



## Brand Strategy and Ideas for Rolex

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### Background and overview of the Swiss wristwatch industry

The following observations are based on statistics provided by the [website](#) of the Federation of the Swiss Watch Industry:

- One of Switzerland's legendary industries that leads the world, with a total export value of CHF 24.9 billion
- The industry saw a decline of 16.9 % in volume terms between 2017 and 2022, with the steepest fall coming in 2019-2020 and is still not back to pre-pandemic levels according to the federation of Swiss wristwatch manufacturers
- January-May 2023 growth of 14.6% in volume and 11.6% by value does seem encouraging
- The Swiss wristwatch industry comprises mechanical as well as quartz movements
- Swiss quartz (electronic) wristwatches large and significant in volume (17.06 million in 2017) declined to 9.7 million in 2022, with the sharpest fall coming again in 2019-2020, and so did Swiss quartz movements, but by a smaller amount
- The distinguishing feature of Swiss wristwatches is their performance across price segments. While those in the lower price bands of below CHF 200 and CHF 200-500 have seen fall in volumes and value between 2000 and 2022, Swiss wristwatches in the CHF 500-3000 and above CHF 3000 grew both in volume and value.
- This seems to indicate a stronger preference for Swiss wristwatches in the premium and luxury segments
- Markets by region indicate that the US followed by China and Hong Kong are the Swiss wristwatch industry's largest export markets
- There also seems to be a high correlation between Swiss wristwatch sales and international travel, even though these are now available around the world
- Among the brands in the Swiss wristwatch industry, Rolex is the clear market leader in retail sales with 29.2% market share, followed by Omega and Cartier at 7.7% and 7% respectively in 2022, according to [Statista](#).

Rolex, as the market leader ought to assume leadership of the industry and build its brand as well as that of the entire Swiss wristwatch industry by continuing to innovate and lead the industry forward.

This brand strategy and ideas document shares a strategy for how to build the Rolex brand in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, at the product, corporate and industry levels, as well as brand communication ideas that will take the company there.

### **Challenges facing the Swiss wristwatch industry**

There are three distinct challenges facing the Swiss wristwatch industry and its leader, Rolex:

- i) Increasing sales of wristwatches to at least pre-pandemic levels both in volume and by value, and growing them beyond those levels
- ii) The second challenge is more to do with changing customer preferences and technology disruption:
  - a) People depending less on wristwatches for time-telling and more on their mobiles
  - b) People shifting to smartwatches and other wearables, enabled by digital technology
- iii) Protecting and defending the industry's share in quartz wristwatches and movements, in the face of intense competition from Japanese wristwatch brands, even if Swiss mechanical watches and movements are more profitable.

### **How can Rolex address these challenges and keep building its brand and the Swiss wristwatch industry**

- By innovating with technology, design and new ranges of wristwatches, Rolex can continue to provide industry leadership
- It is not clear to me from Rolex's website whether Rolex makes any quartz watches or movements at all, but it can help its industry peers innovate and regain lost volume share in quartz watches through cutting edge innovations and more competitive pricing strategies
- The reason for the sharp fall in Swiss quartz wristwatches needs to be ascertained and depending on the reason, a corrective course of action needs to be devised
- The second challenge of customer's changing preferences and technology disruption can best be addressed through:
  - a) Making Swiss wristwatches the epitome of the latest in wrist watch design and functionality, including by adding new features
  - b) Making the wearing of a Swiss wristwatch, especially a Rolex, an indispensable part of a luxury consumer's attire

In other words, make wristwatch technology and elegant design an intrinsic part of Rolex as well as the Swiss wristwatch industry.

To meet the quartz wristwatch challenge – which is the larger segment of wristwatches in the world and which the Swiss watch industry must defend and protect, having been outcompeted in this new segment by the Japanese watch industry in the 1980s – the Swiss wristwatch industry must set up a research and innovation centre that all Swiss watch manufacturers contribute to, and benefit from, with Rolex perhaps leading this initiative.

### **Brand objective and communication objective for Rolex**

Since the Swiss wristwatch industry is faced with challenges quite similar to the one for fine writing instruments - where technology has provided customers with more modern and better alternatives - part of Rolex's brand, product and corporate objective will have to focus on increasing the salience of wristwatches in general, and give them more meaning in people's lives.

Second, it has to maintain leadership in the luxury wristwatch segment and improve the quartz watch performance in the entire industry.

