details of the watch dials. Figure 5.90 shows the blue dial of the Seamaster watch, complete with wave patterns that connect the watch's design to the ocean that inspired it. The white and gold indexes create a striking, bold contrast against the deep blue dial, and the white minute track around the edge of the dial rounds out the visual design. Notice the date window above the six on the bottom of the dial – perfectly symmetrical to the indices at 12'o clock. This highlights the care and attention to detail the designers use when creating these watches.

Figure 5.91 shows a close-up image of a gold Constellation Manhattan's dial. Here, the mother-of-pearl dial lends a soft and elegant touch to the watch's overall design. The star above the round date window exemplifies the fact that the Constellation range is the star of the Omega range. The diamonds used for the hour markers and around the bezel are all perfectly set, showing that Omega's watchmakers are skilled artisans who strive to perfect even the most complicated and time-consuming task.

Luxury watches still tell the time in the same way an inexpensive quartz watch or a mobile phone might. Yet, consumers are willing to pay a considerable premium for these products that enable them to express their identity and other social cues (Veblen, 1899, cited in Bagwell & Bernheim, 2001; Thakur and Vaidya, n.d.). Using diamonds on a watch also contributes to the watch's rarity. Considering the expense of preparing diamonds and the scarce nature of this precious stone, using diamonds on a watch simultaneously increases its price and makes it more rare; two aspects that contribute to the desirability of certain luxury watches (Habacon, 2014; Phau & Prendergast 2000; Dubois & Paternault, 1995). As previously mentioned, the stellar financial performance of the Swiss watch industry during 2021 shows that luxury watches are Veblen goods.

Omega went on to promote the Constellation Manhattan model 38 times during the 2019 calendar year, using a variety of images, videos and carousels (some examples are available [here](#), [here](#) and [here](#)). The first post came on February 4, 2019, when the brand published a video about four inspiring brand ambassadors in the Manhattan Constellation's marketing campaign: Alessandra Ambrosio, Liu Shishi, Nicole Kidman and Cindy Crawford (available [here](#)). The brand used the star on the watch's dial as a direct reference to the brand's technical achievements in watchmaking and illustrated how the watch "stars" in the four different ambassadors' lives (visible on figure 5.92).



From left to right: (Omega, 2019)

Figure 5.92: The small gold star from the Omega Constellation Manhattan's dial

Figure 5.93: A side angle of the Omega Constellation Manhattan

When creating these posts, Omega carefully considers words and other design elements to subtly reinforce the symbolic meaning in its content. This approach emphasises its strategy of using intelligent understatement. The posts also featured other aesthetic aspects of the watch, such as the bracelet, dial and case design. Within the context of the *aesthetic value* theme, Omega uses its historic achievements as the basis for the reintroduction of an iconic line of watches from its past. Instead of repeating facts about its decades-earlier achievements, the brand showcased its technical watchmaking superiority in an indirect, subtle way.

The symbolism behind the star used on the Constellation Manhattan's dial points to the conservatories at Kew-Teddington, Neuchatel and Geneva, where Omega's watches were tested against its competitors throughout the years, often obtaining top honours by having the most accurate watches at these competitions. The "star" also speaks to the brand's use of ambassadors; the brand's image of being important watchmakers, and the brand's connection with space – all featured on Instagram in a subtle, considered and relevant way.

The brand also uses literal and figurative exemplifications of a star to signify the success of its line. The copy on Instagram that accompanied figure 5.92 was "*On the Constellation Manhattan, every diamond and star is a refined work of art.*" The direct reference to a star in the text, along with a photo of the star from the watch's dial, reinforces this message. The copy on figure 5.93 was "*Leaving 2019 on a high. We're counting down with the iconic Omega Constellation*". The "counting down" reference connects the Constellation Manhattan with Omega's work with NASA. The star may also express the notion that the wearer is a "star" in the Omega world, an idea that emphasises the customer-brand relationship.

Considering the frequency with which Omega posted about the Constellation Manhattan watches, it is clear that the brand considers this watch to play an important role in recruiting female followers. Once introduced, these new followers can become enamoured with any of its watches. The Manhattan Constellation therefore served as the calling card that captured the viewers' attention. As previously discussed, the aesthetic elements of Omega watches draw the viewer in, making them fall in love

with the appearance of the watch. The way in which the brand photographs its timepieces, accompanied by excellent copy, adds to the product intrigue while also emphasising the intangible value offered by these watches. Dubois & Paternault (1995) refer to this phenomenon as the “dream value” of the brand.

The visual appearance of a watch is the first thing that captures a person’s attention. Aesthetic value is rooted in the idea that the look of a watch connotes a certain type of affective response, where a person becomes mesmerised and inspired. In the context of the *aesthetic value* theme, Omega created a large number of posts that specifically emphasised the aesthetic value of its watches with the purpose of persuading its followers through its beauty. This resulted in content that is both engaging and immersive, ultimately enabling the brand to transport its followers deeper into the brand’s world.

The researcher used the conceptual framework (figure 5.94) to unpack the four main themes: human achievement; product innovation; brand experience; and aesthetic value. He explored the brand narrative, using the lenses of Narrative Transportation Theory and Transient Competitive Advantage, and commented on the activities that could possibly lead to persuasion.

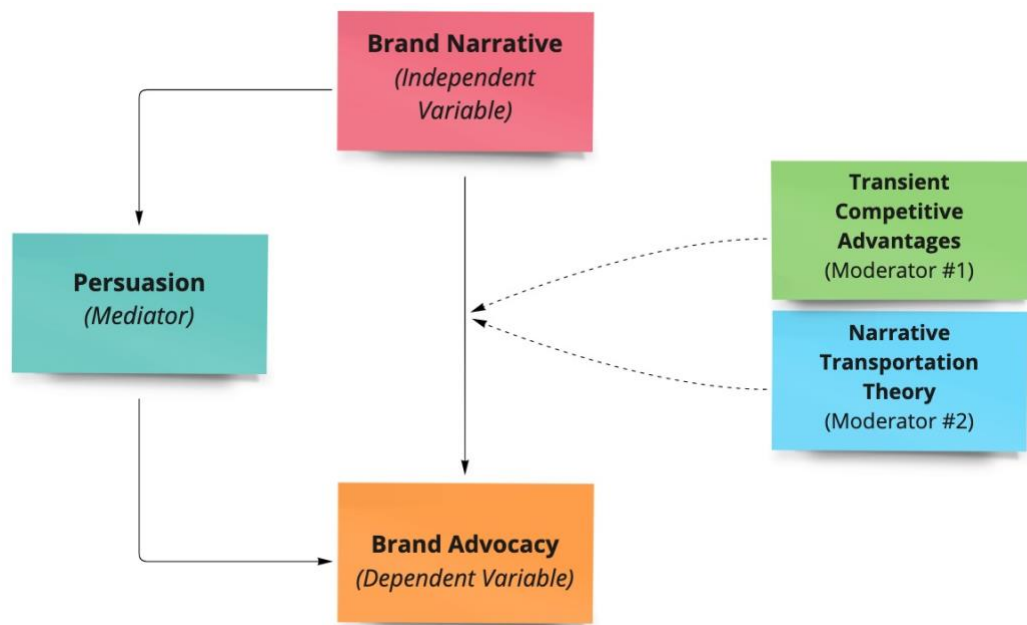


Figure 5.94: Conceptual framework

This study has shown that the Omega brand is synonymous with **achieving the impossible**. This insight formed the foundation of Omega's brand building activities, and determined how the brand used the tools and opportunities at its disposal to solidify Omega's position as a leader brand in the luxury watch industry.

5.4 Omega's brand identity

In the Deloitte Swiss watch industry report, Szegedi and Boudrand (2021) suggest that brand image is the most important factor influencing the purchase decisions for luxury watches. The authors also found that social media, brand ambassadors and influencers play key roles in driving these purchase behaviours. The researcher considered these insights when conducting this research.

Using the primary research as the main source of information, as well as Aaker's Brand Identity System (figure 5.86) as a framework, the researcher mapped out Omega's brand identity (Aaker, 1996). Brand identity forms the foundation of a leader brand's brand building activities. Without a strong brand identity, a leader brand's strategic position can come under threat. When its brand identity is no longer being reinforced, the brand runs the risk of damaging its reputation.

The brand's identity should therefore be strong, consistent and relevant whilst appealing to the tastes of consumers. Considering the importance of the brand's identity, the researcher argues that the four themes identified in the research forms the core of the Omega brand identity. These four themes were used as the inspiration for all of Omega's brand building activities, emphasising their importance as part of the brand's overall brand building strategy.

In addition to identifying the four themes, the researcher used the Aaker Brand Identity System (Aaker, 1996) model to analyse the essence of the Omega brand, its core identity and extended identity, based on 12 elements, as seen in the figure below.

BRAND IDENTITY SYSTEM

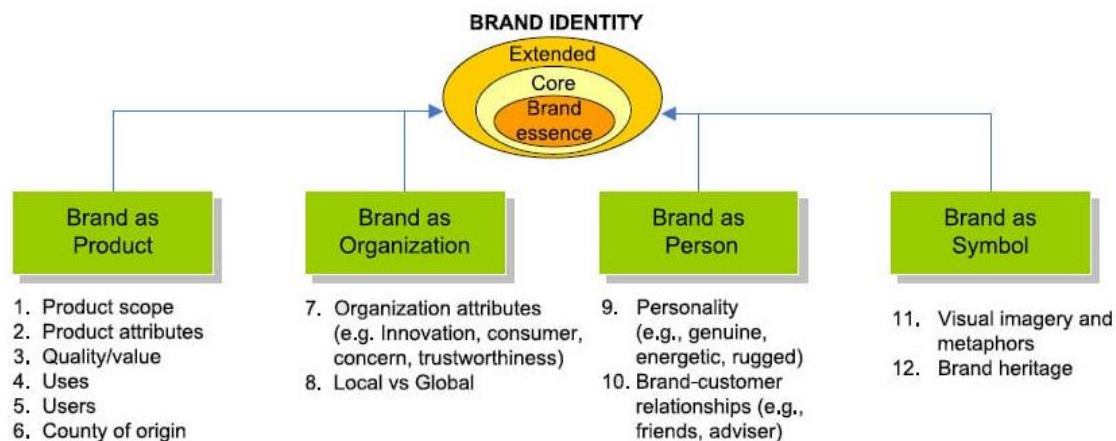


Figure 5.95: Brand Identity System (Aaker, 1996: 79)

The first element of this model, *Brand Essence*, focuses on the phrase that summarises the brand's entire message; a single thought that reflects the brand vision. The next element, *Core Identity*, includes four specific phrases that are central to the way the brand differentiates itself from its competitors. The four themes are the key messaging pillars that were identified during the primary research. The *Extended Identity* element consists of four perspectives broken down into 12 distinct element categories. These four perspectives are *Brand as Product*, *Brand as Organisation*, *Brand as Person* and *Brand as Symbol*. These 12 elements give colour and context to the *Brand Essence* and *Core Identity* (Meyerson, 2019a). The researcher's interpretation of Aaker's model as it pertains to Omega follows:

- **Brand essence:** Achieving the impossible
- **Core identity:** Human achievement; Product innovation; Brand experience; Aesthetic value
- **Extended identity:**
 - Brand as product:
 - *Product scope:* Luxury wrist and pocket watches; jewellery & sunglasses as extensions
 - *Product attributes:* Co-Axial escapements in almost all of its watches; many watches are Master Chronometer certified; rare and special materials are used in certain watches; highest quality components are used in all watches; watches feature

astoundingly accurate movements; a variety of colours and designs to choose from

- *Quality/value*: Omega watches fall in the luxury segment and offer authentic value compared to competitors by adding Master Chronometer certification; the quality of the watches is superlative
- *Uses*: Telling the time; expressing the wearer's personality; completing an outfit; giving as a gift; wearing as a reminder of an achievement or other noteworthy event
- *Users*: Discerning men and women with an appreciation for fine watchmaking; enthusiasts who are interested in the technical aspects of watchmaking; enthusiasts who are drawn to the activities the brand endorses and embodies
- *Country of origin*: Proudly made in Switzerland

○ Brand as organisation:

- *Organisation attributes*: Nimble and innovative; at the forefront of Swiss watchmaking; always improving quality and precision; drawing on its rich history
- *Local vs. global*: A Swiss brand that creates a range of watches that appeal to audiences across the world

○ Brand as person:

- *Personality*: Daring; evocative; ambitious; driven; mysterious; playful; cultured; reliable; sophisticated; successful; powerful
- *Brand-customer relationships*: A companion for life; always ready for adventure; never fully dressed without an Omega

○ Brand as symbol:

- *Visual imagery and metaphors*: Bold use of the colour red; strong visual identity driven by vivid colours and narratives; beautiful and immersive images and videos that add a sense of drama to the watches
- *Brand heritage*: A relentless focus on humans achieving the impossible throughout history; a constant focus on precision and mechanical perfection; a daring attitude from the start

The researcher's adaption of the Aaker Brand Identity System (Aaker, 1996) model shows how Omega implements different elements, themes and media types to reinforce its brand identity through its brand building activities on Instagram.

5.5 Implications for brand custodians

This study identified a number of insights that brand custodians and strategists working in various luxury product industries should consider when devising their online brand strategies. In Omega's case, brand building initiatives (which include a combination of immersive storytelling and the utilisation of authentic Transient Competitive Advantage) lay the foundation for the creation of brand advocacy. In light thereof, the researcher created a model that summarises the implications that play a significant role in an online brand strategy with the emphasis on the creation of brand advocacy.

5.5.1 A model for eliciting brand advocacy

The researcher identified a gap in the available research on *how* luxury brands should use social media channels to build their brands (Szegedi & Boudrand, 2021; Oliveira & Fernandes, 2020; Ko *et al.*, 2019). To address this gap, the researcher identified Omega as a leader brand (Aaker & Joachimsthaler, 2009, 2000; Aaker, 1996), that is successfully building its brand on Instagram. Given the theoretical grounding in the literature on Narrative Transportation Theory (Van Lear *et al.*, 2014; Green and Brock, 2002), Transient Competitive Advantage (McGrath, 2013a, 2013b) and online brand advocacy (Wilk *et al.*, 2019; Wilk *et al.*, 2018a), the researcher then unpacked the overarching approach Omega took when planning and executing its brand building activities on Instagram.

The research showed that Omega carefully selected the events and information that should be used for its brand communication, and how that material should be conveyed to the audience to achieve the intended effect. As expected from a leader brand, Omega stayed true to its brand essence, as well as the elements that differentiate it from its competitors. Omega executed its brand strategy through a

combination of rich images, videos and carousels to immerse their followers in its brand story. The brand’s content focused on the most popular watches in its various product families, and used a number of significant topics as angles from which to tell stories about its products. Omega utilised a variety of events, launches and exhibitions as brand building activities, and grouped posts together in a number of series to improve the level and duration of immersion of its Instagram followers.

The story of Omega’s brand building activities is exactly that: a story. The brand has mastered the art of using narrative-driven content to promote its watches in ways that could ignite a spark of excitement in its followers. Whether it be through the release of a new watch that capitalises on Transient Competitive Advantage or a historic event that is used as the basis for narrative transportation, the brand’s followers become captivated by and immersed in these rich tales of adventure, splendour and pleasure, living vicariously through the posts they see on their screens.

The application of its four core brand identity elements, executed exceptionally well in the brand’s content, creates the platform from which Omega can immerse and persuade its followers. The researcher discovered that Omega implemented clever and effective brand building activities to elicit possible brand advocacy. Considering the research gap that was previously discussed, the researcher identified five implications that may assist other luxury watch brands in creating brand advocacy on Instagram and other social media platforms. These recommendations are combined into a model and explained in figure 5.96 below.

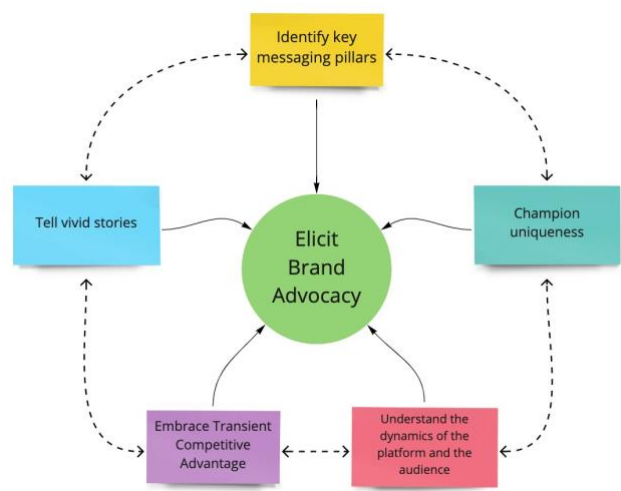


Figure 5.96: A model for eliciting brand advocacy in luxury brands on Instagram

Each of these five elements will now be discussed individually to add depth and context.

5.5.1.1 Identify key messaging pillars

Before planning any brand building activities, brands should identify the key messaging pillars on which their messages will be based. This case study finds that all of Omega's messaging is based on four pillars or themes. These four themes are *human achievement*, *product innovation*, *brand experience* and *aesthetic value*. Together, these themes constitute the entirety of Omega's brand identity.

The core message encapsulated in these pillars is that the Omega brand is synonymous with **achieving the impossible**. This is done by showcasing the incredible things people achieve in space, the ocean or sport field, and everywhere else while wearing Omega watches. The brand also features the innovation and product development that allows the watches to be astoundingly accurate; online brand experiences that let Omega's followers live vicariously through the watches and the beauty and design of the watches that captivates its followers.

The quintessence here for brands is that a clear understanding of their own identity is paramount. Only once a brand fully understands what it stands for, can it communicate how it wishes to be perceived by the world. In Omega's case, these four themes perfectly manifest the brand's reason for existence.

Each theme supports a specific pillar of the brand's identity, and allows it to communicate different aspects of its identity to its followers. In doing so, a coherent and consistent message is guaranteed to ensure that the brand image is built over time on the premises of trust and loyalty.

As the literature review has shown, agile brand building has to do with the portrayal of a strong and consistent brand identity. In turn, a consistent brand identity creates a brand image that customers can identify with and trust. These are crucial elements that need to be in place before brand advocacy can occur (Kalaigianam *et al.*, 2021).

5.5.1.2 Champion uniqueness

Brands should differentiate themselves based on their unmistakable characteristics and traits. In Omega's case the core identity of "achieving the impossible" is exemplified in all their brand building activities. The four themes identified in this study supports Omega's premise as a leader brand that values achievement, innovation, beauty and a narrative steeped in heritage and technical superiority. The researcher found that Omega celebrates its unique tone of voice, style and brand personality and uses it to its advantage when sharing content with followers.

The sophistication, intelligence and understated elegance with which the brand conducted their brand building activities is exemplary. The brand created a consistent visual style which was carried through all posts. This style included the use of the colour red—the corporate colour of the brand—along with photography and videography that emphasised strength, power and grace, respectively.

The brand used a variety of different backdrops and settings when creating the content, with the scene composition always supporting the featured watch. For NASA-themed posts, the brand mixed archive footage, sound and video clips with their own original content, and frequently made use of George Clooney as their point of contact between NASA astronauts and the brand. The brand worked with a select few ambassadors, all of whom speak to different demographics and are relevant to different segments of the watch industry and brand's audience.

In a world where brands often look, think and act in similar ways, leader brands set a new strategic direction for others to follow. By understanding which elements make a brand unique, brand custodians can use these elements to inform the way in which they communicate with their consumers. When communicating with followers on Instagram, Omega uses an adventurous and at times exciting tone of voice. This differentiates the brand from the traditional corporate standard and adds an additional element of individuality to their communications strategy.

The sophistication, intelligence and understated elegance with which the brand conducted their brand building activities is exemplary. Although different pieces of

content are aimed at persuading different audiences, and various watches were promoted using a multitude of narrative devices, the four themes of the brand's core identity are consistently applied throughout.

5.5.1.3 Understand the dynamics of the platform and the audience

Each marketing platform—and its users—is different, and brands need to adjust their brand building activities to capitalise on the unique opportunities offered by each of them. The research identified that Omega has an exceptional understanding of the benefits and functionality provided by Instagram. In addition to this, the brand also understands who it is talking to on the platform.

Brands should be wary of spray and pray tactics, where one type of content is shared with everyone on a platform, or the same content is shared across different platforms. Omega understands that it has different kinds of consumers, with unique tastes, styles and content needs. By keeping different personas in mind, brands can create tailored content that resonates with different subsets of their audience.

In the context of Omega's Instagram activities, this was shown in the way the different watches were communicated. The Omega Constellation Manhattan was positioned towards a slightly older female demographic using language and ambassadors that speak to that segment. Muted backgrounds were used for much of this imagery and the ambassadors themselves were pictured as the main focus point, with the watches playing a supporting role. In contrast, in one instance the Omega Trésor was promoted using vibrant red colours and objects suggesting that this watch is aimed at a slightly younger demographic who enjoys wearing bold colours and watches that have a strong visual identity.

The research has showed that the brand mainly uses single image posts that are supported with statement-based copy for effective and instantaneous immersion. These posts are often centred on space travel—one of the main themes the brand uses as inspiration for its content—and the posts are geared towards telling a specific story. This type of content delivery takes advantage of the best features Instagram has to offer. In doing so, the brand maximises the impact its content can have on its followers.

5.5.1.4 Embrace Transient Competitive Advantage

The researcher found that, although Omega has had success with re-using previous marketing initiatives, its general focus is on constant evolution and continuous improvement of its brand building activities. Examples here include the release of new watches inspired by new technologies and innovations, and never-before-seen partnerships like the Fratello Watches Speedy Tuesday watches and the Omega x Swatch collaboration. Omega has created a string of Transient Competitive Advantage by retooling its operations, upgrading its capabilities and harnessing the future as inspiration for its watches.

By adopting a nimble mindset, brands can move quickly to capitalise on opportunities as and when they arise, instead of continuing on the same path. The important principle here is that brands should move away from the notion of sticking to what worked in the past. To operationalise this insight, companies would need to have buy-in from the entire organisation to ensure the business moves in an agile manner.

5.5.1.5 Tell vivid stories

Luxury brands should invest their brand building spend into telling authentic, unique and vivid stories that actively support their brand identity. The researcher found that all the stories Omega shared with its followers are based on unique selling propositions that the brand owns and exploits, such as its partnership with the Olympic Games and space travel. When planning its brand building activities, brands should not fall into the trap of employing a standardised marketing calendar based on festive holidays. Authentic stories built around unique aspects of a brand's identity resonate with its followers in ways that generic promotions cannot. Examples in this case study are the 50th anniversary of the moon landing and the 125th anniversary of the Omega name.

Finding unique storylines that are relevant to each individual brand allows brand managers to differentiate their brands from the norm. Turning these storylines into vivid stories then takes the followers on a journey with the brand, immersing them in the subtleties of the narrative and increases the probability of them turning into brand advocates. By relying on their heritage, brands can follow Omega's lead and keep their history alive and relevant for the next generation.

In the context of its activities on Instagram, the key to maintaining Omega's brand image is ensuring that this approach to brand building is consistently applied. This insight suggests that brands should be consistent in the way they present their narratives by using the same types of content. This entails a form of consistency in how image and video content is created, which props, colours and scenarios are used to style the content and which ambassadors and messaging will support these narratives.

