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COVER: The model is wearing jewelry from Metalsmiths Sterling™ Signature Collection featuring stamped heraldic imagery. The necklace and bracelet are crafted of sterling silver with faceted blue sapphire accents. Bracelet NB72SA MSRP: \$328, necklace NN11SA MSRP: \$428. Metalsmiths Sterling™ 877-425-4299.



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INTERESTING JEWELRY STORIES

By Frank Dallahan

A benefit of attending a trade show as a member of the press is the opportunity of meeting interesting people and seeing the merchandise they have developed. It is a wonderful opportunity to hear their stories and learn a bit of their histories. There were three manufacturers I met during the Show week in Tucson and Scottsdale. After these meetings, it occurred to me that their stories would be of interest to our readers. In each case there is a passion for creating beautifully designed and finished product. I hope you enjoy these vignettes.

Syna Jewels

The word syna in Greek means "together." Darmesh and Namrata Kothari, a husband and wife team, have created an extraordinary and refreshing collection of luxurious jewels. Drawing inspiration from little things, they have woven together the natural beauty of gems with subtle forms. Their expressive interpretations are both striking and simple.

Overall, the price range of their collection goes from \$330 to \$30,000 retail. All the products are set in 18 karat gold. The line consists of necklaces, earrings, rings and bracelets. One of the interesting products they presented was fossilized mammoth ivory from Alaska. They showed me two very beautiful cameos using mammoth ivory. One was of a swan and the other was a peacock. The ivory background provides an entirely different look to the products. Another unique product from jewelry standard was their zodiac collection. Syna's are different and quite beautiful. The zodiacs are all hand carved, wrapped in gold and come with a blackened silver chain. The zodiacs retail for \$935.

Darmesh and Namrata incorporate design elements from India in their work. Their company symbol for example is a mogul medallion. This design element is a distinguishing trademark of their company. Both Darmesh and Namrata are involved with every aspect of the design of their products. In fact their business cards identify them first as Designer and second as President and Vice President respectively. Both make it clear that product design is the critical element of their work. For more information they can be reached at 201.585.2021 or their website at synajewels.com.

Kirk Kara

Family businesses are not unique in the jewelry manufacturing side of the business. The history of this family business is like so many who started a business facing incredible challenges. Ultimately, the family came to the United States. Here they were able to live in freedom and peace.

The Kirk Kara business began in 1890 when Kirk's grandfather opened a small workshop showcasing his exquisite hand engraved jewelry. Detailed carvings found in Armenian culture were the inspiration for his designs. Kirk's father, Artin, was the only family member to have escaped the Armenian Genocide in 1915. He made his way to Beirut and opened a new shop. His work soon became a prized by European clientele. His design of a hand engraved wedding ring for his bride, Angel, became the design basis of all that was to come.

Today, Kirk Kara produces and sells some of the more interesting designs on the market. They offer six different collections comprising 118 different styles. Kirk Kara uses color in their product line to beautiful effect. Their full collection can be seen on line at Kirkkar.com

Gumuchian

Gumuchian is another jewelry manufacturer with origins in the Middle East. Their credo is "designed by women for women." Located in Manhattan, they employ between 12 and 15 jewelers. The company is also has diamond facilities in Antwerp. Four generations the Gumuchians have been making fine jewelry characterized by unique designs and the quest for perfection. One aspect of Gumuchian product is worthy of special note. Their clasps are designed to be clever.

Their product line consists of bridal engagement rings and wedding rings, rings, earrings, bracelets, pendants, necklaces and brooches. The Gumuchian collection of jewelry brings together a wide array of beautiful and innovative product. Prices generally range between \$1,300 and \$4,600.

One of their rings was especially interesting. They call it The Ring Cycle. It is a gold pave diamond ring in a daisy motif. Its unique feature is when you press the center diamond, the ring comes apart and becomes a one-of-a-kind bracelet. This clasp reveals the story of four generations the Gumuchian family has created exceptional and beautiful jewelry. It is available in yellow, white or pink gold. Prices start at \$4,000.

The inspiration for The Ring Cycle came from Anita Gumuchian's memory. The original concept was developed in the Turkish bazaars of Istanbul. The design was refined and modernized by the Gumuchian's design team. This latest concentric development offers the wearer an elegantly centered daisy accompanied by a chain of gold rings to remind you no matter however far family members may travel they remain closely connected at their core. Gumuchian is run by mother Anita and her two daughters Myriam and Patricia. The Gumuchians design their jewelry with an intuitive feel for what women want in jewelry today. For more information visit Gumuchian.com.



Frank Dallahan

co-publisher of The Retail Jeweler Email Frank@theRetailJeweler.com

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MyRA

By John A. Politi

SAY THAT THREE TIMES FAST!

Mr. Speaker, the President of the United States

In his 2014 State of the Union Address this past January, President Obama offered more Americans, particularly those who are low and middle-income, the opportunity to save for retirement through payroll deductions with a plan for new government-sponsored savings accounts. This new kick-start retirement savings program is called "MyRA," and is similar to individual retirement accounts. MyRA plans will provide "a new way for working Americans to start their own



retirement savings," Obama said. The program will only be available to those workers who don't have access to an employer-sponsored savings plan now i.e., 401(k). The President can establish the savings program under existing executive authority without new legislation. To share a little history with you, the new proposal resembles an earlier Obama Administration savings plan (found in his 2014 Budget and costing the government an estimated \$18 billion in foregone revenue over ten years) that would have required employers to offer an automatic IRA option to all employees.

What's It All About.... Barack?

MyRA

Well, the MyRA savings plan would have the same tax treatment and follow the same withdrawal rules as a Roth IRA, but there are some notable differences. In short, workers could open their accounts with as little as \$25.00, and make automatic contributions through payroll deductions in amounts as small as \$5.00 per month. Enrollment in the plan would be voluntary, and tax-free withdrawals could be made at any time without penalty.

While I certainly agree that more people need to be saving for retirement, this is beginning to sound like an awful lot of paperwork and administration for a plan that's beginning to seem more akin to a Christmas Club Savings Account. MyRA's will only have one investment option: The Treasury will create a security fund modeled after the federal employees' Thrift Savings Plan Government Securities Investment Fund – paying a variable rate. That specific fund posted an average annual return of 2.69 percent for the five years that ended in December 2012. By the way, the average annual inflation rate for that same period was 2.06 percent – adjusting for inflation the investment averaged a return of 0.63 percent per annum. http://www.usinflationcalculator.com/inflation/historicalinflation-rates/. MyRA accounts would be available to married couples with modified adjusted gross incomes up to \$191,000 per year, and individuals earning up to \$129,000 annually. Once the MyRA reached \$15,000, or after 30 years, they would have to be rolled over into a private sector Roth IRA.

Think of MyRAs much like a U.S. Government Bond – true, you won't lose your principal invested, but you won't build up savings quickly either because of the low rate of interest. Individuals receive no tax break for investing in these accounts, and employers will not have any responsibility for these accounts because the government will run them.

MyRA versus 401(k)

For both employers and employees, MyRA accounts differ from the more familiar 401(k) savings plans:

- No employer matching contributions
- No opportunity for high-yielding returns
- No track record of employer support
- Only one investment option the basket of government

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bonds available to federal workers in their retirement plans with maturities between 4-30 years.

- Guaranteed return of principal
- Ability to withdraw funds at any time with no tax penalty.

Employers who choose to participate by the end of this year will initially offer these new saving accounts via a pilot program. They are meant to cost employers little or nothing to create since they will neither administer the accounts not contribute to them. One last caveat – employers are not required to offer them.

The Good, the Bad and the Ugly

The aim of the program is to hopefully encourage millions of people to start feathering their nest so that they can supplement Social Security benefits. Chip Castile, Managing Director and head of the U.S. Retirement Group at BlackRock, Inc., endorsed the President's proposal by stating that, "We're going to have more people talking about the retirement crisis, which is important." "It's a step in the right direction," said Robert Reynolds, CEO of Boston-based Putnam Investments. "I don't think anyone thinks this is going to magically turn us into a nation of savers," said William Gale, Director of the Retirement Security Project at the Brookings Institute in Washington. "But for a particular group it seems like it could be part of the solution." The Vanguard Group and Fidelity Investments both "look forward to reviewing the details of the President's program."

Many believe that the voluntary sign-up will undermine the program – people will procrastinate and they won't sign-up. Others believe that it should be mandatory and allow the



participants the ability to opt out – but that would require approvalby Congress. John Hauserman, President of Retirement Quest Wealth Management shared, "It's not a good long-term portfolio prescription for the majority of people, particularly those who are low and middle-income, and need long-term growth."

How many of you already offer a 401(k) plan and have maybe, just maybe, only see about 50% of your employees participating – even with a company match? Why in the world would anyone not participate? Well maybe they can't afford to. In case you didn't realize our economy has only just begun moving in the right direction. Many of us are still living paycheck to pay check. Still, everyone can always afford to save a little, and this plan allows individuals not necessarily inclined to do so, to do just that, save a little. While I always remain somewhat skeptical of anything the government gets involved in trying to manage, this program is good for America.

What we need to become is more evangelical to both Generation X & Y to start saving. It's a tough pitch though given the college tuition-debt they have, and the lack of a quality career. Maybe, just maybe our President and Congress would realize that we need to get America back to work, and allow everyone the hope of achieving the American Dream. It is a bit long in the tooth to keep hearing that our current retirement tax subsidies disproportionately benefit only higher-income households. Our President needs to remember that this great country shouldn't have nearly 50 million people forgotten and struggling in poverty – more than 16% of our population. Let's get America back to work and then help them to save more for a well-deserved and dignified retirement.

Author's Note: Please consult with your CFP®, CPA, Registered Investment Advisor, Investment Advisor Representative, and/or Estate/ Tax/Eldercare Attorney when discussing your financial needs and developing the appropriate personal/business financial plan.



John A. Politi, Jr

John Politi is a Financial Advisor with Main Street Financial Solutions, LLC, and Managing Director of their offices located in Harrison, NY. John's team provides comprehensive and customized, Fee-Only financial planning, consultation and investment advisory services for individuals, families and businesses. Since 2011, John has volunteered his time as the Executive Director of the New York City-based Jewelers for Veterans Foundation, a 501(c)(3) non-

profit, dedicated to connecting US Military Veterans with training, financial education & employment in the jewelry industry. He is a member of The Twenty-four Karat Club of New York. John welcomes your input and can be contacted at, jpoliti@msfsolutions. com, or telephone (914) – 517-7574, fax (914) 517-7577.