### **Target audience**

Because Rolex is a luxury Swiss wristwatch brand, the target audience is a luxury consumer first, at a broad level. More specifically, the Rolex target audience would be a successful, well-travelled individual who appreciates the finer things in life.

He or she is a luxury consumer who still sets great store by classical elegance, even in the modern, tech-driven age. Wearing a wristwatch is still considered essential by such a person, both to tell the time and for other functions, as well as an accessory. This audience is easier to convert into a Rolex customer.

There is also another group of people who are luxury consumers, but have stopped using wristwatches for time-telling, or have switched to smart digital watches, because of the additional functionality they offer. This second group of people would be harder to convince, but Rolex ought to try and win them over.

### **Competition**

Competition for Rolex too would be of two main kinds:

- a) Other Swiss luxury wristwatch brands such as Omega, Patek Philippe, Audemars Piguet, Breitling and others
- b) Quartz watch brands, both from Japan and Switzerland as well as smartwatches such as Apple Watch and many others

### **Brand strategy for Rolex**

The easiest strategy for Rolex to adopt would be to raise the luxury and fashion quotient of its brand, in an industry that is fighting for relevance and share. However, that would be an inappropriate strategy for Rolex because the Rolex brand has always stood for product excellence, combined with elegant design. The product features, technology and craftsmanship all go to make a Rolex wristwatch what it is.

Unfortunately, as happens with so many luxury brands, the luxury aspect overtakes everything else, reducing the brand to a mere status symbol over time. Rolex reached this position decades ago.

For Rolex to adopt a leadership stance in the industry once again, it needs to rediscover for itself what makes it a great product and brand. Rolex needs to bring the focus back to product excellence, its accuracy, craftsmanship, innovation, and of course, luxury.

And it needs to share this with the world in a refreshing, new way. The world needs to understand once again that people – including celebrities – wear a Rolex because it is a fine product, unmatched in its quality, and not the other way around. Rolex is not great, because celebrities wear it.

Another, equally important part of Rolex's brand strategy will have to focus on playing a leadership role in the Swiss wristwatch industry. Whether it is helping watch manufacturers innovate better in quartz technology, devising more competitive pricing strategies, showcasing their finest innovations each year, and any other such initiatives, Rolex ought to lead the way.

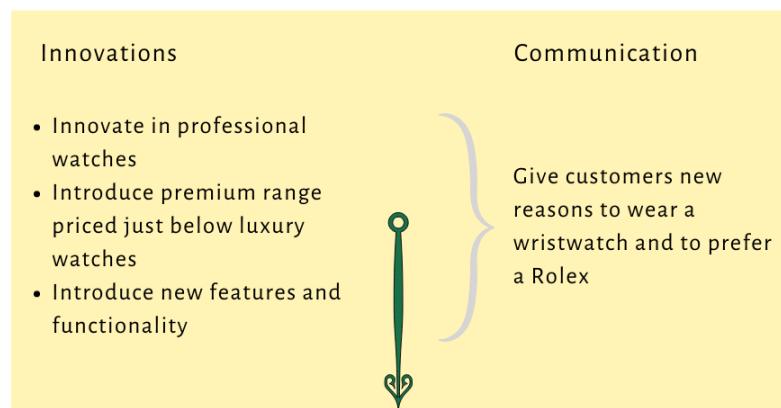
In terms of brand strategy then, Rolex will have to maintain relevance and grow the market, as well as fight for greater market share. This two-pronged brand strategy will help Rolex keep its focus on strengthening its own position in the industry as well as grow the market for itself and the entire industry, especially when wristwatches are being challenged by digital technology.

## Rolex Brand Strategy

Maintain relevance and grow market		Increase market share
Innovate quartz with industry		Innovate in luxury and stay ahead of competition
 Focus on professional watches, giving customers new reasons to wear wristwatches		
Introduce premium priced professional watches below luxury range		Focus on product superiority and Rolex excellence

## Brand Strategy Imperatives for Rolex

### Product level



### Corporate level



### Industry level



## **Brand communication strategy for Rolex**

The brand communication objective for Rolex is to position itself in the minds of customers as the undisputed leader in the Swiss wristwatch industry.

The strategy for Rolex to follow in its brand communication to achieve such an objective would be three-fold:

- 1) Focus on Rolex's product superiority and excellence
- 2) Make Rolex an integral part of Switzerland's heritage
- 3) Make the wearing of a Rolex wristwatch an occasion to treasure

And more importantly, do all this by raising the importance of time itself and connecting it with Switzerland

## **Brand positioning for Rolex**

The ultimate reward of time that successful people owe to themselves and their loved ones.

