

ROLEX  
Genius and Brilliant  
Marketing

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First Edition

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What makes **Rolex** more than just a watch brand? How did it transform timepieces into **symbols of power, prestige, and timeless success**?

This book takes you **inside the world of Rolex**, uncovering the **marketing brilliance** that made it the most coveted luxury watch brand on the planet. From **clever storytelling and brand mystique** to strategic scarcity and celebrity endorsements, Rolex has mastered the art of **creating desire**.

You'll discover the fascinating evolution of its **iconic models**, the bold decisions that shaped its legendary status, and the hidden strategies that keep demand soaring. **Rolex doesn't sell watches—it sells exclusivity, achievement, and legacy**.

Whether you're a **watch lover, a marketing professional, or someone who admires luxury brands**, this book offers a **rare glimpse** into the genius behind Rolex's enduring dominance.

Step into the world of Rolex—where **precision meets power, and branding creates legends**.



**ROLEX**

The uniqueness of the Rolex brand compared to its competitors lies in the fact that it is the first brand that comes to mind when we talk about luxury watches. It is unlikely that Rolex models significantly outperform their competitors, but no one has achieved such recognition and commercial success. And this is despite the fact that Rolex is one of the youngest brands compared to other manufacturers. Behind the success of this brand is not a multitude of generations of a family or entrepreneurs, but essentially one person who invented it all. He was both a brilliant innovator and an outstanding marketer.

In this book, I will tell you the entire history of the Rolex brand and each of its models. We will examine all the basic concepts and terms, as well as compile a step-by-step guide for the buyer. I will explain why Rolex became known as the watches of achievement, and most importantly, what in their marketing allowed them to achieve such recognition.

If you are a man reading this book for the first time and are used to authors who talk about watches looking a certain way, and you have a certain skepticism towards me, I ask you to give me a chance. And believe me, after this, the value of this brand, as well as the watches you already have or plan to acquire, will significantly increase for you.

## The Remarkable Rolex Founding Story



Let's start traditionally with the founder's story. Hans Wilsdorf was born in 1881 in the small German town of Kulmbach, Bavaria. His father owned a chain of hardware stores, and his mother came from a well-known German brewing family. There were three children in the family: Hans was the middle child, with an older brother, Karl, and a younger sister, Anna. When Hans was 12, tragedy struck—their parents passed away. The children were taken in by their maternal uncles, who sold the Wilsdorf family business and sent the children to prestigious boarding schools.

Hans first attended a boarding school in Coburg, then graduated from a business school in Bayreuth, after which he moved to Geneva. His first job after finishing school was with a pearl export company, and later, he joined another company that acted as an intermediary in watch sales.

This marked his entry into the watch industry. Every day, he had to wind several hundred watches and ensure their proper functioning, all while learning the intricacies of the business.

In 1902, Hans briefly returned to Germany to serve in the military. After his service, he moved to London with the aim of obtaining British citizenship. In London, he intended to start his own watch company.

The opportunity to realize his ambitions came through his acquaintance with Alfred Davis, who had the financial resources to invest, while Wilsdorf had the expertise in watches. In 1905, they founded the company Wilsdorf & Davis. The company imported Swiss watch movements, which were then sold under the jeweler's name displayed on the dial. The name Wilsdorf & Davis could only be found on the back of the watches. Later, Davis married Hans's sister, Anna, becoming his brother-in-law.

Hans's ambitions extended beyond merely supplying watches to jewelers. As mentioned earlier, the most famous watch brands already existed at the time, and there was fierce competition in the market. Wilsdorf understood that to succeed, he needed to create something new. He decided to establish himself as a manufacturer of wristwatches.

It's important to understand the context here. At that time, men's wristwatches already existed, and Cartier had made a significant contribution to popularizing them among men, helping to overcome the skepticism that wristwatches were more of an ornament. However, many still doubted that such small watches, compared to pocket watches, could be accurate. Wilsdorf set out to change this perception and focused on producing precise wristwatches.

It was then that he realized his brand needed an original name. There are several legends about how the name Rolex came about, but one of the most credible is that Wilsdorf simply went through the alphabet, trying to come up with a name that would be easy to pronounce in all European languages and compact enough to look good on the dial.

As he recounted on his fiftieth anniversary, the name came to him while he was riding on the upper deck of a horse-drawn bus in London. There's even a photo of him at that moment. Allegedly, someone whispered the name Rolex in his ear. Whether or not this is true, it was at that moment that this world-famous name was born.

In 1910, Hans Wilsdorf succeeded in producing the world's first wristwatches that were certified as chronometers.

In this book, I decided to introduce a special section called "Watches for Dummies." When I say "dummies," I primarily mean myself. In this section, we will explore some concepts necessary for understanding the watch industry.

So, what is a chronometer? (Not to be confused with a chronograph! We will talk about chronographs later in this book.) A chronometer is a highly accurate watch mechanism with an allowable error of no more than 2 seconds per day. Not every watch model can be called a chronometer — this

title is only given to watches that have passed the corresponding certification in Switzerland. And in 1910, it was Rolex that first received the certificate from the Swiss Official Chronometer Testing Institute in Bienne. Four years later, in 1914, they also received the Kew certificate from the British laboratory, confirming their accuracy. Before this, such certificates were only issued to marine chronometers, but now, for the first time, they were awarded to wristwatches. Undoubtedly, having these two certificates significantly changed the attitude of skeptical men towards Rolex wristwatches.

By the way, in addition to his business, Hans Wilsdorf's personal life also improved: in 1911, he married a British citizen, Laurence Frances Crowty. The wedding took place in the famous St. Paul's Cathedral, where later, in 1965, the funeral of Winston Churchill would be held, and in the early 1980s, the wedding of Princess Diana and Prince Charles would take place.

With the start of World War I, the demand for wristwatches increased, as they proved to be very convenient for soldiers. However, at the same time, the economic situation worsened because Britain introduced customs duties. And since Rolex watches were imported from Switzerland, production in Britain became unprofitable.

Moreover, it was not easy for a person with a German surname to live in Britain during the war. Therefore, Wilsdorf decided to move production and himself to Switzerland. In 1919, he moved the headquarters to the city of Bienne. That same year, he bought out the share in the company Aegler, which supplied them with mechanisms, as well as the share of his brother-in-law, becoming the sole owner of the Rolex brand.

In 1920, Rolex moved to the recognized watch capital of the world — Geneva, where they registered their company Rolex S.A. By the way, in those years, it was still difficult for watch sellers to switch to having the brand name on the dial instead of their own. Therefore, Rolex often still indicated their name only on the back of the watches, while the dial bore the name of the jeweler. Wilsdorf did not like this, as he wanted to establish Rolex as a trademark. In 1925, he launched an advertising campaign with an annual budget of 12,000 pounds — a very large sum for marketing at that time. The goal of this campaign was to establish the name Rolex, and he succeeded in achieving that within a year, five out of six watches produced had the name Rolex on the dial, not the jeweler's. In the same year, the brand introduced its famous logo.