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Your most important asset is your workforce. Business users frequently use this cliché, whether they are small retailers with a small staff or owners of a Fortune 500 company. While this is said very often, some owners don't always express it in their actions.

While some business owners may genuinely appreciate the efforts of their staff, they tend to overlook their needs when caught up in running the business. It's similar to not being able to spend quality time with your family – the prime difference being that your family won't be inclined to resign! But your employees can and they very well might. Only after they do so, will you realize that you weren't being appreciative enough of their contributions.

It doesn't take too much to keep an employee satisfied. A number of surveys have shown that money is not the prime motivator for staff members – generally they rate recognition the highest followed by a great working environment. In spite of recognition ranking high for employees, just under half of all employers offer any rewards or incentive to acknowledge a job well done. This is a worrying gap. There are definitely employers who take time out to appreciate a good job, but there are a startling number of those who don't.

Whether you like it or not, an important part of any storeowner's job is staff management. The standard excuse "I'm not good with handling staff" is not acceptable – you risk losing some of your precious employees to retailers who recognize their efforts and shower them with rewards.

So what can you do to acknowledge the efforts of your employees in a consistent manner?

Team based rewards always motivate employees and prevent the issues such as who has worked the hardest. If you have two to three different incentives in a month, it can make go a long way in boosting the morale of your work force.







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Here are five ways that can help motivate your employees better:

Compete with another store for the maximum number sales over \$500/\$1000 per month. Make sure both stores contact each other when they make a sale so they can keep a tally and determine the winner. Decide what the loser should pay the winner, but it has to be

something that can be shared. If you choose to compete with a store that generally achieves higher sales on an average, you can introduce a handicap system – the store that wins has to achieve an average \$100 higher (i.e. \$600/\$1100) while the first store tries to reach the same target. If they manage to win again, the average goes up by another \$100 but if they lose they come back to the previous level.



Rewarding the highest sale for the day with a \$20/\$50/\$100 is another way that works very well. Pass the note around to the person who tops the previous sale and the winner of the note is the one with the highest sale of the day.





Ask vendors if they have any incentives to give. Many of them offer incentives with products and would be more than glad to sell more of their product through you – it's a win-win situation for everyone.





Gift your staff a well-earned massage – after particularly hectic times of the year like a storewide sale or December.

5 Pl

Plan team events such as a meal or take them for bowling. You can tie these to achieving monthly sales targets.

Sure enough, none of these suggestions will prove to be game changers by themselves – but they are not tough to follow, and a systematic program of rewards can have a significant impact on employees' morale. Give some thought to setting up a fun rewards system for your staff and see the rise in productivity with increased satisfaction and motivation among employees.



David Brown

David Brown is President of The Edge Retail Academy, an organization devoted to the ongoing measurement and growth of jewelry store performance and profitability. For further information about The Edge Retail Academy's management mentoring and industry benchmarking reports contact Becka Johnson Kibby: becka@edgeretailacademy.com or 877-910-3343, ext 1



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It Takes a Village to Raise a Website

By Matthew A. Perosi

Content marketing is all about longterm cumulative effects of adding a single new blog post to your website, or updating your Google+ Local page, or sharing the latest custom design photo to Facebook and Twitter. Everything you publish to the Internet is part of your business' "content marketing."

I realize that the daily duties of a jeweler include talking to customers, repairing jewelry, flipping through catalog for findings, bookkeeping, and worrying if you will still be in business one year from now. While you are handling daily duties you also should be working to build your business a every day. This is where long term content marketing comes into play. And, this is exactly where the Internet is truly a business owner's new best friend.

Content marketing allows you to:

- Grow your business with lower long-term costs
- Find new customers every day
- Make your name appear everywhere

To make this work, you need to feed the Internet daily. People searching online expect to find the latest information: the latest news, the latest movie times, and the latest products available on Amazon.com. No one would read a news website if it were not updated daily. No one would visit Amazon.com if it didn't have a current inventory of products.

All popular websites started slowly; even Amazon started out small. They attracted a small audience, which motivated the owners to continually add new products to attract even more people. Amazon built a massive product database that's updated daily.

A lot of daily human labor goes into maintaining Amazon's website to make it what it is. They are the model that many people follow. It starts with feeding content into your website often.

Content includes:

- The words you have on your home page
- The blog entry about a couple that bought a ring from you
- The photos you have on your staff page
- The customer reviews about you on Yelp
- Your website product catalog



Everything you publish to the Internet is part of your business' **CONTENT MARKETING**



You need to get as much information about your store online as possible, and you need to keep it updated often. More is better, and it's more likely your business will appear in the search results.

Google doesn't want you to build your website overnight. They penalize people who try too hard, too fast. You have to grow your online identity naturally, just like a child that needs to eat healthy if they are to grow up strong over 18 years.

Would you feed the child the same exact food every day? Not likely since that leads to health and growth issues. It's the same situation with your online identity; you can't keep doing the same thing over and over again. You need to do things a little different each time.

It doesn't matter how much money you have, or who you are willing

to pay; there's no way to force a child to grow up overnight. Likewise, you can't pay to have overnight online success. Your business will grow over time as long as you keep feeding your website a balanced diet.

Think of the proverb "it takes a village to raise a child" and what it means. Similarly, it takes many different people, including employees, programmers, designers, photographers, writers, customers, and even you to raise a website. Paying each one of these people is part of the long term investment of feeding your website. You won't see a direct return of increased sales, but there is a cumulative effect that can be seen over time.

Content creation is the key to long-term success and there's really nothing too difficult about it other than commitment.



Matthew A Perosi

Matthew Perosi is the Founder of the Jeweler Website Advisory Group (jWAG), a research team devoted to reporting how jewelers can use websites, mobile technology, and marketing trends to further personal and

jewelry store goals. A library of articles, videos, and an archive of jWAG daily email "Nuggets" is freely available at www.jwag.biz. Matthew invites your feedback at matt@jwag.biz.



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Help guard against the unthinkable by making **SAFETY** and **SECURITY** a habit in 2014



By David Sexton

The "what if's" in life are endless. Each year, jewelers fall victim to crime and face unpredictable losses from fire, natural disasters and even internal theft. So how can you possibly protect your business from the unknown? Make safety and security a priority for your business and your staff.

Compare Apples to Apples

A great place to start evaluating your company's safety and security is to examine your insurance needs. Typical business owners' policies were never intended to be a comprehensive insurance coverage solution for jewelers. Jewelers face unique threats and have specific needs that other businesses may not. However, a Jewelers Block policy is a comprehensive policy designed to meet the needs of a very broad spectrum of jewelry operations including losses from burglary, robbery, sneak theft, fire damage and water damage, to name a few. Work with a knowledgeable Jewelers Block specialist agent who can assist you in customizing and structuring the policy to cost-effectively meet the needs of your specific jewelry operation.

Preparing for the Unpredictable

In order to select the appropriate limit of insurance coverage you need to know what your exposure to loss can be. An effective and consistent inventory control methodology is central to protecting the assets of your company, and conducting an annual physical inventory is one of the best things you can do to protect your business.

To maintain accurate and current records, jewelers should update inventories daily. Your inventory records should chart the following information:

- Item number
- Detailed description of the item • Price paid for the item
- Date it was received
- Value of the item • Date it was sold
- Price received for the item

Remember, finished goods are not the only type of inventory your business may need to consider. Loose diamonds and colored stones, settings, replacement materials and customer repairs should also be included.

Creating Continuity

The next area of your focus in creating a more secure business should include the development a business continuity plan. Preparing ahead of time for a disaster is crucial for a quick resumption of your operations allowing you to make informed decisions during a high-pressure crisis. Jewelers Mutual recommends having backup files for everything from your

tax returns and insurance policies to your lease agreement and your most current inventory stored safely in an accessible, offsite location.

Do you have access to your customer database if your store's computers are somehow compromised? A thorough business continuity plan also considers your customers. You'll want to let them know if you're temporarily closed or operating in a different location.

Drill for When It Counts

Does your staff know what to do when disaster strikes? You can help your staff prepare to do the right thing by outlining clear expectations. Precautions such as running an armed robbery drill could mean the difference between life and death. Reinforce to your employees that the safety of your customers and staff is your top priority. Establish a code word or phrase that employees can use to alert the rest of the staff of suspicious behavior and cue an associate to visibly leave the store with a cell phone to observe from a safe distance, ready to call 9-1-1. Associates who remain in the store should be instructed to remain calm, not to resist, and to follow the perpetrator's orders. Inventory and property can be replaced. A life cannot.

Failing to plan is planning to fail

Don't wait until disaster strikes. The time to consider your company's vulnerabilities and to develop more secure habits in your business is now. Invest the time and energy to protect your employees, your business and your way of life before it's too late.

To learn more about operating a jewelry business safely and securely, visit www.JewelersMutual.com or find a Jewelers Mutual agent in your area by calling 1-800-558-6411.



David Sexton

David Sexton is vice president of loss prevention consultingatJewelersMutualInsuranceCompany. Headquartered in Neenah, Wis., Jewelers Mutual is the only insurance company in the U.S. and Canada that specializes exclusively in protecting

the jewelry industry and individuals' jewelry.

Since joining Jewelers Mutual in 1980, Sexton has been involved in the company's Commercial Lines underwriting and loss prevention programs. He currently is responsible for developing and executing activities related to the company's loss prevention efforts, including initiating and maintaining key relationships in the jewelry industry, insurance industry, and law-enforcement community.

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LOW HANGING FRUIT

By Larry Johnson

Over the last few weeks, I have been spending more time out in stores working with independent jewelers to increase their bottom-line profits by improving their displays and overall visual merchandising.

I find however that many of the stores I visit have several very similar display challenges that can be easily solved with a little attention. These display "errors" are somewhat obvious and become so to the store-owner when pointed out. In a matter of a few hours in the store, we can often correct the easier, more obvious "Display mistakes" that are holding sales back.

These simple "fixes" are the "low-hanging fruit" of retail jewelry display.