The content should create a sense of familiarity that followers can identify. At the same time, brands should experiment with how they bring in new information and products within the framework of their existing activities. The idea is to create content that is fresh, captivating and immersive, while still adhering to the overarching principles that a specific brand has become known for.

Omega integrates its physical exhibition spaces and its brand activations with its digital brand building activities on Instagram. The research has shown how the brand creates immersive content-based experiences that invite the viewer into the brand's physical reality. This is done through the use of various posts using images, videos and carousels accompanied by powerful statements that can be absorbed and interpreted quickly for maximum impact.

The model illustrated in figure 5.96 serves as a guideline which luxury brands may follow to execute their brand building activities on Instagram. The paramount conclusion is that each of these five elements needs to be present in a brand building strategy, as each element has an interrelated role to play in driving the overarching strategy. The researcher considers these five elements combined to be a summary of Omega's brand building strategy, and proposes it as a blueprint that other luxury brands can use to elicit possible brand advocacy in their brand building activities.

5.6 Limitations and delimitations

The researcher chose to conduct the study from a brand strategist's point of view, and not from the consumer's point of view. This is an important distinction, as the

researcher did not investigate how the *consumer* views and interprets the content Omega shares to its Instagram page. In conducting the research from the brand strategist's point of view, the researcher can establish how Omega supports its brand image in order to elicit brand advocacy behaviour amongst its followers.

A possible limitation may be that, due to the interpretive nature of this qualitative study, the research findings could be interpreted differently by other researchers. Although great care has been taken to document every step of the research process, the researcher's unique perspective may differ from that of other academics.

The researcher identified a lack of sufficient literature on the creation of brand advocacy for luxury watch brands, as well as the lack of research on Omega's brand building activities on Instagram. This limitation meant that the researcher had to work with resources that focused on other luxury product brands. Although there was a substantial amount of literature on Narrative Transportation Theory, little has been written about Transient Competitive Advantage, or on the role both these elements play in creating online brand advocates in the luxury watch industry. The researcher therefore contributed to this body of knowledge by providing additional practical examples of both these theories from the research.

A potential delimitation is the fact that the researcher limits the research to Instagram, which may influence the generalisation of the results across other social media platforms. The decision to select Instagram however was clearly motivated in the research as the best platform to explore Omega's brand building activities. Another possible delimitation might be that the research sample is limited to one year's worth of Omega's Instagram posts.

Samples from different years may have been an option, but the researcher specifically selected 2019 as a calendar year because it was filled with a multitude of examples of both Narrative Transportation Theory and Transient Competitive Advantage. An entire year's worth of Instagram posts was a big enough sample to reach a point of saturation and yield significant insights.

A further delimitation is that the researcher did not interview Omega employees or marketing divisions to better understand the brand strategy. The researcher considered this approach, but ultimately decided against this as it may have skewed the analysis of the raw data. The decisions made by the researcher were purposively aimed at narrowing the research field to a specific moment in time that best showcased Omega's online brand building activities, thus yielding the most insights. This benchmark study therefore lays the foundation for further research.

5.7 Recommendations for future research

As this study indicated, online brand advocacy is an important factor in any brand strategy, regardless of the product or industry. The researcher found that additional research into online brand advocacy in general is needed. The same finding applies to the use of Transient Competitive Advantage in brand building strategies. The researcher also made the following recommendations to address specific gaps that can be explored in later research:

5.7.1 Research conducted from the consumer's perspective

This case study was done from the brand strategist point of view and a future research study may explore the consumer's point of view. For instance, future research could look at how Omega's brand image is perceived by consumers in terms of the key messaging pillars. A further study could also be conducted measuring the impact of Omega's narrative-driven content strategies on its Instagram followers by specifically looking at the extent to which the content immerses followers in the brand's stories, and to what extent this immersion leads to the creation of brand advocacy.

5.7.2 The study can be replicated in a different luxury goods category

This case study focused specifically on one luxury watch brand, Omega, and its brand building activities on Instagram. In future, this study can be replicated by studying a luxury brand in a different market segment.

Examples could include a luxury handbag atelier, a bespoke shoemaker, a car manufacturer or a haute couture designer. Considering the intricacies related to luxury brand building, this study's insights are not necessarily suited to brands operating in other market segments.

5.7.3 The study can be replicated with a new luxury watch brand

As a brand founded in 1848, Omega has an incredibly rich history, filled with grand achievements and great successes. Its long and storied existence means that it has a multitude of rich narratives to share with audiences. This rich trove makes it easier for its brand custodians to find interesting historical angles from which to launch new products and campaigns.

The researcher suggests that a similar study could be conducted by using a *contemporary* luxury watch brand as the subject. Although on the higher end of the luxury watch price spectrum and with considerably more niche-focused audiences, possible examples here include MB&F, Speake-Marin, Laurent Ferrier, Ressence and Voutilainen.

Using a newer watch brand without such a storied history will show to what extent history and heritage influences the success of their brand building activities, if at all? This research can also explore whether or not these brands utilise narrative-driven content strategies and whether or not they create Transient Competitive Advantage through their activities.

5.8 Conclusion

In this qualitative case study, the researcher aimed to explore how Omega creates brand advocacy on Instagram. He conducted this exploratory research from a brand strategist's point of view by analysing Omega's strategic brand initiatives through the lenses of Transient Competitive Advantage and Narrative Transportation Theory. The sample of one year's worth of Instagram posts (2019), totalling 293 individual entries,

was analysed through qualitative content and qualitative counts analysis, which yielded four main themes. These themes were interpreted with a conceptual framework deducted from the theoretical framework, culminating in a model for eliciting brand advocacy on Instagram.

Considering Omega's move from the classic brand management model to the brand leadership model (Aaker & Joachimsthaler, 2009), where the driver of the brand's strategy moved away from sales and market share towards brand identity building, the brand started investing in storytelling enriched with Transient Competitive Advantage that ultimately differentiates its watches from its competitors. With its strategic visionary perspective, as opposed to the tactical and reactive perspective that was prevalent under the classic brand management model, Omega creates Transient Competitive Advantage that enables the brand to build immersive narratives that captivate and persuade its followers. These pertinent and compelling narratives should turn its followers into brand advocates.

This research established that Omega combines storytelling, Transient Competitive Advantage and other brand building elements to stay relevant and appealing to the current generation of buyers. As mentioned previously, brand image is the most important factor influencing the purchase decisions for luxury watches. To sustain Omega's brand identity online while at the same time attracting new followers, the brand employed strategies that were consistent with its brand identity (behaviour considered to be true to the brand) whilst simultaneously embracing Transient Competitive Advantage as they occurred (which constitutes leading behaviour).

The researcher found that the brand does not employ an asset class strategy where its watches can be seen as investments. The brand also does not engage in artificial product scarcity tactics based on limiting the supply of its watches. Omega chooses to differentiate itself based on the technology used in its watches, and through clever brand strategies that draw followers into the brand. Omega's brand building activities exude glamour, style and sophistication – aspects that support its luxury image. In addition to these aspects, the brand also communicates its values, which include its focus on achieving the impossible (through the human achievement theme); an appreciation for precision and its focus on craftsmanship and technical expertise

(through the product innovation theme); its celebration of its history and Swiss heritage (through the brand experience theme, and its appreciation of natural and man-made beauty (through the aesthetic value theme).

Considering the findings, the researcher proposed a new model with which luxury brands could elicit brand advocacy in their online brand building activities on Instagram. This model includes five elements: *identify key messaging pillars, champion uniqueness, understand the dynamics of the platform and the audience, embrace Transient Competitive Advantage, and tell vivid stories*. These five elements were equally prevalent in Omega's online brand building strategies.

In many ways, the motto of the Olympic Games—*Citius, Altius, Fortius – Communiter*, which translates to “faster, higher, stronger – together”—summarises Omega's digital brand building activities on Instagram. Only by combining all the elements that make the brand unique into a consistent yet agile brand strategy can the brand retain its leader brand position. This study made a significant contribution to the literature on brand building for luxury watch brands by being the first study to explore how Omega employs brand strategies to create brand advocacy on Instagram. It also contributes to the luxury watch industry in that it provides a model for other luxury watch companies on how to elicit brand advocacy in their brand building strategies on Instagram.

REFERENCES

- Aaker, D. 2016. *Strategic brand agility*. [Online]. Available at: <https://medium.com/@DavidAaker/strategic-brand-agility-cc6c04c4ad9d> [Accessed 10 March 2022].
- Aaker, D.A. 1991. *Managing brand equity: Capitalizing on the value of a brand name*. New York: The Free Press.
- Aaker, D.A. 1996. *Building strong brands*. University of Michigan: Free Press.
- Aaker, D.A. 2002. *Building strong brands*. London: Simon and Schuster UK Ltd.
- Aaker, D.A. and Biel, A.L. 1993. *Brand equity and advertising: Advertising's role in building strong brands*. Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Aaker, D.A. and Joachimsthaler, E. 2000. *Brand leadership*. New York: Free Press.
- Aaker, D.A. and Joachimsthaler, E. 2002. *Brand leadership*. London: Simon and Schuster UK.
- Aaker, D.A. and Joachimsthaler, E. 2009. *Brand leadership*. London: Simon and Schuster UK.
- Abel, T. 1948. The operation called Verstehen. *American Journal of Sociology*, 54: 211-218.
- Achille, A. and Zipser, D. 2020. *A perspective for the luxury-goods industry during—and after—coronavirus*. [Online]. Available at: <https://www.mckinsey.com/industries/retail/our-insights/a-perspective-for-the-luxury-goods-industry-during-and-after-coronavirus> [Accessed 18 January 2022].
- Adams, A. 2021. *Patek Philippe was right to discontinue the Nautilus 5711 watch*. [Online]. Available at: <https://www.ablogtowatch.com/patek-philippe-was-right-to-discontinue-the-nautilus-5711-watch/> [Accessed 20 April 2022].
- Adams, A. 2013. *The power Of Co-Axial: how Omega watches use technology to strengthen the brand*. [Online]. Available at: <https://www.forbes.com/sites/arieladams/2013/07/03/the-power-of-co-axial-how-omega-watches-use-technology-to-strengthen-the-brand/#6716a73021ff> [Accessed 11 March 2020].
- Adjei, M.T., Noble, S.M. and Noble, C.H. 2010. The influence of C2C communications in online brand communities on customer purchase behaviour. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 38(5): 634–653.
- Ahearne, M., Bhattacharya, C.B. and Gruen, T. 2005. Antecedents and consequences of customer-company identification: expanding the role of relationship marketing. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 90(3): 574–585.

Aliyu, A.A., Singhry, I.M., Adamu, H. and Abubakar, M.M. 2015. Ontology, epistemology and axiology in quantitative and qualitative research: elucidation of the research philosophical misconception. Proceedings of the Academic Conference: Mediterranean Publications & Research International on New Direction and Uncommon Vol. 2 No. 1. 22nd December, 2015. Abekuta, Abekuta, Ogun State, Nigeria: University Of Agric.

Alt, R., Österle, H., Reichmayr, C. and Zurmühlen, R. 1999. Business networking in the Swatch Group. *Electronic Markets*, 9(3): 169-173.

Altieri, P. 2020. *Is Patek Philippe a good investment?* [Online]. Available at: <https://www.bobswatches.com/rolex-blog/buying-guides/patek-philippe-good-investment.html> [Accessed 21 February 2022].

American Marketing Association. 1960. *Marketing definitions: A glossary of marketing terms*. Chicago: American Marketing Association. Cited in: Maurya, U.K. and Mishra, P. 2012. What is a brand? A perspective on brand meaning. *European Journal of Business and Management*, 4(3): 122-133.

Anand, K.S., Girotra, K. 2007. The strategic perils of delayed differentiation. *Management Science*, 53(5): 697-712.

Anderson, C. 2020. *List vs. ask: comparing steel Rolex prices at retail to prices on the secondary market*. [Online]. Available at: <https://www.watchtime.com/featured/list-vs-ask-comparing-steel-rolex-prices-at-retail-to-prices-on-the-secondary-market/> [Accessed 21 February 2022].

Anwar, S.T. 2007. Global business and globalization. *Journal of International Management*. 13(1): 78-89.

Anwar, S.T. 2008. Daimler Chrysler AG: A decade of global strategic challenges leads to divorce in 2007. Cited in: Deresky, H. ed. 2008. *International management: managing across borders and cultures*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson/Prentice Hall.

Anwar, S.T. 2012. Selling time: Swatch Group and the global watch industry. *Thunderbird International Business Review*. 54(5): 747-762. [Online]. DOI: 10.1002/tie.21497

Appel, M. and Richter, T. 2007. Persuasive effects of fictional narratives increase over time. *Media Psychology*, 10(1): 113–134.

Arndt, Johan. 1967. Role of product-related conversations in the diffusion of a new product. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 4(3): 291–95.

Artworth Brothers. 2020. *OMEGA | a visit at their new headquarters*. [Online]. Available at: <https://artworth.ch/2020/10/12/omega/> [Accessed 12 April 2022].

Aspers, P. and Corte, U. 2019. What is qualitative in qualitative research. *Qualitative Sociology*, 42:139–160.

- Babbie, E. 2010. *The practice of social research*. 12th ed. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.
- Bagozzi, R.P. and Dholakia, U.M. 2006. Antecedents and purchase consequences of customer participation in small group brand communities. *International Journal of Research in Marketing*, 23(1): 45–61.
- Bahl, S. and Milne, G.R. 2010. Talking to ourselves: a dialogical exploration of consumption experiences. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 37(1): 176–95.
- Barger, V., Peltier, J.W. and Schultz, D.E. 2016. Social media and consumer engagement: a review and research agenda. *Journal of Research in Interactive Marketing*, 10(4): 268–287.
- Baig, E.C. 2021. *Surprise! TikTok app defies age boundaries*. [Online]. Available at: <https://www.aarp.org/home-family/personal-technology/info-2021/tiktok-app-defies-age-boundaries.html> [Accessed 10 April 2022].
- Baker, L. 2021. *The 23 unusual, wonderful, and remarkable things I learned and witnessed during Geneva Auction Week 2021*. [Online]. Available at: <https://www.hodinkee.com/articles/geneva-auction-week-2021-recap> [Accessed 12 February 2022].
- Baker, L. 2022. *We wrist-checked the fans in line during MoonSwatch Madness*. [Online]. Available at: <https://www.hodinkee.com/articles/omega-swatch-moonswatch-madness-watch-spotting> [Accessed 22 April 2022].
- Barker, P. 2021. *Philip Barker: How the Olympic motto has changed as Thomas Bach continues evolution*. [Online]. Available at: <https://www.insidethegames.biz/articles/1111030/olympic-motto-thomas-bach-tokyo-2020> [Accessed 21 February 2022].
- Barrett, M. E. 2000. Time marches on: the worldwide watch industry. *Thunderbird International Business Review*, 42(3): 349–372.
- Batat, W. 2019. *Digital luxury: transforming brands & consumer experiences*. Los Angeles: Sage.
- Baxter, P. and Jack, S. 2008. Qualitative case study methodology: Study design and implementation for novice researchers. *The Qualitative Report*, 13(4): 544-559. [Online.] DOI: 10.46743/2160-3715/ 2008.1573.
- Bazemore, C. 2019. *Why would pre-owned be more expensive than new?* [Online]. Available at: <https://blog.crownandcaliber.com/why-would-pre-owned-be-more-expensive-than-new/> [Accessed 12 February 2020].
- Bazemore, C. 2022. *How the Omega Speedmaster beat NASA torture tests and went to the Moon*. [Online]. Available at: <https://www.gearpatrol.com/watches/a594621/50-year-anniversary-moon-landings-speedmaster/> [Accessed 20 April 2022].
- Bendapudi, N. and Berry, L.L. 1997. Customers' motivations for maintaining relationships with service providers. *Journal of Retailing*, 73(1): 15–38.

Berg, B. and Lune, H. 2012. *Qualitative research methods for the social sciences*. 8th ed. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education.

Bhattacharya, C.B. and Sen, S. 2003. Consumer-company identification: A framework for understanding consumers' relationships with companies. *Journal of Marketing*, 67(2): 76–88.

Bhatti, A., Akram, H., Basit, H.M., Khan, A.U., Naqvi, S.M.R., Bilal, M.E. 2022. Commerce trends during COVID-19 pandemic. *International Journal of Future Generation Communication and Networking* 13(2): 1449-1452.

Bishop, C. 2021. *OMEGA CEO and President Raynald Aeschlimann on novelties 2021*. [Online]. Available at: <https://swisswatches-magazine.com/blog/ceo-aeschlimann-on-omega-novelties-2021/> [Accessed 17 April 2022].

Blowers, M. 2018. *The best Rolex for investment: a beginner's guide*. [Online]. Available at: <https://www.blowers-jewellers.co.uk/best-rolex-for-investment-guide/> [Accessed 20 February 2022].

Blowers, M. 2021. *Are second hand Omega watches a good investment?* [Online]. Available at: <https://www.blowers-jewellers.co.uk/second-hand-omega-watches-good-investment/> [Accessed 21 February 2022].

Boateng, H. and Okoe, A.F. 2015. Consumers' attitude towards social media advertising and their behavioral response: the moderating role of corporate reputation. *Journal of Research in Interactive Marketing*, 9(4): 299–312.

Bonin, H. 2012. Reassessment of the business history of the French luxury sector. The emergence of a new business model and a renewed corporate image (from the 1970s). In: Bonin, H. et al. eds. 2012. *European business and brand building*. Brussels: PIE Peter Lang, 113-135.

Booth, J. 2018. *How many hours do Olympic athletes practice? Prepare your jaw to drop*. [Online]. Available at: <https://hellogiggles.com/awards-events/olympics/how-many-hours-do-olympic-athletes-practice/> [Accessed 21 February 2022].

Boudet, J., Gordon, J., Gregg, B., Perrey, J. and Robinson, K. 2020. How marketing leaders can both manage the coronavirus crisis and plan for the future, 8 April 2020. [Online]. Available at: <https://www.mckinsey.com/business-functions/marketing-and-sales/our-insights/how-marketing-leaders-can-both-manage-the-coronavirus-crisis-and-plan-for-the-future> [Accessed 27 April 2022].

Bourke, J. *Watches of Switzerland sales have a good time of it, with boost from new James Bond film*, 9 November 2021. [Online]. Available at: <https://www.standard.co.uk/business/leisure-retail/watches-of-switzerland-sales-surge-james-bond-film-boost-b965132.html> [Accessed 28 April 2022].

Braun, V. and Clarke, V. 2006. Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3(2): 77–101.

Braverman, J. 2008. Testimonials versus informational persuasive messages: the moderating effect of delivery mode and personal involvement. *Communication Research*, 35(5): 666–94.

Breiding, R.J. 2013. *Swiss made: The untold story behind Switzerland's success*. London: Profile Books.

Brendan, D. 2019. *Omega Seamaster Aqua Terra Ultra Light watch debuts new titanium case and movement*. [Online]. Available at: <https://www.ablogtowatch.com/omega-seamaster-aqua-terra-ultra-light-watch-debuts-new-titanium-case-movement/> [Accessed 21 May 2022].

Brodie, R.J., Ilic, A., Juric, B. and Hollebeek, L.D. 2013. Consumer engagement in a virtual brand community: An exploratory analysis. *Journal of Business Research*, 66(1): 105-114.

Broer, R. 2022. *Crushed watch dreams: Investors and rising prices are spoiling the joy of watch collecting*. [Online]. Available at: <https://www.fratellowatches.com/crushed-watch-dreams-investors-and-rising-prices-are-spoiling-the-joy-of-watch-collecting/> [Accessed 12 February 2022].

Broer, R. 2022. *Some afterthoughts on the Omega × Swatch Speedmaster MoonSwatch*. [Online]. Available at: <https://www.fratellowatches.com/some-afterthoughts-on-the-omega-x-swatch-speedmaster-moonswatch/> [Accessed 30 April 2022].

Broer, R.J. 2019. *How the Speedmaster became the Moonwatch*. [Online]. Available at: <https://www.fratellowatches.com/speedmaster-became-moonwatch/> [Accessed 5 March 2020].

Broer, R.J. 2017. *OMEGA Speedmaster Speedy Tuesday Limited Edition*. [Online]. Available at: <https://www.fratellowatches.com/omega-speedmaster-speedy-tuesday-limited-edition> [Accessed 03 October 2018].

Broer, R.J. 2018. *Speedmaster Speedy Tuesday 2 “Ultraman” – out now! (live pics and video)*. [Online]. Available at: <https://www.fratellowatches.com/speedmaster-speedy-tuesday-2-ultraman> [Accessed 12 October 2018].

Broniarczyk, S.M. and Gershoff, A.D. 2003. The reciprocal effects of brand equity and trivial attributes. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 40(2): 161–175.

Brooks, R. 2021. *How shoppers are using social media*. [Online]. Available at: <https://www.forbes.com/sites/forbesagencycouncil/2021/08/27/how-shoppers-are-using-social-media/?sh=6a1620bd72eb> [Accessed 23 January 2022].

Brown, C.L. and Carpenter, G.S. 2000. Why is the trivial important? A reasons-based account for the effects of trivial attributes on choice. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 26(4): 372–385.

Brown, S. and Patterson, A. 2010. Selling stories: Harry Potter and the marketing plot. *Psychology and Marketing*, 27(6): 541–556.

Buchanan, N. 2009. Wild times. *WatchTime*, October 2009: 72-128.

Bucher, R. 2020. *9 reasons why Rolex is such a coveted luxury item*. [Online]. Available at: <https://watchtime.me/the-knowledge/article/1518/9-reasons-why-rolex-is-such-a-coveted-luxury-item> [Accessed 22 August 2022].

Bues, J. 2019. *The Omega Speedmaster Apollo 11 50th Anniversary Limited Edition (live pics & pricing)*. [Online]. Available at: <https://www.hodinkee.com/articles/omega-speedmaster-apollo-11-50th-anniversary-limited-edition-introducing> [Accessed 19 April 2022].

Bues, J. 2020. *Breaking news: Rolex, Tudor, Patek Philippe, Chanel, and Chopard leave Baselworld*. [Online]. Available at: <https://www.hodinkee.com/articles/rolex-tudor-patek-philippe-leave-baselworld> [Accessed 21 March 2022].

Buettner, B. 2015. *The Omega Speedmaster White Side Of The Moon*. [Online]. Available at: <https://www.hodinkee.com/articles/the-omega-speedmaster-white-side-of-the-moon-2> [Accessed 29 March 2022].

Bughin, J., Doogan, J. and Vetvik, O.J. 2010. A new way to measure word-of-mouth marketing. *McKinsey Quarterly*, (2): 113–16.

Burnard, P., Gill, P., Stewart, K., Treasure, E. and Chadwick, B. 2008. Analysing and presenting qualitative data. *British Dental Journal*, 204(8): 429–32.

Byron, A. 2021. *TikTok seniors: how the older generation is giving new life to the youthful app*. [Online]. Available at: <https://www.seniorsmatter.com/tiktok-seniors-how-the-older-generation-is-giving-new-life-to-the-youthful-app/2580807/> [Accessed 10 April 2022].

