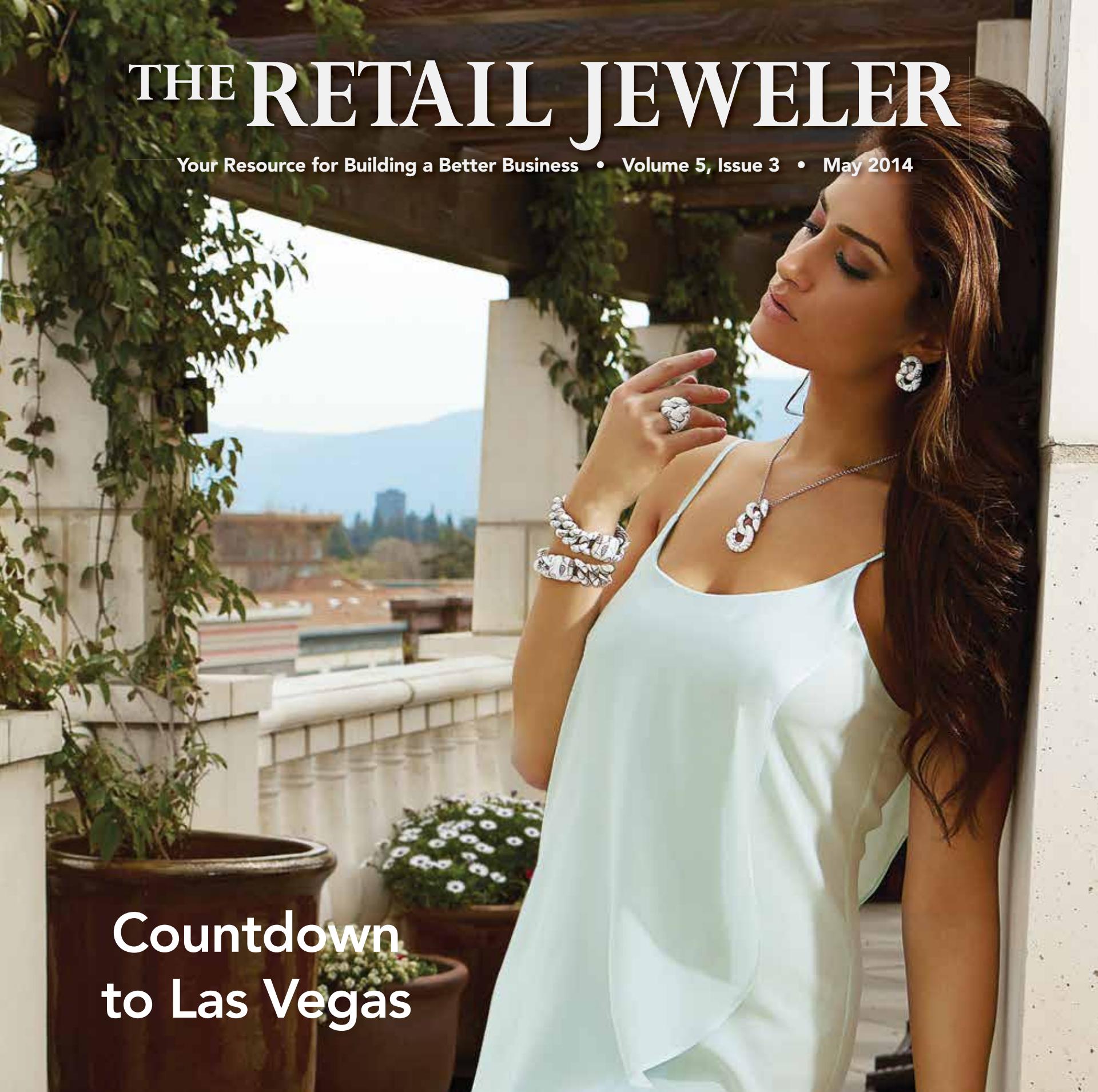


THE RETAIL JEWELER

Your Resource for Building a Better Business • Volume 5, Issue 3 • May 2014



Countdown
to Las Vegas

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Page 47



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COVER: The model is wearing jewelry from The Catena Collection by Belle Étoile, 877.838.6728. Hand-painted white Italian enamel on sterling silver with pavé-set stones. Ring: MSRP \$295., pendant: MSRP \$295., 18" silver rolo chain: \$60., earrings: MSRP \$325., bracelet: MSRP \$1,195.

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THE COST OF DOING BUSINESS REPORT –

By Frank Dallahan

Jewelers of America is now in the process of seeking participants in its annual Cost of Doing Business Report for retail jewelers. JA has been running this important project for as long as I can remember. Except for a one-year hiatus in 2012, JA has collected and published the report for the benefit of the retail jewelry community. Members of the manufacturing, wholesale and publishing firms also benefit from the information contained in the report because it provides a snapshot of the actual operating results of their customer retail jewelers.



The Cost of Doing Business Report is a detailed analysis of key operating statistics that every jeweler can and should use to compare their individual performance results. Measuring results of any business is the responsibility of the owners and it goes to the basic question of "How are we doing?" Measuring results tells them where they are at a particular moment in time. While you may recall the old joke about accountants are those who try to tell the driver where to go by looking out the rear window. The fact is though, unless you know where you are right now, you cannot realistically determine where you should be going and what specific steps you need to take to get there! And to do that, you must drill down into the details of the business.

Looking at last year's report there is much to consider. Frankly, there is much that is concerning about the state of the retail jewelry business. This is especially the case if, as I suspect, the results are typical and projectable to the rest of the retail community. Actually, I think it is entirely likely that the results are projectable and are probably worse, because those who did participate demonstrated they are interested in the information and how they compare. Those who did not participate are likely not interested and my guess is their performance numbers would be lower than those presented in the report.

HOW ARE WE DOING?

Some of the specific areas presented in the report include strategic profit model ratios to look at including:

- Profit margins by store/business type
- Asset Turnover
- Return on Investment
- Return on New Worth (Owners Equity)
- Details on Operating Expenses
- Inventory Turnover
- Sales per square foot
- Gross profit per square foot
- Sales and gross margin per employee
- Payroll by employee



Each of these analyses is categorized by store volume size or appropriate category, making it very easy for an individual retailer to plug in their own numbers. Even better is the fact that for this year, retailers who participate in the data collection phase and complete the survey will receive a valuable customized Performance Analysis Report with comprehensive comparisons of the jeweler's financial data against industry averages to help identify how to improve store performance and profits. They also receive a free copy of the final report. Last but not least, those retailers who do participate will be entered into four weekly drawings where a \$500 cash prize is offered.

JA asks retail jewelers to visit www.profitplanninggroup.com/jewel, to participate on or after April 14, 2014. The survey will be open through May 12.



Today, we live in an information society. This JA program is an excellent opportunity for you to both contribute to the industry's stock of knowledge about itself as well as gain very valuable analysis of your own store. Mark your calendar for April 14th and log on. With your federal tax return completed you will have all of the information right at hand! Clearly, the results will tell you how your store is doing and provide concrete ideas of how you will be able to improve its performance.