In this regard I must mention that Rolex used to have an advertising strapline which so aptly summed up the Rolex brand, but seems to have been dropped in the past few years.

“A crown for every achievement” is perfect for Rolex and it needs to be revived.

## **Brand promise**

Only Rolex of Switzerland offers you the luxury of time with unerring accuracy for a lifetime and beyond.

## **Tone and manner**

- Someone who fully understands the importance of time and respects it
- Elegant, cultured, mature and well-travelled

## **Creative Idea for Rolex brand communication**

As I mentioned earlier, the communication strategy must connect Rolex with its country of origin, Switzerland, and establish Rolex's leadership in the industry. The creative idea connects Rolex and Switzerland in a way that together, they offer some fine meditations on time.

This is executed differently in TV adverts and in magazine/print media.

In a set of three TV adverts, we make Geneva and its lake the core creative idea, around which the storylines develop. After all, this is where the heart of

Rolex's watchmaking expertise is located, and it allows us to tell of Rolex's watchmaking traditions and innovations in engaging and even magical ways.

### **TV advert #1 (Time and Jupiter Symphony)**

Film opens on a fine late afternoon in Geneva city. It is spring, and in the mellow afternoon sunshine we see two gentlemen strolling up a winding path.

They are walking rather purposefully, though. One of them is much older, while the younger gent looks like his protégé or apprentice. The older gent who comes across as a sort of mentor, is doing most of the talking, while the younger chap listens intently and interjects once in a while.

**Older man: One day, you'll realise that time is a great arrangement, a grand scheme.**

**(Looks upwards and around): Like the seasons... the cosmos.**

**Younger man: You mean the certainty of it?**

**Older man (smiles at his friend): Yes, but only when it's designed so.**

The younger chap looks as if he understands, but only partially.

By now, we see the two men are walking towards the Rolex factory. And we catch glimpses of Lake Geneva every now and then.

We hear church bells peal in the distance.

**Older man (looking at the young chap with a gleam in his eye): Mozart's Jupiter Symphony wouldn't be the Jupiter Symphony, if the notes were arranged differently.**

The young fellow nods in agreement and they are now inside the Rolex factory. They take their places at their workstations, taking off their coats and settling down to work.

**Older man (with a smile): It will take you a long time to appreciate all this.**

We dissolve to several dials of Rolex timepieces circling in and out of frame, as they pass us, each dissolving into the next, as if representing the continuum of time.

**Super appears on screen: Enough to last a lifetime and longer.**

**Sign-off: Rolex**

**A crown for every achievement**

### **TV advert #2 (Time Lost to the Heavens)**

Film opens with a montage of people engaged in various outdoor adventure activities. From mountaineering and exploration, to flying, diving and sailing, we see man attempting to control the forces of nature, even as he is in harmony with it.

This visual treat gives us a great opportunity to showcase Rolex's range of professional watches. But through the ice and snow, the depths of the ocean contrasted with high-altitude flying and more, what we attempt to create is a great, vast stillness. As if time itself stands still. We do this by juxtaposing high adrenalin activities with slow motion, to create an enhanced sense of almost meditative stillness.

**MVO: It makes us proud that people rely on the unerring accuracy of a Rolex, when it most counts.**

We are now flying and gliding smoothly over the Swiss Alps, between snowcapped peaks and low-slung clouds. The feeling is ethereal, with the sun bursting through the clouds.

Slowly, we see the city of Geneva make its appearance below us.

**MVO continues: But what if we told you that even a Rolex loses 1/1000<sup>th</sup> of a second every five years?**

Dissolve to the tight close up of the inside of a Rolex wristwatch. Hand flips the dial over to reveal the face of the Rolex Sky-Dweller watch.

**MVO: It's what we call "Temps perdu ver les cieux"**

**Super: Time lost to the heavens**

**Sign-off: Rolex**

**A crown for every achievement**

### **TV advert #3 (Timeless innovations)**

Film opens on a car driving down the Swiss mountains. It's late afternoon in winter and the entire scene is enveloped in a kind of eerie partial darkness. Except for the snow on the trees that seem to emit light.

Inside the car, who do we see but Rolex's brand ambassador, Roger Federer, in conversation with the Company's CEO who is at the wheel driving somewhere.