Here are the first few entries of a list of some of the most common errors I see and some suggested solutions that might help you diagnose your own stores situation and take corrective action.

ive new thought to how your merchandise is placed in the case. Display with "intention", not by habit or by accident. Many jewelers, over the years, fall into the trap of just "putting it all" in the case in an effort to make it all fit. The case comes off looking like an unattractive mess of goods. Take time to organize your merchandise to be "presented" not just displayed. Place best pieces in the back (salesperson's side) of the case on individual displays that make them look special. Put middle priced options near the center of the case (front to back) to show selection.

Place less expensive items in trays near the customer's side of the case. This organizes the case in a "Best-Better-Good (back to front)" arrangement that makes selling up easier. Now the best pieces are in the first place your customer looks and obvious to all eyes. ecide which pieces in each case you want most to sell and display them accordingly. Use common sense in your intentional placement of your most important items. If the one ring you would really like to sell in your case is in a tray with 11 others tucked in a dusty corner of the case, your odds of a sale (and the customers opinion of the piece) are diminished. Make those pieces look special.

Take the 3 items in each case that you'd most like to sell and display them individually in a way that attracts extra attention to them. Add a small sign with some text that tells the story behind the piece. If you do not have the right display, call your display supplier and ask for for these "key item" displays. You can make your own with some clean, simple display element placed on a small platform with a splash of color or sign that sets them apart. It is a bit of a cliché, but the more people that see a given piece, the better the odds are somebody will buy it. When the item sells, replace it quickly with another.







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LOW HANGING FRUIT



ther common display mistakes include inadequate or confusing signage, improper use of vendor provided displays, lack of attention to the role of color in the case, misplacement of merchandise in showcases without concern for traffic flow and failure to use the computer data from sales and merchandise reports to influence display decisions. I'll address these errors in this space in the next few months, along with any new observations from upcoming trips. (Please feel free to submit your own list as well)

inadequate or confusing signage,

lack of attention to the role of color in the case

misplacement of merchandise in showcases.

failure to use the computer data...

You saw the word "intention" used several times in this article. I did this *intentionally* because I believe that is the one word that best sums up the core strategy of good display. Do what you do for a reason. Have a viable reason for what, where, why and how you display your store. Your business is too important to leave things to chance and simply hope for

"Intention" intentionally

the best. Everything we do has a "Why" and it is the answer to this question that gives us insight into the future result.



Try this exercise. When your staff is busy displaying your merchandise in the case, ask them "why" it is being done this way. If the answer is anything unrelated to the customer and the customer's buying experience, question it and find a way to change it. "I didn't have room for these in that case" or "We have always put these here" are not display strategies for growth. "The customers are more likely to buy them over here" or "Because our customers often ask about ..." or "Putting them here increases my chances of selling that companion piece" are indicators of sales growth potential resulting from intentional efforts. Display with intention and you will drive your sales and success. Try it.

More "fruit" next month. As always, let me know if you have questions, contributions or if I can help in any way.

There's power in knowing.

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SPRING SHOW REVIEW

Leaving the cold tundra of the East coast to travel to the sunny, warm, beautiful desert country of Phoenix and Tucson was a real pleasure. The day I left for the West, it was a cool 8 degrees! The wind was blowing, although howling may be a better descriptive adjective. The beginning of a new jewelry season somehow becomes even better when the sun is shining and you can feel its warmth on your face as you leave your hotel.

Centurion

My travels took me to the three shows noted above. Howard Hauben's Centurion Show continues to impress. It is held in an impressive venue and it is impressively run. The Phoenician is a spectacular resort. And, as Ferris Buehler said about the restaurant Chez Quis, "I highly recommend it if you have the means." The nearby Hilton, however, was more than adequate for my budget! The Phoenician is a perfect venue for the higher end manufacturers and suppliers as it is for their customers. Going to a place like the Phoenician is a real motivator.

The Spring Show Season started off with a bang! The Centurion kicked off 2014 on a very optimistic note. Retailers reported solid Christmas results and that brought them to the show in a good mood and with money to spend and orders to back up their good mood.

Both the exhibitors and jewelers attending the show represent the upper tier of the retail and manufacturing communities. These are the firms that deal with consumers with significant disposable income levels. Many of these consumers look at jewelry as a good investment that brings with it the added benefit that it is wearable art. According to the Centurion eNewsletter, the expectation for 2014 is good with a small g not a capital G. In this economy, however, no one knows what's going to happen because there are so many variables that are hard to quantify. The bottom line is that past season's result were positive and the "feelings" about business for 2014 were positive and that is surely a good way to start the year.

Traffic at the show was very good and steady throughout. The show was well managed. Things happened on time. There were plenty of people to direct you if you were lost.

Bill Clinton was the featured speaker at the event. I was unable to hear Mr. Clinton's talk due to a commitment in Tucson that evening. However sources told me that the talk was typical Clinton. And one who did attend the event said that it made you wish that he were still President! All told, Centurion was a good way to start the spring season.

JCK Tucson

I wondered how JCK would fare with their new show at the Marriott Starr Pass. JCK recently acquired the GLDA Show and

Centurion, JCK, and AGTA's Gem Fair



had limited time to prepare for the show. Developing a new show though takes time, energy, and money especially at the beginning. It was obvious that JCK did their homework and put the show together in a very effective fashion.

Frankly, I was a little surprised at the level of traffic at the show. It was much greater than I expected. My expectations were colored because of the location of the venue approximately 20-30 minutes from the center of the gem-show activity. I arrived at the show on Wednesday the day after Centurion closed. The morning session was lightly attended, but in the afternoon there was a noticeable increase in floor traffic, the result of jewelers traveling from Centurion to Tucson. The show was widely and effectively promoted even at the local level. Driving from my hotel in Tucson to the Marriott Star Pass (about half an hour's drive) I heard at least two radio commercials promoting the show. In case you were wondering, JCK made it very clear in the radio commercials that the show was open only to professional buyers.

According to Yancy Weinrich, Group Vice President of the JCK Shows, "Tucson was successful with over 1800 stores in attendance (47% of which don't attend Vegas – so [it was] a big opportunity for the vendors to meet new buyers."

AGTA

The originator of the Phoenix/Tucson show experience is AGTA – the American Gem Trade Association. The AGTA Gem Show is held at the Convention Center in the heart of downtown Tucson. It is recognized as the show to visit for the world's gemstone community. There, buyers learn the availability of gemstones and their prices. The show as usual was well organized and effectively run.

The show floor was active with buyers from all over the world. Gemstone dealers, retailers, manufacturers were all in attendance. Exhibitors were happy with the traffic and the amount of business they were doing.

According to Doug Hucker, CEO of AGTA, the show had better than a 3% increase in attendance of unique buyers and as important, better than a 3% increase in attending companies. The action at the show was as positive as well. AGTA focused on doing more and better for this year's show. According to Hucker, AGTA's efforts to improve food offerings, the buyer's party, and the outreach to AGS jewelers all resulted in a positive thumbs up experience for attendees and exhibitors.

One of the highlights of the show was the special recognition to honor Ray Zajicek and Roland Naftule, founding members of AGTA, for their contributions to the association and the industry at large. **GE** Capital

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The 2014 AGTA GemFair Tucson[™] was held at the Tucson Convention Center, February 4th through 9th. The show started out with record numbers and the momentum continued throughout the week!

"The AGTA Gemfair[™] was remarkable this year," stated Douglas K. Hucker, AGTA's Chief Executive Officer. "Attendance was up and sales were better than ever! Exhibitors and buyers were thrilled with the show and the positive energy was felt by all!"

The AGTA held several new events this year that contributed to the show's success. The AGTA Cad Design Studio was located on the GemHall floor and was busy with appointments throughout the show. The full-service studio offered designers the chance to bring their vision to life, do a CAD drawing and create a wax mold ready for casting.

AGTA was pleased to announce the return of the Tools, Technology and Supplies (TTS) Pavilion. This pavilion was located in the Grand Ballroom and was dedicated to all aspects

of jewelry manufacturing and repair. MJSA "At the Bench Live" sessions were held twice daily in the pavilion. Attendees with GJX, JOGS and Holidome Show (G&LW) badges were admitted to the TTS Pavilion and bench demonstrations. AGTA introduced the first TTS drawing where \$500 was up for grabs every day!

The return of the Daily Drawing was also a big hit, as buyer's gathered around the AGTA Spectrum of Design Pavilion daily in anticipation of the winning

announcement! Every day one lucky buyer won anywhere from \$1,000 to \$2,000 to spend on the show floor.

The revived outdoor eating area was well received by both buyers and exhibitors. The best food trucks that Tucson has to offer were parked at AGTA GemFair all week. With tons of delicious options, there was something for everyone!



The AGTA Buyer Appreciation Party was held on Wednesday, February 5th and received great feedback. The buyer's truly enjoyed a taste of Tucson with complimentary hors d'oeuvres and cocktails. The GemHall floor was bustling with activity and full of energy.

Sweet Treats were offered to attendees on several of the other days as an afternoon pick-me-up!

GemJammin, the first-ever Coyote Classic 5K and the AGTA Spectrum Awards™ Gala were all hugely successful events that AGTA held during the week of GemFair.

With sales, attendance and energy up at the show this year, the AGTA looks forward to the 2015 AGTA GemFair[™] Tucson that will be held February 3rd through 8th. For more information go to http://www.agta.org/tradeshows/index.html.



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PLANNING -

WATCH RESTORATION...



America's fascination with the hidden treasures discovered on Antiques Road Show and popularity of reality shows like Pawn Stars, American Pickers, and Auctioneers has created a renewed interest in vintage and heritage pieces. Your customers are searching through their attics and dresser drawers seeking treasure.

Among higher-end collectibles, watches have always been a favorite category. Many of the pieces being discovered are severely worn or deteriorated from improper care and storage. Many may look to be worthless yet they may hold immeasurable sentimental value for the owner or a good return on investment for the investor/collector.

Watch restoration, particularly of European masterpiece classics, is well beyond the scope and ability of all but a very select few master watchmakers. Most collectors and owners of vintage and antique timepieces look to have them restored to their original condition. Even jewelers with in-house watchmakers would be well advised to think twice before attempting a full restoration. This is one of the primary reasons watch restoration can be such a valuable source of higher-end traffic and profitable sales.