Cagau. 2021. *Cagau: Asset value of luxury watches to rise during pandemic*. [Online]. Available at: <https://www.arabianbusiness.com/money/wealth/alternative-assets/464653-cagau-asset-value-of-luxury-watches-to-rise-during-pandemic> [Accessed 13 February 2022].

Campbell, M.C. and Kirmani, A. 2008. I know what you're doing and why you're doing it: the use of the persuasion knowledge model in consumer research. In: Haugtvedt, C.P., Herr, P.M. and Kardes F.R. eds. *Handbook of consumer psychology*. New York, NY: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Catellier, M. 2020. *Why some watches hold their value and others don't*. [Online]. Available at: <https://www.forbes.com/sites/matthewcatellier/2020/12/22/why-some-watches-hold-their-value-and-others-dont/?sh=7928b76879cd> [Accessed 13 February 2022].

Cavaye, A.L.M. 1996. Case study research: a multi-faceted research approach for IS. *Information Systems Journal*, 6(3): 227-242.

Chaffey, D. 2022. *Global social media statistics research summary 2022*. [Online]. Available at: <https://www.smartinsights.com/social-media-marketing/social-media-strategy/new-global-social-media-research/> [Accessed 18 January 2022].

Chahal, H. and Rani, A. 2017. How trust moderates social media engagement and brand equity. *Journal of Research in Interactive Marketing*, 11(3): 312-335.

Chamberlin, E.H. 1965. *The theory of monopolistic competition*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press. Cited in: Hem, A.F. 2019. Beyond uniqueness: developing and testing a new typology of brand benefit differentiation. PhD thesis. Department of Strategy and Management. Norwegian School of Economics.

Chan, C. 2018. *History of time: Omega's extraordinary legacy of mastering precision*. [Online]. Available at: <https://www.lifestyleasia.com/hk/style/watches/history-time-omegas-extraordinary-legacy-mastering-precision/> [Accessed 8 December 2021].

Chang, Y and Ko, Y.J. 2014. The brand leadership: Scale development and validation. *Journal of Brand Management*, 21(1): 63–80. [Online]. DOI: 10.1057/bm.2013.23.

Chang, Y, Ko, Y.J. and Leite, W.L. 2016. The effect of perceived brand leadership on luxury service WOM. *Journal of Services Marketing*, 30(6): 659–671.

Cheung, C.M. and Lee, M.K. 2012. What drives consumers to spread electronic word of mouth in online consumer-opinion platforms. *Decision Support Systems*, 53(1): 218–225.

Chia, C. 2019. *Omega revives historical 19-Ligne pocket watch movement*. [Online]. Available at: <https://watchesbysjx.com/2019/01/omega-19-ligne-movement-125th-anniversary.html> [Accessed 26 April 2022].

Childs, M. 2010. *Nicolas Hayek: entrepreneur who created the Swatch brand and saved the Swiss watchmaking industry*. [Online]. Available at: <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/obituaries/nicolas-hayek-entrepreneur-who-created-the-swatch-brand-and-saved-the-swiss-watchmaking-industry-2021119.html> [Accessed 15 October 2019].

Chronis, A. 2008. Co-constructing the narrative experience: staging and consuming the American Civil War at Gettysburg. *Journal of Marketing Management*, 24(1/2): 5–27.

Clymer, B. 2015. *Reference points: understanding the Omega Speedmaster*. [Online]. Available at: <https://www.hodinkee.com/articles/understanding-the-omega-speedmaster-professional> [Accessed 2 March 2020].

Clymer, B. 2017. *Hands-on: The Omega Speedmaster 'Speedy Tuesday' Limited Edition (Live pics of the prototype)*. [Online]. Available at: <https://www.hodinkee.com/articles/omega-speedmaster-speedy-tuesday-limited-edition-hands-on> [Accessed 17 January 2022].

Clymer, B. 2018. *Introducing the Omega Speedmaster HODINKEE 10th Anniversary Limited Edition*. [Online]. Available at: <https://www.hodinkee.com/articles/omega-speedmaster-hodinkee-10th-anniversary-limited-edition> [Accessed 21 April 2022].

Cohen, L. and Manion, L. eds. 1994. *Research methods in education*. 4th ed. London: Longman.

Connor, A. 2019. *Forgotten watchmakers you should know*. 20 July 2019. [Online]. Available at: <https://gearpatrol.com/2019/07/20/forgotten-watch-brands-collectors-will-love/> [Accessed 19 January 2020].

Corder, J. 2019. *Why is a Rolex watch so popular?* 23 May 2019. [Online]. Available at: <https://www.esquire.com/content/34592-why-does-everyone-want-a-rolex> [Accessed 12 January 2020].

Corder, R. 2022a. *Swatch says customers will be able to buy all the MoonSwatch watches they wish*. [Online]. Available at: <https://www.watchpro.com/swatch-says-customers-will-be-able-to-buy-all-the-moonswatch-watches-they-wish/> [Accessed 23 April 2022].

Corder, R. 2022b. *MoonSwatch price settles below \$1,000 as Swatch promises enough supply for everybody*. [Online]. Available at: <https://www.watchpro.com/moonswatch-price-settles-below-1000-as-swatch-promises-enough-supply-for-everybody/> [Accessed 29 April 2022].

Courvoisier, F.H. and Roederer, C. 2019. Speedy Tuesday: Omega's adoption of Communication 4.0. In: Cantista, I. and Sádaba, T. eds. 2020. *Understanding luxury fashion*. London: Palgrave Macmillan, Chapter 9: 205–220.

Cova, B. and Pace, S. 2006. Brand community of convenience products: New forms of customer empowerment – The case “my Nutella The Community.” *European Journal of Marketing*, 40(9/10): 1087–1105.

Crotty, M. 1998. *The foundation of social research: Meaning and perspective in the research process*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Crowe, S., Cresswell, K., Robertson, A., Huby, G., Avery, A. Sheikh, A. 2011. The case study approach. *BMC Medical Research Methodology*, 11(1): 100.

Datta, H., Ailawadi, K. L. and van Heerde, H. J. 2017. How well does consumer-based brand equity align with sales-based brand equity and marketing-mix response? *Journal of Marketing*, 81(3): 1–20.

Davis, J. 2019. *Omega just set an unbeatable world record for the deepest dive watch ever*. [Online]. Available at: <https://www.esquire.com/uk/design/a28129852/omega-just-set-a-world-record-deepest-dive-watch-ever/> [Accessed 18 January 2022].

Deane, P. 2018. *A guide for interdisciplinary researchers: Adding axiology alongside ontology and epistemology*. [Online]. Available at: <https://i2insights.org/2018/05/22/axiology-and-interdisciplinarity/> [Accessed 19 February 2022].

Decarlo, M. 2018. *Scientific inquiry in social work*. Roanoke: Open Social Work Education. [eBook]. Available at: <https://scientificinquiryinsocialwork.pressbooks.com> [Accessed 19 February 2022].

DeMarco, A. 2022. *Phillips to offer 88 Audemars Piguet Royal Oak watches in 50th anniversary sale*. [Online]. Available at: <https://www.forbes.com/sites/anthonydemarco/2022/03/29/phillips-to-offer-88-audemars-piguet-royal-oak-watches-in-50th-anniversary-sale/?sh=5f1628e22588> [Accessed 17 April 2022].

DeMarco, A. 2015. *The Omega Speedmaster's 14 seconds of fame*. [Online]. Available at: <https://www.forbes.com/sites/anthonydemarco/2015/05/20/the-omega-speedmasters-14-seconds-of-fame/?sh=5e0a2e3429b5> [Accessed 22 May 2022].

Dennis, M.A. and Kahn, R. 2018. *Internet*. [Online]. Available at: <https://www.britannica.com/technology/Internet> [Accessed 11 November 2018].

Denzin, N.K. and Lincoln, Y.S. 2000. *Handbook of qualitative research*. 2nd ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Denzin, N.K. and Lincoln, Y.S. 2005. *Introduction: The discipline and practice of qualitative research*. 3rd ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

De Smet, A., Mygatt, E., Sheikh, I. and Weddle, B. 2020. *The need for speed in the post-COVID-19 era—and how to achieve it*. [Online]. Available at: <https://www.mckinsey.com/business-functions/people-and-organizational-performance/our-insights/the-need-for-speed-in-the-post-covid-19-era-and-how-to-achieve-it> [Accessed 23 April 2022].

Dessart, L., Veloutsou, C. and Morgan-Thomas, A. 2015. Consumer engagement in online brand communities: a social media perspective. *Journal of Product & Brand Management*, 24(1): 28–42.

Dhar, R. and Sherman, S.J. 1996. The effect of common and unique features in consumer choice. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 23(3): 193.

Doerr, E. 2021. *10 Omega watches on Olympic wrists at the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games*. [Online]. Available at: <https://quillandpad.com/2021/08/11/10-omega-watches-on-olympic-wrists-at-the-tokyo-2020-olympic-games/> [Accessed 21 May 2022].

Donzé, P. 2018. The Swiss watch industry. *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Business and Management*. [Online]. DOI: 10.1093/acrefore/9780190224851.013.94

Donzé, P.Y. 2011. The Comeback of the Swiss Watch Industry on the World Market: A Business History of the Swatch Group (1983-2010). *Discussion Papers in Economics and Business 11-14*, Osaka University, Graduate School of Economics.

Donzé, P.Y. 2014. *A business history of the Swatch group: The rebirth of Swiss watch-making and the globalization of the luxury industry*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Doskocz, L. 2021. *Why I bought it: Omega Speedmaster Speedy Tuesday 2 Ultraman*. [Online]. Available at: <https://quillandpad.com/2021/08/21/why-i-bought-it-omega-speedmaster-speedy-tuesday-2-ultraman/> [Accessed 18 April 2022].

Downe-Wamboldt, B. 1992. Content analysis: methods, applications, and issues. *Health Care Women Int.* 13(3): 313– 321.

Dubois, B. and Paternault, C. 1995. Observations: understanding the world of international luxury brands: the 'dream formula.' *Journal of Advertising Research*, 25(4): 69-76.

Dunbar, B. and Loff, S. 2022. *Apollo 11 mission overview*. [Online]. Available at: https://www.nasa.gov/mission_pages/apollo/missions/apollo11.html [Accessed 10 April, 2022].

Edelman, D.C. 2010. Branding in the digital age: You're spending your money in all the wrong places. *Harvard Business Review*, 88(12): 62–69.

Eicher, D.J. 2019. *Starmus 2019 brings rock and astronomy together*. [Online]. Available at: <https://astronomy.com/magazine/2019/12/starmus-2019-brings-rock-and-astronomy-together> [Accessed 21 May 2022].

Ellis, M. 2018. *Instagram vs. Facebook: what's the better marketing avenue?* [Online]. Available at: <https://99designs.com/blog/business/instagram-vs-facebook-marketing/> [Accessed 4 January 2022].

Elo, S. and Kyngas, H. 2007. The qualitative content analysis process. *Journal of Advanced Nursing*, 62(1): 107–15.

Erlingsson, C. and Brysiewicz, P. 2013. *Orientation among multiple truths: an introduction to qualitative research*. *African Journal of Emergency Medicine*, 3(2): 92–99.

Erlingsson, C.L. and Brysiewicz, P. 2017. A hands-on guide to doing content analysis. *African Journal of Emergency Medicine*, 7(3).

Escalas, J.E. 2007. Self-referencing and persuasion: narrative transportation versus analytical elaboration. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 33(4): 421–429. [Accessed 7 March 2020].

Europa Star. 2009. *Omega announces worldwide co-axial advertising campaign*. [Online]. Available At: <https://www.europastar.com/news/1004032616-omega-announces-worldwide-co-axial-advertising.html> [Accessed 18 January 2022].

European Business Review. 2021. *Why prefer using Instagram over other social media platforms?*, 29 December 2021. [Online]. Available at:

<https://www.europeanbusinessreview.com/why-prefer-using-instagram-over-other-social-media-platforms/> [Accessed 4 January 2022].

Farmelo, A. 2021. *The complete buying guide to Omega watches*. Available at: <https://www.gearpatrol.com/watches/a569974/omega-watches/> [Accessed 10 January 2022].

Federation of the Swiss Watch Industry FH. 2022. *Swiss watch exports in 2021: a strong recovery carries Swiss watchmaking to new heights*. [Online]. Available at: https://www.fhs.swiss/eng/2022_01_27_00_statistics.html [Accessed 19 February 2022].

Federation of the Swiss Watch Industry FH. 2021. *The Swiss and world watchmaking industries in 2020*. [Online]. Available at: https://www.fhs.swiss/file/59/watchmaking_2020.pdf [Accessed 19 March 2022].

Fernandes, N. 2020. Economic effects of coronavirus outbreak (COVID-19) on the world economy. 2020. *IESE Business School Working Paper No. WP-1240-E*. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.3557504>

Fishbein, M. and Yzer, M.C. 2003. Using theory to design effective health behavior interventions. *Communication Theory*, 13(2): 164–83.

Five Deeps Expedition. n.d. *Expedition*. [Online]. Available at: <https://fivedeeps.com/home/expedition/> [Accessed 18 January 2022].

Fleming, Z. 2020. *Rappers and watches: when timepieces become jewelry and status symbols*. [Online]. Available at: <https://zanefleming.medium.com/rappers-and-watches-when-timepieces-become-jewelry-and-status-symbols-e5e957fb90da> [Accessed 21 February 2022].

Forster, J. 2018. *Introducing the Omega Speedmaster 'Speedy Tuesday' 2 Ultraman*. [Online]. Available at: <https://www.hodinkee.com/articles/the-omega-speedmaster-speedy-tuesday-2-ultraman> [Accessed 18 January 2022].

Forster, J. 2022. *The Swiss watch industry just had its best year ever, with the USA leading the way*. [Online]. Available at: <https://www.hodinkee.com/articles/the-swiss-watch-industry-just-had-its-best-year-ever-with-the-usa-leading-the-way> [Accessed 21 May 2022].

Frank, R. 2021. *Luxury watch shortage drives growth of \$20 billion secondhand market as start-ups rush to cash in*. [Online]. Available at: <https://www.cnbc.com/2021/10/13/luxury-watch-shortage-drives-growth-of-20-billion-secondhand-market.html> [Accessed 12 January 2022].

Fuggetta, R. 2012. *Brand advocates: turning enthusiastic customers into a powerful marketing force*. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley.

Gapper, J. 2022. *The MoonSwatch craze is an Omega ad campaign*. [Online]. Available at: <https://www.ft.com/content/37deb2c5-d257-49dc-a8c6-67a0ad0f0deb>. [Accessed 29 April 2022].

Gbrich, C. 2007. *Qualitative data analysis: an introduction*. 1st ed. London: Sage.

Gentles, S.J., Charles, C., Ploeg, J. and McKibbin, K. 2015. Sampling in qualitative research: Insights from an overview of the methods literature. *The Qualitative Report*, 20(11): 1772-1789. [Online]. [Accessed 1 May 2016].

Geyser, W. 2021. Brand advocacy: the most valuable marketing strategy today. Available at: <https://influencermarketinghub.com/brand-advocacy-marketing-strategy/> [Accessed 22 January 2022].

Gfrerer, K.S. 2014. Does the e-retailing of luxury brands really damage their brand image? MCom dissertation. Norwegian School of Economics.

Giacomini, M. 2010. Theory matters in qualitative health research. In: Bourgeault, I., Dingwall, R. and de Vries, R. eds. *The Sage handbook of qualitative methods in health research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 125–156.

Gomelsky, V. 2017. *The watch world's billion dollar babies*. [Online]. Available at: <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/11/15/fashion/watches-rolex-patek-philippe-omega.html> [Accessed 8 December 2021].

Gomelsky, V. 2021. *The big four increase their worldwide grip on watches*. [Online]. Available at: <https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/08/fashion/watches-rolex-audemars-piguet-patek-philippe-mille.html> [Accessed 21 January 2022].

Goulard, B. 2014. *Weekly watch photo: Omega Speedmaster to celebrate 45th anniversary of Apollo 11*. [Online]. Available at: <https://monochrome-watches.com/weekly-watch-photo-omega-speedmaster-celebrate-45th-anniversary-apollo-11/> [Accessed 21 May 2022].

Goulard, B. 2015. *The feeling of being James Bond 007 with the Omega Seamaster 300 SPECTRE Limited Edition on the wrist (specs & price)*. [Online]. Available at: <https://monochrome-watches.com/omega-seamaster-300-spectre-limited-edition-review-price/> [Accessed 15 April 2022].

Goulard, B. 2017. *Omega introduces the 2,012-pieces Speedmaster #SpeedyTuesday Limited Edition*. [Online]. Available at: <https://monochrome-watches.com/omega-speedmaster-speedy-tuesday-limited-edition-specs-price/> [Accessed 8 March 2020].

Goulard, B. 2019. *Omega Seamaster Planet Ocean Ultra Deep Professional – the new world's deepest dive watch (field-tested 10,928m)*. [Online]. Available at: <https://monochrome-watches.com/omega-seamaster-planet-ocean-ultra-deep-professional-the-new-worlds-deepest-dive-watch-field-tested-10928m/> [Accessed 18 January 2022].

Goulard, B. 2021a. *The definitive guide to James Bond 007 x OMEGA watches*. [Online]. Available at: <https://monochrome-watches.com/retrospective-defenitive-guide-omega-watches-worn-in-james-bond-007-movies-including-2021-no-time-to-die/> [Accessed 23 April 2022].

Goulard, B. 2021b. *The top 50 Swiss watch brands of 2020...and the invincible hegemony of Rolex*. [Online]. Available at: <https://monochrome-watches.com/top-50-swiss-watch-brands-2020-market-share-sales-editorial/> [Accessed 21 February 2022].

Graham, J. and Havlena, W. 2007. Finding the “missing link”: Advertising's impact on word of mouth, web searches, and site visits. *Journal of Advertising Research*, 47(4): 427-435.

Graneheim, U.H. and Lundman B. 2004. Qualitative content analysis in nursing research: concepts, procedures, and measures to achieve trustworthiness. *Nurse Educ Today*, 24: 105–112.

Gray, A. 2018. *The explosive growth of eSports*. [Online]. Available at: <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2018/07/the-explosive-growth-of-esports/> [Accessed 26 January 2019].

Green, D. 2016. *Mechanical watches can be thousands of dollars more expensive than quartz — but you should still buy one*. [Online]. Available at: <https://www.businessinsider.com/mechanical-watches-worth-buying-2016-9?IR=T> [Accessed 28 February 2020].

Green, J. and Thorogood, N. 2009. *Qualitative methods for health research*. 2nd ed. Los Angeles: Sage.

Green, M. 2018. *Haute Time discusses the spirit of innovation with Omega CEO Raynald Aeschlimann*. [Online]. Available at: <https://www.hautetime.com/haute-time-discusses-the-spirit-of-innovation-with-omega-ceo-raynald-aeschlimann/85515/> [Accessed 18 April 2022].

Green, M.C. 2004. Transportation into narrative worlds: the role of prior knowledge and perceived realism. *Discourse Processes*, 38(2): 247–67.

Green, M.C. 2008. Transportation theory. In: Wolfgang Donsbach. ed. 2018. *International encyclopaedia of communication*. Oxford, UK: Wiley-Blackwell, 5170-75.

Green, M.C. and Brock, T.C. 2000. The role of transportation in the persuasiveness of public narratives. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 79(5): 701–21.

Green, M.C., and Brock, T.C. 2002. In the mind's eye: Transportation-imagery model of narrative persuasion. In: Green, M.C., Strange, J.J. and Brock, T.C. eds. 2002. *Narrative impact: social and cognitive foundations*. Mahwah: Erlbaum, 315–341.

Gu, S., Slusarczyk, B., Hajizada, S., Kovalyova, I. and Sakhibieva, A. 2021. Impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on online consumer purchasing behavior. *Journal of Theoretical and Applied Electronic Commerce Research*, 16: 2263–2281.

Habacón, P. 2014. *Veblen good, Veblen curve and conspicuous consumption*. [Online]. Available at: <https://jphabacon.wordpress.com/author/jphabacon/> [Accessed 13 January 2022].

Hammarberg, K., Kirkman, M. and de Lacey, S. 2016. Qualitative research methods: when to use them and how to judge them. *Human Reproduction*, 31(3): 498–501. [Online]. DOI: 10.1093/humrep/dev334.

Hannah, D.R. and Lautsch, B.A. 2010. Counting in qualitative research: why to conduct it, when to avoid it, and when to closet it. *Journal of Management Inquiry*, 20(1): 14-22. [Online]. DOI: 10.1177/1056492610375988.

Hartov, O. 2022. *Why are Omega watches some of the best in the world? Ask this man.* [Online]. Available at: <https://www.gearpatrol.com/watches/a711716/raynald-aeschlimann-omega-ceo-interview/> [Accessed 17 April 2022].

Haussermann, M. 2007. *1001 wristwatches: From 1925 to the present.* New York: Paragon.

Heaton, J. 2019. *The Omega Seamaster Planet Ocean Ultra Deep Professional.* [Online]. Available at: <https://www.hodinkee.com/articles/omega-seamaster-planet-ocean-ultra-deep-professional-in-depth> [Accessed 18 January 2022].

Hem, A.F. 2019. Beyond uniqueness: developing and testing a new typology of brand benefit differentiation. PhD thesis. Department of Strategy and Management. Norwegian School of Economics.

Hennigs, N., Wiedmann, K. and Klarmann, C. 2012. Luxury brands in the digital age – exclusivity versus ubiquity. *Marketing Review*, 29(1): 30-35.

Hennig-Thurau, T., Gwinner, K.P., Walsh, G. and Gremler, D.D. 2004. Electronic word-of-mouth via consumer-opinion platforms: What motivates consumers to articulate themselves on the internet? *Journal of Interactive Marketing*, 18(1): 38-52.

Hennig-Thurau, T., Malthouse, E. C., Friege, C., Gensler, S., Lobschat, L., Rangaswamy, A. and Skiera, B. 2010. The impact of new media on customer relationships. *Journal of Service Research*, 13(3): 311–330.

Hidden, A. 2018. *Are Swiss-made watches ‘better’?* [Online]. Available at: <https://www.watchgecko.com/swiss-made-watches/> [Accessed 12 February 2020].

Hiller, J. 2016. *Music Therapy Research.* 3rd ed. Dallas: Barcelona Publishers.

Hodinkee, 2021. *45 watches that stole the street-style show at Pitti Uomo.* [Online]. Available at: <https://www.hodinkee.com/articles/watch-spotting-pitti-uomo-spring-2021> [Accessed 23 May 2022].

Hofer, B. 2004. Exploring the dimensions of personal epistemology in differing classroom contexts: student interpretations during the first year of college. *Contemporary Educational Psychology*, 29: 129–163.

Ho, J. 2016. *Inside the Omega factory: where perfection is produced.* [Online]. Available at: <https://deployant.com/inside-the-omega-factory-where-perfection-is-produced/> [Accessed 17 January 2022].

Holland, O. 2022. *From Queen Victoria to Cardi B, how this legacy watchmaker found itself in the zeitgeist*. [Online]. Available at: <https://edition.cnn.com/style/article/patek-philippe-celebrity-popular-culture/index.html> [Accessed 20 February 2022].