**Rolex CEO: Roger, you and Rolex go together so well, don't you?**

**Roger Federer (mischievously, with a grin): Yes, I always wear mine, if that's what you mean.**

**Rolex CEO (surprised, laughs): Well, I also meant the spirit of innovation, which we share in common. You invented the serve and volley game, right?**

**Roger Federer (who seems to be in his element today): Yes, it has served me well.**

**Rolex CEO: And we invented the perpetual rotor...**

**Roger Federer (as if on cue, rattles off the others): The Oyster perpetual, date-just...**

**(They laugh)**

We intercut the conversation with shots of Lake Geneva, as evening falls over the city.

Now, we actually reach the shores of the lake. Twinkling fairy lights and the city lights all around add a touch of warmth on a winter evening.

Suddenly spotlights come on, and we discover that the vast surface of Lake Geneva has been turned magically into an ice-ballet floor. Giant clock hands reach across the lake, as a couple perform the most graceful ice ballet on a frozen lake in winter.

A large, and select audience is gathered on this beautiful evening. And we see Roger Federer and the Rolex CEO watching the ballet.

Dissolve to circling Rolex watch dials, that almost seem to match the pirouetting movements of the ballet in progress.

**Super: Innovation and elegance that are timeless**

**Sign-off: Rolex**

**A crown for every achievement**

**Rolex print campaign**

It is important that Rolex also communicates with its customers – both existing and prospective – through the print medium, especially select newsmagazines such as The Economist, The New Yorker, Esquire and Vanity Fair. Advertising in magazines and in select newspapers allows us to engage with customers better and share more information with them about Rolex.

We communicate the same creative idea of linking Rolex with Switzerland and with Geneva in the print campaign, but in a much wider sense that goes beyond watchmaking. And we do this by exploring the many dimensions of time, and what they mean to Rolex.

#### **Print advert #1**

**Headline: How the world measures time is best understood in the rarefied atmosphere of the Swiss Alps.**

#### **Body Copy:**

Here in the midst of mountains as old as time itself, you realise that time is made in the heavens. For nowhere else in the world does one feel in closer proximity to the skies, as in Switzerland. This landlocked country holds us in, its tall and craggy mountains protecting us from the vagaries of history and destiny, sweeping across the rest of the world.

In many ways, you could say that time stands still here. And yet, no country has seen as many new inventions and innovations in the art and science of recording time as has Switzerland. At Rolex, Geneva, it allows us to contemplate time in all its many dimensions, both in form and function.

As inventors of the world's first perpetual rotor for a wristwatch, we proved that the Rolex self-winding mechanical movement is in constant harmony with wearers and their movements. In creating the first Oyster wristwatch case, we ensured that the Rolex watch enjoyed ultimate protection against the elements. And in inventing the Date-just, we allowed Rolex customers to keep track of days and dates, without ever having to remember to reset them.

These are just a few of the ways in which Rolex anticipates and keeps step with customers' busy lifestyle requirements. Striving for perfection in every wristwatch we carefully design and create, we are happy to have graced the wrists of millions around the world. High achievers and perfectionists themselves, who stop at nothing to attain their goals.

It is for people like them and their pursuit of excellence that we continue to create exquisite timepieces. Each an exemplar, that the world sets its time by.

**Sign-off: Rolex**

**A crown for every achievement**

**Print advert #2:**

**Headline: Experiments with Calvinism, the Social Contract and modern education took their time in this land.**

**Body Copy:**

Switzerland, it appears was never far away from new ideas being born. People who wanted to experiment with new thoughts and ideas somehow always found their way through the craggy mountains of the Alps. Think of Calvin, the French protestant reformer who gave shape to his highly austere and regimented form of Protestant Christianity in Switzerland. Or our very own Jean Jacques Rousseau who thought of the Social Contract as a means by which society could engage with their governments. Or his idea of modern education for children.

It appears that they needed the quiet space and time that Switzerland affords. Time to contemplate, to imagine, and to think anew. Just as we contemplate time in all its many dimensions, both in form and function, at Rolex, Geneva.

As inventors of the world's first perpetual rotor for a wristwatch, we know that the Rolex self-winding mechanical movement is in syncopation with wearers and their movements. In creating the first Oyster wristwatch case, we ensured that the Rolex watch enjoyed ultimate protection against the elements. And in inventing the Date-just, we helped Rolex customers keep track of days and dates, without ever having to remember to reset them.