**Frank Dallahan**

co-publisher of The Retail Jeweler
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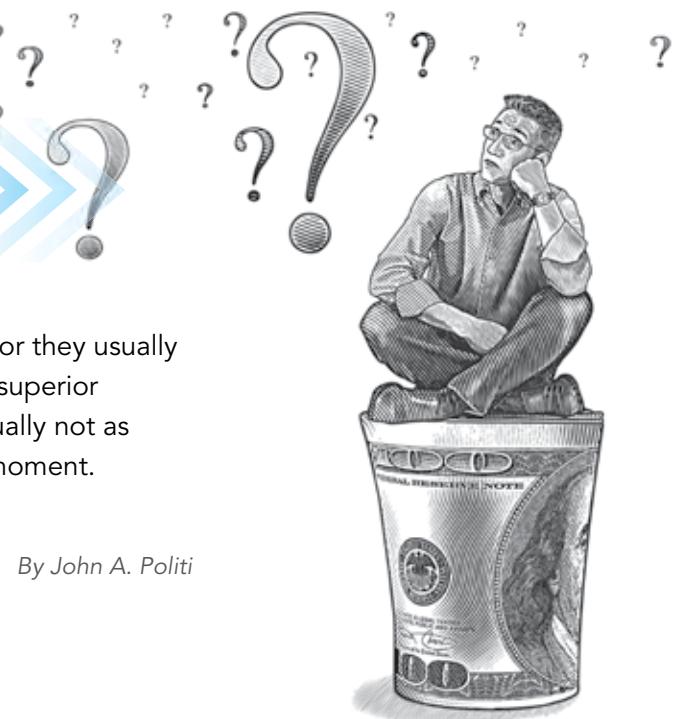
WHAT ME WORRY

Readers have told me after having a conversation with their Financial Advisor they usually have no idea what they were talking about. From time-to-time we all feign superior investment intelligence – somehow stirring the “Alpha” in us all, but it’s usually not as meaningful as we had hoped, and certainly not a “trip the light fantastic” moment.

As the creators of our own human capital we have a responsibility not only to ourselves, but also to our families, employees and customers to be financially literate. Not to espouse our own personal opinions, and certainly not to try and change someone else’s mind, but to at least be able to think and converse in a manner that is not only acceptable, but also absolutely necessary in today’s world of “dark pools”.

A friend of mine whom I admire greatly, was an actor and playwright, his name, William Shakespeare. Willie once wrote, “The lady doth protest too much, methinks.” Today, as seen in translation on babylon.com, the phrase has come to mean that one can “insist so passionately about something not being true that people suspect the opposite of what one is saying.” By the way, Willie’s words appeared in Hamlet, Act III, Scene II. We all could use a primer of what we should consider at a minimum as being well-stocked in the basic understanding of economic theory – what it is, and why it’s important.

The classical economic theory “stresses that economies function most efficiently if everyone is allowed to pursue his or her self interest, in an environment of free and open competition.”



By John A. Politi

Based on the ideas of eighteenth and nineteenth century British economists from Adam Smith (1723-90) through to Alfred Marshall (1842-1946) - <http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition>. In what is considered to be the Standard Economic Model much weight is placed on the assumption that people are rational. Standard economics assumes that people are fully aware of all of the options they possess, and can always rank these options in accordance with their preferences, and always choose the option of what they like best. One should also be aware of the neo classical interpretation of economic theory as proposed by John Maynard Keynes. Keynesian economics is the view that in the short run, especially during recessions, economic output is strongly influenced by aggregate demand (total spending in the economy). In the Keynesian perspective, aggregate demand does not necessarily equal the productive capacity of the economy; instead, it is influenced by a host factors and sometimes behaves erratically, affecting production, employment, and inflation.

“insist so passionately about something not being true that people suspect the opposite of what one is saying.”



Now this might seem as though we’re going from the simple to the sublime, but simply put, Capitalism is a good economic system – businesses employ and pay people to work, people earn money from their work, people can spend their money on things they want. A favorite quotation of mine by Mr. Keynes is, “Capitalism is the astounding belief that the most wickedest of men will do the most wickedest of things for the greatest good of everyone.”

“Capitalism is the astounding belief that the most wickedest of men will do the most wickedest of things for the greatest good of everyone.”

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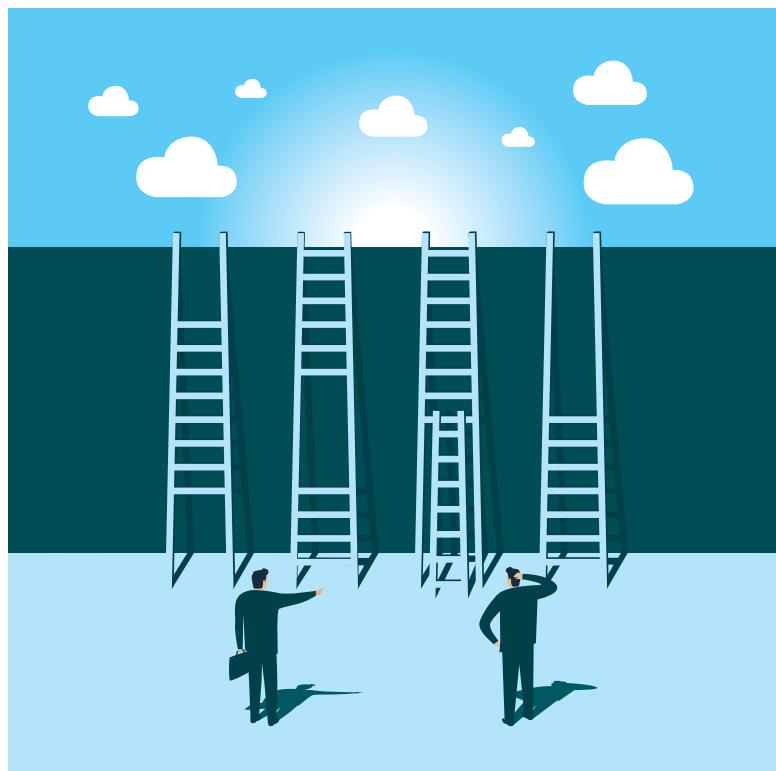
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WHAT ME WORRY

But, when people lose their jobs , businesses close, and people who cannot work, cannot spend money. Now, we have problems in our economy – and our investment portfolios. Keynes said that this is when the government should step in and help people who do not have work - the government should spend more money when people do not have work. Without entering the political arena I should state that not every economist-professional, armchair, or otherwise-agree with Mr. Keynes' theory.



...the government should spend more money when people do not have work

How does all this matter to our investment portfolios?

Well, economic theory drives the policies of central banks and determines the price of money, and the price of money is fundamental to the prices of all our assets. What central banks do can be either helpful or harmful. In the short-term they can dampen volatility while intensifying pressures that distort prices, forming bubbles-which always end in significant reversals. Central banks are essentially limited to manipulating interest rates (the price of money) and flooding the market with liquidity; this is their primary function. Keep in mind though that the central banks are not the primary cause of a distorted

economic policy. It's important to look at the macroeconomic view, but please don't get lost in the weeds.