Holt, D.B. 1995. How consumers consume: a typology of consumption practices. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 22(1): 1–16.

Holt, D.B. 2004. *How brands become icons: The principles of cultural branding*. Boston: Harvard Business School.

Hong Kong Tatler. 2019. *Omega's Constellation Manhattan is a triumph of craftsmanship and design*. [Online]. Available at: <https://www.tatlerasia.com/style/watches/omegas-constellation-manhattan-is-a-triumph-of-craftsmanship-and-design> [Accessed 21 January 2022].

Howard, D. and Kerin, R. 2013. A surname brand effect explanation for consumer brand preference and advocacy. *Journal of Product and Brand Management*, 22(5/6): 362-370.

Hsieh, H.F. and Shannon, S. 2005. Three approaches to qualitative content analysis. *Qual Health Res*, 15(9): 1277–88.

Huang, R., Ha, S. and Kim, SH. 2018. Narrative persuasion in social media: an empirical study of luxury brand advertising. *Journal of Research in Interactive Marketing*, 12(3): 274-292.

Hughes, M.Ü., Bandoni, W.K. and Pehlivan, E. 2016. Storygiving as a co-creation tool for luxury brands in the age of the internet: A love story by Tiffany and thousands of lovers. *Journal of Product and Brand Management*, 25(4): 357–364.

Hussey, J. and Hussey, R. 1997. *Business research: A practical guide for undergraduate and postgraduate students*. London: Macmillan.

Hutchinson, A. 2021. *TikTok provides insights on how older users are engaging on the platform*. [Online]. Available at: <https://www.socialmediatoday.com/news/tiktok-provides-insights-on-how-older-users-are-engaging-on-the-platform/598237/> [Accessed 10 April 2022].

Italian Watch Spotter. 2020. *Retail price increase for Rolex, Tudor and Audemars Piguet*. [Online]. Available at: <https://italianwatchspotter.com/retail-price-rolex-ap-2020/?lang=en> [Accessed 21 January 2022].

Jackson, D. 2021. *Instagram vs Facebook: which is best for your brand's strategy?*, 30 June 2019. [Online]. Available at: <https://sproutsocial.com/insights/instagram-vs-facebook/> [Accessed 23 December 2021].

Jacobides, M.G. and Winter, S.G. 2005. The co-evolution of capabilities and transaction costs: explaining the institutional structure of production. *Strategic Management Journal*. (26): 395-413.

Jeannerat, H. and Crevoisier, O. 2011. Non-technological innovation and multi-local territorial knowledge dynamics in the Swiss watch industry. *International Journal of Innovation and Regional Development*, 3(1): 26–44.

Kahn, R. *Internet*, 2022. [Online]. Available at:
<https://www.britannica.com/technology/Internet> [Accessed 21 April 2022].

Kalaighnam, K., Tuli, K. R., Kushwaha, T., Lee, L. and Gal, D. 2021. Marketing agility: the concept, antecedents, and a research agenda. *Journal of Marketing*, 85(1): 35–58. [Online]. DOI: 10.1177/0022242920952760.

Kapferer, J-N. 2007. *The new strategic brand management: creating and sustaining brand equity long term*. 3rd ed. London: Kogan Page.

Kapferer, J-N. 2008. *The new strategic brand management: creating and sustaining brand equity long term*. 4th ed. London: Kogan Page.

Kapferer, J-N. and Bastien, V. 2009. The specificity of luxury management: turning marketing upside down. *Journal of Brand Management*, 16(5): 311–322.

Kapferer, J-N. and Bastien, V. 2012. *The luxury strategy: break the rules of marketing to build luxury brands*. 2nd ed. London: Kogan Page.

Kapferer, J-N. and Valette-Florence, P. 2016. Beyond rarity: the paths of luxury desire. How luxury brands grow yet remain desirable. *Journal of Product & Brand Management*, 25(2): 120-133.

Karakaya, F. 2002. Barriers to entry in industrial markets. *Journal of Business & Industrial Marketing*, 17(5).

Karmali, S. 2017. *Presley and Kaia Gerber to join mother Cindy Crawford in first luxury campaign as a family*. [Online]. Available at:
<https://www.harpersbazaar.com/uk/fashion/jewellery-watches/a43975/kaia-presley-gerber-omega-ambassadors/> [Accessed 18 January 2022].

Kastanakis, M.N. and Balabanis, G. 2012. Between the mass and the class: antecedents of the “bandwagon” luxury consumption behavior. *Journal of Business Research*, 65(10): 1399–1407.

Kebir, L.L. and Crevoisier, O. 2008. Cultural resources and regional development: The case of the cultural legacy of watchmaking. *European Planning Studies*, 16(9): 1189–1205.

Keller, E. and Berry J. 2003. *The influentials*. New York: Free Press.

Keller, E. 2007. Unleashing the power of word of mouth: Creating brand advocacy to drive growth. *Journal of Advertising Research*, 47(4): 448.

Keller, K.L. 1993. Conceptualizing, measuring, and managing customer-based brand equity. *Journal of Marketing*, 57(1): 1–22.

Keller, K.L. 1998. *Strategic brand management: Building, measuring, and managing brand equity*. Prentice Hall: Upper Saddle River.

Keller, K.L. 2001. *Building customer-based brand equity: a blueprint for creating strong brands*. Cambridge, MA: Marketing Science Institute.

Keller, K.L. 2003. Brand synthesis: The multidimensionality of brand knowledge. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 29(4): 595–600.

Keller, K.L. 2008. *Strategic brand management: Building, measuring, and managing brand equity*. 3rd ed. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education.

Keller, K.L. 2012. *Strategic brand management: Building, measuring, and managing brand equity*. 4th ed. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education Inc.

Kemp, E., Childers, C.Y. and Williams, K.H. 2012. Place branding: creating self-brand connections and brand advocacy. *Journal of Product & Brand Management*, 21(7): 508-515.

Keylock, M. and Faulds, M. 2012. From customer loyalty to social advocacy. *Journal of Direct, Data and Digital Marketing Practice*, 14(2): 160-165.

Khamwon, A. and Pongsuraton, K. 2020. Brand experience, brand tribalism and brand advocacy. *International Journal of Social Science Research* 2(3): 79-85.

Kim, C.K. and Park, S. 2001. The effect of brand personality and brand identification on brand loyalty: applying the theory of social identification. *Japanese Psychological Research*, 43(4): 195–206.

Kim, J.E., Lloyd, S. and Cervellon, M.C. 2016. Narrative-transportation storylines in luxury brand advertising: motivating consumer engagement. *Journal of Advertising*, 69(1): 304-313.

Kim, K.H., Ko, E., Bing, X. and Hann, Y. 2012. Increasing customer equity of luxury fashion brands through nurturing consumer attitude. *Journal of Business Research*, 65(10): 1495-1499.

Kivunja, C. and Kuyini, A.B. 2017. Understanding and applying research paradigms in educational contexts. *International Journal of Higher Education*, 6(5). [Online]. DOI: 10.5430/ijhe.v6n5p26.

Ko, E., Costello, J.P. and Taylor, C.R. 2019. What is a luxury brand? A new definition and review of the literature. *Journal of Business Research*, 99(2019): 405–413.

Köhler, T., Smith, A. and Bhakoo, V. 2022. Templates in qualitative research methods: origins, limitations, and new directions. *Organizational Research Methods* 25(2): 183–210. [Online]. DOI: 10.1177/10944281211060710.

Korstjens, I. and Moser, A. 2018. Series: Practical guidance to qualitative research. Part 4: trustworthiness and publishing. *European Journal of General Practice*, 24(1): 120–124.

Kotler, P., Kartajaya, H. and Setiawan, I. 2016. *Marketing 4.0: moving from traditional to digital*. Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley and Sons.

Kotter, J. 2014. *Accelerate (XLR8): Building strategic agility for a faster-moving world*. Boston: Harvard Business Review Press.

Kraidy, M.M. 2009. The internet as a mass communication medium. In: *Encyclopedia of Life Support Systems: Journalism and Mass Communication*. Chapter 1: 1-23.

Landes, D.S. 1983. *Revolution in time: Clocks and the making of the modern world*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Landor. 2015. *The agility paradox*. Landor. [eBook]. Available at: https://landor-prod.imgix.net/app/uploads/2015/11/04143014/Landor_AgilityParadox_Int_09Dec2015.pdf [Accessed 12 January 2022].

Lankarani, N. 2019. *It could take 8 years to get this Patek Philippe. If you can get on the list*. [Online]. Available at: <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/03/20/fashion/watches-patek-philippe-nautilus.html> [Accessed 19 January 2022].

Laran, J., Dalton, A.N. and Andrade, E.B. 2011. Why consumers rebel against slogans. *Harvard Business Review*, 89(11): 34.

Lawer, C. and Knox, S. 2006. Customer advocacy and brand development. *Journal of Product and Brand Management*, 15(2): 121-129.

Leavy, B. 2014. Strategy, organization and leadership in a new “transient-advantage” world. *Strategy & Leadership*, 42(4): 3-13.

Lee, T.B. 2015. *The internet, explained*. [Online]. Available at: <https://www.vox.com/2014/6/16/18076282/the-internet> [Accessed 21 May 2022].

Lester, S. 1999. *An introduction to phenomenological research*. [eBook]. Available on Semantic Scholar at: <https://www.semanticscholar.org/paper/An-introduction-to-phenomenological-research-Lester/02b321149f8a77ce112a0664e40cc7780190f0c4> [Accessed 12 August 2019].

Leung, A. 2022. *Patek Philippe officially removes 5711 Nautilus from website*. [Online]. Available at: <https://hypebeast.com/2022/1/patek-philippe-5711-nautilus-officially-removed-from-website-news> [Accessed 15 April 2022].

Leventhal, R.C., Wallace, E., Buil, I. and de Chernatony, L. 2014. Consumer engagement with self-expressive brands: brand love and WOM outcomes. *Journal of Product and Brand Management*, 23(1): 33-42.

Levers, M.D. Philosophical paradigms, grounded theory, and perspectives on emergence. *SAGE Open*, October-December 2013: 1–6.

Lexico. 2022a. [Online]. Available at: <https://www.lexico.com/definition/luxury> [Accessed 17 May 2022].

Lexico. 2022b. [Online]. Available at: <https://www.lexico.com/definition/exclusivity> [Accessed 17 May 2022].

Lexico. 2022c. [Online]. Available at: https://www.lexico.com/definition/case_study [Accessed 23 February 2022].

Li, Y. 2021. Consumer behavior and marketing strategy of apparel luxury goods on Chinese e-commerce platform. *Proceedings of the 2021 3rd International Conference on Economic Management and Cultural Industry (ICEMCI 2021)*.

Liang, R.D. and Zhang, J.S. 2012. The effect of service interaction orientation on customer satisfaction and behavioral intention. *Asia Pacific Journal of Marketing and Logistics*, 24(1): 153–170.

Lincoln, Y.S. and Guba, E.G. 2000. Paradigmatic controversies, contradictions, and emerging confluences. In: Denzin, N.K. and Lincoln, Y.S. eds. *Handbook of qualitative research*. 2nd ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 163–188.

Liu, X. Burns, A.C. and Hou, Y. 2013. Comparing online and in-store shopping behavior towards luxury goods. *International Journal of Retail & Distribution Management*, 41(12): 885–900.

Lombard, C. 2018. *The Brand Identity Prism and how it works*. [Online]. Available at: <https://howbrandsarebuilt.com/blog/2018/12/21/the-brand-identity-prism-and-how-it-works/> [Accessed 10 March, 2022].

Luedicke, M.K., Thompson, C.J. and Giesler, M. 2010. Consumer identity work as moral protagonism: How myth and ideology animate a brand mediated moral conflict. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 36(6): 1016–1032.

Lütgens, M. 2021. *Speedmaster goes to space: The Omega Speedmaster Moonwatch celebrates the 50th anniversary of the moon landing*. [Online]. Available at: <https://www.watchmaster.com/en/journal/stories-en/50-years-of-moonlanding-reaching-for-the-stars> [Accessed 15 April 2022].

Madupu, V. and Cooley, D.O. 2010. Antecedents and consequences of online brand community participation: a conceptual framework. *Journal of Internet Commerce*, 9(2): 127–147.

Malär, L., Krohmer, H., Hoyer, W.D. and Nyffenegger, B. 2011. Emotional brand attachment and brand personality: The relative importance of the actual and the ideal self. *Journal of Marketing*, 75(4): 35–52.

Mar, A. 2013. *Transient advantage explained*. [Online]. Available at: <https://business.simplicable.com/business/new/what-is-transient-advantage> [Accessed 20 July 2019].

Marczyk, G., De Matteo, D. and Festinger, D. 2017. *Essentials of research design and methodology*. John Wiley: London.

Margolis, J. 2014. *The enduring appeal of mechanical watches*. [Online]. Available at: <https://www.ft.com/content/0e850b12-336d-11e4-85f1-00144feabdc0> [Accessed 28 February 2022].

Markl, X. 2017. *A technical perspective: the Omega Co-Axial escapement fully explained*. [Online]. Available at: <https://monochrome-watches.com/omega-co-axial-escapement-technical-perspective/> [Accessed 20 April 2022].
020].

Mathison, R. 2017. Social media advocacy: How to build a brand advocate program. Available at: <https://blog.hootsuite.com/social-media-advocacy-brand-advocate/> [Accessed 21 January 2022].

Maxwell, J.A. 1992. Understanding and validity in qualitative research. *Harvard Educational Review*, 62: 279-299.

Maxwell, J.A. 2010. Using numbers in qualitative research. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 16(6): 475–482. [Online]. DOI: 10.1177/1077800410364740.

Mayring, P. 2000. Qualitative content analysis. *Forum: Qualitative Social Research*, 1(20). [Online]. Available at: <http://www.qualitative-research.net/index.php/fqs/article/view/1089/2385> [Accessed 13 February 2013].

MBA Skool. 2019. *Brand building*. [Online]. Available at: <https://www.mbaskool.com/business-concepts/marketing-and-strategy-terms/13022-brand-building.html> [Accessed 25 January 2019].

McGrath, R.G. 2013a. *Transient advantage*. [Online]. Available at: <https://hbr.org/2013/06/transient-advantage> [Accessed 20 July 2019].

McGrath, R.G. 2013b. *The end of competitive advantage*. Boston: Harvard Business Review Press.

McSpedden, B. 2018. *Richard Mille's Tourbillon Talisman watch is a limited-edition status symbol*. [Online]. Available at: <https://www.afr.com/life-and-luxury/richard-milles-tourbillon-talisman-watch-is-a-limitededition-status-symbol-20181011-h16iwa> [Accessed 22 February 2022].

McQueen, M. 2002. Language and power in non-profit/for-profit relationships: A grounded theory of inter-sectoral collaboration. PhD thesis. University of Technology, Sydney. [Online]. Available at: <http://www.merylmcqueen.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/mcqueen-phdthesis-2002.pdf>.

Merlo, E. 2012. The ascendancy of the Italian fashion brands (1970-2000). In: Bonin, H. et al. eds. 2012. *European business and brand building*. Brussels: PIE Peter Lang: 137-154.

Merriam, S. 1998. *Qualitative research and case study applications in education*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Merriam-Webster. 2022. [Online]. Available at: <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/case%20studies> [Accessed 19 January 2022].

Meyerson, R. 2019a. *David Aaker's Brand Vision Model and how it works, part one*. [Online]. Available at: <https://howbrandsarebuilt.com/blog/2019/09/24/david-aakers-brand-vision-model-and-how-it-works-part-one/> [Accessed 10 March, 2022].

Meyerson, R. 2019b. *Marty Neumeier's Brand Commitment Matrix and how it works*. [Online]. Available at: <https://howbrandsarebuilt.com/blog/2019/07/08/marty-neumeiers-brand-commitment-matrix-and-how-it-works/> [Accessed 10 March 2022].

Miles, M.B. and Huberman, A.M. 1994. *Qualitative data analysis: An expanded sourcebook, vol. 2*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Miller, K.W. and Mills, M.K. 2011. Contributing clarity by examining brand luxury in the fashion market. *Journal of Business Research*, 65(10): 1471–1479.

Milton, D. 2021. *Rolex finally comments on the product shortage – and conspiracy theories need not apply*. [Online]. Available at: <https://www.hodinkee.com/articles/rolex-finally-comments-on-the-product-shortage-and-conspiracy-theories-need-not-apply> [Accessed 19 January 2022].

Milton, D. 2022a. *Business News: Patek and Rolex prices surge as inflation hits 40-year high*. [Online]. Available at: <https://www.hodinkee.com/articles/patek-and-rolex-prices-surge-as-inflation-hits-40-year-high> [Accessed 22 February 2022].

Milton, D. 2022b. *MoonSwatch madness! Huge lines form around the world on Omega x Swatch launch day*. [Online]. Available at: <https://www.hodinkee.com/articles/moonswatch-madness-huge-lines-form-around-the-world-on-omega-x-swatch-launch-day> [Accessed 30 April 2022].

Misczuk, C. 2019. *Why used Rolex watches are more expensive than a new model*. [Online]. Available at: <https://www.bobswatches.com/rolex-blog/watch-101/why-used-rolex-watches-more-expensive-than-new-model.html> [Accessed 26 February 2020].

Mitchell, V-W. and Papavassiliou, V. 1997. Exploring consumer confusion in the watch market. *Marketing Intelligence & Planning*, 15(4): 164–172.

Moon, K. and Blackman, D. 2017. *A guide to ontology, epistemology, and philosophical perspectives for interdisciplinary researchers*. [Online]. Available at: <https://i2insights.org/2017/05/02/philosophy-for-interdisciplinarity/> [Accessed 12 January 2022].

Morgan, D.L. 1993. Qualitative content analysis: A guide to paths not taken. *Qualitative Health Research*, 3(1): 112-121.

Morra, M.C., Ceruti, F., Chierici, R. and Gregorio, A.D. 2018. Social vs. traditional media communication: brand origin associations strike a chord. *Journal of Research in Interactive Marketing*, 12(1): 2–21.

Morris, M. and Ogan, C. 1996. The internet as mass medium. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, 1(4). [Online]. DOI: 10.1111/j.1083-6101.1996.tb00174.x

Munnukka, J., Uusitalo, O. and Jokinen, E. 2014. Advocacy participation and brand loyalty in a virtual brand community. *Proceedings of the 27th BLED eConference*.

Myers, M.D. 2008. *Qualitative research in business & management*. Los Angeles: SAGE.

Naas, R. 2019. *Omega unveils limited-edition Speedmaster watches that celebrate 50th anniversary of moon landing*. [Online]. Available at: <https://www.forbes.com/sites/robertanaas/2019/07/16/omega-unveils-limited-editionspeedmaster-watches-that-celebrate-50th-anniversary-of-moon-landing-prices> [Accessed 6 January 2022].

Neita, A. 2021. *Are Rolex watches a good investment & what is their value?* [Online]. Available at: <https://wristadvisor.com/are-rolex-watches-a-good-investment-what-is-their-value/> [Accessed 20 February 2022].

Nell, V. 1988. *Lost in a book: The psychology of reading for pleasure*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Netemeyer, R.G., Krishnan, B., Pullig, C., Wang, G., Yagci, M., Dean, D., Ricks, J. and Wirth, F. 2004. Developing and validating measures of facets of customer-based brand equity. *Journal of Business Research*, 57(2): 209–224.

Neumann, J. 2021. *Why luxury brands will keep their pandemic playbooks*. [Online]. Available at: <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2021-12-16/luxury-brands-are-keeping-their-pandemic-playbooks-and-expanding-into-e-commerce> [Accessed 18 January 2022].

Neuman, W.L. 1997. *Social research methods: qualitative and quantitative approaches*. Needham Heights: Allyn and Bacon.

Niessing, J. and Aaker, D. 2015. Being too agile could kill your brand, *INSEAD Knowledge Blog*, 8 October 2015. [Blog]. Available at: <https://knowledge.insead.edu/blog/insead-blog/being-too-agile-could-kill-your-brand-4299>.

Ohiagu, O.P. 2011. The internet: the medium of the mass media. *Kiabara Journal of Humanities*, 16(2): 225-232.

Okonkwo, U. 2009. Sustaining the luxury brand on the internet. *Journal of Brand Management*, 16(5/6): 302-310.

Ok, P. 2018. European luxury fashion brand advertising and marketing relating to nostalgia. *Studies in Communication Sciences*, 18(2): 307–324. [Online]. DOI: 10.24434/j.scoms.2018.02.007.

Oliveira, M. and Fernandes, T. 2020. Luxury brands and social media: drivers and outcomes of consumer engagement on Instagram. *Journal of Strategic Marketing*. [Online]. DOI: 10.1080/0965254X.2020.1777459.

Omega, 2019. Omega. [Instagram]. Available at: <https://www.instagram.com/omega/> [Accessed 2020–2022].

Omega. 2021a. *Watches*. [Online]. Available at: <https://www.omegawatches.com/> [Accessed 8 December 2021].

Omega. 2021b. *The material difference*. [Online]. Available at: <https://www.omegawatches.com/> [Accessed 8 December 2021].

Omega. 2021c. *Planet Omega: world's deepest dive*. [Online]. Available at: <https://www.omegawatches.com/planet-omega/ocean/worldsdeepestdive> [Accessed 19 December 2021].

Omega. 2022a. *Speedmaster Heritage Models "Speedy Tuesday" Limited Edition*. [Online]. Available at: <https://www.omegawatches.com/en-us/watches/speedmaster/heritage-models/anniversary-series/speedy-tuesday-limited-edition/product> [Accessed 2 February 2022].

Omega. 2022b. *Speedmaster*. [Online]. Available at: <https://www.omegawatches.com/en-us/watch-omega-speedmaster-moonwatch-professional-co-axial-master-chronometer-chronograph-42-mm-31030425001001> [Accessed 21 May, 2022].

Omega. 2022c. *Seamaster Diver 300m Co-Axial Master Chronometer 42 MM*. [Online]. Available at: <https://www.omegawatches.com/en-us/watch-omega-seamaster-diver-300m-co-axial-master-chronometer-42-mm-21030422003001> [Accessed 21 May 2022].

Omega. 2022d. *Olympic Games collection*. [Online]. Available at: <https://www.omegawatches.com/watches/specialities/olympic-games-collection/product> [Accessed 12 February 2022].

Omega. 2022e. *Aqua Terra 150m Ultra Light*. [Online]. Available at: <https://www.omegawatches.com/watches/seamaster/aqua-terra-150m/ultra-light/product> [Accessed 21 April 2022].

Omega. 2022f. *Speedmaster Heritage Models Speedy Tuesday "Ultraman"*. [Online]. Available at: <https://www.omegawatches.com/en-gb/watches/speedmaster/heritage-models/anniversary-series/speedy-tuesday-ultraman/product> [Accessed 21 May, 2022].

O'Neil, P. 2014. *Manufacture - Omega enters a new era of manufacturing*. [Online]. Available at: <https://www.europastar.com/magazine/features/1004086834-manufacture-omega-enters-a-new-era-of.html> [Accessed 16 January 2022].

Oxford Learner's Dictionaries. n.d. [Online]. Available at: <https://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/definition/english/advocacy> [Accessed 17 January 2022].