These are just a few of the ways in which Rolex anticipates and keeps step with customers' busy lifestyle requirements. Striving for perfection in every wristwatch we carefully design and create, we are happy to have graced the wrists of millions around the world. High achievers and perfectionists themselves, who stop at nothing to attain their goals.

It is for inventive people who break new boundaries in their endeavours that we are inspired to create our Rolex timepieces. Designed to last a lifetime and beyond.

**Sign-off: Rolex**

**A crown for every achievement**

**Print advert #3:**

**Headline: From Thomas Mann's Magic Mountain to Nietzsche, the world has sought solace and good health here.**

**Body Copy:**

There is something about the air in Switzerland that is believed to cure the ailing and heal the weak. For centuries, people have sought its salubrious surroundings, seeking to recuperate in its magnificent mountains and valleys. Thomas Mann wrote his magnificent Magic Mountain set in Switzerland. And many, from Nietzsche to Wagner, lived here to find inner peace.

They were seeking time away; they were also in search of time. Hardly surprising, you'd think, since Switzerland has mastered the art and science of telling time like no country has. At Rolex, Geneva, we continue to contemplate time in all its many dimensions, both in form and function.

As inventors of the world's first perpetual rotor for a wristwatch, we proved that the Rolex self-winding mechanical movement is in constant harmony with wearers and their movements. In creating the first Oyster wristwatch case, we ensured that the Rolex watch enjoyed ultimate protection against the elements. And in inventing the Date-just, we allowed Rolex customers to keep track of days and dates, without ever having to remember to reset them.

These are just a few of the ways in which Rolex anticipates and keeps step with customers' busy lifestyle requirements. Striving for perfection in every wristwatch we carefully design and create, we are happy to have graced the wrists of millions around the world. High achievers and perfectionists themselves, who stop at nothing to attain their goals.

It is for people like them and their respect for time that we continue to create exquisite timepieces. A worthy measure of the greatness of some lives.

**Sign-off: Rolex**

**A crown for every achievement**

**Print advert #4:**

**Headline: The world united here with the League of Nations and will hopefully stand the test of time.**

**Body Copy:**

When the Great War ended, and kingdoms and empires were all tumbling about, it is to Switzerland that newly born nations headed after the Paris Conference in 1920. This tiny landlocked country was the setting for the world's greatest powers to unite and form the League of Nations. Standing in Geneva even today, is the United Nations headquarters, keeper of world peace.

It would be quite natural to say then, that it is in time that we find peace. Why else would Switzerland boast so many new inventions and innovations in the art and science of recording time. We keep time and peace for the world, while proudly staying a neutral power. Just as we contemplate the many dimensions of time, both in form and function at Rolex Geneva.

As inventors of the world's first perpetual rotor for a wristwatch, we proved that the Rolex self-winding mechanical movement is in constant harmony with wearers and their movements. In creating the first Oyster wristwatch case, we ensured that the Rolex watch enjoyed ultimate protection against the elements. And in inventing the Date-just, we allowed Rolex customers to keep track of days and dates, without ever having to remember to reset them.

Then there are the jewels, the gears and the balancing wheel, all seeking a perfect balance. Striving for perfection in every wristwatch we carefully design and create, we are happy to have graced the wrists of millions around the world. High achievers and perfectionists, who stop at nothing to attain their goals.

It is for people who value their peace and their time, that we continue to create exquisite timepieces. Each a testimony to their quest for excellence.

### **Sign-off: Rolex**

### **A crown for every achievement**

#### **Print advert #5:**

**Headline: The universe expands, time bends, and we just help you manage it all a little better.**

#### **Body Copy:**

Nowhere on earth is this most experienced and felt as it is in the mountains of the Swiss Alps. Here, you feel the closest to the skies and the entire cosmos as it swirls around, creating days, weeks, months and years for us. And the way Switzerland dominates the time-telling industry, you must think that we have

great secrets to understanding time hidden away in every fold of the mountains in this land.

It is true, no country has more new inventions and innovations in the art and science of recording time than Switzerland. And at Rolex, Geneva, we have not merely contemplated it, but perfected the art of telling it as well. However, not even a Rolex wristwatch can help losing 1/1000<sup>th</sup> of a second every five years or so thanks to the imperceptibly slow expansion of the universe. So, we invented a new term for it: *temps perdu ver les cieux*. Time lost to the heavens, in plain English. Consider it Swiss watchmakers' gift to the heavens.