The central banks are now winding down their extraordinary monetary policies. As for the next crisis, expect more of the same, only doled out in an environment of already low rates and more than adequate liquidity. You should understand how the theory they're using will express itself in the economy and directly affect your investment portfolio. That depends a great deal on the relationship held with your Financial Advisor. Let's face it, there are bad matches out there, just like there are bad matches in all phases of business and in life. My friend tells me her advisor is condescending to her. Worse, she isn't happy with the advisor's communication skills—he rarely gives her timely performance reports in a language a human could understand. On the other hand, there are some really great Advisors out there, and they are both passionate and sincere in seeing that your financial goals and objectives are being correctly addressed. More importantly, they will communicate with you in a manner that is both intelligent and understandable. The more you understand about the economy, regardless if that's your shtick or not, the better you'll understand what your Advisor is telling you – for better or worse. Remember, this is the individual that you've selected as the steward of your investment portfolio.

So do yourself a big favor and go online with your local library and download a free eBook - *The Intelligent Investor: A Book of Practical Counsel*, by Benjamin Graham. This book was first published in 1949 and remains the ubér finance book of our generation. Read and re-read chapters 8 & 20 – let me know what you think. If all else fails, download a copy of Niccolò Machiavelli's *The Prince*. Great reading on a rainy day.

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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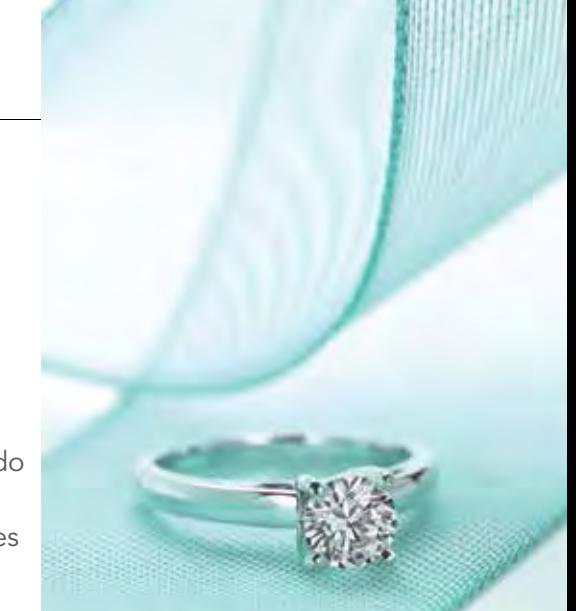
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Building on Bridal

By David Bwown



With the increased interest in bridal over the last couple of years, it is a good time for jewelers to pay attention to this important part of their business, (even if some jewelers wonder if there are any weddings still happening these days!) There is a market and a number of clients have benefitted from improved sales in this respect as consumer confidence has grown.

Building bridal sales requires a long-term commitment and is hardly an easy job. With considerable hard work and patience, you can make bridal sales an essential part of your business. You need to think of several aspects when building your strategy, such as:

- CUSTOMER BENEFITS
- THE RIGHT INVENTORY
- THE RIGHT MARKETING
- A GOOD STAFF

CUSTOMER BENEFITS

Customers need a reason to buy. All customers have some reservations, and it is necessary to understand and answer these reservations to get to the point of purchase. You will be required to remove the risk for them and take a few on your own. For example:

- Do you give customers a diamond protection guarantee?
- Do you have a diamond pledge?
- Do you have an aggressive trade-in policy?
- Is there an aggressive financial plan that you follow?
- Do you follow an aggressive layaway policy?
- How and where will you display the merchandise?
- Is there a Referral program that you have?
- Do you offer free gifts with every purchase of engagement rings?
- Example: a bag with a jewelry cleaner, appraisal, list of warranties/services, how to preserve your jewelry, referral card etc.
- Another good way to cross-market is to partner with other bridal vendors and include coupons or gift cards in this bag

INVENTORY:

Inventory is of prime importance. For the customer to buy, your selection has to be right. It is a fact that a good selling item which is doing well in one store or market will continue to be a good seller elsewhere. There is plenty of data available about the best-selling pieces and their providers. Put the odds in your favor and use this information to your best advantage. You need to ask some important questions:

- What is your share of market in bridal?
- What is your target of bridal sales to total sales do you aim to reach?
- Do you have a branded designer bridal line or a private line?
- Should you have both a branded and your own private label?

- What is the average engagement retail price do you currently sell?
- What is the range of prices you sell?
- Which diamond size and shape do you sell most currently?
- Do you have a good selection of inventory?

MARKETING:

People need to know that you are in the bridal market. A client once told me this very appropriate saying 'running a business without marketing yourself is like winking in the dark! Retailing is a game of numbers and you need to constantly work at marketing in order to get the sales.

- Are you going to need additional marketing support?
- In that case, what about the budget?
- Is there a co-op available?
- What other resources will you need to make it successful?
- What is your definition of success?
- How often will you measure it? Monthly? Quarterly?
- Where will your customers come from?

STAFF:

You must put in as much effort in selling it as you did in buying it. If your staff members are not interested, uneducated or uninformed in the business of selling diamonds, then all your efforts in other areas won't be able to help you either.

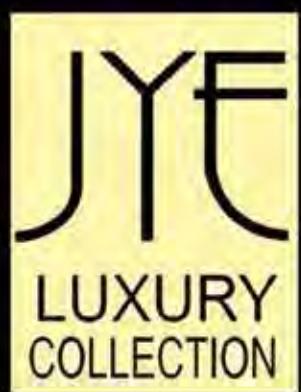
- Which employees can sell bridal effectively?
- Are you enforcing turnovers in your store (where the most qualified staff take over a large diamond sale from an inexperienced member)?
- Which of your employees has the highest average retail in bridal?
- Does your new bridal plan require training? Quick answer: YES!

Following through on these 4 important aspects will help you go a long way in making your bridal business an effective contributor to the sales of your store.



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 Kirby: becka@edgeretailacademy.com or 877-910-3343, ext 1



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An Ounce of Prevention

By David Sexton



Ben Franklin observed, "An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure." That saying is true for all kinds of business-related issues, including preventive maintenance for your building. As a successful jewelry business owner, you must keep your eye on what your customers want. Offering the right merchandise is what keeps your business profitable. In addition, you need to maintain your facilities to manage operational costs prevent expensive repairs and provide a safe environment for your staff. Having to deal with unexpected building repairs or heating and cooling issues isn't just an inconvenience, it's expensive and could even require you to temporarily suspend your operations at a time of year you can least afford to do so. The relatively small investment you make in preventative maintenance on a routine basis throughout the year is a cost effective way to avoid critical systems surprises that could otherwise cost you a lot more.