Pappas, I.O., Pateli, A.G., Giannakos, M.N. and Chrissikopoulos, V. 2014. Moderating effects of online shopping experience on customer satisfaction and repurchase intentions. *International Journal of Retail & Distribution Management*, 42(3): 187-204.

Park, C., MacInnis, D.J., Priester, J.R., Eisingerich, A.B. and Iacobucci, D. 2010. Brand attachment and brand attitude strength: conceptual and empirical differentiation of two critical brand equity drivers. *Journal of Marketing*, 74(6): 1–17.

Park, C.W. and MacInnis, D.J. 2006. What's in and what's out: Questions on the boundaries of the attitude construct. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 33(1): 16–18.

Parrott, G., Danbury, A. and Kanthavanich, P. 2015. Online behavior of luxury fashion brand advocates. *Journal of Fashion Marketing and Management*, 19(4): 360-383.

Patton M.Q. 2002. *Qualitative research and evaluation methods*. 3rd ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Pawlowski, A. 2020. *Why do athletes love ice baths and can they work for you?* [Online]. Available at: <https://www.today.com/health/ice-bath-benefits-why-do-athletes-take-ice-baths-do-t191381> [Accessed 20 February 2022].

Pearlman, R.Z. 2021. *Omega debuts next generation of NASA-qualified Speedmaster moonwatches*. [Online]. Available at: <https://www.space.com/omega-speedmaster-master-chronometer> [Accessed 29 March 2022].

Pennington, C. 2021. *The value proposition: Skip the watches that pay homage to the military – and get the Marathon they actually use*. [Online]. Available at: <https://www.hodinkee.com/articles/skip-the-watches-that-pay-homage-to-the-military-and-get-the-marathon-they-actually-use> [Accessed 10 February 2022].

Phau, I. and Prendergast, G. 2000. Consuming luxury brands: The relevance of the rarity principle. *The Journal of Brand Management*, 8(2): 122–138.

Phillips, B.J. and McQuarrie, E.F. 2010. Narrative and persuasion in fashion advertising. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 37(3): 368–92.

Pini, F.M. and Pelleschi, V. 2017. Creating a seamless experience for luxury consumers: integrating online and offline communication. In: Rigaud-Lacresse, E. and Pini, M.F. eds. *New luxury management: creating and managing sustainable value across the organization*. Cham: Springer: 217-237.

Pitsch, J. 2021. *Morgan Stanley's top 20 Swiss watch company ranking for 2021*. [Online]. Available at: <https://professionalwatches.com/morgan-stanleys-top-20-swiss-watch-company-ranking-for-2021/> [Accessed 12 February 2022].

Pizzitola, L. 2020. *The power of branding*. [Online]. Available at: <https://www.kauaidesign.com/post/the-power-of-branding> [Accessed 21 March 2022].

Poddar, A., Foreman, J., Banerjee, S. and Ellen, P.S. 2011. Exploring the Robin Hood effect: moral profiteering motives for purchasing counterfeit products. *Journal of Business Research*, 65(10): 1500-1506.

Pope, C., Ziebland, S. and Mays, N. Analysing qualitative data. Cited in: Pope, C., Mays, N. eds. 2006. *Qualitative research in health care*. 3rd ed. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 63–81.

Pop, N. A. and Zottu-Z, M. 2016. Brand significance in the marketing of luxury watchmaking. Qualitative research on the Bucharest market. *Annals of the University of Oradea, Economic Science Series*, 25(1): 1011–1020.

Porch, R. 1985. The digital watch: tribal bracelet of the consumer society. *Design Issues*, 2(2): 46–49.

Porter, M.E. 1980. *Competitive strategy: techniques for analyzing industries and competitors*. New York: Free Press.

Porter, M.E. 1996. What is strategy? *Harvard Business Review*, November-December: 61-71.

Presi, C.P., Maehle, N. and Kleppe, I.A. 2016. Brand selfies: Consumer experiences and marketplace conversations. *European Journal of Marketing*, 50(9/10): 1814–1834.

Prestige Time. n.d. *Omega watches review & FAQ*. [Online]. Available at: <https://www.prestigetime.com/blog/omega-watches-review-faq.html> [Accessed 15 February 2022].

Raffaelli, R. 2013. Mechanisms of technology re-emergence and identity change in a mature field: Swiss watchmaking. *Working Paper 14–048*. Cambridge: Harvard Business School.

Raffaelli, R. and DeJordy, R. 2019. Field-level paradox and the co-evolution of an entrepreneurial vision. Harvard Business School Working Paper. (16)3, July 2019.

Ramadan, Z., Farah, M.F. and Dukenjian, A. 2018. Typology of social media followers: the case of luxury brands. *Marketing Intelligence & Planning*, 36(5): 558–571. [Online]. DOI: 10.1108/MIP-01-2018-0039.

Rau, N. 2021. *The price development of the Audemars Piguet Royal Oak*. [Online]. Available at: <https://www.chronext.com/journal/deep-dive/the-price-development-of-the-audemars-piguet-royal-oak> [Accessed 13 February 2022].

RepTrak. Rolex, 2021. [Online]. Available at: <https://www.reptrak.com/rankings/company/rolex/> [Accessed 22 February 2022].

Richter, M. 2022. *Circles of time: reviewing the A. Lange & Söhne Lange 1 Time Zone*. [Online]. Available at: <https://www.watchtime.com/featured/circles-of-time-reviewing-the-a-lange-sohne-lange-1-time-zone/> [Accessed 17 April 2022].

Riddell, C. 2014. *Masstige and the digital age: trends from Australia*. [Online]. Available at: <http://chrisriddell.Com/Masstige-And-The-Digital-Age-Trends-From-Australia/> [Accessed 9 November 2018].

Riordan, M.A. 2017. Emojis as tools for emotion work: Communicating affect in text messages. *Journal of Language and Social Psychology*, 36(5): 549-567.

Rita McGrath: *Want a competitive edge? Ignore stability*. 2014. YouTube video, added by Big Think. [Online]. Available at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vuf_7rDY74 [Accessed 1 October 2019].

Ritson, M. 2022. *For Omega and Swatch, the rewards of co-branding could be astronomical*. [Online]. Available at: <https://www.marketingweek.com/mark-ritson-omega-swatch-moonswatch-co-branding/> [Accessed 22 May 2022].

Robertson, T. 2019. *Difference between push and pull marketing*. [Online]. Available at: <https://smallbusiness.chron.com/difference-between-push-pull-marketing-31806.html> [Accessed 9 January 2020]

Roggeveen, A.L., Sethuraman, R. 2020. How the COVID-19 pandemic may change the world of retailing. *Journal of Retailing*, 96(2): 169–171.

Rohm, A., Kaltcheva, V.D. and Milne, G.R. 2013. A mixed-method approach to examining brand-consumer interactions driven by social media. *Journal of Research in Interactive Marketing*, 7(4): 295-311.

Rolex. 2022. *DateJust*. [Online]. Available at: <https://www.rolex.com/watches/datejust.html> [Accessed 17 April 2022].

Rolex. 2022. *Tested to be toughest*. [Online]. Available at: <https://www.rolex.com/about-rolex-watches/tested-to-be-toughest.html> [Accessed 21 June 2022].

Romaniuk, J. and Gaillard, E. 2007. The relationship between unique brand associations, brand usage and brand performance: analysis across eight categories. *Journal of Marketing Management*, 23(3): 267–284.

Romaniuk, J., Sharp, B., Ehrenberg, A. 2007. Evidence concerning the importance of perceived brand differentiation. *Australasian Marketing Journal*, 15(2): 42–54.

Roulet, C. 2021. *Counterfeiting “costs” the Swiss watch industry CHF 2 billion*. [Online]. Available at: <https://www.watchesandculture.org/forum/en/counterfeiting-costs-the-swiss-watch-industry-chf-2-billion/> [Accessed 21 May 2022].

Rouse, M. 2013. *Push advertising*, May 2013. [Online]. Available at: <https://whatis.techtarget.com/definition/push-advertising> [Accessed 9 January 2020].

Rudner, R. 1966. *Philosophy of social science*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.

- Ryan, G.W. and Bernard, H.R. 2000. Data management and analysis methods. In: Denzin, N.K. and Lincoln, Y.S. eds. *Handbook of qualitative research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 769-802.
- Ryu, K, Lehto, X.Y., Gordon, S.E. and Fu, X. 2019. Effect of a brand story structure on narrative transportation and perceived brand image of luxury hotels. *Tourism Management*, 71(2019): 348–363.
- Salzer-Mörling, M. and Strannegård, L. 2004. Silence of the brands. *European Journal of Marketing*, 38(1/2): 224–238.
- Sandelowski, M. 2001. Real qualitative researchers do not count: the use of numbers in qualitative research. *Research in Nursing & Health*, 24(3): 230-240.
- Sandelowski, M., Voils, C.I. and Knafl, G. 2009. On quantitizing. *Journal of Mixed Methods Research*, 3(3): 208-222.
- Sashi, C.M. 2012. Customer engagement, buyer-seller relationships, and social media. *Management Decision*, 50(2): 253–272.
- Seiko. 2018. *Our heritage: History of the only manufacture with every watchmaking expertise*. [Online]. Available at: <https://www.seikowatches.com/global-en/special/heritage/> [Accessed 12 October 2019].
- Seo, Y., Li, X., Choi, Y.K. and Yoon, S. 2018. Narrative transportation and paratextual features of social media in viral advertising. *Journal of Advertising*, 47(1): 83-95.
- Sharma, G. n.d. *Why do brands prefer Instagram over other social media platforms?* [Online]. Available at: <https://www.socialpilot.co/blog/instagram-over-other-social-media-platform> [Accessed 23 December 2021].
- Shaw, A.W. 1912. Some problems in market distribution. *The Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 26(4): 703. Cited in: Hem, A.F. 2019. Beyond uniqueness: developing and testing a new typology of brand benefit differentiation. PhD thesis. Department of Strategy and Management. Norwegian School of Economics.
- Shawn Burke, C., Wilson, K.A. and Salas, E. 2005. The use of a team-based strategy for organizational transformation: guidance for moving toward a high reliability organization. *Theoretical Issues in Ergonomics Sciences*, 6(6): 509–530.
- Simonian, H. 2009. *A new spirit of sobriety takes hold*. [Online]. Available at: <https://www.ft.com/content/f1432a84-5613-11de-ab7e-00144feabdc0> [Accessed 21 March 2021]
- Sims, J. 2021. *Changing times: what your watch choice says about your social status today*. [Online]. Available at: <https://www.mrporter.com/en-ca/journal/watches/watches-status-symbols-signalling-rolex-patek-philippe-9971404> [Accessed 21 February 2022].

Sirianni, M. 2017. *How a watch escapement works*. [Online]. Available at: <http://blog.watchdoctor.biz/2017/12/03/how-a-watch-escapement-works/> [Accessed 11 March 2020].

SJX. 2016. *The pursuit of the perfect watch movement at Omega*. [Online]. Available at: <https://watchesbysix.com/2016/07/the-pursuit-of-the-perfect-watch-movement-at-omega.html> [Accessed 17 January 2022].

SJX. 2017. *Living with the Omega Speedmaster “Speedy Tuesday.”* [Online]. Available at: <https://watchesbysix.com/2017/07/test-drive-omega-speedmaster-speedy-tuesday.html> [Accessed 12 January 2022].

Slater, M.D. and Rouner, D. 2002. Entertainment-education and elaboration likelihood: understanding the processing of narrative persuasion. *Communication Theory*, 12(2): 173–91.

Smith, A.N., Fischer, E. and Yongjian, C. 2012. How does brand-related user-generated content differ across YouTube, Facebook, and Twitter? *Journal of Interactive Marketing*, 26(2): 102-113.

Smith, J. 1993. *After the demise of empiricism: the problem of judging social and educational inquiry*. New York: Ablex.

Soares, A.M. and Pinho, J.C. 2014. Advertising in online social networks: the role of perceived enjoyment and social influence. *Journal of Research in Interactive Marketing*, 8(3): 245–263.

Spangle, R. 2021. *The watches that caught our eye during New York Fashion Week*. [Online]. Available at: <https://www.hodinkee.com/articles/the-watches-that-caught-our-eye-during-new-york-fashion-week> [Accessed 29 April 2022].

Stacey, J. 2019. *The Omega Speedmaster Apollo 11 Anniversary Limited Edition (live pics & pricing)*. [Online]. Available at: <https://www.hodinkee.com/articles/omega-speedmaster-apollo-11-anniversary-limited-edition-introducing> [Accessed 19 April 2022].

Stacey, J. 2021. HODINKEE Radio: When Your Watch Becomes A Deserted Island Dilemma. [Podcast]. Available at: <https://www.hodinkee.com/articles/when-your-watch-becomes-a-deserted-island-dilemma> [Accessed 10 February 2022].

Stacey, J. 2022. *Introducing the Omega Seamaster Planet Ocean Ultra Deep in titanium and 'O-MEGASTEEL.'* [Online]. Available at: <https://www.hodinkee.com/articles/the-omega-seamaster-planet-ocean-ultra-deep-in-titanium-and-o-megasteel> [Accessed 10 March 2022].

Stahl, F., Heitmann, M., Lehmann, D.R. and Neslin, S.A. 2012. The impact of brand equity on customer acquisition, retention, and profit margin. *Journal of Marketing*, 76(4): 44–63.

Steiger, J. 2021. *What is causing luxury watch prices to skyrocket?* [Online]. Available at: <https://www.jaztime.com/blog/luxury-watch-high-prices/> [Accessed 19 January 2022].

Stokburger-Sauer, N., Ratneshwar, S. and Sen, S. 2012. Drivers of consumer-brand identification. *International Journal of Research in Marketing*, 29(4): 406-418.

Streefkerk, R. 2022. *Qualitative vs. quantitative research | Differences, examples & methods*. [Online]. Available at: <https://www.scribbr.com/methodology/qualitative-quantitative-research/> [Accessed 20 February 2022].

Stufflebeam, D.L., Madaus, G.F. and Kellaghan, M.S.T. 2000. *Evaluation models: viewpoints on educational and human services evaluation*. 2nd ed. New York: Springer.

Sun, T., Youn, S., Wu, G. and Kuntaraporn, M. 2006. Online word-of-mouth (or mouse): An exploration of its antecedents and consequences. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, 11(4): 1104-1127.

Swaminathan, V., Sorescu, A., Steenkamp, J-B. E. M., O'Guinn, T.C.G. and Schmitt, B. 2020. Branding in a hyperconnected world: refocusing theories and rethinking boundaries. *Journal of Marketing*, 84(2): 24–46.

Swatch. 2022. *Swatch and Omega "reach for the planets" with the Bioceramic MoonSwatch Collection*. [Online]. Available at: <https://www.swatch.com/en-za/bioceramic-moonswatch.html> [Accessed 29 April 2022].

SwissWatchExpo. 2021. *5 things to know about Omega*. [Online]. Available at: <https://www.swisswatchexpo.com/TheWatchClub/2021/07/02/omega-watches-history/> [Accessed 8 December 2021].

Swithinbank, R. 2019. *50 years on, the Omega watch that went to the Moon*. [Online]. Available at: <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/06/29/fashion/watches-omega-speedmaster-moonwatch-anniversary.html> [Accessed 9 October 2021].

Szegedi, K., Boudrand, J. 2021. *The Deloitte Swiss watch industry study 2021: adapting to a changing landscape*. [Online]. Available at: <https://www2.deloitte.com/content/dam/Deloitte/ch/Documents/consumer-business/deloitte-ch-en-swiss-watch-industry-study-2021.pdf> [Accessed 21 February 2022].

Tajeddini, K. and Trueman, M. 2008. The potential for innovativeness: A tale of the Swiss watch industry. *Journal of Marketing Management*, 24(1-2): 169-184.

Tak, P., Pareek, A. and Rishi, B. 2017. Social comparison of luxury fashion brands: impact of ostentation and media habits. *IUP Journal of Marketing Management*, 16(1): 29-46.

Tamas, A. 2018. *Watch rankings*. [Online]. Available at: <https://www.watch-rankings.com/watch-rankings/> [Accessed 10 October 2018].

Terasaki, S. and Nagasawa, S. 2013. Unveil the competitive advantage of Richemont over LVMH. *Proceedings of First International Symposium on Affective Engineering*, 403–410.

Thakur, M., Vaidya, D. n.d. *What are Veblen goods?* [Online]. Available at: <https://www.wallstreetmojo.com/veblen-goods/> [Accessed 13 January 2022].

Thanh, N.C. and Thanh, T. L. 2015. The interconnection between interpretivist paradigm and qualitative methods in education. *American Journal of Educational Science*, 1(2): 24-27.

Theurillat, T. and Donzé, P.Y. 2015. Retail networks and real estate: the case of Swiss luxury watches in China and Southeast Asia. *Discussion Papers in Economics and Business* 15-28, Osaka University, Graduate School of Economics.

The IIE. 2022. The IIE Postgraduate Handbook 2022. The Independent Institute of Education: Unpublished.

Thompson, C.J. 1997. Interpreting consumers: A hermeneutical framework for deriving marketing insights from the texts of consumers' consumption stories. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 34(4): 438–55.

Thompson, J. 2007. Breguet: back to where it once belonged. *Watch Times*, June: 126-145.

Thompson, J. 2017a. *Four revolutions part 1: A concise history of the quartz revolution*, 10 October 2017. [Online]. Available at: <https://www.hodinkee.com/articles/four-revolutions-quartz-revolution> [Accessed 12 October 2019].

Thompson, J. 2017b. *Four revolutions part 3: A concise history of the mechanical watch revolution (1990-2000)*, 14 December 2017. [Online]. Available at: <https://www.hodinkee.com/articles/four-revolutions-mechanical-watches-part-two> [Accessed 12 October 2019].

Thompson, J. 2017c. *The Richemont Group's new COO, Jérôme Lambert*, 2017. [Online]. Available at: <https://www.hodinkee.com/articles/personalities-richemont-coo-jerome-lambert-2017> [Accessed 4 October 2018].

Thompson, J. 2018a. 'Sustained recovery' in U.S. market, FH says. [Online]. Available at: <https://www.hodinkee.com/articles/sustained-recovery-in-us-market-fh-says> [Accessed 4 October 2018].

Thompson, J. 2018b. *Swiss watch exports up again in July 2018*. [Online]. Available at: <https://www.hodinkee.com/articles/swiss-watch-exports-up-again-july-2018> [Accessed 4 October 2018].

Thompson, J. 2019. *Global uncertainty unsettles SIHH*. [Online]. Available at: <https://www.hodinkee.com/articles/global-uncertainty-unsettles-sihh> [Accessed 25 January 2019].

- Thompson, J. 2020. *Business news: Baselworld cancels 2021 show*. [Online]. Available at: <https://www.hodinkee.com/articles/baselworld-cancels-2021-show> [Accessed 22 March 2022].
- Time and Tide. 2021. *US sprinter Noah Lyles opens up about his bronze medal and Omega Seamaster Aqua Terra Ultra Light*. [Online]. Available at: <https://timeandtidewatches.com/noah-lyles-omega-seamaster-aqua-terra-ultra-light/> [Accessed 21 May 2022].
- Time and Watches. 2020. *Patek Philippe - Ref. 5270J-001 Perpetual Calendar Chronograph*. [Online]. Available at: <https://www.timeandwatches.com/2020/07/patek-philippe-ref-5270j-001-perpetual.html> [Accessed 18 April 2022].
- Trochim, W.M.K. n.d. *Qualitative validity*. [Online]. Available at: <https://conjointly.com/kb/qualitative-validity/> [Accessed 18 February 2022].
- Trochim, W.M.K. and Donnelly, J.P. 2006. *Research methods knowledge base*. Cincinnati, OH: Atomic Dog Publishers.
- Truefacet. 2016. *Rolex's rise: how the brand became a status symbol*. [Online]. Available at: <https://www.truefacet.com/Guide/Rolex-Prices-Now/> [Accessed 19 January 2022].
- Unni, R. and Harmon, R. 2007. Perceived effectiveness of push vs. pull mobile location based advertising. *Journal of Interactive Advertising*, 7(2): 28–40.
- Vaismoradi, M., Turunen, H. and Bondas, T. 2013. Content analysis and thematic analysis: implications for conducting a qualitative descriptive study. *Nursing and Health Sciences*, 15(3): 398–405.
- Van Laer, T., De Ruyter, K., Visconti, L. M. and Wetzels, M. 2014. The extended transportation-imagery model: a meta-analysis of the antecedents and consequences of consumers' narrative transportation. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 40(5): 797–817. [Online]. DOI: 10.1086/673383 [Accessed 9 October 2019].
- Van Laer, T., Feiereisen, S. and Visconti, L. 2019. Storytelling in the digital era: A meta-analysis of relevant moderators of the narrative transportation effect. *Journal of Business Research*, 96: 135–146.
- Veblen, T. 1899. *The theory of the leisure class: An economic study of institutions*. Reprint, New York: Dover Publications, 1994. Cited in: Bagwell, L.S. and Bernheim, B.D. Veblen effects in a theory of conspicuous consumption. *The American Economic Review*, 86(3): 349–373.
- Video Blog: The End of Competitive Advantage 2014 | Rita McGrath*. 2018. YouTube video, added by Rita McGrath Group. [Online]. Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G2Tg-cXS3pQ> [Accessed 03 October 2019].
- Vijayaragavan, S. 2021. *What brand strategy of Rolex ensured its success?* [Online]. Available at: <https://thestrategystory.com/2021/04/22/rolex-brand-strategy/> [Accessed 22 August 2022].

Wallace, E., Buil, I. and de Chernatony, L. 2012. Facebook 'friendship' and brand advocacy. *Journal of Brand Management*, 20(2): 128-146.

Watches of Switzerland. 2022. *Cartier*. [Online]. Available at: <https://www.watchesofswitzerland.com/c/Brands/Cartier> [Accessed 18 April 2022].

Watchonista. 2020. *Why the Constellation is OMEGA's star of precision*. [Online]. Available at: <https://omega.watchonista.com/news/why-constellation-omegas-star-precision> [Accessed 21 January 2022].

Webster, F.E. Jr. and Keller, K.L. 2004. A roadmap for branding in industrial markets. *Brand Management*, 11(5): 388–402.

Wegelin, J. 2010. *Mister Swatch: Nicolas Hayek and the secret of his success*. London: Free Association Books.

Weiss, J. 2021. *George Clooney spotted wearing OMEGA's most underrated watch ever*. [Online]. Available at: <https://www.dmargin.com/2021/10/george-clooney-omega-seamaster-aqua-terra.html> [Accessed 19 January 2022].

White, J. 2019. *Omega's new watch was tested at the bottom of the Mariana Trench*. [Online]. Available at: <https://www.wired.co.uk/article/omega-seamaster-planet-ocean-ultra-deep-professional> [Accessed 8 December 2021].

White, J. 2022. *Omega and Swatch's \$260 MoonSwatch looks out of this world*. [Online]. Available at: <https://www.wired.com/story/omega-and-swatch-moonswatch/>. [Accessed 18 May 2022].