As inventors of the world's first perpetual rotor for a wristwatch, we proved that the Rolex self-winding mechanical movement is in constant harmony with wearers and their movements. In creating the first Oyster wristwatch case, we ensured that the Rolex watch enjoyed ultimate protection against the elements. And in inventing the Date-just, we allowed Rolex customers to keep track of days and dates, without ever having to remember to reset them.

These are just a few of the ways in which Rolex anticipates and helps customers manage their time better. Striving for perfection in every wristwatch we carefully design and create, we are happy to have graced the wrists of millions around the world. High achievers and perfectionists themselves, who stop at nothing to attain their goals.

It is for people like them and their pursuit of excellence that we continue to create exquisite timepieces. Each an exemplar, as precious as time.

### **Sign-off: Rolex**

#### **A crown for every achievement**

#### **Advertising for Rolex's sponsorship events**

Rolex as a leading Swiss wristwatch maker sponsors several prestigious events, and also keeps time at many of these, especially the sports events. These associations are good for the Rolex brand, as they connote the right brand image as well as allow Rolex to be seen at the right events.

The sports sponsorships that Rolex is associated with are:

- Grand Slam Tennis Tournaments, especially Wimbledon
- Golfing Championships including the Augusta Masters and the British Open
- Sailing Championships

- Formula 1 racing
- Daytona Nascar in the US
- Equestrian events, including the Ascot

Besides these, Rolex also sponsors concerts by the Vienna Philharmonic, one of Europe's most prestigious classical music orchestras.

While these are all very appropriate and well-suited to the Rolex brand, I noticed many years ago that the communication for these events were not exactly advertising, and weren't communicating the right messages. I have also seen short 2-3 minute "fillers" as I call them, based on these events, aired on international news channels, especially CNN. Many a time, these seem to fill in for advertising, but they are not advertising.

I then happened to read somewhere that Rolex works with IMG (International Marketing Group), a leading international event and talent management and PR company. I presume that IMG is also creating brand communication for Rolex and releasing it in media.

I would urge Rolex to not confuse advertising with PR, or event management. These are separate communication disciplines and each is meant to deliver different results. So, while IMG might still continue to handle the event sponsorship and management for Rolex, the brand communication for these events ought to come from a full-fledged advertising agency, that also works on the main brand communication.

I think that in terms of global appeal, fit with Rolex, and priority, Rolex should focus on tennis, golf and music by the Vienna Philharmonic, in the sense of creating advertisements for these. I have some ideas for each of these, which I'd like to share next.

There are three TV adverts, one for each of these event-brand associations. I must at the outset state that these are not meant to be celebrity endorsements of the brand, even if they feature celebrities. These adverts are more about Rolex's association with each of these sporting and music activities, through the aspect of time.

The advantage is that these TV adverts can be aired for a few years, without having to go into fresh productions every year, as they are not specific to any particular year's event, but are more about Rolex's association with these world-class events as an icon of excellence. In the print medium, Rolex can advertise its association with specific year's tournaments and concerts if there is such a need, or if it wishes to communicate something specific tied to that year's event.

**TV advert on tennis (Centre Court):**

Film opens on a clear blue sky. Camera pulls back and tilts down to reveal that we were actually looking at the sky through the open roof of Wimbledon's Centre Court.

We then see Roger Federer playing his Wimbledon singles final against various opponents. These are clips from several matches that he has played at Wimbledon Centre Court over the years.

We see him serving aces, hitting cross-court winners, running to the net and either smashing a shot, or delivering a delicate drop shot. And we continue to hear spectators applauding in the background.

**MVO: Many have trod this hallowed ground of tennis**

**Few leave their imprint on the game.**

**There will be still more**

**Not merely wanting to win**

**But to fashion the game after them.**

**For them, Rolex will be here every beating second and minute.**

Suddenly, the sounds fade away and we see Roger Federer sitting all by himself in an empty Centre Court. We then realise that he was reflecting on all his previous matches and his glorious tennis career at Wimbledon.

The background music is light orchestral, to allow for the male voice over and the spectators' applause to be heard.

We then use the same open roof at Wimbledon's Centre Court, but this time viewing it aerially, zooming out until it dissolves into a dial of the Rolex Oyster Perpetual.

End on the Centre Court at Wimbledon. Rolex logo appears with the strapline.