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Images courtesy of Universal Watch Repair - www.universalwatch.net

What should you look for in a restoration service?

For the answer I spoke to Ariana Buksdorf of Universal Watch Repair in Birmingham, Michigan - one of the top watch restorers in the United States.

"First you need a person who understands fine watches and is able to explain what is needed for the restoration," explained Ariana. "This is very important to be sure the client is not disappointed." Ariana also provided a few tips on what to look for when interviewing a restoration company.

Years of experience: They can't have too much.

The service should be familiar with a broad range of fine timepieces and be factory authorized for some of the top brands. This is less important for the vintage and antique pieces since they are out of warranty but it shows a level of trust and training by the brands.

A highly trained and qualified staff of specialists: The ability to consult with one another over the intricacies of a project is very important.

Inventory of parts: While this may seem fundamental a deep inventory of parts, including OEM, is essential. This includes bracelet parts, buckles, straps and crystals. This is vital to return the piece to as close to original condition as possible.

Warrantee: How do they back their service?

Promoting watch restoration service service- as with all of the unique services your store provides - in your market is key to its success. Place counter cards in your estate and watch departments. Talk it up during estate buying and selling events. Feature it on your website and Facebook page bearing in mind that some of the clients who have these pieces may not be as comfortable with the Internet or social media. You may want to consider running commercials during the showing of Antiques Road Show, Pawn Stars, American Pickers or Auctioneer\$.

With the right service and right promotion watch restoration could become a new opportunity for your store. TRJ

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THE**STYLE**PAGE



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SEVEN IDEAS: WHY INTERNAL CONTROLS ARE NECESSARY

By Ann Arnold

WHAT CONTROLS DO YOU HAVE IN PLACE?

Who or what are we trying to control? Your wife? Your husband? Your children? Your most trusted longest-term employee? Many times we get so caught up in the day-to-day aspects of business, we forget we need to protect it. One of the most common comments accountants hear when a problem is uncovered, is "But they were with me for so long!" or "They could never do that, I trusted them completely!"

Good internal controls do not have to be hard to implement but they do have to be done and reviewed. Many businesses hire a bookkeeper to do most of their accounting functions, enter bills, make deposits, and pay bills. However, having one person do all of this is not wise.

WHAT DOES GOOD INTERNAL CONTROLS MEAN?

Business dictionary.com defines it as:

"Systematic measures (such as reviews, checks and balances, methods and procedures) instituted by an organization to:

- Conduct its business in an orderly and efficient manner
- Safeguard its assets and resources
- Deter and detect errors, fraud, and theft





- Ensure accuracy and completeness of its accounting data
- Produce reliable and timely financial and management information
- Ensure adherence to its policies and plans."

HAVE YOUR EYES GLAZED OVER YET?

Most people start to get that far away look when I start getting excited about internal controls. But, they are systems and procedures everyone in business, and particularly the jewelry business, should implement and use.

First, you need to analyze your business whether retail, wholesale or manufacturing. You probably already have some good controls in place. Here are some questions to ask yourself to see if you have all the bases covered:

- Does the same person enter bills, write and sign checks?
- Does that person reconcile the bank monthly statement?
- Who approves each bill prior to payment?
- Who makes bank deposits?

In general, different people should do the functions described above. Perhaps not all of them, but as an owner you have the ability to oversee and designate different people to do different accounting functions.

Here are some examples of how to make sure you are safeguarding your assets:

• If you have one person entering the bills, and writing the checks, make sure that someone else is signing each check and that they specifically look at who is being paid.

- If the payee is a name that is not recognized, question it and investigate.
- When signing checks, have each check attached to the bill being paid so that you can verify the expense and make sure it is approved.
- Prior to any bills being given to the bookkeeper, they should be approved.
- If it is a purchase from a vendor, the buyer or person that ordered the item should confirm the merchandise has been received at the price and quantity ordered.
- When approving invoices for purchases, the invoice received should be reconciled with what was actually in the package
 either check the packing slip and attach that verified slip to the invoice, or check the invoice itself to the contents.
- If it is another type of expense, such as rent, electricity, or your phone bill, review it to make sure you are being charged appropriately and any unusual spikes in the amount billed are investigated.

Here are some other pointers and red flags to keep in the back of your mind:

- Many times fraud is committed by someone that is the most trusted and has the most access to the assets.
- Be wary of an employee that never takes a vacation. One day off does not count. All employees should be given at least a one-week vacation, where all the days are taken off consecutively.

If you are not in the same location as where the accounting function is being performed, you can still monitor what is being done. For instance, most banks today have online banking. It only takes a few moments to log in each day and review all checks that were presented for payment to ensure that you know who the payee is.

Remember, you work hard to make money; you should work just as hard to protect and safeguard that investment.



Ann Arnold

Ann Arnold is an expert in manufacturing and finance. She earned her CPA working for Deloitte, and was the VP and later CEO of Lieberfarb, a US based manufacturer of wedding and engagement rings. This 27 year industry veteran is the founder

and president of the Arnold Advisory Group, LLC, a comprehensive consultancy dedicated to helping clients increase their efficiency through financial modeling and analysis, time management and organizational strategies, and best business practices. To learn more, email ann@ArnoldAdviosryGroup.com.

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Centurion Design Awards Presented To 12 Companies



12 exhibitors of the Centurion Scottsdale Show were recipients of the prestigious Centurion Design Awards at the recent show, held February. 1 through 4 in Scottsdale.

The pieces were on display for the first two days of the Show for retailers to vote their top picks in each of 12 categories. This year, the competition was anonymous. Each entry was accompanied by a description of the piece but not the designer's name. For two days, retailers swarmed the awards area to vote their choices, which were kept under wraps until the results were announced at the annual Awards dinner, sponsored by Veranda magazine, on Monday, February 3.

The evening's festivities opened with welcome remarks by Kate Kelly Smith, publishing director of the Hearst Design Group (publishers of Veranda) and Clinton Smith, Veranda editor-in-chief.

Chippenhook, Exhibit Management Corp. and Jewelers Mutual Insurance Company were cited for their strong support of the Centurion Design Awards as cosponsors. David Sexton of Jewelers Mutual and Richard Zucker of Exhibit Management presented the awards to the winners, along with Jenny Luker of the Platinum Guild International and Michael Barlerin of the Silver Promotion Service.



Gail and David Friedman of Sarah Leonard Fine Jewelry, Los Angeles, CA with Martin Rapaport (center) after Rapaport's talk at Centurion.

New York jewelers Olivia Cornell, Cornell's Jewelers, Rochester, NY, and Marc Solomon of Solomon's Jewelry, Plainview, NY, at the 2014 Centurion Show.



Here is a list of the **winning companies** and **entries**:



A. Link & Co. won the Bridal category for a shared prong halo engagement ring in platinum, with special detailing on the shank. Diamond weight, approximately 3.00 ctw.



Jack Abraham won the Colored Stone Classic category for a unique fine gem Thai ruby in platinum and 18k yellow gold.



The winner of the Colored Stone Fashion was Spark Creations,

for 38.30 ct. Ethiopian opal, combined with 9.79 ct. spessartite, and 2.21 ctw. of diamonds, with yellow gold accents.



The winner of the **Contemporary Metals** category was **Rebecca**'s cuff of 24k rose gold over bronze with shimmering accents.

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PLANNING -

Centurion Design Awards Presented To 12 Companies



William Levine won the Diamond Classic

category for a platinum bracelet with 19 cushion cut diamonds, 10.19 ctw., edged with 412 full-cut diamonds weighing 1.34 ctw.



Yvel won the **Pearl** category with an 18k white gold bracelet combining 21 by 23 mm silver baroque fresh water souffle pearls set with 9.85 ctw. diamonds.



Siera Jewelry won the Diamond Fashion category for a fancy 18kt white gold necklace with diamonds and onyx.



Coast Diamond won the Platinum

category, for a ring featuring a vibrant 3.90ct. heart- shaped gem spinel surrounded by diamonds.







SYNA won the Sterling Silver

category, for a silver owl pendant with 18k yellow gold accents, champagne diamonds, and tsavorite eyes.



The winner of the **Mixed Precious Metals** category was **Arman Sarkisyan**, for his Sacred Heart in 22K Gold with oxidized silver, diamonds, rosecut diamonds, rubellite, kyanite, and sapphires.



Finally, in the **Watches** category, the winner was a Swiss made, numbered limited edition (499) timepiece, with multicolor baguette-cut sapphires, diamonds, bezel, lugs and buckle, by **Marco Moore**.



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SOUNDOFF

MAN MADE DIAMONDS AND ALTERNATIVE METALS.

IS HISTORY REPEATING ITSELF?

Ann Arnold

George Santayana said, "Those who cannot learn from history are doomed to repeat it."

An interesting quote and one that begs another question, is our industry one that learns from history or doomed to continue to repeat it? Ok, so doomed may be too harsh a word, however, it makes a clear point.

Do you remember about 5-6 years ago when alternative metals started being introduced in the wedding ring market? Gold and platinum prices were going through the roof and alternative metal wedding rings were a huge hit. Manufacturers were adjusting themselves to the more price conscious consumer. So what happened? If any retail jewelry store today looks at their wedding ring sales figures from today vs. 5 years ago there are some very clear trends and similarities. Those retailers that entered the alternative market will say the category of alternative metal wedding rings is a large percentage of their business and mostly what they sell.



SOUNDOFF

However, they will also concede their gross profit dollars from this category has gone down. For example, retailers used to sell a wedding ring in the \$600-\$700 range, and could make about \$250 per ring. Today the average sale of an alternative metal wedding ring is anywhere from \$100-\$300, with gross profit starting at less than \$100 per ring. Stores need to sell a lot more rings to get the same gross profit dollars. Plus, anyone can go online and look up a tungsten or titanium ring and buy it on Amazon.com starting at \$25. What is that saying about your store that charged even \$100 for the same ring?

So why bring this up now? Well recently there has been a lot of talk about manmade diamonds. Besides the recent controversy about mixing manmade with natural diamonds, some manufacturers are starting to produce lines, including engagement ring lines, showcasing these diamonds. Anyone can go online and find manmade diamond engagement rings being sold with a 1.03ct center, in a white gold solitaire 6 prong setting, for \$768. It begs the question, is there a market out there for this product? The answer will be yes if we allow it. And just like we allowed a market to be created for alternative metals, we will allow a market to be created for manmade diamonds. What is the result? Well some will say that we are just adjusting ourselves to the more price conscious consumer. Others may say the industrial application for these stones is really where the market is. And others may say this is just the way the market is shifting, and it is allowing designers and manufacturers to be creative.