Wiedmann, K.P., Hennigs, N. and Siebels, A. 2007. Measuring consumers' luxury value perception: a cross-cultural framework. *Academy of Marketing Science Review*, 2007(7): 1–21.

Wiedmann, K.P., Hennigs, N. and Siebels, A. 2009. Value-based segmentation of luxury consumption behavior. *Psychology and Marketing*, 26(7): 625–651.

Wilcox, K., Kim, H.M. and Sen, S. 2009. Why do consumers buy counterfeit luxury brands? *Journal Of Marketing Research*, 46(2): 247–259.

Wilder, K.M. 2015. Brand advocacy: conceptualization and measurement. *Theses and Dissertations*. 929. <https://scholarsjunction.msstate.edu/td/929>

Wilk, V., Harrigan, P. and Soutar, G.N. 2018a. Navigating Online Brand Advocacy (OBA): an exploratory analysis. *Journal of Marketing Theory and Practice*, 26(1-2): 99-116.

Wilk, V., Soutar, G.N. and Harrigan, P. 2019. Online Brand Advocacy (OBA): the development of a multiple item scale. *Journal of Product and Brand Management*, 29(4): 415–429. [Online]. DOI: 10.1108/JPBM-10-2018-2090.

Wilk, V., Soutar, G.N. and Harrigan, P. 2021. Online brand advocacy and brand loyalty: A reciprocal relationship? To be published in: *Asia Pacific Journal of Marketing and Logistics* [Preprint]. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1108/APJML-05-2020-0303>.

Willis, J.W. 2007. *Foundations of qualitative research: interpretive and critical approaches*. London: Sage.

Winston, A. 2012. *Your competitive position is always eroding*. [Online]. Available at: <https://hbr.org/2012/03/your-competitive-position-always> [Accessed 23 April 2022].

Wolfe, A. and Lastoe, S. n.d. *10 Olympic athletes' daily habits you should steal (that don't involve the gym)*. [Online]. Available at: <https://www.themuse.com/advice/10-olympic-athletes-daily-habits-you-should-steal-that-dont-involve-the-gym> [Accessed 20 February 2022].

Wright, S., O'Brien, B.C., Nimmon, L., Law, M. and Mylopoulos, M. 2016. Research design considerations. *Journal of Graduate Medical Education*, 8(1): 97-98.

Wrist Aficionado. 2021. *A status symbol for the ages: the Royal Oak Offshore Perpetual Calendar*. [Online]. Available at: <https://wristaficionado.com/blogs/news/a-status-symbol-for-the-ages-the-royal-oak-offshore-perpetual-calendar> [Accessed 19 February 2022].

Wuring, N. 2008. *Customer advocacy: When you care, people notice*. Booksurge.com.

Xie, C., Richard, P.B. and Kjell, G. 2019. The impact of corporate social responsibility on consumer brand advocacy: The role of moral emotions, attitudes, and individual differences. *Journal of Business Research*, 95: 514-530.

Yang, W. and Mattila, A.S. 2014. Do affluent customers care when luxury brands go mass? The role of product type and status seeking on luxury brand attitude. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 26(4): 526–543.

Yap, L. 2018. *Swiss watchmakers make the leap to Chinese e-commerce*. [Online]. Available at: <https://www.luxurysociety.com/en/articles/2018/06/swiss-watchmakers-make-leap-chinese-e-commerce> [Accessed 19 May 2019].

Yeoman, I., Brass, D. and McMahon-Beattie, U. 2007. Current issue in tourism: The authentic tourist. *Tourism Management*, 28(4): 1128–1138.

Yeoman I. and McMahon-Beattie U. 2011. *The changing meaning of luxury*. Cited in: Yeoman I. and McMahon-Beattie U. eds. 2011. *Revenue management*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.

Yoo, B. and Lee, S. H. 2009. Buy genuine luxury fashion products or counterfeits. *Advances in Consumer Research*, 36(1): 280–228.

ADDENDUM A

A SUMMARY OF ALL CODE GROUPS

Code Groups
A beautiful watch
A beautiful and functional watch
A beautiful new watch that's also very accurate, thanks to the Master Chronometer-certified movement
A beautiful watch that is reliable enough to tour the world with
A beautiful, new watch based on an incredible history
Beautiful dress watch that had a practical past as a tool watch
Beautiful watch that can also be used as a tool when diving
Additional elements that enhance the experience
The watch's box is part of the appeal
Aesthetic value of the watch
Inviting the viewer to explore and appreciate the design of the watch
Many people will find the design and execution of the watch appealing
Watch design is aesthetically pleasing
Anniversary of Apollo 11
50th anniversary model made of platinum
50th anniversary of the Apollo 11 mission
A 50th anniversary watch model of the first step on the moon, powered by a special movement
A collection of Speedmaster watches that, together, celebrate 50 years of space travel
A golden watch made to celebrate a "golden achievement" - the Apollo 11 mission's 50 year anniversary
A special edition 50th anniversary watch featuring the iconic calibre 321
Buzz Aldrin wearing the new golden Speedmaster celebrating 50 years since his mission's success
Celebrating 50 years since Apollo 11 mission with a special-edition gold Speedmaster
Celebrating 50 years since Omega's watches assisted the Apollo 11 team
Celebrating 50 years since the Apollo 11 moon landing with a special event
Celebrating 50 years since the Apollo 11 team's success
Celebrating 50 years since the moon landing with a star-filled event at the Kennedy Space Centre
Celebrating Apollo 11's mission success with a special edition watch
Celebrating the 50th anniversary of the success of the Apollo 11 mission
Celebrating the Apollo 11 mission success with a special watch
Celebrating the success of Apollo 11 mission in partnership with Omega ambassador Rory McIlroy
George Clooney celebrating Apollo 11's mission's 50 year anniversary
Limited-edition watch launched to celebrate 50th anniversary of Apollo 11 mission
Omega celebrates the 50th anniversary since it helped astronauts step onto the surface of the moon
Speedmaster used by astronauts for more than 50 years
Tying the launch of the Apollo 11 50 year anniversary model to the PGA

Championship
Using Rory McIlroy to celebrate 50 year anniversary of Apollo 11 success from a different angle: golf
Watch is a tribute to the Apollo 11 crew and celebrates the 50th anniversary of the mission
Apollo Missions
Apollo Missions
Celebrating the success of Apollo 11 mission in partnership with Omega ambassador Rory McIlroy
George Clooney and Charlie Duke discusses the engineering behind the Apollo 11 mission
George Clooney celebrating Apollo 11's mission's 50 year anniversary
Reflecting on the incredible achievement of Apollo 11
The Apollo 11 mission was 10 years in the making
Using Rory McIlroy to celebrate 50 year anniversary of Apollo 11 success from a different angle: golf
Video showcasing astronauts preparing for liftoff on Apollo 11
Artisans & craftsmanship
Celebrating Swiss craftsmanship and tradition and embracing the brand's heritage in the valleys
Craftsmanship and attention to detail on the leather strap
Focus on the crown of the watch that features the Omega symbol - a symbol of craftsmanship and engineering prowess
Showing the amount of time that goes into achieving perfection
Skilled artisans and watchmakers creating beautiful works of art that also tell time
Astronaut using an Omega
Astronauts also chose Omega as their watch for use in space
Astronauts boarding the Saturn V rocket
Focus on Speedmaster as part of an astronaut's toolkit
How Speedmasters were worn and used by astronauts
Significance behind the Speedmaster and its use by astronauts
Speedmaster is tough enough for work in space
The Speedmaster was the astronauts' choice as well
Used by astronaut
Watch features golden adornments showing astronauts, signifying the importance of astronauts in the Speedmaster's history
Attention to detail
Copy suggests that Omega focuses on every small aspect of each watch and that everything has to be perfect
Fine details on the watch
Focus on individual components suggests that Omega pays attention to every small detail
Focus on small details on the watch
Focus on the details of watch dial
Inviting the user to take a closer look at the watch
Macro shot of watch details
Omega innovates by taking the smallest details into consideration
Reference to the small details on the watch
Shot of watch dial and details

Signifies an attention to detail
The elegant watch features small and intricate details that will appeal to the discerning gentleman
The use of small numerals in the background shows the fine detail that goes into creating this watch
Video features macro shots of watch detail
Behind the scenes
A behind the scenes look at the Kennedy Space Center
Behind the scenes at the George Clooney & Charlie Duke interview shoot
Behind the scenes footage of NASA astronauts preparing for their mission
Behind the scenes of Omega and NASA's shared history
Brand ambassadors: Alessandra Ambrosio
Alessandra Ambrosio suggests that a watch is the best accessory for women
Alessandra Ambrosio suggests that the watch empowers a woman and gives her confidence
Alessandra Ambrosio wearing gold coloured outfit, matching the gold accents of the Constellation watch.
Alessandra Ambrosio wearing the watch as an accessory
Alessandra Ambrosio wears dress in Omega's colour, red
Watch matches ambassador's identity
Brand ambassadors: Annina Frey
Annina Frey uses the watch while exploring iconic landmarks and places in Switzerland
Connection between a Swiss watch and a Swiss ambassador exploring Swiss cities
Promoting the Swiss boutique-only model by using a Swiss DJ, Annina Frey
Brand ambassadors: Buzz Aldrin
Bold black & white image of Buzz Aldrin wearing a Speedmaster
Buzz Aldrin wearing the new golden Speedmaster
Buzz Aldrin wearing the new golden Speedmaster celebrating 50 years since his mission's success
Buzz Aldrin wore a Speedmaster while walking on the moon
George Clooney and Buzz Aldrin discussing Buzz's history and career at NASA
George Clooney talks with astronaut Buzz Aldrin
Limited edition Speedmaster to celebrate Buzz Aldrin walking on the moon
Two iconic figures in Omega's history: George Clooney and Buzz Aldrin
Brand ambassadors: Charlie Duke
Behind the scenes at the George Clooney & Charlie Duke interview shoot
Celebrating moon landings with George Clooney and Charlie Duke
Charlie Duke discusses his history and the story behind his moon mission
Charlie Duke is proud to have gone to the moon
Charlie Duke remembers the engineering behind his mission
Charlie Duke shares insight into NASA's spacecraft design
George Clooney and Charlie Duke discuss lunar modules
George Clooney and Charlie Duke discusses the engineering behind the Apollo 11 mission
George Clooney and Charlie Duke discussing the use of the Speedmaster for their missions
George Clooney interviews Charlie Duke
George Clooney talks with astronaut Charlie Duke

George Clooney talks with astronaut Charlie Duke about his part in NASA's success with Apollo 11 mission.
Brand ambassadors: Cindy Crawford
Anniversary of a 20-year partnership between the actress and the brand
Celebrating an iconic ambassador partnership
Cindy Crawford appreciates the design of the watch
Cindy Crawford comments on how versatile and comfortable the watch is
Cindy Crawford exudes the same appeal as the watch
Cindy Crawford wears a red dress - iconic Omega colours
Cindy Crawford wears a striking white dress - the watch is an accessory that supports the outfit beautifully
Sophisticated ambassador wearing an Omega watch
Brand ambassadors: Eddie Redmayne
Actor and CEO named in same comment signifies the importance of the actor to the brand
Ambassador Eddie Redmayne selected to attend exhibition opening
Connection between Omega and Eddie Redmayne based on timelessness, sophistication and success
Eddie Redmayne explains the history behind the brand
Eddie Redmayne is the embodiment of classic Omega style
Eddie Redmayne used to promote opening of an important exhibition for the brand in Shanghai
Eddie Redmayne uses Omega pocket watch to express himself
Eddie Redmayne's stature as an actor helps sculpt the brand image in Asia
Use of very influential and timeless ambassador to "humanise" the brand
Brand ambassadors: George Clooney
Behind the scenes at the George Clooney & Charlie Duke interview shoot
George Clooney and Charlie Duke discuss lunar modules
George Clooney and Charlie Duke discusses the engineering behind the Apollo 11 mission
George Clooney and Charlie Duke discussing the use of the Speedmaster for their missions
George Clooney celebrating Apollo 11's mission's 50 year anniversary
George Clooney interviews Charlie Duke
George Clooney reflects on his memory of the moon landing
George Clooney talks with astronaut Buzz Aldrin
George Clooney talks with astronaut Charlie Duke
Special celebrations featuring George Clooney and NASA's finest staff
Two iconic figures in Omega's history: George Clooney and Buzz Aldrin
Brand ambassadors: Kaia Gerber
Kaia Gerber exploring New York while wearing her Trésor
Kaia Gerber having fun while wearing her Omega
Kaia Gerber wearing a Trésor with a different strap that expresses her personality
The watch helps Kaia Gerber express her personality
Brand ambassadors: lifestyle, men
Model stands on a bridge in New York
Brand ambassadors: lifestyle, women
Beautiful women wearing Omega watches
Omega ambassadors preparing for event - Paris Fashion Week

Omega brand ambassadors that all embody different elements of the brand
Omega's ambassadors fit into the mould of have people would perceive Paris Fashion Week.
Sophisticated and sexy, like the watch in question
Brand ambassadors: Liu Shishi
Actress Liu Shishi wearing an intricately decorated dress that mimics the fine details found on the watch
Liu Shishi describing the qualities of the new Constellation watch
Liu Shishi wears Constellation watch with gold accents as part of gold outfit
The watch completes the actresses outfit
Brand ambassadors: Nicole Kidman
Nicole Kidman comments on why she wears her Constellation
Nicole Kidman gives style advice by wearing the watch
Nicole Kidman wearing a gold watch in a bright red dress - the iconic Omega colours
Nicole Kidman wearing a red dress, bringing in the Omega colour, red
Pairing of the watch with a prominent actress signifies a good, fitting collaboration
Brand ambassadors: Rory McIlroy
Celebrating the success of Apollo 11 mission in partnership with Omega ambassador Rory McIlroy
Using Rory McIlroy to celebrate 50 year anniversary of Apollo 11 success from a different angle: golf
Brand ambassadors: sport
Using successful athlete as ambassador
Brand ambassadors: Vianney
Musician Vianney explores the city of love, Paris, with a Paris-only boutique watch model on his wrist
Showcasing up-and-coming French singer, Vianney. Adds to the aspirational nature of the watch by connecting it to an ambassador that is busy forging his own path
Used French singer, Vianney, to promote the Paris-only limited edition watch
Brand-building activities
Celebrating the brand's illustrious past
Engages the viewers and entices them to get to know the brand even better by using a quiz
Engaging the consumer and letting them make a choice
Gala dinner
Important milestone for the brand
Inviting the viewer into the brand's history
Omega colour (red & gold) used in image to reinforce the brand identity
Omega partners with Paris Fashion Week to add an element of sophistication and sexiness to its brand
Partnership with exclusive online watch retailer, A Collected Man
Comments on the look of the watch
The new iteration of the Constellation watch is slimmer and more refined
The use of pink in the background adds a soft and elegant touch to the already-elegant watch
Design inspiration: brand
Chess pieces in black and white mimics black and white jacket and shirt
Dial of the watch is inspired by the brand's colour, red
Jewellery design that uses Omega logo to create each piece

Jewellery range inspired by nature
Minimalist styling with clever use of the colour red to support the brand's identity
Omega's iconic colours of red and gold used on the watch
Omega's red creates a perfect festive gifting backdrop
Omega's red is the same red used on the Swiss flag
Omega's strong red colour mimicked on the seconds hand of the watch
Referring to the small date window on the watch dial - a design element - that has a beautiful aesthetic value on top of its functional value
Strong colours used in styling
Strong focus on the colour red - fitting for the brand
Strong red colours used on watch and for styling of image to promote the brand's bold identity
Stylish outfit in bold colours that supports the watch's design
The Omega red colour creates a beautiful contrast against the gold on the watch and the decorative balls
The small grooves in the fluted bezel signifies the attention to detail present on all Omega watches
The watch is simple and subtle compared to the striking red background
The watch's design is strong and iconic, just like the famous landmarks of NY
Trésor watch given additional personality through the use of colourful and playful objects in the background
Vibrant colours used throughout carousel, signifies boldness
Watch comes with a strap in Omega's classic red colour
Watch design uses Omega's colours (red & gold)
Wearing dresses that celebrate the brand's colour red
Design inspiration: elegance
3D animation used to signify the idea of elegance in motion
Comparing attention to detail in watch's design to that of a soft, feminine touch
Flower used in styling to signify a soft design touch on the watch
Graceful design, harmony between steel and gold
The design of the links on the bracelet mimics that of the indexes on the dial
The dial is designed to be symmetrical and beautiful
The shape and colour of the roman numerals on the white dial creates visual interest and is both stylish and beautiful
The styling is soft and subtle in appearance, yet strong and built in execution
The watch is elegant and classically designed
Watch design is streamlined and can be worn for any occasion
Design inspiration: history
A modern take on a classic watch
Design inspired by watches from the 1940's
Familiar design, but modern execution
Historic relevance of the material used for the watch's design
Iconic watch design that has stood the test of time
Incorporating famous design elements into a timeless watch
Omega uses vintage parts to recreate iconic pocket watch
The design has been updated, but stays true to the original
The watch's design has been changed and updated over the years, but the essence remains the same. Signifies timeless and iconic design
The watch's design is very classic in nature

Watch colour matches the colour of an old picture frame, linking the design to the history of the brand
Watch design based on iconic watch from the brand's history
Watch design celebrates brand colours, 125th anniversary and 19-ligne "Omega" calibre
Watch design inspired by iconic watches from decades past
Watch design inspired by the past, but updated for a modern world
Watch design still relevant after 125 years
Watch design uses traditional techniques to beautify and embellish
Watch inspired by design from 1957
Design inspiration: locations & architecture
Comparing the watch to other iconic NY themes of movies, songs and stories. The watch is seen as being equally as special
Comparing the watch to the greatness that is the city of NY suggests that the boutique-only watch is very special indeed
Inspiration for the design came from an iconic building in Manhattan
Design inspiration: moon & space
A small touch (the Constellation star) signifies the brand's expertise in watchmaking
Black watch is striking against green background
Combining elements of the moon landing into the unique characteristics and design of the watch
Connection between winter and the dark side of the moon
Copy references the inspiration behind the watch
Iconic watch movement makes a return in a very special watch
Omega designs are classic and timeless
Small astronaut footprint visible in the moonphase disc, reinforcing the connection with the moon landing
The design of the Speedmaster hasn't changed since it went to the moon
Watch design celebrates man's first step on the moon
Watch design celebrates NASA and Omega's shared success on the Apollo 11 mission
Watch design celebrates the first ever step on the moon
Watch design inspired by the dark side of the moon
Watch design inspired by the moon landing
Word play to compare the surface of the moon and the dial of watch
Design inspiration: ocean
3D animation of ball rolling mimics the rolling waves of the ocean
Deep blue colour of lapis lazuli also mimics the colour of the ocean at great depth. Reinforces the connection between the Seamaster and the ocean
Design of the dial inspired by the ocean and water sports
Maritime theme connects watch to its inspiration from the past
Monochrome watch design is only broken with the use of red lettering for the Seamaster name
Nautical theme pulled through in the imagery
Omega differentiates their offerings from that of other brands by combining design, heritage and the brand's history to create watches that offer something different
Omega uses design to celebrate its heritage, but also signifies its vision of the future
Sailboat-shaped indexes and wave motif on dial is a tribute to the ocean
Sea inspiration mimicked on the dial of the watch with wave motif

Seahorse used in background styling - an icon in the Omega watch lineup, used on the caseback of Seamaster watches
Sun-brushed blue dial on watch, a homage to the blue skies and oceans of the world
Using technology and the brand's history to inform and execute watch design and manufacturing
Watch and jewellery pieces' designs were both influenced by the ocean
Watch design inspired by the ocean
Watch design inspired by the waves of the ocean
Watch's dial design references the waves of the ocean
Design inspiration: sport
Connection between the greens of a golf course and the green colour used for the NATO strap on this limited edition
Ice white watch design with a tiny red blip mimics the Japanese national flag ahead of the Tokyo Olympics
Omega's tribute watch to the 2020 Olympics
The Globemaster's serious attitude gets a fun twist thanks to the use of a yellow background
The green on the seconds hand and NATO strap matches the green of golf courses
Watch designed with professional golfers in mind
Watch dial design inspired by the Tokyo Olympics branding
Design inspiration: utility
Black background mimics black ceramic used on watch bezel
Explaining inspiration behind watch design
Focussed on design
Influence of watch construction on the overall look and feel of the watch
Monotone colours used in styling lets the watch do the talking
The 3D animated tubes moving up and down mimics the gears in the watch working in unison
The 3D animation effect of the sweeping hand mimics the perpetual motion of the automatic watch movement
The Aqua Terra's design celebrates the spirit of adventure, but this version is classy and the perfect gift for a stylish gentleman
Watch designed to withstand the influence of magnetism
Everyday life with an Omega
A simple and elegant dress watch
A watch suited to the times
An iconic watch worn in an iconic city
Celebrate the coming new year
Copy references the versatility of the watch
Copy suggests that the watch is also perfect for the office, despite its heritage inspired by space travel
Copy suggests that the watch will make your Monday's feel better and more exciting
London is a combination of grand spaces and less-than-grand places
Making memories while wearing a watch
Simple pleasures in life
Talks about the city that never sleeps, so a good watch will keep everyone on time while they're awake
The copy suggests that you admire and adore the watch the more you spend time with it

The dark watch against the light green background hints to the casual nature of the watch
The watch is photographed with a card wallet, key chain, pen and a notebook, suggesting its potential use by a business executive
The watch is worn while doing numerous different things
The weather can influence the type of watch you wear
Trust the universe, trust an Omega watch
Use an Omega watch to guide you on your journey, and trust the process
Use the watch to keep track of the next year
Using the watch to count down to the new year
Watch photographed next to a card wallet, earrings, a pen and a notebook signifies use in a stylish, everyday environment
Watch photographed next to a card wallet, pen and casual NATO strap, suggesting that this rugged watch also has a softer, more luxurious side
Watch photographed next to cufflinks, card wallet, pen and a casual NATO strap showcases the serious, yet practical and casual side of the watch
Watch photographed with a ring, a card wallet, a pen and a casual white NATO strap suggests that it's a watch that can be worn casually or in a formal environment
Watch photographed with NATO strap next to watch role, cigar box, map and woven chair. Signals more casual way of using and wearing the watch - multi-use
Wear an Omega and celebrate each moment of your life
Wear Omega watches and be present in every experience
Wear Omega watches for urban and everyday adventures
Express personality with watch
A Constellation in any configuration is the perfect watch for gents
Anything is possible when wearing an Omega Constellation
Appreciating the small luxuries of time and experiences
Capture attention by wearing a visually appealing and interesting watch
Choose an Omega Constellation watch to be your guide through your life
Creating memories while wearing an Omega watch
Elegant Speedmaster used for sightseeing in Switzerland
Enjoying calm days on the ocean with an Omega watch
Feminine pose
Individualists wearing Omega watches to express their identities
Masculine pose
Model looks mysterious while wearing the watch
Model wearing a Constellation while exploring Swiss landmarks
Omega focusses on matters of the heart
Omega invites viewers to embrace love
Omega makes watches for professionals and amateurs alike
Omega watches are the gentleman's choice
Omega watches as a tool to express individuality
Omega watches can be personalised to better suit the wearing and express their personality
Omega watches connects you with your higher, ideal self
Omega watches worn in the city of love
Omega wearers are globe trotters who travel the world and have a great time while doing so
Omega's stance as a stylish watch still has relevance in a sporting setting