**Rolex (logo)**

**A crown for every achievement**

**TV advert on golf (The Green Jacket):**

Film opens on the beautiful golf course in Atlanta, venue of the renowned Augusta Masters.

Using drone footage, we swoop down on the fairway and fly low over it until we reach the main hotel where the golfers are staying.

We are just in time, catching golfers as they arrive in their cars, on the eve of the tournament. There's Jordan Spieth, Jason Day, Adam Scott, Phil Mickelson, all milling around the hotel lobby and reception as they check in.

A nice sprinkling of the old and the new champions of golf. What's more, they all greet each other heartily and in friendly banter.

**MVO: On the green, where the old familiars**

**Meet the new challengers...**

As some of them exit the elevator on their floor, they are greeted by a golf ball hurtling down the carpet at high speed towards them.

**MVO: ...There's always a surprise waiting round the corner.**

They hop aside to avoid it, look up and see no one. Jordan Spieth asks Phil Mickelson who that could possibly be.

**Phil smiles: One and only Rory!**

As they walk towards their hotel rooms, there's another golf ball that comes bouncing down a carpeted stairway.

**Jason Day: And that?**

**Adam Scott: Tiger!**

They laugh and take leave of each other, as they retire to their rooms.

**MVO: But through all the rounds, some manage to**

**Stay masters of the fairway.**

We then catch them in the evening, sharing a drink at the bar.

Phil Mickelson appears in his Augusta Masters' green jacket, which draws admiration and leg-pulling in equal measure.

**Scott to Phil: Is this 2004, 6 or 10?**

Phil simply smiles, while the others give him a friendly pat on the back. We catch a glimpse of his Rolex Oyster Perpetual wristwatch.

**In their never-ending quest for excellence**

**Rolex is here, year after year.**

We end on the Augusta Masters' fairway, while the tournament is in progress. The Rolex logo appears on screen along with the strapline.

**Rolex (logo)**

**A crown for every achievement**

**TV advert on music (The Vienna Philharmonic)**

Film opens on a late summer evening in Vienna. There is still plenty of light outside, as we catch the golden disc of the sun about to slip behind the city skyline and the horizon.

Magically, another disc of light appears on the lawns of the Schonbrunn Palace where the Vienna Philharmonic orchestra is gathered to perform their annual summer feast of music.

They start to play Mozart's Jupiter Symphony. We catch close ups of some of the orchestra's violinists and the conductor, as also hover over the audience gathered in the lawns listening intently.

**MVO: Whether it is the Summer Concert at the Schonbrunn Palace,**

**When the city of Vienna flocks to celebrate its renowned orchestra**

It is the roving disc of light that leads us. Brighter and sharper than all the other stage and palace lights already giving the place a festive look, it shows us glimpses of musicians and listeners both enthralled by the music.

**MVO: Or the New Year Concert that rings in the new year**

**For the entire world**

Suddenly, the disc of light disappears behind the palace, and the entire scene transforms to winter. We are now at the Musikverein in Vienna, home of the Vienna Philharmonic.

The disc of light reappears, along with festive Christmas lights and decorations on the streets outside. It guides us into the main concert hall for the New Year Concert, bedecked with flowers for the occasion.

**MVO: It is a celebration of the finest music traditions that knows no seasons...**

The roving light once again shows us musicians and listeners immersed in the music. Before finally honing in on the conductor as he ends his piece with a flourish of his baton and a bow.

**MVO: ...It is perpetual. And Rolex is here to keep time to it.**

The glowing disc dissolves into the dial of a Rolex Oyster Perpetual wristwatch.

Film ends on the Vienna Philharmonic orchestra with the Rolex logo appearing on screen along with the strapline.

**Rolex**

**A crown for every achievement**

**Direct Response and PR ideas for Rolex**

In addition to advertising, Rolex ought to also make use of other communication disciplines such as direct marketing and public relations, in a focused manner.

A luxury brand such as Rolex would have a database of all its esteemed customers and the company ought to communicate with them one-to-one. Direct response is ideal for turning this database into a customer loyalty programme, through which Rolex builds and strengthens its relationship with its existing customers.

It ought to create a direct marketing programme that allows the company to share important information with customers in order to make them feel part of a select and exclusive group of people around the world. Through this customer loyalty programme, Rolex can keep its customers informed about:

- Important new corporate developments at Rolex
- Expansion plans of its retail network, including duty-free stores
- New product launches
- New services related to its products, or changes therein.