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- Hans Soukup, Inventory Manager Lasker Jewelers, Eau Claire, WI

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Which Inventory System would you rather have?

SOUNDOFF

What do I think? I think retail jewelry stores and jewelry manufacturers have to decide if they are in the fine jewelry business or the costume jewelry business, or perhaps both. Be prepared that profit margin dollars will go down; you will need to start selling more units to make up for the loss in gross profit; and your expense structure will change. More unit sales, may mean more labor to produce those sales, which in turn means higher payroll and related expenses. More unit sales, means higher production costs. More unit sales means more effort to achieve the desired result.

Whichever direction you choose, you must not only embrace it, but prepare for it.

MAN MADE DIAMONDS AND ALTERNATIVE METALS. IS HISTORY REPEATING ITSELF?

Abe Sherman

Ann Arnold's article focused on the marketing aspects of synthetic diamonds and posits that jewelers will have the choice whether or not to sell these goods. My concern isn't about how to market these goods, nor am I going to make the argument for or against carrying them (at this time).



My concern is about disclosure and about the potential for undermining the consumer confidence that supports diamond values worldwide. Until detection methods are ubiquitous in every jewelry store, and jewelers are diligent about checking every single diamond that comes into their shop for repair, I will remain concerned.

The scenario that concerns me is when a man-made diamond ring is sold for \$5,000, for example, but is undisclosed as being synthetic and a year or two later shows up in a different store for a repair. The customer asks for an updated appraisal and this second jeweler, who is not a gemologist and has no business doing the appraisal anyway, does not identify it as being man-made. I don't have to tell you where this story is heading – at some point, someone will be accused of switching the customer's natural diamond with a synthetic.

This won't be happening just one time every now and again. This story will happen multiple times and to enough people that the TV & cable news stations will get a hold of it and they will interview jewelers with their hidden cameras about how jewelers and consumers will be able to tell the difference between natural and the synthetic diamonds.

Of course, this will happen right around Thanksgiving. Some will show off their labs and demonstrate how easy it is to separate the synthetic from natural diamond, but some will just shrug and tell the reporters they can't tell the difference. And that's when consumers will lose confidence in the value of a natural diamond.

So, yes, there will be a market for man-made diamonds, just as there is for CZ's and synthetic moissanite, laser drilled and fracture filled diamonds and glass. But none of those other treated or simulated diamonds has had the potential to disrupt the confidence of the marketplace. TRJ





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U.S. Marine Corps Honors ISG

ISG proud to report that the ISG Community was recently honored by the United States Marine Corps with a US Flag flown over Bagram Air Base, Afghanistan, along with a Commemorative Plaque from Operation Enduring Freedom in recognition for our support of the US Marines stationed in and around the Afghanistan region. This honor follows closely the US Flag presented to the ISG by soldiers of a Forward Operating Base outside the Bagram area in Afghanistan



The ISG Gem Shopping Guide at Bagram enters its 6th year of distribution

Since 2006 the ISG Community has provided information and support to military personnel across the region regarding the many problems with shopping for gemstones and jewelry at the many bazaars and dealers who are located around Bagram AB and many of the Forward Operating Bases. We recognized in 2005 the problems being caused by these dealers who sold grossly misrepresented gemstones to the soldiers who spent significant amounts of their duty pay on gemstones that were virtually worthless. Over the past 6 years the ISG has assisted with research and reporting of the problems for virtually all of the branches of service represented in the Afghanistan

operations area, including providing free copies of our DVD, 10x loupes and Selvyt polish cloths to anyone stationed there with an APO or FPO address. An example of one of these sets can be seen at the right.



This ISG information DVD package is available at no cost to all military and civilian personnel stationed in the Afghanistan region with an APO or FPO address. To receive or send a package please use the special email below. The ISG Community has pledged to keep making this information available to the military until the final soldier has left harm's way there. For more information, please email Email: military@ schoolofgemology.com

The ISG Community will provide free gemological services to any soldier who believes they may have a problem with gemstones purchased in Afghanistan. We urge extreme caution when shopping for gemstones there.

New Smart Phone App for Retail Jewelry Sales

If you're one of the myriad of retail jewelers who have been hearing about the rapid growth of mobile retail apps but don't know where to begin or have the big bucks to finance your own – TryltOn Jewelry may be the answer.

There is something personal and exciting about trying jewelry on in person, but this app serves as a nice substitute. Overall, it is fun playing virtual dress up! Also since it is very easy to use and displays different trends and styles, it could attract a wide audience.



TryltOn Jewelry gives your customers a personal, interactive experience with trying on jewelry from the convenience of their mobile device. They can share the image through Twitter, Facebook and Instagram.

Unlike some mobile apps TryltOn isn't limited to a specific brand. You can upload of all the jewelry you carry in your store and TryltOn also has a variety participating suppliers lined up to for you to offer their lines on your app, too. It offers a range of features your tech savvy customers will love.

The app is available two ways; as a portal app which means a consumer puts in your stores ID to reach your store and as a stand alone with a direct connection to your store. Costs to the jeweler vary which version a jeweler chooses. The TryltOn portal app is available free consumers from the Android and iTunes app stores by searching the name tryiton jewelry.

For more information call Chris the developer, who also happens to be a retail jeweler, at TryltOn Apps 877-438-4646



Furrer Jacot Introduces Lucienne, Its First Collection Of Engagement And Wedding Rings

Falling in love, becoming engaged, and getting married are three of the most important milestones in a couple's life. Nothing is more meaningful, magical, or everlasting, than the symbolism that surrounds the offering of an engagement ring. One of the jeweler's greatest challenges is interpreting the engagement ring's design to reflect the two people and their love for each other. As one of Europe's leading jewelers of customized wedding bands, Furrer Jacot introduced its first collection of solitaire engagement and matching wedding rings in the US called Lucienne by Furrer Jacot.

"By combining our expertise of innovative technologies and traditional craftsmanship, each design for the 23 different rings in this new collection illustrates the intense precision of setting a solitaire diamond in extremely creative mountings," explained Lucas Ruppli, Design Director, Furrer Jacot.

Furrer Jacot is one of the few artisan jewelry companies that designs and produces everything in house at the company's headquarters in Schaffhausen, Switzerland. All of the designs in the collection reflect Furrer Jacot's modern and fresh design approach. The Lucienne series features mountings for a 1carat, 1.5 carat. or 2 carat. solitaire diamond, but each mounting can also be customized for larger carat diamonds upon request. Available in platinum and 18 karat gold, the different mountings are designed with particular elements to express this lifelong bond between the couple. For example, the dome setting is an innovative and fresh approach to the traditional halo setting. The heart and the angel mountings are elegant and subtle and symbolize love, eternity and protection. The flower setting resembles a crocus, which is the first blossom that appears in spring, bursting with passion and energy. A fourth mounting is more retro in design with a split shank, which symbolizes two people sharing their life together.

Love is an all-consuming emotion, intense and yet indefinable. "It seals the most incredible bonds" is the slogan of the new advertising campaign relating to the powerful but invisible bond that joins two people. "These rings testify and seal the most incredible love stories. They are a very personal and individual







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- Your customers will be very pleased with the high quality and attractive styling of Mumma Contour Wedding bands.





reflection of every couple," explains Walter Haeusermann, CEO and owner of Furrer Jacot. "Everything about the making of these rings is beyond perfection. With this collection, we want to widen our offering for the American customer looking for the highest quality and design standards in a ring here to last for a lifetime," added Haeusermann.

Royal Chain Presents New Angelica Catalog

Angelica Collection, The adjustable bracelets and charms from Royal Chain, is beautifully presented in this exquisite new catalog. There are over 500 charms available in silver, yellow gold and rose gold finishes. Bracelets and charms are made in the USA from recycled metals. MSRP starts at \$25. For a copy call Royal Chain Group at 800-622-0960.



Goldstein Diamonds Launches New Website

Revamped and redesigned, this new site, goldsteindiamonds. com, is easy to navigate and full of new features. "Our new website has been created to make the retailer more profitable," says David Goldstein. "One of the features offers customized diamond search reports with your store's information and gives you the ability to create your own pricing."

In addition, the site offers a search by stone function and all files can be downloaded to an individual store's website. To register, simply log on to the site and follow the easy instructions. If you need help, call 480-945-4367 or email info@ goldsteindiamonds.com.



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Rio Grande is Awarded Ethics in Business Award

The Samaritan Counseling Center announced the recipients of its 15th Annual Ethics in Business Awards today. Rio Grande was among three recipients of the Rust Award for Excellence in Ethical Business Practice by a For-Profit Business.

One of the nation's largest suppliers to the jewelry industry, Rio Grande was founded in 1944 by Saul Bell and purchased just over a year ago by Richline Group, a Berkshire Hathaway Company. Rio Grande continues to be led by secondgeneration Bell family Alan, Molly and Eddie Bell, adhering to company principles that are embedded in their unique culture.

"It is really an honor to receive this award, considering the investigative efforts put into this process! Everyone at Rio Grande is proud and humbled to have been recognized as a recipient of this award," says Molly Bell, executive vice president of Rio Grande.

Each of the 31 final nominees for the awards was subject to a rigorous selection process. Samaritan partnered with the Anderson School of Business at the University of New Mexico to complete an exhaustive report of each of the final nominees. A final selection committee then analyzed more than 800 pages of reports to select the final winners.

The Samaritan Counseling Center has hosted the New Mexico Ethics in Business Awards since 2000. The program honors organizations and individuals who promote ethical business conduct for the benefit of the workplace, the marketplace, the environment and the community. Ethical business practice is determined by right organizational and individual behavior based on high standards and exemplary practices.

More information on Rio Grande can be found at riogrande. com. For information on the 2014 Ethics in Business Awards, visit ethicsinbusinessnm.com.



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IGI Offers Free Synthetic Screening Services To DMIA, DDC Members

In response to industry concerns regarding the possible mixing of synthetic diamonds with natural diamond parcels, the International Gemological Institute (IGI) is offering limited-time screenings of up to 100 diamonds – free of charge – to all members of the Diamond Manufacturers and Importers Association (DMIA) and Diamond Dealers Club (DDC), at IGI's New York laboratory.