Keep Your Air Conditioning and Electrical Systems Efficient and Safe

Take the heat off your air conditioner to keep your facilities functioning at its best, Jewelers Mutual recommends following these tips to keep your air conditioner in good repair:

Condenser: If your condenser – that's the actual air conditioning unit heat exchanger located outside your building – is not level, or is dirty or blocked, it will have to work harder. It will reduce the cooling capability, increase your power bills and ultimately decrease the life span of the unit. The good news is keeping your condenser clean takes just a few moments. Clear any trash, dirt or weeds from the unit's surface. Keep grass trimmed and vegetation at a four-foot radius from the unit's coils.

Filter: To keep your air conditioner running at peak performance, change your air filter at least quarterly. Doing so will save energy and improve the overall air quality.

Wiring and refrigeration: Have a qualified service technician check refrigerant pressures as well as electrical connections annually, preferably before you start using it to fight the summer heat.

Crankcase heater: Some air conditioning units employ a crankcase heater to keep lubricating oil at a proper temperature and prevent the oil from mixing with liquid refrigerant. Crankcase heaters must be energized all season and must be operated for at least eight hours before starting the A/C unit. Have a qualified service technician inspect the heater annually, too.

Avoiding sparks in your electrical system

Keep your overall electrical system in good health also requires ongoing preventative maintenance. Consider these steps to reduce your risk of business interruption, poor energy efficiency and even electrical fires:

Electrical equipment room: Your electrical equipment room may be tucked out of the way in a basement or storage room. That likely means you and your staff may not give it the same level of cleaning consideration as other public areas in your facilities. Yet keeping an equipment room clean isn't just about appearances. It's also about safety.

Don't use your electrical equipment room for storage, and limit access to this room to authorized staff who can vacuum regularly to remove dirt, dust, airborne contaminates and debris. They can also periodically assure the area is dry and free from potential sources of water.

Hire an expert: While many jewelry business owners try to cut costs by taking care of routine maintenance issues themselves, electrical work requires competent technical skills. If not done correctly, it can be dangerous. Hire a reputable, qualified electrician for your annual electrical inspections.

Electrical connections: Have a qualified electrician check connections for signs of arcing, corrosion and excessive heating and to ensure proper attachment. The electrician should scan connections using infrared imaging to identify hot spots.

Electrical devices: For all electrical devices, make sure the equipment is in good operating condition and maintained according to the manufacturers' instructions. Keep ventilation openings clean, inspect seals and gaskets regularly, and change or clean filters.

To learn more about operating your business safely and securely, visit JewelersMutual.com or call 800-558-6411.



David Sexton

David Sexton is vice president of loss prevention consulting at Jewelers Mutual Insurance Company. 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.

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GOOGLE THWARTS ONLINE MARKETING SHORT CUTS

By Matthew A. Perosi

Since the dawn of the first public search engine in April 1994, business owners have been struggling to highly rank their website in search results. The search engine optimization, SEO, industry was born to serve this ranking need.

In the mid-1990s, many Internet experts would spend a lot of time figuring out how the engines worked so they could sell website ranking services.

Some early SEO tricks they used, that no longer work, include:

- formatting important words in bold or italic text
- using the same keyword several times on a web page
- excessively hyperlinking many pages to your website using the same words

The SEO experts charged a lot of money to implement these SEO techniques, and they figured out how to build automated systems that did the work for them. Widespread abuse of these ranking techniques from SEO companies, eventually lowered the importance of these factors.

Google has been the target of other types of SEO abuse over the years. Their original method of ranking web pages was by counting the number of other pages on the Internet that linked to your website. They called it PageRank. Google didn't realize that companies would easily abuse PageRank who would simply set up thousands of random named websites to create a massive link strategy. SEO experts could charge a single low fee to have your website listed on all those sites at one time. It took Google years to correct this type of link abuse, and now this type of automated misuse of PageRank is dead. Google recommends that all websites write new content regularly. This request for new content eventually led to another mistreated business model. You can hire someone from another country for \$3 to write a very low quality article of 200 words. This type of writing usually provides little value to your website visitors. Again, Google fought back by creating software that could tell the difference between well-written editorials vs. poorly written blogs, often written by non-native English speakers.

Facebook and Bing also struggle to create an Internet that users can enjoy without the abusive practices of companies that sell SEO services. Any time the Internet community figures out a shortcut to systematize an Internet marketing process, Google, Bing, and Facebook figure out how to shut it down accordingly.

Google now fights back against businesses using those PageRank and content-writing shortcuts. They fight back by



lowering the ranking of websites in search results until all those shortcut methods are removed from your website. That removal process can take more than a year. Historically, every search-ranking shortcut only yields short-term online popularity. If you rely on your website ranking to gain sales, imagine your financial disaster when Google changes your search result ranking for more than a year. We're all looking for a sustainable way to have high ranking. The only method that seems to work is through long-term commitment, listening to what your customers want, and giving it to them. You need to figure out how to show the best product and service on your website.

I recommended that jewelers hire a full time, in-house employee who can manage the website and online marketing. When you consider all the software, hardware, and online service costs involved with online marketing, plus health insurance and payroll, an in-house employee with all the right qualifications might cost upwards of \$75,000 per year. You can also hire an agency as long as they don't use any shortcuts. A retail jeweler should be able to hire a high quality agency for about \$62,000 per year. For that price, they would handle your website and all online marketing for you.

The loss of Google ranking is real. Before hiring one of those alluring, low cost online marketing agencies, ask yourself how they can afford to provide those low cost services. Cutting corners with automation could result in future penalties of your website. Be careful, or drop me an email and I'll give you an unbiased opinion of any agency you are thinking of hiring based on their service plans.



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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INCREASE

By Rick Arnemann

the READABILITY of Your Content Now

Providing intriguing content is vital when attracting an audience online. However, with the overload of information outlets available on the Internet today, one needs to do more to not only gain the attention of an audience but to also keep them around long enough to actually read what you have written. Here are a few tips to increase the readability of your online content:



USE A CATCHY TITLE

Grab the attention of your audience as soon as you can with a thought provoking title. This will help your content stand out among the rest of the Internet noise and will increase the click-through rate. Communicate within your title the information that will interest your audience.



USE SUB-HEADINGS

Reading content online is different than traditional print media. Readers want to quickly identify the main points of an article, to quickly decide if the information is what they are looking for, or whether they need to move on. Utilize sub-headings to make your content easy to navigate and to identify the main points of your content for your readers.



USE SHORT PARAGRAPHS

Short paragraphs allow your readers to quickly scan the content and find exactly what interests them. The easier it is for your audience to identify the information they need, the more likely they are to take the time to read what you have to say.



KEEP IT RELEVANT

Provide valuable information in your content, but be original. Cut out the excess information and get to the point, as readers online do not want to navigate through unnecessary text. Keep your content concise, use simple sentences, and avoid redundancies.



HAVE SHARING OPTIONS

Give your readers the opportunity to help disseminate your content online. Providing social sharing buttons with your content is an easy way to spread your content and increase virality.