Personalise the watch as you see fit
Purchase your own Constellation watch if you didn't get the gift you wanted
Simplicity is also beautiful
Strong woman choosing to wear the watch
Strong, independent women having fun while wearing Omega watches
Suggests that the watch supports an interesting and exciting lifestyle
The Constellation is a special watch that is more than just a beautiful piece of jewellery
The watch is an enabler of exciting experiences
The watch is elegant, simple and beautiful and is perfect for executives
This toolwatch can also be used by executives in a corporate environment
Using a watch to express your personality
Using a watch to reflect on time spent in a specific place
Wear a Speedmaster when exploring the winter landscape
Wearing a Speedmaster while spending time with a loved one
Women embodying the spirit of the Omega brand
Express style & personal taste
A group of gentlemen with unique taste and individual style ideas
A NATO strap for any occasion
A watch can form part of a person's identity, or be worn as an expression of their identity
A watch is an important part of a stylish wardrobe
Adapting an Omega watch to your own style
Adaption of traditional styling
Add a unique touch to your watch with an Omega NATO
Although the weather might change the type of outfit you should wear, a Speedmaster is always a good addition to an outfit
Change the strap on your watch to match the seasons
Combine watch and cufflinks
Create own style
Different straps can be used, showcasing the product's versatility
Different straps change the look of the watch
Explains how to wear a pocket watch - ultimately about what suits your unique personality
Feminine jewellery that features fine craftsmanship
How to wear a watch with clothing
Lady wearing a feminine Speedmaster and Omega jewellery
Lady wearing an Omega watch along with Omega jewellery
Model is wearing the watch as her only accessory, signifying its significance
Model wearing tuxedo
NATO straps help make watches more versatile
NATO straps help to spruce up your golfing attire
Omega as a fashion accessory
Omega influences personal style by combining watches and jewellery
Omega NATO straps are the perfect travel accessory
Omega NATO straps can be used to add a pop of colour to your watch
Omega watches as a style accessory
Omega watches can be worn with numerous outfits

Omega watches complete the wearer's outfit
Omega watches fit into the modern gentleman's wardrobe
Omega watches signify a touch of class and refinement when worn to special events. Omega incorporates this insight into their posts
Pair watch with a matching set of cufflinks
Photo exudes style and class
Regardless of what they wear, men look stylish with Omega watches
Showing versatility by wearing watch on NATO strap or rubber
Soft pink colours used to signify the fact that this is a feminine watch
Sophisticated and stylish event
Sophisticated model
Sophisticated outfit
Style statement with outfit change
Stylish and sophisticated woman wearing an Omega watch
Stylish men wearing Omega watches
Stylish tuxedo outfit
The Speedmaster is a classic watch that will always be in fashion
The watch can be dressed up for use with a tuxedo or dressed down for use in the field
The watch can be worn in any instance
The watch is a good addition to the model's outfit
Timeless style advice
Use watch as accessory
Using Omega watches as a style accessory
Watch completes outfit
Watch look can be updated to suit your personality
Watch used to express personal style
Watch worn as an accessory
Wear an Omega as part of your outfit
Wear gold watch to capture attention
Well-dressed men wearing Omega watches
Gift Omega: Aqua Terra watch as gift
A simple watch also makes a great festive gift
Copy refers to the excitement surrounding gifting during the festive period
Gift a simple and elegant Aqua Terra
Gift Omega: Constellation watch as gift
A Constellation is the appropriate choice of festive gift for ladies
Suggesting that this Constellation is a great holiday gift
Gift Omega: De Ville watch as gift
Gift a De Ville during the festive season
Lady wrapping a watch in a red box with red ribbon, ready to be gifted
Omega's colour red is synonymous with Christmas gifting
Red gift box on a red background. The golden decoration balls pick up on the gold in the watch the lady is wearing
The De Ville is considered a simple and elegant watch - perfect for a festive season gift
The gift boxes and ribbon are all red, signifying that Omega's colour red is synonymous with the festive gifting season

The perfect gift for someone with a confident sense of style
Gift Omega: Globemaster watch as gift
A visually enticing image that really personifies festive gifting
Gentleman the world over would love to receive a Globemaster as a gift
Gift Omega: Ladymatic watch as gift
A lady unboxes a Ladymatic that was received as a gift
Gift and receive Omega watches during the festive period
Gift Omega: Omega as a gift
Giving an Omega product is considered to be a very grand gesture
Giving an Omega watch as a gift for a special occasion
Omega item used as a gift
Gift Omega: Seamaster watch as gift
A sporty toolwatch makes an elegant Christmas gift
Gift the ultimate dive watch during the festive season
Omega watches make exceptional gifts
Striking red background and Christmas decoration in the iconic Omega colour
When you gift an Omega watch, you gift a story that the wearer discovers as he immerses himself in the brand
Gift Omega: Speedmaster watch as gift
By gift-wrapping a Speedmaster, you gift someone the spirit of Omega. The ultimate gift.
Christmas decorations in Omega's colour suggests that the brand's watches will make the perfect Christmas gift
Gift a lady a Speedmaster as a festive gift
Omega watches make the perfect gift for fellow explorers, travellers and enthusiasts
Pair a Speedmaster with a NATO strap for a great festive gift idea
Strong red Omega colour in the background signifies the start of the festive season
The background features numerous gift boxes in Omega's red, signifying that their watches should be gifted
History of the brand
125th anniversary of Omega brand
A space filled with memories of the achievements of the Omega brand
A watch design inspired by historic events of the past
A watch from Omega's history, updated for the present
Beautiful pocket watch that influenced the entire industry
Black and white image signifies that the photo was taken long ago, showing how Omega's Speedmaster has long been a staple toolwatch that served NASA well
Brings the heritage and legacy of Omega to life
Celebrating the birthplace of Omega
Celebrating the history of the Omega Speedmaster
Celebrations in Switzerland
Focus on the history and achievements of Omega
Iconic Omega pocket watch
Image of disassembled watch movement that influenced the industry
Image of vintage Omega advertisements reinforces the brand's history and heritage
Image shows a beautiful vintage Omega in a vintage red box next to an archive book and certificates of authenticity
Image shows vintage Omega watch on vintage marketing booklets and extracts from the archives

Inspired by the past
Looking back at the history of the Speedmaster
Multiple variations on the same Speedmaster theme
Older watch with a story
Omega celebrating its Swiss heritage
Omega is proud of its history and heritage, celebrates this with a quiz
Omega played a part in shaping world history
Omega red colour used in styling to reinforce connection to its past
One of the most important watches in Omega's history
Proud of heritage
Reference to Omega's founding year conveys the fact that they've got centuries' worth of experience
The background of the image is in Omega's iconic red
The brand has a rich history to celebrate, filled with iconic achievements
The brand is proud of its heritage and the watches it made in the past
The brand lets its history take center stage and uses its museum to tell stories from its illustrious past
The brand's legacy and heritage, all immortalised
The Constellation has been a favourite for decades
The most important watch family in Omega's lineup
Video showcases a few iconic moments in the Omega brand's history
Vintage watch
Watch design celebrates brand colours, 125th anniversary and 19-line "Omega" calibre
Incredible achievements with Omega watches
After diving to the greatest depth ever recorded, the watch still passed all laboratory tests
All Omega watches used for record attempt passed the test
An Omega watch went deeper into the ocean than any other watch before
Celebrating a watch that made a significant impact on human history
Each winner of the Stephen Hawking Medal of Science Communication will receive this watch
Golden astronaut in image celebrates the golden moment Omega shared with NASA when the first men walked on the surface of the moon
Movement that inspired the industry
New world record broken by Omega watch: deepest dive
Omega watch broke a record
Omega watch broke world record for deepest dive
Omega watch central to success
One of man's most important achievements in the history of the world
Perservence leads to success
Special Speedmaster made for winners at the Starmus Festival
The rower received an OBE for his achievements
The watch was used for a record-breaking dive and passed without any issues
Triple gold medallist
Undisputed importance of the Speedmaster
Using a historic event as an opportunity to market the watch
Video shows watch between medals
Watch photographed with the rower's medals, signifying that the rower is a champion

that wears an Omega
Watch referred to as being iconic
Watches inspired by the watch that shaped world history
Won a gold medal
Innovation, research & development
50 years' worth of innovation and history brought these watches to life
A lightweight watch made thanks to a lot of research
A technologically advanced watch that allows divers to reach great depths
Advanced engineering and technology makes Omega watches indispensable tools for professionals
Although simple in design, this is a serious watch for watch lovers
An old design with modern technology inside
Continuous product innovation drives Omega's edge
Copy plays on relationship between accuracy and perpetual movement
Copy suggests that they've focused on precision watchmaking since their inception
Cutting-edge technology at the time
Engineering prowess helped Omega make the deepest-diving watch ever
Extraordinary watch that pushes the boundaries of watch design and engineering
Focussing on the watch's unrivalled precision
History of innovation
Imagery focusses on technical drawings, watch components, reinforces the message that Omega creates technically advanced watches ahead of its time
Omega always updates the technology, but keeps the look consistent
Omega innovates by taking the smallest details into consideration
Omega publically supporting the "Made in Switzerland" movement and keeping manufacturing in Switzerland
Omega's focus on R&D helps them to continuously innovate
Omega's history, driven by innovation, achievement and excellence
Over-engineered watch that is physically tough and technically sophisticated.
Playing chess, strategy
Precision engineering
Product innovation by adapting the watch design
Record supports Omega's vision of providing the best tools for professionals
Reintroduction of the iconic Omega calibre 321
Reproduction of iconic watch movement
Technical mastery
The "Master Chronometer" text is visible on the card in the card wallet, reminding the viewer of the watch's serious credentials
The lightest watch Omega has made
The movement of the watch signifies progress and innovation during an era characterised by great achievements.
The movement was the most precise of the time
The Speedmaster exemplified the best Switzerland could produce
The watchmakers' focus on precision is mimicked in how effortlessly the steel pins roll on the 3D animated background
Their relentless focus has allowed them to create very accurate watches, certified as Master Chronometers
Use technology for innovation
Very accurate movement made by pioneering engineers

Watch design innovation: ability to push the crown into the body
Watch design material improvements
Watch powered by a legendary Omega movement
James Bond
A diver's watch that's perfect for James Bond
A special-edition toolwatch to celebrate Omega and James Bond's history
As a true spy would have it, not all is revealed on the first glance
Black and white photo of Daniel Craig as James Bond
Celebrating Omega and James Bond's history
James Bond's latest watch - released for No Time to Die
James Bond's newest watch, launched while wearing a tuxedo
James Bond's watch needs to fulfil multiple uses
Launch of James Bond's new Omega watch
The 50th anniversary of James Bond film, On Her Majesty's Secret Service
The James Bond watch is a toolwatch through and through
The new James Bond toolwatch can also be dressed up for use with a suit and tie
The new watch is an embodiment of James Bond's style
The perfect toolwatch for a spy like James Bond
The watch design features a number of references to James Bond, but are cleverly hidden
Video showcases the launch event in New York. Daniel Craig is present
Watch design features James Bond's family crest
Watch supplier to James Bond
MASTER: Content
Content: Image
Content: Image & video carousel
Content: Image carousel
Content: Video
Content: Video Carousel
MASTER: Copy
Copy: Announcement
Copy: Invitation
Copy: Question
Copy: Statement
MASTER: Featured
Featured: Aqua Terra
Featured: Constellation
Featured: De Ville
Featured: Globemaster
Featured: Jewellery
Featured: Ladymatic
Featured: NATO strap
Featured: None
Featured: Planet Ocean
Featured: Ploprof
Featured: Railmaster
Featured: Seamaster
Featured: Speedmaster

Featured: Straps
Featured: Trésor
MASTER: Omega Feature
Omega feature: Ambassadors
Omega feature: Astronauts
Omega feature: Brand collaboration
Omega feature: Calibre 321
Omega feature: Incredible achievements
Omega feature: James Bond
Omega feature: Olympic athlete
Omega feature: Olympic games
Omega feature: Space travel
Omega feature: Special exhibition
MASTER: Part of Series
Part of series: 007
Part of series: 007 II
Part of series: A Collected Man
Part of series: A Collected Man II
Part of series: AquaTerra on a boat
Part of series: Brown & rose gold watches
Part of series: Calibre 321
Part of series: Calibre 321 II
Part of series: Ceramic & titanium Seamaster
Part of series: Change of season
Part of series: Constellation Citizen K
Part of series: Constellation His & Hers
Part of series: Constellation Manhattan
Part of series: Constellation Manhattan II
Part of series: Constellation Manhattan III
Part of series: Constellation Manhattan IV
Part of series: De Ville Trésor
Part of series: De Ville Trésor II
Part of series: Dressing up
Part of series: Exclusive Preview
Part of series: Gifting
Part of series: Gifting II
Part of series: History of Omega
Part of series: Jewellery
Part of series: Moonwatch
Part of series: Moonwatch II
Part of series: Moonwatch III
Part of series: Moonwatch IV
Part of series: Moonwatch V
Part of series: Olympics
Part of series: Omega Museum
Part of series: OmegaGolf
Part of series: OmegaGolf II
Part of series: OmegaMyChoice

Part of series: OmegaMyChoice II
Part of series: OmegaMyChoice III
Part of series: Paris Fashion Week
Part of series: PittiUomo
Part of series: Railmaster
Part of series: Seamaster 1948
Part of series: Seamaster 300
Part of series: Seamaster 300M
Part of series: Seamaster Diver
Part of series: Seamaster His & Hers
Part of series: Seamaster Lapis Lazuli
Part of series: Seamaster Malachite
Part of series: Seamasters by the sea
Part of series: Shanghai exhibition
Part of series: Speedmaster
Part of series: Speedmaster Moonphase
Part of series: Speedmaster Moonphase II
Part of series: Speedmaster winter getaway
Part of series: Speedy Tuesday
Part of series: Standalone post
Part of series: Swiss made
Part of series: Valetine's day
Part of series: Vintage Omega
Part of series: Watch components
Part of series: Watches + 3D animation
Part of series: World's deepest watch
MASTER: Reason for Post
Reason for post: Launch a product
Reason for post: Share general content
Reason for post: Showcase product features
Reason for post: Tell a story
MASTER: Topics
Topic: 007
Topic: 19-linge "Omega" calibre
Topic: Apollo 11 anniversary celebration
Topic: Apollo 11 launch
Topic: Apollo 11 mission
Topic: Aqua Terra
Topic: Astronaut in space
Topic: Astronauts ready for boarding a rocket
Topic: Boutique Exclusive
Topic: Calibre 321
Topic: Calibre 8928 Ti
Topic: Constellation
Topic: De Ville
Topic: Dressing up
Topic: Dressing up at Pitto Uomo
Topic: Ex-soldier

Topic: Exclusive Preview (New watches being launched)
Topic: George Clooney speaks to Buzz Aldrin
Topic: Gifting
Topic: Globemaster
Topic: History of the brand
Topic: Jewellery
Topic: Kennedy Space Center
Topic: Moon landing
Topic: NATO strap
Topic: Olympic athlete
Topic: Omega Golf
Topic: Planet Ocean
Topic: Ploprof
Topic: Railmaster
Topic: Rockets at the Kennedy Space Center
Topic: Saturn V rocket
Topic: Seamaster
Topic: Space travel
Topic: Special occasion - opening of exhibition in Shanghai
Topic: Special occasion - Paris Fashion Week
Topic: Special occasion - Valentine's Day
Topic: Speedmaster
Topic: Starmus Festival
Topic: Swiss heritage
Topic: Timeless style example
Topic: Tokyo 2020 olympic games
Topic: Trésor
Topic: Vintage Omega
Topic: Watch components
Topic: Watches + 3D animation
Topic: World's deepest watch
Moon landing
A new watch powered by an iconic movement, to celebrate the 50 year anniversary of the moon landing
A special watch released to celebrate the historic event
A watch that brings together multiple elements of the moon landing
Approaching and landing on the moon's surface
Astronaut wearing Speedmaster on the moon
Buzz Aldrin wore a Speedmaster while walking on the moon
Celebrating moon landings with George Clooney and Charlie Duke
Celebrating one of the greatest adventures: travelling to the moon. All done with an Omega strapped to their suits
Celebrating the 12 astronauts who've walked on the moon
Celebrating the actual moon landing
Celebrating the first watch that went to the moon
Charlie Duke discusses his history and the story behind his moon mission
Charlie Duke is proud to have gone to the moon
George Clooney reflects on his memory of the moon landing

Historical significance of the moon landing, and Omega's part in this event
Including moon-related copy to reinforce the connection between Omega and the moon landing.
Limited edition Speedmaster to celebrate Buzz Aldrin walking on the moon
Limited edition watch to celebrate Apollo 11's moon landing
Moon landing
Moon's service described while astronaut wears a Speedmaster
NTT: Moon landing
Omega is proud to have contributed to the success of the Apollo missions that reached the moon
Omega reached the moon numerous times
Omega's involvement in sending astronauts to the moon
Omega's Speedmaster was used for moon missions a number of times
Reference to the history of the brand and the part the watch played in the moonlanding
Referencing the surface of the moon in promotional copy and incorporating the surface of the moon on the packaging box
Sharing the story behind Apollo 11's mission to the moon
Significance of the moon landing for American and world history
TCA: Moon landing
The first man on the moon wore a Speedmaster
The first watch worn on the moon
The moment the first astronauts set foot on the moon, accompanied by their trusty Speedmasters
The start of the journey towards the moon
Words from the first man on the moon, while wearing a Speedmaster
More than sum of its parts
Focus on the qualities of the watch, not just on its main function of telling time, more than just a tool
Omega watches are more than just the sum of their parts. They are works of art, made by skilled artisans
The movement is as important as the watch design itself
The watch is more than the sum of all its parts
Mystery behind the brand
Talks about exploring the city and the watch in the same context, suggesting that both have more to offer than meets the eye
Watch dial that draws attention and needs to be seen
Watch face turned out of sight signifies mystique, is enticing
NASA & Omega's partnership
A Speedmaster being worn during NASA's first space walk
A watch that draws on Omega and NASA's shared history
Black and white archive footage and current footage of NASA rockets
Black and white image celebrates a piece of NASA and Omega's shared history
Black and white image of the engines on a rocket
Black and white photos signifying long-running partnership between NASA and Omega
Celebrating a NASA astronaut's first walk in space
Celebration of Omega's part in NASA's history
Charlie Duke shares insight into NASA's spacecraft design

George Clooney and Buzz Aldrin discussing Buzz's history and career at NASA
George Clooney talks with astronaut Charlie Duke about his part in NASA's success with Apollo 11 mission.
Historical significance of the NASA x Omega partnership
Iconic partnership between Omega and NASA
Image features a NASA astronaut's space suit to signify the relationship that Omega and NASA shares due to the moon landing
Image focuses on the "Swiss Made" sign, celebrates Switzerland's contribution to the success of the NASA moonlanding campaigns
Important moment in Omega and NASA's shared history
Lots of preparation went into NASA's missions - similarly, lots of preparation went into Omega's watches
NASA astronaut discussing the engineering used to get to space
NASA celebrates historic event in partnership with Omega
NASA co-hosts event with Omega to celebrate iconic partnership
NASA used Omega watches on many missions
NASA's most impressive achievement immortalised in an Omega watch
Omega ambassador talks to NASA astronaut
Omega capitalises on their relationship with NASA
Omega celebrates its partnership with NASA by showcasing some of NASA's rockets
Omega has a good name with NASA
Omega has been supplying NASA for more than 50 years
Omega is the single watch contractor for supplying NASA
Omega plays an important part in NASA's history
Omega shares historic moment with NASA
Only watch approved for all NASA missions
Partnership between NASA and Omega
Sharing the inside of NASA's launching room
Showing the importance of the Speedmaster to NASA missions
Special celebrations featuring George Clooney and NASA's finest staff
Speedmaster favoured by NASA astronauts
Speedmaster met all NASA's requirements in its standard format
Speedmaster part of NASA's history
Speedmaster passed all NASA's tests
Speedmaster was the only tool NASA didn't have to modify
The most important moment in NASA and Omega's shared history
The rockets that powered NASA's rockets can be seen in the same light as the movements that powered Omega's Speedmaster
The Speedmaster was a tool that didn't need to be modified by NASA
The Speedmaster was Switzerland's best and used by NASA's best
The start of one of Omega and NASA's proudest moments
Video in black and white shows parts of NASA's control room, signifying the historic partnership between Omega and NASA over the years
New watch launch
A new Omega watch launched
Sneak preview of a new watch launching soon
Olympic Games
Celebrating Omega's position as the Olympic Games' Official Timekeeper
Ice white watch design with a tiny red blip mimics the Japanese national flag ahead of

the Tokyo Olympics
Olympic rower
Omega as official timekeeper for the Olympic games
Omega celebrates human achievement by partnering with the Olympics
Omega starts the countdown to the 2020 Olympics
Omega's part in the Olympic games
Omega's strong red colour mimiced on the seconds hand of the watch
Omega's tribute watch to the 2020 Olympics
Watch dial design inspired by the Tokyo Olympics branding
Omega exhibition
A brand story told through multiple lenses of sport, exploration, craftsmanship and heritage
A collection of iconic Omega experiences
Brand story recreated at the exhibition
Exhibit that showcases the Omega brand in Shanghai
Exhibition in Shanghai that tells the brand story
Omega museum
Explore the brand's legacy and history in their new museum
Invitation to come and visit the brand's museum
Invites customers to visit the Omega museum in Biel, Switzerland
Museum features numerous important moments, events, achievements and creations from the brand's history
Museum was created to immerse customers in the brand's history
New museum opened that celebrates Omega's history
New museum tells the Omega brand story
Omega used in space
Robust toolwatch that shaped space exploration
Toolwatch used in space
Omega watches for adventures
A pair of Seamaster watches for both ladies and gentlemen
A watch that helps wearers reach their full potential
A watch that is ideal for any adventure
Accessories used during winter holiday
As the weather changes and it becomes colder, watches with lighter dials can help lift the mood
Beautiful images of the watch worn in different locations around the world
Beautiful watch used for casual exploration
Camera, sunglasses, a watch - accessories for a holiday
Celebrating "Swiss Made" by exploring the country while wearing the watch
Embrace the opportunities life throws at you
Embrace your destiny and aim for your highest success
Explore the outdoors
Exploring Swiss cities with an Omega
Exploring the Swiss countryside with an Omega
Falling in love with Swiss landmarks while wearing a Constellation
Memories are made in pairs - a couple with Seamaster watches
New watch released in time for summer
Spending time in a Swiss valley while wearing an Omega