This free service will benefit the diamond industry as a whole, while allowing IGI to collect crucial, reliable data that will help in determining the prevalence of synthetic and natural diamond mixing. "IGI continuously emphasizes education and transparency, which ultimately increases consumer confidence," said IGI President and CEO Jerry Ehrenwald. "We hope members of the trade will take advantage of this free offering in a collective effort to help resolve the issue." The Institute offers well-established synthetic identification services and utilizes advanced equipment – including De Beers' DiamondSureTM and DiamondViewTM machines – to assist in synthetic determinations.

For more information and/or to make a diamond screening appointment at IGI's new state-of-the-art New York laboratory (The French Building, 551 Fifth Ave.), please contact: David Weinstein at david@igi-usa.com (212) 753-7100 (ext. 3326).

Stuller Promotes Maren Rosen to Vice President, Bridal and Jewelry

Rosen joined Stuller¹s merchandising team in 2011 and began a remarkable transformation in the bridal segment. By quickly assessing the marketplace and converting what she saw into clear action, Maren was able to deliver immediate and sustained results.

In May 2013, she took responsibility for Stuller's jewelry segment and replicated many of the proven bridal processes and strategies, ultimately beginning a similar transformation in jewelry.



"Maren has consistently demonstrat-

ed the speed, flexibility and cross-functional capabilities required to succeed in today¹s rapidly changing marketplace," says Jeff High, chief merchandising officer. "She continues to be a valuable asset to our merchandising team."



Gesswein Announces The Promotion of Greg Gesswein

The Paul H. Gesswein& Co., Inc, announced the recent promotion of Greg Gesswein to the position of Vice President of the company. Located in Bridgeport, Connecticut, Gesswein marks the beginning of the company's 100th anniversary this year.

Mr. Gesswein first began working in the packaging department at Paul H. Gesswein& Co., Inc. in 1992. He graduated from Trinity College in Hartford, CT. in 2003 and began working full time for the company. In 2004, he was named the West Coast Sales Representative. He traveled extensively all over the West Coast. In 2009, he returned to Connecticut and was promoted to the position of Industrial Manager. He focused on the industrial business and increased his managerial involvement in the company. Mr. Gesswein introduced the first Mold Polishing class for Paul H. Gesswein, Inc.

This class offers customers technical training for mold polishing using the latest equipment. The classes have been a great success and the company looks forward to a full class schedule in the coming year.

In 2013, Mr. Gesswein began the two-year Executive MBA program at the University of New Haven. Upon his recent promotion to Vice President. His main focus is to grow the industrial side of the business and find new products that solve problems for customers, improve results, and increase efficiency. Greg Gesswein is a member of the Center for Family Business in Connecticut where he networks and discusses methods to improve family businesses.

JVC Announces New Supply Chain Assurance Product

The Dodd-Frank Act requires SEC-listed companies to publicly disclose if their products contain gold or tungsten from a violent region of Africa, and to also disclose if their products are not "conflict free." Retail jewelers, jewelry manufacturers and suppliers who deal in gold and tungsten come under the Dodd-Frank Amendment by logical extension even though they may not be SEC listed companies. Their suppliers may well be SEC listed.

To meet Dodd-Frank requirements, these SEC listed companies are seeking information from their direct and indirect suppliers about the origin of the gold and tungsten that they buy, as well as assurances that the minerals were not used to fund conflict. JVC's do-it-yourself kit is for these suppliers, enabling them to implement responsible supply chain systems and thus provide

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the information and assurances needed by their customers.

JVC's supply chain assurance system is risk based, meaning that companies using the kit must determine whether there is a risk that their gold or tungsten was used to fund conflict. Determining risk is done by gathering information from suppliers, including details about where minerals were purified, or where they originated. Assessing risk also requires that companies find out if their suppliers have implemented their own supply chain assurance systems. If a company concludes that there is risk in their supply chain – because, for example, their suppliers cannot identify where the gold they use was purified, or because the tungsten they use originated in the Democratic Republic of Congo - they must next devise a strategy to manage the risk. JVC's kit has the templates and guidance you need to gather required information, as well as to assess and manage risk. These include:

- Sample letters requesting information about the gold or tungsten that you buy
- Sample logs to track information you receive

- A sample policy showing your commitment to responsible mineral supply chains
- Sample language to include in vendor contracts, indicating your requirements regarding responsible supply chains
- Templates to use to assess risk, and manage risk if any is found

The kit materials are not the same for every business. Because assurance systems differ, depending on where a company is on the mineral supply chain, and whether it is supplying gold or tungsten, JVC's kit offers customized guidance and templates to meet the obligations created by Dodd Frank. The kit also includes an explanation – and examples – to help users determine their position on the supply chain and exactly which kit materials to use.

The cost of the JVC's kit is \$100 for members and \$250 for non-members. It is available for purchase on JVC's website, www.jvclegal.org, or call JVC at 212-997-2002, for more information.



Jewelers Mutual is offering two videos with great tips for receiving and shipping valuables

To kick off the New Year, Jewelers Mutual has added a new instructional video to Jewelers Mutual's "Safety & Security" web page. The new two-minute animated video provides a five-point checklist to help you protect your interests when receiving and unpacking shipments of valuables. This video serves as a companion to the video JM released late last year conveying instructions to help ensure the safety and security of the merchandise that you ship. Shipping-and-receiving losses continue to be the most common cause of claims filed by Jewelers Mutual's commercial customers.

When receiving merchandise shipments, follow the five steps outlined in the video below.

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TphBNzFgQDg&feature= player_embedded

When shipping merchandise, follow the five steps outlined in the video below!

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xvWcO3QRt6s&feature=p layer_embedded

Midas Chain Launches Licensed NFL Jewelry Collection

Midas Chain is pleased to announce an exciting new fine quality line of officially licensed NFL Necklaces available for delivery nationwide to jewelers. The sterling silver and dazzling color Crystal Collection have been crafted into footballs that have the team logo on a licensed hangtag. The collection is starting to appear in stores nationwide and is getting great feedback from the jewelry industry. This high quality is unique, because of the number of crystals utilized in the manufacturing process. This along with a stylish link chain containing a ball of crystals accenting the chain, are just some of the features of the upscale necklaces.



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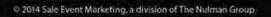
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"We noticed the entire industry was completely lacking a high quality licensed NFL collection of sterling silver and crystal jewelry. We are now the first manufacturer to fill that gap", said VP Sales Roy Merlucci. "We are committed to always creating new and exciting products that bring customers into jewelers stores, he added."

The unique details and craftsmanship of this collection are done with the highest level of standards and quality, which have always been a symbol of an original Midas product. The unique Midas collections can be seen in the almost 300 page catalog that make the perfect countertop reference for jewelers nationally. Jewelers can also request website access to place orders 24/7. For your free catalog please call 877-643-2765 or email sales@midaschain.com.

Omi Privé New Website

Luxury gemstone jewelry designer Omi Privé announces the launch of their colorful website www.omiprive.com. The newly designed site offers a modern, responsive, and clean design, while providing a content-rich experience. The site serves as a personal invitation to view the complete jewelry collection, and provides insight into the story, passion and craftsmanship of Omi Privé.

Stunning high-resolution images create a vivid environment through which users may customize their searches by color, gemstone type, shape and more. The intuitive top navigation allows visitors to easily scroll over the various collections, gemstone education section, and learn about the in-depth history of Omi Privé. The retail jeweler locator interfaces with Google maps to allow customers to easily find an Authorized Omi Privé Retailer. The integrated blog features posts with new product announcements, press exposure, upcoming events and the latest trends in colored gemstone jewelry.

For more information and to view the new website, visit omiprive.com.



Nulman



Gumuchian Hires New Director of Business Development

Luxury brand Gumuchian has hired industry veteran Barbara Palumbo as their new Director of Business Development for the Southern part of the country. "I am thrilled to announce the addition of Barbara Palumbo to the Gumuchian team." said Myriam Gumuchian, Vice President of Sales and one of the company's leading ladies. "Barbara's years of experience and personal passion for jewelry will be the perfect fit with our force of women."

"I could not have selected a position with a company that fits my style, personality, and drive better than this one," states Palumbo, 40, whose previous positions include Senior Vice President for successful online retailer Union Diamond and who currently writes the jewelry blog Adornmentality.com. "I am a long-time admirer of the Gumuchian brand so to be a part of something you have such a love for, with a company you deeply respect and believe in, makes for a wonderful opportunity."

The Gumuchian team will formally introduce Palumbo to clients at this week's Centurion show in Scottsdale, Arizona.

Jewelers MUTUAL INSURANCE COMPANY EARNS A.M. BEST's A+ RATING For the 27th Year In A Row

Jewelers Mutual has earned its 27th consecutive A+ Superior financial strength ratings from A.M. Best, the world's oldest and most authoritative insurance rating and information source. Jewelers Mutual is the only insurer dedicated solely to serving the jewelry industry in the United States and Canada, serving both commercial jewelry businesses and personal jewelry owners. Jewelers Mutual was founded and continues to be headquartered in Neenah, Wisconsin.

"Twenty-seven consecutive years of A+ ratings is an accomplishment we are very proud of at Jewelers Mutual," says the company's president and CEO, Darwin Copeman. "A.M. Best is one of the most respected rating companies in the world. This A+ rating reflects Jewelers Mutual's financial strength and stability over more than a quarter of a century."

Copeman added, "I have heard agents and policyholders refer to Jewelers Mutual as the gold standard in jewelry insurance, and A.M. Best's rating certainly supports our position as a leading insurer for jewelry businesses and jewelry owners."



13 F A



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The Perfect Match: Rose Gold and Morganite

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A.M. Best's ratings are based on a comprehensive quantitative and qualitative evaluation of a company's balance sheet strength, operating performance and business profile, or, where appropriate, the specific nature and details of a debt security. For A.M. Best's Credit Rating Methodology, visit ambest.com.

Jewelers Mutual's consistent underwriting profits, positive cash flow, and a stable stream of net investment income drive the company's profitable results. In addition, an established reinsurance model and well diversified investments limit the company's exposure to unpredictable financial markets and catastrophic events. Jewelers Mutual Insurance Company is debt-free.