Rick Arnemann

Rick Arnemann is CEO of Harmon Group, a full-service marketing firm, specializing in the luxury products and services sector. You can reach Rick at rick.arnemann@harmongrp.com



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Fail to Plan...

Plan to Fail!

By Andrew Kohler

You came up with a winning advertising concept. The design is better than you imagined. The photographer did a superb job. Unfortunately the final piece was delivered after the deadline and it won't appear in time for your event date.

Time marches on and so should your marketing plan. I'll say it again! Time marches on and so should your marketing plan. Unless you sell Christmas trees, your business calendar doesn't start and stop at Christmas. Your marketing plan should be developed around a dynamic rolling calendar. That way individual programs, events or even seasons won't get missed.

By utilizing simple techniques like reverse timelines and rolling calendars you can get your buying in sync with your marketing and your marketing in sync with your selling cycles.

Value Triangle



The Value Triangle is made of three components, **COST**, **TIME** and **QUALITY**

Pressure on one component affects the other two

Example: If there isn't enough TIME to complete the project within the standard turn around time then COST will go up for rush charges or QUALITY may go down due to the rushed timeframe.

A forth component may be **IMPOSSIBILITY**. Sometimes there just isn't enough time or money for the project to be completed within the dictated parameters. Planning ahead will prevent this from happening.

Reverse Timeline

A timeline is a tool for displaying a series of events in chronological order. It can be a list of dates and functions or a graphic showing a long bar labeled with dates, functions etc. The graphic approach is typical of a Gantt chart developed by Henry Gantt in the early 1900s.

Timelines are mostly used to show periods of time between two events. In our case the due date and the start date and critical milestones in between them.

A timeline is helpful for management of unwieldy projects. In these cases, timelines are used to help you know what milestones need to be achieved and under what time schedule.

For a reverse timeline I start with the ultimate due date. For example, the day you want customers to receive a mailing piece. Then, I add the time for each of the functions to determine the start date of the project utilizing some approximated times for key activities. It's important to note that special projects may require some additional time.

Approximate times for
mail, print etc.

- Concept, layout, design 2-4 weeks
 - Photography 1-2 weeks
 - Production 1-2 weeks
 - Printing 1-2 weeks
 - Process for mailing 1 week
 - Mail, First Class 2-3 days, Standard (bulk) 1-6 weeks

Add in extra time at the beginning to work with your advertising agency or other suppliers you use to alert them to the project and review your goals, assumptions, and timing. Their input is valuable to the successful implementation of your project.

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Fail to Plan... Plan to Fail!

Rolling Calendar

A rolling calendar or rolling twelve-month cycle throws out the notion of planning on a calendar year basis. No more planning from Christmas to Christmas.

Imagine a room where 52 pages are displayed each representing a specific week. As one week is completed a new one would take its place. You may not have key projects each week but you do have them throughout the year Christmas, Valentine's Day, Trunk Shows, Ladies Night etc. Keeping in mind that some events may have multiple projects to support them. Using the timeline outlined above and taking the longest lead, and adding some wiggle room will help determine how far in advance you need to start working on the project.

Let's walk through a practical way to assure you have the appropriate planning in place.

Back up your calendar by 4 months for big events.
So August 25 your calendar should say Christmas.
Or November 14 should say Valentines Day

Week #: _____	Date: _____
Event/Holiday This Week: _____	
Item(s): _____	
Advertising In: _____	
Event/Holiday in 90 Days: _____	



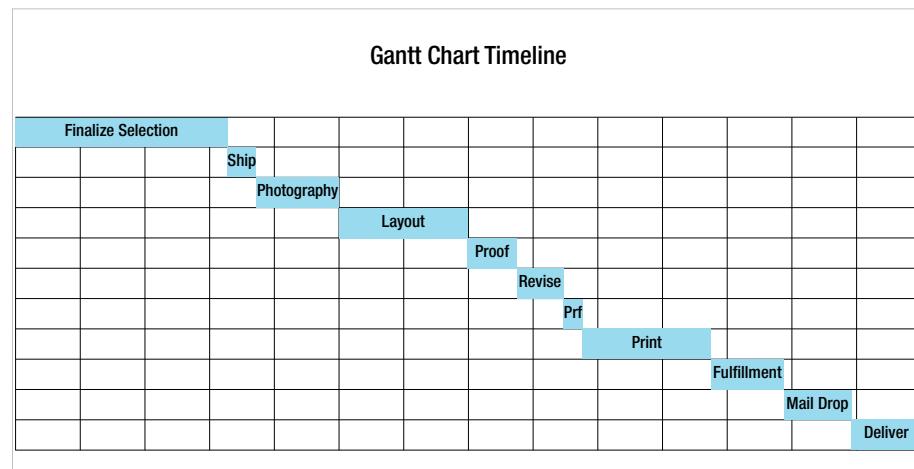
You can also use the Rolling Calendar concept for planning your Social Media

Social Media Planner		Week #				
Channel	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Blog						
Email						
Facebook						
Twitter						
Pinterest						
Web Banner						
Web Event						
Other						
Other						
Other						

The advantages of a proper planning include-

- Allowing adequate time for creative development.
 - More efficient media buys
 - Sufficient time to order and receive inventory of the promoted product
 - Personnel staffing so there are no gaps in coverage
 - Personnel Training so everyone is up to speed
 - Don't forget co-op. As you meet with sales representatives in your store or visit suppliers at shows be sure to ask them what if any co-op they offer. It could come in the form co-op dollars or available graphics or flyers. Whatever they offer should be considered in your marketing plans.

With these simple techniques you'll start planning more for success.



Andrew Kohler

Co-publisher of The Retail Jeweler
Email: Andy@TheRetailJeweler.com

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Why did your customer NOT buy that Necklace?

By Aleah Arundale

Do you know why that woman, who really liked that necklace, walked out without buying it? Because she HAS a necklace!

YES. She likes yours more, but she thinks it would be irresponsible to buy another necklace since she already has a one.



"Well, what is wrong with having lots of necklaces?!"

Sorry. In the down economy many people came to realize they could be happy with less stuff. Today people want less clutter. Getting rid of things people don't need makes them feel good.

WHY don't you buy a new TV?

Well, because you have a TV. You feel it would be extravagant or irresponsible to buy a new one when you already have one. However, what if you could trade your old TV in for a new one! Then you would FEEL GOOD about getting a better TV.

The car industry figured this out. Car companies offer great incentives for trade-ins. Consignment clothes stores are thriving. People feel it's ok to buy new clothes if they get rid of old ones. If you can help that lady trade in her old necklace she will upgrade to your new one!

