

## COMMERCE

# Chanel acquires partial stake in Swiss watchmaker MB&F

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Headquartered in Geneva, MB&F specializes in modern, concept-driven designs. Image credit: MB&F

By LUXURY DAILY NEWS SERVICE

French fashion house Chanel is buying a sizable portion of a high-end horology business.

Its acquisition of a 25 percent stake in Swiss luxury watch and clock manufacturer **MB&F**, or Maximilian Bsser and Friends, was announced on Aug. 22. Headquartered in Geneva, Chanel's strategic partner specializes in modern, concept-driven designs.

"We are delighted to sign a strategic partnership with MB&F who share the same values of independence, creativity and excellence," said Frdric Grangi, president of watches and fine jewelry at Chanel, in the statement.

"The announcement is part of our long-term strategy to continue to preserve, develop and invest in specialist know-how and expertise, reaffirming our position in high-end watchmaking."

## Strategic M&A

Following the deal, MB&F founder Maximilian Bsser will continue to hold a 60 percent majority stake, while Serge Krikhoff, head of R&D and production, will keep 15 percent.

Established in 2005, the nine-time Grand Prix d'Horlogerie de Genve award recipient is known for producing what it calls "three-dimensional kinetic sculptures."

Announcing LMX, celebrating 10 years of our Legacy Machines, initiated with LM1. The LMX is an LM1 on steroids, revisiting its most striking features: the flying balance wheel, independent dual time zones, and a crazy new rotating power reserve indicator.<https://t.co/Li6G32eod7> [pic.twitter.com/Q1kZ3lEPty](https://pic.twitter.com/Q1kZ3lEPty)

MB&F (@MBandF) **March 24, 2021**

The limited editions blend retro-futuristic elements with inspirations drawn from science fiction and nature and comprise a bulk of the brand's sales, which hit \$53.3 million last year. MB&F is carried in just 21 retail locations across America, Asia, Europe, Africa and the Middle East.

"It was our responsibility, in today's very favorable context and with our management team in its prime, to take this major step to ensure our long-term future a natural evolution for a company celebrating its 20th anniversary next year," said Mr. Bsser, in a statement.

"In addition to allowing us to pursue our independent path, free of any pressure on growth, the investment by Chanel will strengthen our operations by providing access when needed to their wider ecosystem and network of specialized suppliers."

The partial owner of such names as Swiss watchmakers Romain Gauthier and FP Journe ([see story](#)), Chanel has focused on investing in independent manufactures in the decades since launching its first timepiece in 1987.

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