

# CLASSIC DRIVER

## Vertu - Born From an Obsession



**With its 'engine', shock absorbers, carbon fibre, titanium, leather and hand-crafted production process, Vertu's mobile phone range has more in kin with the world of bespoke motor cars than portable telephony.**

Remember the days when owning a mobile would mark you out as someone special? Well, ownership of a Vertu phone nowadays makes the same statement as using a Mont Blanc pen, or wearing a Patek Philippe watch - it's an emotional assertion about your inner happiness. We were recently invited to visit the company, to see just what makes Vertu mobile phones so unique.



The company hand-assembles its worldwide production at a high-tech industrial building in Hampshire, south west of London. To see the manufacturing process (and the best automotive comparison would probably be the McLaren F1 that was built not so far away at Woking) you are reminded of either a modern F1 technical facility or a Swiss watch company. In fact the connections actually do run deep – staff at Vertu have spent time at Bentley Motors studying the fine processes that signify the term 'hand-crafted', as well as using the traditional Swiss watch making skills of precious-metal handling and finishing.



Vertu produce two models, the 'Signature', a phone so detailed that only 5 people in the company can make them (and that's after 3 years' training...), and one that could be described in watch-making terms as a 'Grand Complication' with its 388 mechanical components and ruby bearings supporting the keys to give them that characteristically precise touch. The other is the 'Ascent', a performance-oriented phone with its unique Liquimetal® chassis that features in the company's current publicity material – being run over by a Sports Car: and working perfectly afterwards of course.



No two Vertu luxury phones are the same. Such is the complexity of the design, and the infinitely skilled patience of the workers, that hand-assembly and finishing and polishing ensure that differences unseen to all but the most highly trained eye are allowed for in assembly to produce closing faces that fit perfectly, with no gaps, squeaks or rattles. And such is the dedication of the final inspection process that a high percentage are sent back for rectification – very often a complete strip-down and re-assembly. And the final polishing station for the 'Signature' has a craftsman with skills learnt in the Swiss watch industry, knowing the nuances

of grain in gold, titanium and platinum.



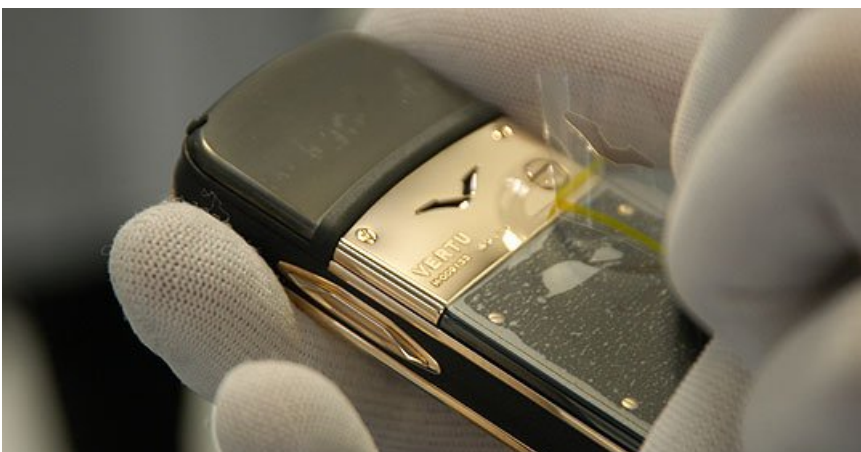
Two new products grace the line-up pre-Christmas. The 'Vertu Ascent White Special Edition' follows on from the success of the 'Ascent Pink', while the 'Vertu Ascent Motorsport Limited Edition' has a carbon fibre inlay (from the same manufacturer who supplies parts for F1 cars), and is being showcased by a racing programme in the Porsche Michelin Supercup that includes ten Grand Prix-supporting races in Europe and two in the USA. It's this model that has the closest ties with modern 'super-sports' cars like the Porsche GT3. Hand-stitched leather, speaker ports that mimic the air vents of a racing car, and titanium and ceramic components draw strong parallels with the world of the race track.





Like the car that wears its logo, only 997 examples of the 'Motorsport Limited Edition' will be made.

And after the final (final!) checking and polishing, when the phone is ready for despatch, the serial number is laser-engraved onto the back, and comprehensive digital photographs are made of its every angle as a complete record of the birth of a new member of the 'Vertu Family'. As every example has a back that **only** fits its correct Vertu front **exactly**, it's important for the manufacturer to record everything that leaves the factory, and is an invaluable tool in the after-sales experience.



## Concierge Service

It doesn't end when the customer takes the phone home and powers it up – far from it. All Vertu phones come with one year's Vertu Concierge Service (renewable on a yearly basis thereafter), accessed via a special button on the side of the hand set. Available every day of the year, round the clock, a personal adviser is there to help you make travel arrangements, book 'the un-bookable' play or restaurant table, or just help out to make a busy person's life that little bit easier.



It's the ultimate service from the world's ultimate mobile phone.

For more information, please visit [www.vertu.com](http://www.vertu.com).

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