Charles Garnier Paris Introduces Britannia 958 Heritage Collection™

Noted sterling silver jewelry designer and manufacturer Charles Garnier Paris premieres a higher standard of silver with the introduction of their new collection the Britannia 958 Heritage Collection™ crafted with 95.8% pure silver. The United States Patent and Trademark Office have recently granted trademarks for the collection. Through a proprietary manufacturing process the new lines will feature silver that is more pure, than sterling silver. The elevated and upscale assortment brings to consumers a nickel-free, hypoallergenic silver that contains 95.8% pure silver, higher than the current 92.5% silver found in sterling. The Charles Garnier Paris exclusive refinement process creates a stronger metal that is shinier and longer lasting.

"Britannia 958 is our premiere collection for silver", commented Charles Garnier Paris Sales Manager Julie Franco "The line gives retailers a competitive advantage and differentiation." The exciting new selections made for everyday wear and will be introduced at the Centurion Show in Scottsdale, AZ from February 2nd – 4th, 2014.

Charles Garnier Paris has been crafting jewelry for over 100 years and is carried in finer jewelry stores across the United States. For more information, high resolution images, or to pull for editorial photo shoots, please contact Joseph Alexander at 213.892.0075 x118 or via email at joseph@ charlesgarnier.com.



GIA Announces Tawfic Farah Memorial Scholarship And Awards Scholarships To 151 Students In 29 Countries

GIA announced the Tawfic Farah Memorial Scholarship, which will be offered beginning June 15, 2014. The annual scholarship will award full tuition for an on-campus student to pursue their Graduate Gemologist (GG) diploma, including the required Diamond Grading, Colored Stone Grading and Gem Identification lab classes. The first scholarship will be for a student at GIA's campus in Mumbai, and will rotate throughout GIA's global campuses in subsequent years. The application period each year will run through Oct. 31 and is available on GIA's website at gia.edu/scholarships.

Tawfic Farah, GIA's vice president of International Operations who passed away in May 2013, made a lasting and important contribution to the Institute's mission by building strong relationships in Africa and the Middle East; working tirelessly to expand education and beneficiation efforts in Africa; and supporting the global expansion of GIA's services. He served GIA and the global public for 10 years with a passion and drive bolstered by humor and compassion.

"Tawfic helped countless people, both students and members of the trade, by working to bring GIA's education programs to communities involved in the gem and jewelry industry throughout the world. He helped build GIA's relationships with governments and to create opportunities and choices where few had previously existed," said Susan Jacques, GIA's president and CEO. "In keeping with the vision Tawfic gifted to GIA, we honor him in a way that reflects his personal passion and continues the great contributions he made to the communities that are part of our industry. His always positive and effervescent presence will be greatly missed."

In January 2014 the Institute awarded its Fall 2013 scholarships to 151 students in 29 countries. The scholarships, totaling more than \$500,000, align with GIA's goals of providing quality education in gemology and jewelry to the trade and aspiring professionals. Supported by private donors and the GIA endowment fund, these scholarships supplement GIA's wider scope of offerings. Recipients are eligible to participate in distance education eLearning courses and on-campus classes in Bangkok, Carlsbad, Hong Kong, London, Mumbai, New York and Taiwan; and at the GIA branch in Dubai.

For photos or press inquiries, please contact Kristin Mahan at kristin.mahan@gia.edu or 760-603-4184.

Moteworthy

Luxury Brand Group Expands Offices and Opens Showroom in Los Angeles, January 2014

Southern California (Orange County) based brand communications, marketing and public relations agency, Luxury Brand Group is pleased to announce that in it's tenth year of business, the agency has expanded into the Los Angeles area opening a private public relations and product placement showroom with offices in the heart of West Hollywood. The showroom is set to officially open January 27 and will allow stylists, celebrities, editors, press, bloggers, and other industry influencers to schedule appointments, experience the breathtaking jewelry and accessory brands, and hand-select the perfect pieces for events, photo shoots and other product placement projects.

LBG currently represents a variety of fine and fashion jewelry brands and has succeeded in building long lasting relationships with stylists and press over the years with an office in Seal Beach (Orange County) and a satellite office in New York City. The 1,000 square foot industrial-loft style showroom, located on Santa Monica Boulevard, is in the center of the entertainment industry. LBG will showcase current jewelry clients and will be announcing new brand partnerships (fashion and accessory) in the coming months.

"Considering Luxury Brand Group's growth within the last decade, the next logical and exciting step to take was an obvious one," explains Frank Proctor, President/CEO of Luxury Brand Group. "To provide our clients with a beautiful meeting place to showcase their brand to press, stylists, celebrities, bloggers and retail buyers is an invaluable benefit to their business. Being a full-service brand communications agency, this next step in our growth truly provides our clients the full gamut of brand exposure in the market, ultimately building consumer awareness and loyalty."

The showroom is by appointment only, and further rounds out the services of LBG which include brand development, public relations, product placement, digital marketing, social media, trade relations, trade show management and marketing. For more information on Luxury Brand Group's services and the showroom, please visit www.LuxBrandGroup.com or contact Jen Cullen Williams at 562.296.5990 jen@luxbrandgroup.com

A World Apart

The new tagline for MARS Jewelry, A World Apart, is part of an overall brand repositioning launching across multiplatforms this month. The brand is boldly distinguishing itself So are ours.

That's why we send exactly the diamonds you ask for.



For over 50 years Mr. Baguette has carried a huge inventory of finely cut baguettes, small fancy shapes and melee. All our diamonds are accurately graded and perfectly matched to meet your specific requirements.

From individual stones to layouts and bag filling we provide jewelers with:

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from competitors by drawing comparisons to the other Mars. The strategy allows for an opportunity to be more playful and memorable. The iconic name is in fact a blend of the initials of the four founding members of the company.

As part of the re-brand, the bridal and fashion jewelry manufacturer is introducing a new logo and planetary inspired color palette, user-friendly trade website and a first-rate, comprehensive, informative catalog available to jewelry retailers across the U.S. The new voice and texture of the brand is designed to solidify for clients that we deliver beyond their expectations, according to Art Sahagian, Vice President of Sales and Marketing.

"We wanted to be clear about the immensity of our product offerings and still be true to who we are – a company committed to custom creations, competitive pricing and above all else, customer service," he said. The new website will feature engagement rings and wedding bands which are easily found by design, size and price. Offering filters to find exactly what you are looking for quickly. All registered MARS retail partners will be able to purchase securely online based on their set terms.

For more information contact Art Sahagian, Vice President of Sales and Marketing at 1-888-592-6277 ext.135.



IGI Re-Certified by The Responsible Jewelry Council

The Responsible Jewellery Council (RJC) announced recently that New York-based service industry member, the International Gemological Institute (IGI) for North & South America, has achieved re-certification by meeting the ethical, social and environmental standards established by the RJC's Member Certification System.

"RJC congratulates IGI – North & South America on achieving re-certification. After a Member has become RJC Certified for the first time, independent verification is required at the end of each certification period to ensure continued conformance and to maintain Certified Member status. The successful verification assessment was conducted by UL, one of the independent third-party auditing firms accredited to the RJC's Member Certification system," says Catherine Sproule, RJC's Chief Executive Officer - Interim.

"We are honored to once again earn this important recognition. As a long-time RJC member, we fully support the Council's commitment to promoting responsible and ethical practices throughout the industry. As IGI – North & South America's core values complement those of the RJC's, we look forward to continuing to work together to educate and further the industry as a whole, while ultimately reinforcing consumer confidence," said IGI President and CEO Jerry Ehrenwald, GG; ASA.

Jewelers Mutual Joins Martha Stewart Weddings To Show Brides-to-be The Love

Valentine's Day comes and goes, but the love for jewelry remains strong as brides-to-be plan the accessories for their weddings. In the days ahead, Martha Stewart Weddings gets ready to kick off a national promotion in which brides have a chance to win beautiful jewelry from Ivanka Trump Fine Jewelry. The promotion involves a partnership with Perfect Circle[®] Jewelry Insurance , the personal jewelry insurance brand of Jewelers Mutual Insurance Company.

As the exclusive jewelry partner of Martha Stewart Weddings "You're Engaged!" sweepstakes (February 15 - March 14), Jewelers Mutual presents Ivanka Trump Fine Jewelry's timeless Signature Oval Diamond Bangle Bracelet valued at \$4950 as the week-one prize. The bracelet features 1.33 carats of 330 stunning white diamonds set in 18k white gold. The sweepstakes includes a partnership with Jewelers Mutual as well as other leading brands including Dessy, Wedding Paper Divas and Crate & Barrel.

"We are thrilled to be working so closely with other prominent brands in the bridal market," said Joel Matthies, senior vice president of personal lines at Jewelers Mutual. "Aligning Perfect Circle Jewelry Insurance with Martha Stewart Weddings and Ivanka Trump Fine Jewelry brings greater awareness to jewelry insurance as an important step in the wedding planning process."

Jewelers Mutual is the nation's leading jewelry insurance specialists who've been insuring jewelry for more than 100 years. Its Perfect Circle Jewelry Insurance coverage provides jewelry owners with worldwide jewelry protection against loss, theft, damage and even mysterious disappearance. *



"Couples underestimate how important the right insurance is for their ring-the symbol of their love-until they need to replace it," says Matthies. "The right insurance means having freedom from worry to wear and enjoy their jewelry anywhere in the world and know that if the unthinkable happens, they're covered."

*Underwritten by Jewelers Mutual Insurance Company, Neenah, Wisconsin. Coverage is subject to underwriting review and approval, and to policy terms and conditions.

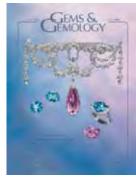
GIA Enhanced Visitor Experience at Tucson 2014 Shows Institute to Hosted Classes; Offered Lab Service, Seminars and More

GIA offered special laboratory services, gem and jewelry seminars, classes and more during the annual Tucson gem shows. The Institute's show offerings were held at the Tucson Convention Center during the American Gem Trade Association Two free seminars explored recent gemological discoveries and research, and the Museum of London's extraordinary Cheapside Hoard exhibit. The Institute also offered two lab classes – colored stone grading and pearl grading – and two fee-based seminars – identifying synthetic diamonds and identifying diamond treatments.

