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BaselWorld: watchmaking industry trends decrypted by the WorldWatchReport

Geneva (ots) -

For the seventh consecutive year on the occasion of BaselWorld, digital luxury company IC-Agency unveils the results of the WorldWatchReport, an exclusive market research study that deciphers the demand related to 25 luxury watch brands (1) expressed by consumers located in 10 key markets (2).

Based on the analysis of hundreds of millions of searches (3) as well as the official brands' presence on Facebook and Youtube, this year's main findings are:

- The dominance of BRIC markets

Nearly 1 out of 3 searches for luxury watch brands is performed in the BRIC markets, with China (20%) becoming the second largest market for luxury watchmaking brands behind the USA (32%).

- The increasing importance of Social Media

1.5 million watch aficionados are now connected to luxury brands on Facebook, a stunning +450% increase compared to last year, with Bulgari and TAG Heuer leading the pack in terms of brand engagement. Rolex and Patek Philippe are the only brands without an official presence on the 600-million-members social network.

Hublot, Rolex, Breitling and Omega are the most popular brands on Youtube, which is becoming the #1 source for online watch reviews. User generated content captures 44% of the most viewed videos related to watchmaking brands.

- A globalized industry with strong local disparities in terms of clientele's preferences

- Brands' popularity: Compared to last year, Rolex has reinforced its share of voice in Europe and in the United States but, in the race for China, the crown brand is lagging behind Longines (19.3%), Omega (16.3%), Rado (11.7%) and Cartier (10.1%). Brands from the Swatch Group, especially Rado and Longines, are very strong in the BRIC markets, which account for 75% of the demand for those two brands. The weight of China for Haute Horlogerie brands Vacheron Constantin (39%), IWC (32%) and Patek Philippe (27%) is exceptionally high - witnessing the growing appetite of Chinese consumers for high-end and exclusive timepieces.

- Models and collections: Classic, well-established and middle price range models are the most in demand. The pole position of Omega Seamaster (5.6%) is confirmed for the third consecutive year, while Rolex Submariner (4.7%) and Daytona (4.2%) jumped one rank to hold 2nd and 3rd positions respectively. Besides these two powerhouse brands, TAG Heuer, Cartier and Breitling occupy most of the Top 30 ranking, respectively with their most popular models Carrera (6th, 2.9%), Tank (7th, 2.5%) and Navitimer (12th, 1.7%).

- Brand ambassadors: The most searched celebrities worldwide are as global as the industry. Last year leaders' Tiger Woods (TAG Heuer, 1st, 16.2%) and Aishwarya Rai (Longines, 2nd, 9%) are now followed by Jet Li (new entry for Hublot, 3rd, 6.7%) taking Nicole Kidman's last year ranking (Omega, 8th, 3.3%).

(1) 25 brands covered: Audemars Piguet, Baume & Mercier, Blancpain, Breguet, Breitling, Bulgari, Cartier, Chopard, Ebel, Frank Muller, Girard-Perregaux, Hublot, IWC, Jaeger-Le-Coultre, Longines, Montblanc, Omega, Patek Philippe, Piaget, Rado, Raymond Weil, Rolex, Tag Heuer, Vacheron Constantin, and Zenith

(2) 10 Key markets covered: Brazil, China, France, Germany, India, Italy, Japan, Russia, United States and the United Kingdom

(3) Based on Google as well as Yandex in Russia and Baidu in China, the WorldWatchReport covers an average of 85% search market share globally.

About the WorldWatchReport

The WorldWatchReport is carried out since 2004 by IC-Agency, Luxury Digital Marketing company, and published in partnership with Europa Star (www.europastar.com) "the most influential watch magazine" with the support of la Fondation de la Haute Horlogerie.

The complete study will be officially available from April 1st, 2011 and can be ordered online at:
www.worldwatchreport.com

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