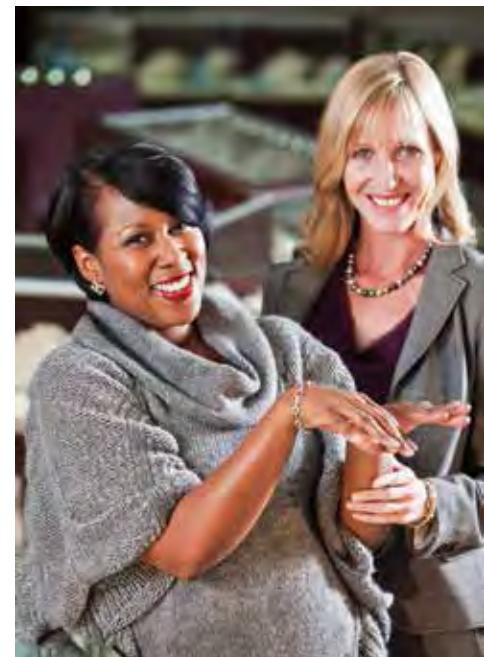
The goal in sales is to get the customer to FEEL GOOD about what they are buying, especially in our industry! We sell emotion. People do not buy luxury items for logical reasons. They BUY jewelry because it makes them FEEL special, richer, smarter, or more attractive. That's why people want diamond grading reports. It helps them FEEL good about what they are buying.

Aleah, How can I be more Eco-Jewelry Friendly??

If you promote and suggest trade-ins, not only will you be more Eco-responsible, but also you will close more sales! Have a promotion to get \$25 off a new watch when you bring in your old watch. When a shopper is looking at a necklace ASK them if they have other necklaces to bring in. You could even consign it for them in your case.

(But Aleah, we already ask if they have any gold to bring in towards this purchase? Asking for gold does not present the same feeling. It makes it about YOU wanting gold and less about THEM feeling good.

It needs to be about them. Make sure you convey you are helping them UP GRADE to a better piece of jewelry.)



The goal in sales is to get the customer to FEEL GOOD about what they are buying



Aleah Arundale

Aleah has never gained one customer by being professional. She is the most fun you can have selling diamonds. She is a third generation GIA Gemologist and a fifth generation jeweler, turned loose diamond wholesaler. Selling diamonds on the road lets her share great ideas with hundreds of different jewelers from all over the country. Sign up for her fun newsletter by emailing her at Aleah@olympiandiamonds.com



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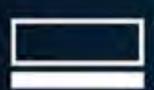


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Survey Shows Exceptionally Strong U.S. Silver Jewelry Sales in 2013

Fifth Consecutive Year of Growth

Silver jewelry sales in the United States were robust in 2013, with 73% of jewelry retailers reporting increased sales last year, according to "Silver Jewelry Buying Trends," a survey conducted by the prominent jewelry trade publication "National Jeweler" on behalf of the Silver Institute's Silver Promotion Service. The survey also finds that silver jewelry has become an increasingly important category for many jewelers for the past several seasons, both in driving sales and providing margin.

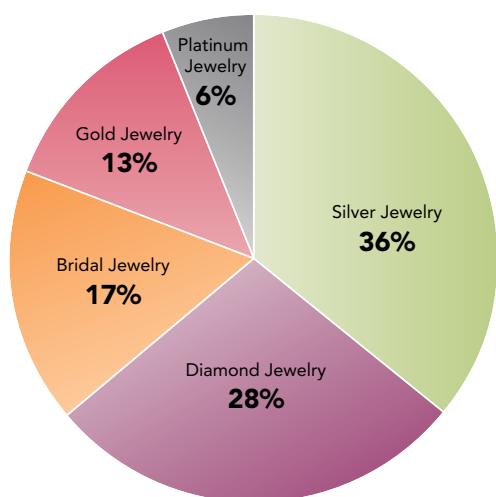
Highlights from the survey include the following:

Retailers said their silver jewelry sales, as a percentage of their overall jewelry sales, were on average 33% of their unit volume and 29% of their dollar volume.

The average increase in 2013 for silver jewelry sales was 17%.

The best maintained margins during the holiday season were as follows:

(Percent rating category as "best")



92% of retailers say they are optimistic that the current silver boom will continue for the next several years.

The survey was fielded in February for the Silver Institute's Silver Promotion Service (SPS). The objective of the SPS is to develop and implement programs designed to enhance silver's image and stimulate demand for silver jewelry in major international markets. This was the fifth consecutive year that the SPS has conducted such a survey.



SPS Director Michael Barlerin commented, "While we already had anecdotal information from our program participants that 2013 had been an exceptional year for them, it was gratifying to see the quantifiable results from the survey. Additionally, the five consecutive year-over-year results are perhaps the most compelling I have ever seen."

For more information on the survey's results, please see: www.silverinstitute.org/site/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/SilverJewelryBuyingTrend2014.pdf

GIA Selected As One Of The Most Ethical Companies

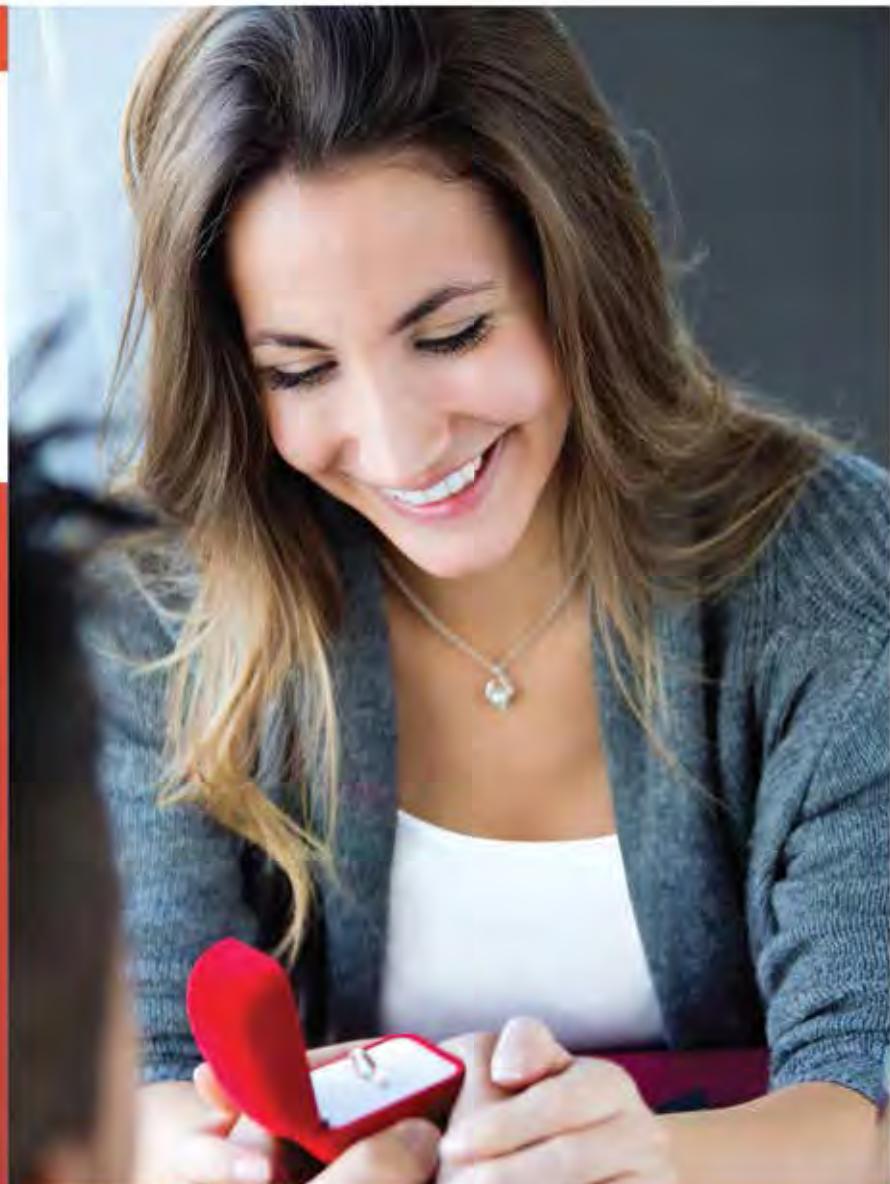
The Ethisphere® Institute has named GIA as a 2014 World's Most Ethical Company®. This is the second year in a row the 83-year old nonprofit Institute has received the designation, which recognizes its continued efforts to build and maintain a superior ethics and compliance program.