GIA Alumni Association The sponsored its annual dinner, auction and dance event, "Party at the GIA Gem Mine," on Feb. 7 at the Marriott University Park Hotel. GIA's highlights at the 2014 Tucson shows included: GIA Museum Exhibit Attendees of the Tucson Gem and Mineral Show, Feb. 13-16, had the opportunity to preview pieces from the Institute's spring 2014 Carlsbad exhibit, "Gems & Gemology 80th Anniversary." Pieces featured on three different covers of the Institute's award-winning scientific quarterly journal, were on display along with their cover:

Winter 1988. These intense rubellites (ring 13.8 ct; necklace 18.5 ct) are from the Queen Mine, San Diego County, CA. Designed by Jeanne Larson. Courtesy of The Collector Fallbrook, CA; Photo Harold & Erica Van Pelt.







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TRADE SERVICES



HELP WANTED

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as interactive B to B Website. MARS also specializes in custom orders which it also pays commission on. Looking for candidates with experience in diamond bridal jewelry. Most territories available. Generous commission structure. Please email resume to art@marsjewelry.com or call 888-592-6277 x135.



Winner of the JCK Jewelers' Choice Awards and premier luxury jewelry designer is seeking qualified independant sales representatives with high-end jewelry trade experience. West Coast region ind resumes to ive-corpetivehoo.com

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Sales Professional Wanted We are looking for seasoned road teps to sell our very popular line of hand bags and accessories. Minimum 5 years repping other established jewelry lines. Call 845-255-4015 Sebbie Brooks HANDBAG COLLECTION 🗞 Outbound Diamond Sales a sales dynamite. - an entrepreneurial spirit. - relationship builder - team player. - looking for a long term career with great growth potential. If this sounds like you and you're looking to join a rowing company email DiamondInfo101@gmail.com **Sales Representatives Wanted** Midwest based leading fine jewelry manufacturer is looking for Sales Representatives - several territories open! Must have 5+ years direct experience traveling and a strong customer base. Must be self-motivated, have a great work ethic, and be focused on results! Please submit resume to: jewelrypolisher@gmail.com ------------**Reserve This Space** For Your One Inch Help

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Summer 2006. Colombian emerald and diamond necklace with matching earrings designed by Jean Schlumberger for Tiffany & Co. in the 1950's. The three large emeralds in the necklace are 6.65-7.41 ct; the emeralds in the earrings are 3.27 and 4.03 ct. Courtesy of a private collector; Photo Harold & Erica Van Pelt.

Summer 2008. A selection of topaz jewelry and loose faceted stones from the GIA collection. The Belle Époque platinum corsage ornament features a 39.80 ct pink topaz and diamonds. The 9.36 ct blue, 11.39 ct blue and 14.47 ct pink topaz are from the Dr. Edward J. Gübelin Collection. The 11.54 ct blue topaz and sapphire ring set in 18K gold is a gift of Jacques Prades. Gift of Stephen and Eileen Silver, S.H. Silver Co; Photo Harold & Erica Van Pelt.

GIA Show Service Laboratory at AGTA GemFair Show attendees had convenient access to gem identification and country-of-origin services through the GIA Show Service Laboratory. Seasoned GIA gemologists accepted gemstones onsite at the AGTA GemFair.

At the GIA Seminars Magnificent Jewels, Robert Weldon, GIA's manager of photography and visual communications and a noted expert on colored gems, described his quest to photograph and document the historically significant treasures of the Museum of London's Cheapside Hoard. The unrivaled collection of nearly 500 gems and jewelry pieces – believed to have been buried in London in the seventeenth century and undisturbed until 1912 – offered a unique glimpse of Renaissance jewelry.

GIA Education GIA offered two lab classes and two seminars during the AGTA GemFair™.

Colored Stone Grading Lab Class Tuesday through Thursday, Feb. 4-6, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Students developed skills in grading the color, clarity and cut quality of a wide range of colored stones. They also learned the GIA Colored Stone Grading System and how to describe color by hue, tone and saturation; Judge gem quality factors; Improve the consistency and accuracy of colored stone grading skills; and learned about the relationship between light and color and develop color memory. During the Pearl Grading Lab Students discovered how the world's foremost experts determine the quality of Akoya, freshwater, South Sea and Tahitian pearls. They also learned GIA's 7 Pearl Value Factors™ by training with a member of the Institute's internationally respected team of instructors; and learned how to evaluate freshwater and cultured pearls in order to increase



sales and promote the relationship between beauty, value and quality in your merchandise.

Identifying Synthetic Diamonds - through a combination of lecture and hands-on lab using a microscope, students learned how to identify HPHT-grown synthetic diamonds and separate them from natural diamond. They also gained greater insight into the identification of CVD-grown synthetic diamond, and learned how to easily separate synthetic moissanite and synthetic cubic zirconia from diamond. Identifying Diamond Treatments Saturday, Students learned about the most important diamond treatment processes currently used in the gemstone market. Through a combination of lecture and hands-on lab with a microscope, the class covered the nature and treatment identification of diamonds including, laser drilled, fracture filled, HPHT, irradiation, and multiple treatment processes. Students also learned to separate laser manufacturing remnants from treatments.

GIA at the CAD/CAM Pavilion GIA's Jewelry Manufacturing Arts program is at the forefront of jewelry design education – from 3D printer rapid prototyping and casting to prefinishing, setting and buffing. Throughout the AGTA GemFair Tucson, GIA experts answered questions and discussed a variety of relevant topics, including CAD/CAM, zero-shrinkage from CAD file to photopolymer models to rough castings, jewelry engineering priorities, jewelry design concepts, 3D scanning of gemstones and importing content into CAD files for use in making jewelry, and Quality Assurance Benchmarking criteria when CAD Modeling.

Shop Your Way To The Beach

The Smart Show is offering an opportunity to win a six-night, seven-day dream vacation for two simply by doing what you do at trade shows: Shop. For every \$2,500 spent with Smart Show vendors you will be entered for a chance to win an amazing and welldeserved beach getaway from Capital Marketing Concepts. In addition, The Smart show also offers other



great business-building prizes from Kate Peterson, Larry Johnson, The Edge Retail Academy, Diamond Council of America, Leslie McGuire and more. The vacation package includes:

- 6-night hotel accommodations for two at the Viva Wyndham Maya in Mexico or the Viva Wyndham Dominicus Beach in the Dominican Republic
- Round-trip airfare for two departing from the continental USA
- All meals, snacks and alcoholic beverages
- MENTORING FROM THE EDGE RETAIL ACADEMY
- Valued at \$3,000 1 winner
- For three months, The Edge Retail Academy will serve as your coach, helping your identify areas of your business that are falling short of their potential and providing you with proven strategies for improving them.

They'll help you define your sales, profit and inventory targets, giving you directions on how to get there and telling you when you go off track. Bi-weekly phone calls with your personal coach will help you stay the course, and post-call action plans will give you a roadmap to success. (www.edgeretailacademy.com)

LEARN ABOUT YOUR CUSTOMERS WITH KATE

Valued at \$1,800 — 1 winner

What do you really know about your customers and your market? Do you know how much business is out there — and how much your competitors are taking? With a custom demographic report and phone consultation with Kate Peterson, you'll be armed to go into the holiday season knowing more about the people who are — and could be — walking through your doors! Kate's Demographic Analysis and Development Plan provides a comprehensive picture of your customer, using the most current census data and five-year future estimates to report the most significant demographic variables and trends in critical categories including gender, age, household income, employment, and marital status. www. performanceconcepts.net

DIAMOND COUNCIL OF AMERICA PRIZE PACKAGE

Valued at \$298 — 1 winner

- One-year DCA membership: Full DCA membership for one retail store, including access to all of DCA's education courses in diamonds, colored gemstones and sales.
- One Online Diamond Course: Through practice modules and exercises, one front-line sales associate will learn about diamond sales and everyday store operations.
- One Selling Bridal Jewelry Program: One digital workbook and trainer's guidebook that teaches selling techniques, effective communication methods and relationship building to improve your bridal jewelry sales.

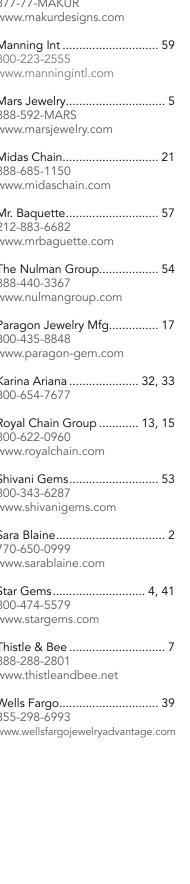
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Retailers Lauded For Best Practices

The 2014 Vendors' Choice Retailer Awards were announced during a gala dinner sponsored by Veranda magazine at the Centurion Scottsdale Show, which ran Feb.1 through 4. All Centurion exhibitors were invited to vote for the retailers they felt exemplify the best practices in three key areas of business: special events, sales associates, and Internet advertising. Additionally, one Retailer Of The Year was named in each of two revenue categories: under \$5 million and \$5 million and above.

Editor-in-chief Clinton Smith (below top) of Veranda opened the evening with welcome remarks.(below center) Karen Goracke, newly named CEO of Borsheims, with exhibitor Sheldon Kwiat of Kwiat, and Kate Kelly Smith, publishing director of the Hearst Design Group (publishers of Veranda) who presented the award. Karen Goracke, said, "We are incredibly proud and honored to be named the best retailer in so many areas, especially with such fine competition."

The winning retailers for 2014 were:

- Best Special Events, first place, Borsheim's, Omaha, NE; second place was a three-way tie between Diamonds Direct USA, Charlotte, NC; Fragments, New York, NY; and Orr's, Pittsburgh, PA.
- In the Best Retail Sales Associates category, Borsheim's again took first place. Second place went to Tiny Jewel Box, Washington, DC.
- The first place winner for the Best Internet Advertising category was Borsheim's, completing a sweep for the jeweler. Second Place went to Fragments, New York, NY.
- The Retailer of the Year in the revenue category of under \$5 million per store was a tie between Marthaler Jewelers, Asheville, NC, and Rogers Jewelry Co., Modesto,

CA. And Borsheim's was named Retailer Of The Year in the \$5 million and over per store category.

Right, the winners' trophies.







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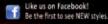


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