These customers also ought to be invited to all the exclusive and special events that Rolex organizes, such as watch fairs, duty-free shopping festivals, classical music concerts, new launches with celebrities, etc.

A customer loyalty programme can also be very useful in building the gifting part of Rolex's business, including corporate gifting.

Rolex ought to also deploy PR in order to share news of its new corporate developments with the wider world, its new product innovations and launches, etc. It ought to also partner with organisations that help it leverage its Swiss origins, such as the United Nations, the World Economic Forum as well as a leading business school such as IMD, Lausanne, through important events and initiatives. I would recommend that Rolex explore associations of this kind with the above-mentioned organisations, to see how it can partner certain kinds of studies, or conferences.

Rolex can also use social media, especially Twitter and Instagram as public relations media channels and ought to avoid advertising on social media. I notice that Rolex is already doing some of this news-sharing kind of communication on Twitter and they must continue with it.

PR can also help shed light on Rolex's social initiatives and how it is helping to make the world a better place. I am sharing my thoughts on what types of social causes, Rolex ought to champion and invest in, on a long-term basis, which you can read below.

### **Rolex and social causes**

I notice that Rolex has been associating itself with concern and action on the environment front, and I agree entirely with this direction for the company and the corporate brand, as a social purpose.

However, from what I have seen as communication from Rolex, again on CNN, which is an advert called Rolex Call of the Earth (with a fingerprint icon), it is not very clear what Rolex wishes to communicate nor what Rolex itself is doing to protect the environment.

I have also visited the Rolex website to read more about the company's planet initiatives, and I don't find much specific information there either. I saw a link directing me to a [Rolex.org](http://Rolex.org) site, which I didn't follow, but I don't think the company is approaching any of this the right way. And I hope it's not because IMG or some other PR agency is advising Rolex.

There is also another serious lacuna in Rolex's website, which is the absence of corporate information, especially the company's annual reports. Because, if Rolex is following ESG standards and is accounting for it as well, something like the planet initiatives would feature under it.

My advice to Rolex on its social purpose investments would be to concentrate on a few areas of endeavour and do them well. To that extent, I would recommend:

- The environment
- Classical music

And I would advise that Rolex does not brand them as Perpetual Initiatives, as this reduces the significance of the Perpetual Rotor innovation in Rolex's watchmaking. Rather, the branding ought to convey Rolex's leadership and an aspect of time, perhaps.

Within the environment, I would suggest that Rolex concentrate on the highest priority areas linked to climate change, around the world, for Rolex's contribution to be effective: ecological hotspots that need urgent attention and action. I suggest:

- Sustainable forestry, given how much timber Switzerland and other European countries use, as well as fighting illegal logging in faraway places such as in the Indonesian and Amazon rainforests
- Forestry and irrigation in drought-prone African countries
- Marine hotspots that are threatened by plastic waste, overfishing and shipping lanes

I wonder if it is possible for Rolex to design a wristwatch – perhaps a variant of the Rolex Skydweller – that has a climate change watch built into it. An additional device that tells customers how much closer the world is, to breaching the 2° Celsius increase over pre-industrial times, as specified by the UN Climate Change panel.

In music, Rolex ought to team up with The Vienna Philharmonic with whom the company already has a long association, and take it to the next level. I would recommend

- A Rolex Music Scholarship for young musicians to study in Vienna at the conservatory associated with the Orchestra, if there is one
- A Rolex Music Artist of the Year Award again in association with The Vienna Philharmonic.

These social purpose investments by Rolex ought to be accounted for under ESG, or even outside it, in the company's annual reports, along with the positive effects these have had in the relevant areas. They should also be subjects that can be covered in media through PR.

## **Conclusion**

Rolex enjoys a position of leadership in the Swiss wristwatch and global wristwatch industries. In the coming decade, it needs to leverage this position of leadership to be able to protect and grow its market in the wake of new challenges and headwinds in the industry.

It needs to focus much more on Switzerland, its place of origin to strengthen its leadership and on innovations, both in mechanical self-winding watches as well as quartz. What's more, it needs to innovate in bringing newer features such as those customers seek today from smartwatches and wearables, into its range of elegant timepieces.

In building its brand beyond making watches, Rolex needs to focus much more sharply on the environment and classical music, and report its investments as well as the effect they are having in these areas of endeavour.

Time is of the essence, and Rolex must lead the way.