GIA's mission is to ensure the public trust in gems and jewelry through research discoveries, education, laboratory services and instrument development. "We're honored to be recognized by the Ethisphere Institute for the second consecutive year. This designation is truly a testament to the tremendous dedication of GIA staff to conduct every aspect of our global activities with the utmost integrity and according to the best principles of ethical business practice. Everything we do revolves around GIA's public-benefit mission, and our compliance program is always a priority," said Susan Jacques, GIA's president and CEO. "The entire community of World's Most Ethical Companies believe that customers, employees, investors and regulators place a high premium on trust and that ethics and good governance are key in earning it," said Ethisphere's Chief Executive Officer, Timothy Erblich. "GIA joins an exclusive community committed to driving performance through leading business practices. We congratulate everyone at GIA for this extraordinary achievement."

To be included in the annual list of the World's Most Ethical Companies, organizations must demonstrate an active role in promoting ethical business practices internally and exceeding legal compliance standards. The Ethisphere Institute is an independent research center dedicated to promoting best practices in business ethics, corporate social responsibility, anti-corruption and sustainability.

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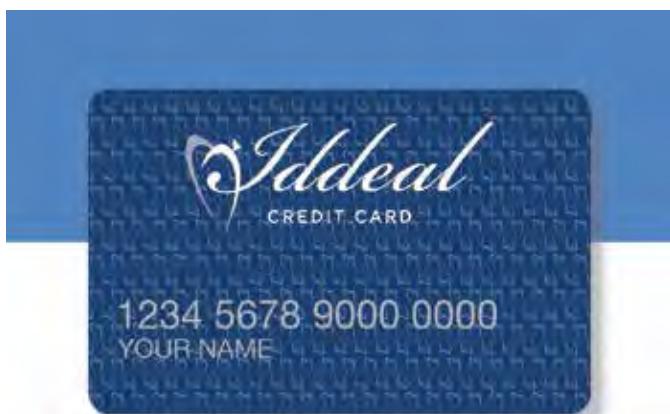
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New and NOTEWORTHY

IDD launches Iddeal Credit Card

Boasting the broadest credit approvals with the highest credit limits, the Iddeal Credit Card is the perfect consumer finance solution for the retailer who wants to increase store sales and grow their business. Specifically designed as a fully integrated point of sale payment solution, the Iddeal Credit Card Program offers an easy one application process with first and second looks and leasing program options; a truly seamless multiple lender participation system.

Retailers who participate in the IDDeal Credit Card program will benefit from NO annual fees, NO monthly charges, NO software and equipment, and NO monthly or annually transaction requirements. Soon to be the industry's preferred choice for consumer finance, become an authorized an IDDeal Credit Card Retailer and start closing more sales today. For more information about this program, call 800-621-1162.



Sandra Biachi Introduces Interchanable Ring Sets

The Montage 14kt white gold ring set allows the ring to be as unique as the woman wearing it. Four interchangeable bands featuring natural Café Diamonds, Caribbean Blue Diamonds as blue as the Caribbean sea, Black Velvet Diamonds perfect for that little black dress and shimmering White Diamonds ensure that Montage can be changed to match any occasion and your every mood. Change the bands within the jacket, wear just the band by itself or together in any combination. Montage, one ring with a multitude of options.

Call 800.442.2632 for more information.



New Color Merchants Catalog

Color Merchants Inc. has released a new 72-page catalog to showcase their extensive product collections. The catalog includes timeless classics plus fashion forward designs and is a must-have for every retail jeweler. Hundreds of styles including precious and semi-precious sets, diamond tennis bracelets, birthstone programs, diamond crosses, their Heart Throb collection, and many more are featured. The catalog is an easy way for every customer to find everything they need.

Additionally, Color Merchants makes ordering even easier. All catalog products can be seen and ordered online at www.ColorMerchants.com. Retailers are encouraged to view or download the full catalog on the web or call 1-800-356-3851 to request your copy.



M. Geller E-Tools: Helping You Build a Site for More Eyes

Celebrating their 30th year of business, loose diamond wholesaler M. Geller is experiencing increased interest from retail jewelers in the newest editions of their two e-tool programs. The Bridal Ring Creator™ program integrates with a jewelry store's web site, allowing their customers to select their own diamond from among the 40,000-plus listed as well as their choice of setting styles and metals. Their First Choice™ loose diamond search programs is a customer-facing search tool that allows a store associate to search for the diamond that's right for each customer and generate an order for it to be sent to them for in-store viewing with the customer.

M. Geller's e-tools—which are iPad friendly—and the company's years of product knowledge and expertise is how they "Make It Easy" for you to build and maintain relationships with your customers while updating your web site. For more information, call M. Geller at 800-643-5537.



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New and NOTEWORTHY

Perfect Product Every Time

Greg Anthony Jewelry, a Los Angeles based jewelry manufacturer, has implemented CAD-CAM methodology in its business. CAD-CAM (computer-aided design) and CAM (computer-aided manufacturing), gives both the manufacturer and the retail jeweler peace of mind that a flawless product is being created. Another benefit of the CAD-CAM process is it allows clients to receive 3D images of the product, during every stage of the design. As a result, clients can alter pieces as they desire thereby providing a perfect product, every time. CAD-CAM from Greg Anthony Jewelry also means a product developed with this method is made entirely in the United States.

"This technology allows us to deliver within days of receiving an order. It has taken the industry to a whole new level, where customer satisfaction is at an all time high throughout the country" stated company C.E.O. Greg Babikian, "in fact, our clients find the greatest solace in that they are part of the process and can view the complete piece before it is even manufactured."

The CAD design and CAM process has created a wave of excitement within the jewelry industry, one that is certainly measurable by the success of companies like Greg Anthony Jewelry. The days of guess work and complex ordering systems are passé in the industry, because new technologies utilizing computer software have taken the playing field to a whole new level. One that celebrates simpler and easier times for the jewelry retailer, providing for a marketplace that has greater efficiency with built in affordability. Call 213-627-2130 for more information.