The perfect companion on and off shore
The perfect travel companion
The watch becomes a companion on a journey through the ambassador's home country
The watch is part of the adventure as it can be worn anywhere whilst doing anything
The watch is the perfect companion for a variety of settings
The watch supports an adventurous lifestyle
Travelling with a companion and luxury watches
Using an Omega to explore Swiss mountains
Using the watch outside during a winter holiday
Watches that are suitable for hours of fun in the ocean
Watches worn during different seasons
Wearing a Swiss made watch in the Swiss countryside. Homecoming of sorts
Wearing a watch while exploring a beautiful city like Paris
Wearing an Omega in the city of love signifies the connection between a beautiful place and a beautiful watch, and how the two can be related
Wearing an Omega watch leads to wonderful experiences
Wearing an Omega while exploring Swiss lakes
Wearing the watch on a trip through different countries
Wearing the watch while travelling the world
Omega watches last a lifetime
A good watch lasts a lifetime
By re-certifying its vintage watches, Omega reassures customers that their Omega watches will last a lifetime
Omega cares about its customers - past, present and future
Omega cares about its customers after the sale has been made
Omega is proud of its heritage and authenticates vintage watches on behalf of its clients
Omega issues Certificates of Authenticity to assist its customers with future resale
Omega keeps record of all the watches it manufactured and shares this information with customers
Statement that diamonds are forever, signifies that Omega watches are figurative diamonds, and that these watches are also adorned with diamonds
Suggests that Omega watches can last a lifetime
The brand has made incredible watches for centuries and it still supports previous owners and collectors with services, information and advice
The inspiration watch was accurate enough to be used in war - Omega make watches that last and are dependable
The re-certification of vintage Omega watches shows that the brand cares about its heritage and the watches from its history
Vintage Omega watches can be authenticated and certified in Switzerland
Wear an Omega while making memories - both will last a lifetime
Personalise the look of your watch
A colourful NATO strap adds a touch of personality to the watch
A different strap can change the look of a watch
Professional sports
A special edition Aqua Terra for golfers
A watch that can be worn when playing golf
A watch that is equally suited to use on an off the golf course

Deep sea diving
Focuses on Omega's involvement with professional sports such as golf
Omega ambassador playing in the PGA Championship
Omega partners with iconic sporting events in order to own a part of the story of human achievement
Omega supports elite sporting events
Omega watches worn at the PGA Championship
Omega's focus on professional sports such as golf helps them introduce new and valuable tools for professionals
Omega's involvement in professional sports helps it develop watches that help players perform at their best
Omega's part in supporting elite sporting events
Omega's relationship with professional sports
Seamaster Aqua Terra watch as part of the golf collection
Shows Omega's involvement in an elite and sophisticated sport: golf. Is in keeping with it's brand image
Special edition of the Seamaster Aqua Terra to celebrate Omega's involvement in golf
The perfect golf watch: comfortable, lightweight and very reliable
The perfect watch for golfers
Watch can be used for sailing
Quality of the watches
Bold image of the watch to showcase the "Swiss Made" copy as a reference to quality
Copy suggests that a lot of time goes into creating and perfecting every watch
Even the smallest touches are executed perfectly
Image signifies the pure beauty of the components Omega uses for its watches
Testament to the quality of the watches
Soul of the brand
Powered by an impressive movement, the heart of the watch
Showing the movement again, which suggests that the movement is at the heart of everything Omega does. It's the soul of the brand
Talking about the watch movement - the heart of the watch - and its workhorse capability
The engines are the heart of the rockets in the same way that the movement is the heart of the watch
The inside of the watch is equally as important as the outside
The movement is the heart of the brand
The movement is the heart of the watch
The movement is the heart of the watch, the centre of innovation for the brand
The movement signifies the brand's main focus
The watch movement is the centre of attention
The watch movement is the heart of the watch
Space travel
Celebrating Omega's part in space exploration
Iconic watch movement used in space
Omega celebrating the space race
Omega utilises every opportunity to capitalise on its history of helping astronauts with space travel
Preparing for the trip to space
Space exploration

Special edition watch to celebrate the first Omega that went to space
The pendulum and spinning cylinder in the 3D animation mimics the movement of objects in space, in reference to the watch's space travel-inspired past
Watch qualified for space missions
Special connection to the watch
A tool watch with a personal story that is worth more than money
The watch is incredibly significant to the ex soldier who cherishes it and won't sell it
The watch is more than just an accessory
The watch is so special that the wearer won't want to put it down
Video showcasing ex soldier's story with the watch
Speedmaster used on Apollo missions
Limited edition Speedmaster to celebrate the Apollo 11 mission
Limited edition watch to celebrate Apollo 11's success
Omega contributed to the success of the Apollo 11 mission
Omega immortalises their part in the Apollo 11 mission's success with a special edition watch
Precious metal version of the Speedmaster that celebrates the Apollo 11 mission
Speedmaster used for Apollo 17 mission
Speedmaster was an integral part of the Apollo missions
The launch of the Apollo 11 mission, which eventually lead to the launch of numerous new Omega watches
The Speedmaster has been used for all Apollo missions
The Speedmaster was an important part of all the Apollo missions
Technical aspects of the watch
A watch with a special complication: a world timer function
Closeup shot of the chronograph function on the watch dial
Closeup visuals of the watches
Copy references the watch's depth rating
Showcases a technical feature of the watch
The watches are desirable
"Gold rush" comment in reference to the frenzy created when gold was found historically. Signifies the desirability of gold in the watch in question.
A highly anticipated watch
Boutique-only model to celebrate the city that never sleeps
Boutique-only watch pays tribute to iconic London landmarks
Handled with gloves, signifies being valuable
Inviting the viewer to fly to NY to purchase the boutique-only model
Lapis lazuli has been a rare and special material adored by royalty. Wearing this watch will thus make the customer feel special
London boutique-only model is a tribute to the iconic city
Promotes the New York boutique exclusive Seamaster watch
Supports the narrative behind the Paris-only model by showing beautiful images of places in Paris. Adds to the appeal of the watch by linking it to a beautiful place
The association between Omega and royalty adds a touch of rarity and exclusivity to the watches
The boutique-only watch captures the beauty of London
The watch is a fitting tribute to London
Wearing a boutique-only version of a watch signifies the special nature of the city it celebrates

Wearing this special watch will make you feel as privileged as royalty
Tool watch for outdoor activities
A classic and elegant watch that can be used as a toolwatch on the ocean
A classic Omega dive watch
A classic, workhorse watch
A modern-day toolwatch
A new take on an Omega divers watch
A simple toolwatch for use during professional sports
A toolwatch for ladies that can be worn around the world
A toolwatch pictured in its natural habitat - next to the ocean
A toolwatch that can also be dressed down and used in a casual setting
A watch designed for professionals
An iconic toolwatch, updated for modern times
Comment on how the beauty of the watch does not detract from its workhorse, toolwatch nature
Copy references the fact that this is a diver's watch
Dive watch pictured on rock next to water
Elegant, yet rugged toolwatch
Iconic watch in battered condition shows that it was well used
Image styling reinforces the watch's utilitarian nature
Lady wears a dive watch next to the ocean
Omega suggests one of their toolwatches as a worthy option for a new watch purchase
Omega watches are tools for professionals
Out in nature
Regardless of where or how it is used, the Seamaster is the perfect toolwatch
Rugged, utilitarian toolwatch
Rugged, yet still beautiful. A great toolwatch for ladies for summertime fun
Showing how real-world soldiers used Omega watches as tools
Shows the watch as being a tool used during life's great adventures
Speedmaster can be an integral part of any technical mission
Speedmaster is a toolwatch that can pass any test
The watch can be worn as a toolwatch when diving, or for a day in the office
The watch is being used on a boat in the ocean, playing to its strength as a rugged toolwatch
The watch is featured on a rock, signifying its tough, toolwatch nature and its ability to transition from the ocean to the mountains
The watch is photographed against a blue background, signifying the idea that this dive watch should be immersed in the ocean
The watch is used by an ex-SAS soldier, referencing its toolwatch capabilities
The watches are tools, ready to be used at the beach in summertime
Toolwatch that can be used for diving
Watch photographed next to train track and steel chains to emphasize toolwatch capabilities
Watch seems to be immersed under water, referencing its toolwatch nature
Watch used as a tool at sea
Water sport
Tools for professionals
The precise movement helps professionals keep track of time

Watch technology that allows deep diving
Tough & beautiful watch
A tough watch that is still beautiful
Beautiful, but strong enough to withstand abuse on a boat in the ocean
Watch can withstand magnetism
A watch that can withstand tremendous amounts of magnetism
Watch can withstand the influence of magnetism
Watch design: ladies classic watch
Beautiful detail of the watch
Beautiful dress matches the watch's design
Bold and clean styling so that the watch captures all the attention
Bold colours and styling to support the beautiful design of the watch
Bold image of watch with lots of gold accents. Imposing and impressive to look at, but still refined
Both the front and back of the watch is beautiful to look at
Clean, classic-looking designs, executed well
Crisp watch design with beautiful gold hands against a white dial
Diamonds and golden stars are applied by hand
Diamonds on the watch are supported by using diamond jewellery on the model
Macro shot of diamonds, attention to the small details
Showcase beautiful design elements
Showcasing beautiful details on the watch
The colour on the background mimics the colour of the watch and its dial
The diamonds add a slightly understated touch of luxury
Watch design: ladies sport watch
Feminine watch with a toolwatch design is made beautiful through the use of gold accents
This ladies watch is still a functional toolwatch with beautiful gold accents on the dial
Toolwatch for women that is both beautiful and functional
Watch design featured in video
Watch design features fine decoration
Watch photographed against white background creates a great contrast with the dark blue strap and dial accents
Watch's waved dial is complemented perfectly by the mother-of-pearl jewellery pieces
Watch design: mens classic watch
Black and white colour scheme between the watch strap and dial, signifying the classic, classy tuxedo-like design
Closeup shot of the clean, crisp white dial and the luxurious black alligator leather strap
Copy refers to the beauty of the watch's design
Copy suggests that the watch design is simple, yet elegant and effective at telling the time
London's iconic hallmarks are shown on the back of the watch
Showcasing the beautiful storage box
Special design dial is embossed with silk
Striking image of the movement's rotor against a white background
The caseback of the watch showcases the beauty of the watch movement in the same way an intimate knowledge of Paris would showcase its beauty to a traveller
The gold accents against the blue dial creates a beautiful and appealing contrast

The gold case and blue dial work together really well
The large, open dial is crisp and clean and is perfectly contrasted by a luxurious black alligator leather strap
The watch's design is visually appealing and demands the viewer's attention
This watch features just the right amount of detail to create a sophisticated touch
Watch design: mens sport watch
A classic design updated for modern times
A clean dial design, perfect for use as a toolwatch when diving
A dive watch in a formal, tuxedo-esque colour scheme
A dive watch with retro styling
Beautiful gold accents against crisp white dial creates an elegant look
Black and white dial design is broken only by the use of Omega's red letter colour for the Seamaster name
Black and white watch design referenced in the copy
Black dial and black bezel references the watch's toolwatch focus
Black on black design signifies a toolwatch aesthetic
Black watch with gold accents gives this toolwatch a more luxurious appearance
Blue background creates the impression that the watch is immersed in the ocean. An ode to its dive watch heritage
Blue dial and bezel, picking up on the colour of the ocean
Boat-shaped indexes on dial
Bold colours and gold accents for a toolwatch
Bold orange and crisp white used for watch design
Bright and bold green dial with gold accents
Bright yellow gold case with green leather strap
Classic black and white design on watch, photographed against a simple white background
Classic watch design that still remains relevant
Closeup shot of the Speedmaster Moonwatch
Cufflinks mimic watch dial's design
Dark blue dial contrasted by the gold accents on the bezel, dial and bracelet
Deep, dark blue lapis lazuli dial featured in photograph
Diver's watch with playful colours on the watch
Focus on the iconic Seamaster seahorse design on the caseback of the watch
Focus on the watch's design and its ability to incorporate gold into a divers' toolwatch
Gold and blue creates stark contrast on this elegant toolwatch
Minute track on inside of the dial mimics a train track.
Record-breaking toolwatch still has a beautiful and simple design
Reference to the chronograph pushers in black on the side of the case
Seamaster logo featured prominently on the background
Sleek design of a tool watch
Strong, bold white accents on black dial captures attention
The bezel is photographed in such a way that small bevels and edges are visible on the side, suggesting that lots of time and attention to detail is needed to finish each component
The black and gold aesthetic creates a toolwatch that is also beautiful
The blue dial creates a striking contrast against the white background
The contrast between blue and gold is particularly bold and striking on the white background.

The deep, dark blue and grey on the watch contrasts with the muted background, focusing attention on the watch
The diamonds on the background also pulls attention towards the diamonds on the dial and bezel
The gold accents on the dial and bezel pairs well with the brown leather strap and clean lines of the steel case
The lollipop hand mimics signals used on train tracks.
The Omega logo is proudly displayed in the background design
The simple black and white colour scheme on the watch makes it very versatile
The wave motif on the ceramic dial is engraved with a laser
The white dial design helps a diver read the time under water
Toolwatch with beautiful design
Toolwatches that are also stylish
Use of brown leather and red gold creates beautiful contrast
Video focuses on watch design details
Video on white background shows closeup shots of the watch's features
Watch design focused on creating contrast between the dial and the subdials
Watch has golden accents to exemplify its significance
Watch photographed on background that mimics the dial colour
Watch photographed against a background that mimics the waves on the dial and the waves of the ocean
Watch materials: ceramic
A toolwatch made from titanium and ceramic
Ceramic used on watch bezel, signifies toolwatch qualities
Describing materials used when designing the watch, ceramic & titanium
Use of innovative materials
Watch materials: diamonds
Beautiful finishes and detail in the watch, with diamonds on the dial and bezel
Comment of how different materials work together to create something special
Diamonds on watch dial mimics islands in the ocean
Focus on the beautiful diamonds set in the watch case
Gold and diamonds on the watch gives a very sophisticated look
Precious materials applied to this watch
Small diamonds on the background mimic the diamonds used on the watch case and lugs
Watch materials: exotic
A toolwatch with a beautiful design and luxurious materials
Always using a different and interesting material in their watches
Blending precious metal and a rare mineral to create a beautiful and special watch
Bold watch design using rare materials
Connection between the material used for the watch and Marco Polo
Copy suggests that lapis lazuli has been admired for centuries. Omega's use thereof should be commended
Copy suggests that the same material used on the watch has been the choice of royalty for centuries
Marco Polo described the material used for the dial of the watch as the "finest azure in the world"
Omega showcasing their focus on innovation by using luxurious materials on their watches

Omega uses luxurious material for watch design
Precious materials help to differentiate the watch and adds a touch of luxury
Rare and special material used for watch dial
Side-angle photograph of watch featuring a rare lapis lazuli dial
Sleek and beautiful watch with an elegant red garnet dial
The choice of material signifies rarity, wealth and exclusivity
The material used for this watch dial was admired by Cleopatra
The use of rare materials on watch, combined with a unique story on why it was done, creates NT
Watch materials: gold
A focus on the luxury aspect of gold being used in the watch bracelet
A luxury watch made with precious materials to celebrate the success of the Apollo 11 mission
A precious metal version of an iconic toolwatch
A set of gold Globemaster bezels lay on a white background while a watchmaker holds one bezel in his hand using a white glove
All gold material used for the watch design
Beautiful and timeless watch design, executed in a modern colourway in 18k Sedna (red) gold
Beautiful gold watch with lots of diamonds makes for the perfect festive gift for ladies
Beautiful, gold version of the toolwatch that was worn on the moon
Bright and bold gold watch
Comment on the type of material used in the construction of the watch
Diver watch featuring a mix of materials and gold adornment to challenge the traditional notion of what a toolwatch could and should be
Gold and a precious material dial used on the watch
Gold and diamonds on the watch gives a very sophisticated look
Gold watch with an astronaut on the caseback
Luxury version of an iconic toolwatch
Mixture of gold and steel used for the watch
New watch release that features a slim case made of gold
Precious metal used to create a limited edition Speedmaster
Precious metal version of an iconic toolwatch
Sleek and beautiful watch with an elegant red garnet dial
Special gold version of the first Speedmaster that went to space
Stark contrast between gold and deep blue on watch dial and bezel
The gold decoration with the tree shape works to support the gold jewellery and the gold in the watch's bezel
The gold decorations perfectly match the gold of the watch and creates a beautiful contrast with the red background
Watch material adds to a beautiful colour that mimics a fiery glow
Watch materials: other
Combination of special materials adds up to become a very special watch
Material and watch design limits pushed to innovate and create tough tools
Rubber bracelet on the watch signifies toolwatch connection
Watch materials: titanium
A toolwatch made for professional golfers using innovative material
A toolwatch made from titanium and ceramic
Comment on the type of material used in the construction of the watch

Describing materials used when designing the watch, ceramic & titanium
Omega uses innovative material to advance the world of watch design
Omega's first-ever movement made from titanium
Use of innovative materials
Watch used by soldiers
A watch suited to a member of an elite unit
Royal navy officer
Shows that Omega watches are suited for real-life soldiers
The watch is suited for real-world use in combat situations
Watches for any gender
A lady reaching for a man's watch, suggesting that there are Omega watches for any gender
Beautiful model wearing a stylish, smaller-sized and more luxuriously appointed version of the iconic Speedmaster
Gents watch photographed next to earrings suggests that ladies can wear it as well
His and hers Speedmasters
Men-sized watch worn by a lady
Smaller size Speedmaster is perfect for women
Watchmaker
Focus on the watchmaker - brand expertise
Watch photographed on a watchmaker's bench after testing
Watchmaker applies index to dial with a small tweezer - indicates the precise nature of watchmaking
Watchmaker holds the bezel of a Seamaster 300M between his fingers, signifying its diminutive size
Watchmaker holds the dial of a Seamaster with a small tweezer in image one
Watchmaker holds the watch movement by the winding stem in image two
Watchmaker's tweezer used to hold the rotor, signifying the scale and small size of the component
(blank)
(blank)
Grand Total

ADDENDUM B

A SUMMARY OF ALL MASTER CODE GROUP COUNTS

General	Count
Posts	293
Unique Codes	1107
Code Groups	93
Themes	8

TOPIC	CODES PER GROUP
Master: Copy	295
Copy: Statement	196
Copy: Invitation	75
Copy: Announcement	15
Copy: Question	9
Master: Topic	334
Topic: Speedmaster	44
Topic: Constellation	38
Topic: Seamaster	38
Topic: Aqua Terra	24
Topic: Gifting	17
Topic: Boutique Exclusive	12
Topic: Trésor	12
Topic: History of the brand	11
Topic: Moon landing	11
Topic: 007	9
Topic: Planet Ocean	9
Topic: Kennedy Space Center	7
Topic: Calibre 321	6
Topic: Exclusive Preview (New watches being launched)	6
Topic: Swiss heritage	6
Topic: Watch components	6
Topic: Watches + 3D animation	6
Topic: Dressing up	5
Topic: NATO strap	4
Topic: 19-linge "Omega" calibre	3
Topic: Apollo 11 mission	3
Topic: Astronaut in space	3
Topic: Dressing up at Pitto Uomo	3
Topic: Ex-soldier	3
Topic: Jewellery	3
Topic: Olympic athlete	3
Topic: Omega Golf	3
Topic: Railmaster	3

Topic: Space travel	3
Topic: Special occasion - opening of exhibition in Shanghai	3
Topic: Special occasion - Paris Fashion Week	3
Topic: Special occasion - Valentine's Day	3
Topic: Tokyo 2020 olympic games	3
Topic: Vintage Omega	3
Topic: World's deepest watch	3
Topic: Apollo 11 anniversary celebration	2
Topic: De Ville	2
Topic: Rockets at the Kennedy Space Center	2
Topic: Apollo 11 launch	1
Topic: Astronauts ready for boarding a rocket	1
Topic: Calibre 8928 Ti	1
Topic: George Clooney speaks to Buzz Aldrin	1
Topic: Globemaster	1
Topic: Ploprof	1
Topic: Saturn V rocket	1
Topic: Starmus Festival	1
Topic: Timeless style example	1

Master: Featured	306
-------------------------	------------

Featured: Speedmaster	75
Featured: Seamaster	66
Featured: Constellation	38
Featured: None	37
Featured: Aqua Terra	32
Featured: Trésor	20
Featured: Planet Ocean	14
Featured: NATO strap	6
Featured: Ladymatic	4
Featured: Globemaster	3
Featured: Jewellery	3
Featured: Railmaster	3
Featured: De Ville	2
Featured: Straps	2
Featured: Ploprof	1

Master: Omega-featured	202
-------------------------------	------------

Omega feature: Space travel	52
Omega feature: Ambassadors	48
Omega feature: Incredible achievements	45
Omega feature: Astronauts	26
Omega feature: James Bond	10
Omega feature: Brand collaboration	6
Omega feature: Special exhibition	6
Omega feature: Calibre 321	3
Omega feature: Olympic athlete	3
Omega feature: Olympic games	3

Master: Part of series	298
-------------------------------	------------

Part of series: Moonwatch	20
Part of series: Gifting II	14
Part of series: Moonwatch IV	12
Part of series: OmegaMyChoice	12
Part of series: Constellation Manhattan	9
Part of series: Constellation Manhattan II	9
Part of series: Constellation Manhattan III	9
Part of series: History of Omega	9
Part of series: Moonwatch II	9
Part of series: Moonwatch III	9
Part of series: OmegaGolf II	9
Part of series: 007 II	6
Part of series: Brown & rose gold watches	6
Part of series: Exclusive Preview	6
Part of series: Moonwatch V	6
Part of series: Seamaster 300M	6
Part of series: Seamaster His & Hers	6
Part of series: Seamasters by the sea	6
Part of series: Speedmaster winter getaway	6
Part of series: Swiss made	6
Part of series: Watch components	6
Part of series: Watches + 3D animation	6
Part of series: Dressing up	5
Part of series: Constellation His & Hers	4
Part of series: 007	3
Part of series: A Collected Man	3
Part of series: A Collected Man II	3
Part of series: AquaTerra on a boat	3
Part of series: Calibre 321	3
Part of series: Calibre 321 II	3
Part of series: Ceramic & titanium Seamaster	3
Part of series: Change of season	3
Part of series: Constellation Citizen K	3
Part of series: Constellation Manhattan IV	3
Part of series: De Ville Trésor	3
Part of series: De Ville Trésor II	3
Part of series: Gifting	3
Part of series: Jewellery	3
Part of series: Olympics	3
Part of series: Omega Museum	3
Part of series: OmegaGolf	3
Part of series: OmegaMyChoice II	3
Part of series: OmegaMyChoice III	3
Part of series: Paris Fashion Week	3
Part of series: PittiUomo	3
Part of series: Railmaster	3
Part of series: Seamaster 300	3
Part of series: Seamaster 1948	3
Part of series: Seamaster Diver	3
Part of series: Seamaster Lapis Lazuli	3

Part of series: Seamaster Malachite	3
Part of series: Shanghai exhibition	3
Part of series: Speedmaster	3
Part of series: Valetine's day	3
Part of series: Vintage Omega	3
Part of series: World's deepest watch	3
Part of series: Speedmaster Moonphase	2
Part of series: Speedy Tuesday	2
Part of series: Standalone post	2

Master: Reason for post	335
--------------------------------	------------

Reason for post: Tell a story	111
Reason for post: Showcase product features	98
Reason for post: Share general content	78
Reason for post: Launch a product	48

Master: Content	293
------------------------	------------

Content: Image	142
Content: Image carousel	77
Content: Video	58
Content: Image & video carousel	14
Content: Video Carousel	2