Charles & Colvard's Lulu Avenue® Signs License Agreement with Frances Gadbois to Be Exclusive Designer

Charles & Colvard, Ltd.'s (NASDAQ:CTHR) sales division, Lulu Avenue®, has signed a new exclusive, design and license agreement with Frances Gadbois, effective immediately. Its prior license agreement with JudeFrances Jewelry was terminated with mutual consent of both parties.

The agreement with Frances Gadbois, who designed the fashion and moissanite jewelry collections for Lulu Avenue® under its prior agreement with JudeFrances Jewelry, calls for Ms. Gadbois to continue to design fashion and moissanite jewelry for Lulu Avenue®. As the designer of the Lulu Avenue® collection, Ms. Gadbois has devoted significant amounts of her time to the collection, creating classic, elegant, and trend-setting designs.

Michelle Jones, President of Lulu Avenue®, said, "We are extremely pleased with Frances Gadbois' spectacular designs, and look forward to our continued partnership with her. Having secured Frances' availability to create exclusive designs, we believe, enables even greater collaboration and creativity as we grow our direct sales business."

Frances Gadbois said, "Working with Lulu Avenue® over the past year, seeing the tremendous success of our stellar Style Advisors, has inspired me to continue designing creative jewelry that is stunning and on-trend. I look forward to devoting my time to Lulu Avenue® and working closely with the team."

Randy N. McCullough, Chief Executive Officer of Charles & Colvard, said, "We believe that this agreement with Frances will propel Lulu Avenue® to the next stage of its growth, and strengthen the appeal of our jewelry offerings to a wide variety of customers through our Style Advisors."

Support for Generation Rescue

Royal Chain Group supports Generation Rescue through its sales of their Angelica Collection adjustable bracelets. This year, \$.25 of each piece is donated to Generation Rescue, a non-profit organization that provides treatment assistance, information, and hope to families affected by autism. This bracelet was designed specifically for the charity and is available in yellow, silver, or rose (as shown).

Angelica is 100% designed and made in the USA from recycled metals. MSRP \$25
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- Silver representing 31% of retailer's unit volume
and 27% of dollars.
- The Holiday Season's best maintained margin, by far!



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*Results based on National Jeweler Annual Silver Survey

SILVER JEWELRY

SILVER PROMOTION SERVICE/
NATIONAL JEWELER SURVEY



Fast Facts: 2013 Results and Five-Year Trend



73% of retailers reported sales increases in 2013 over the prior year.



The average increase reported was **17%**.



36% of retailers voted silver as having delivered the best maintained margin during the 2013 Holiday season.



Percentages voted best for other categories: Diamond jewelry **28%**; Bridal jewelry **17%**; Gold jewelry **13%**; and Platinum jewelry **6%**



65% or more have reported increasing their inventory of silver jewelry since 2009



Silver jewelry consistently is one third of unit sales and close to **29%** of dollar sales



63% of retailers report silver jewelry is a very important category



During this 5 year period **92%** or more of those surveyed are optimistic about the silver sales boom continuing

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SILVER PROMOTION SERVICE/ NATIONAL JEWELER SURVEY

Fast Comments from the survey from retailers are interesting and instructive and possibly provocative?

Fast Question:
How do your silver sales compare?

- "As silver becomes a more affordable option for customers, the designs and styles are becoming much better"
- "It drives important traffic into the store"
- "Silver allows us to have the price point we need for our customers"
- "Margins are better. Multiple sales. Self-purchases are better"
- "Very upbeat on silver"
- "Category is growing every year"
- "Ten years ago, I never thought ten years ago I would ever carry as much silver product, but the industry has developed quite a following"
- "Leads to other sales"
- "Silver jewelry is here to stay"

Fast Question:
How does your sales and margin story compare with these jewelers' comments?



As seen in
InStyle
MAY 2014



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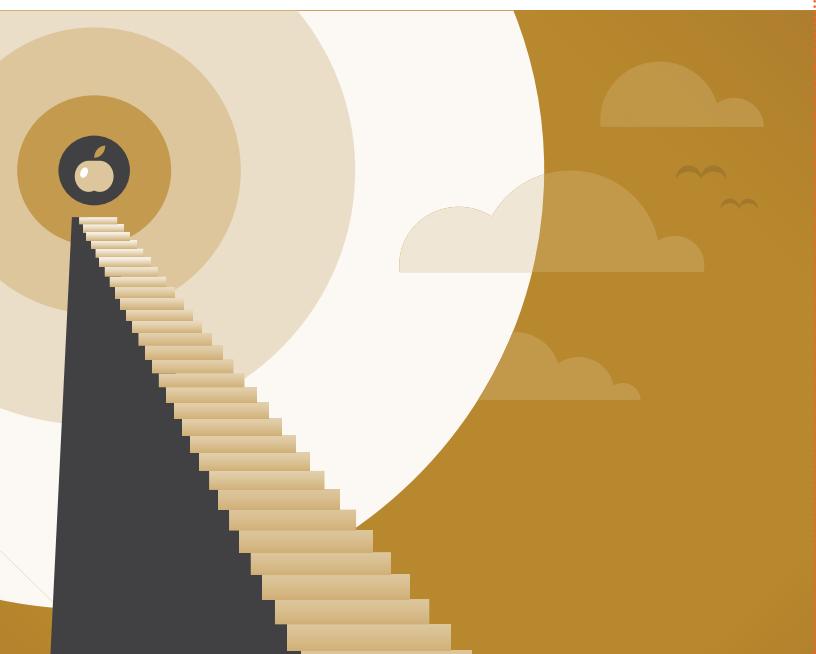
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HIGHER HANGING FRUIT



Last issue, I wrote about some of the most common display mistakes that I see in my visits to independent stores around the US. I commented that some/many of the "errors" were in fact rather easy fixes that will make a big difference in the store's success. Hopefully you were motivated to examine your own store's situation, identify problem areas and take corrective action. So much for this "lowest-hanging fruit." It is time to reach up a bit higher and take a few more bites.

C olor

Pay attention to color in the case. Everywhere your customer goes in their daily routine, colors mean something. Red lights/yellow lights/green lights. Yellow cabs, Orange vests, Pink ribbons. Be certain that you are aware of color in your showcases as well because whether it is voiced or not, your customer is conditioned to assume that the ring on the white ring finger in a case full of beige elements means something is different about it. The truth is, maybe it does and maybe it doesn't. Take this conditioning and use it to your advantage by placing a few highlighted pieces you want most to sell on elements of a different color. As we discussed last issue, you want to display the items you want most to sell in a manner that insures everyone sees THAT piece, increasing the number of chances someone will buy it. Conversely, when you are using displays of multiple colors for no reason (other than you didn't have the right color element) you confuse the customer and undermine your sales opportunity. A hodge-podge showcase full of displays of many colors for no apparent reason is a bad idea.

By Larry Johnson

Vendor supplied Materials

Think twice before using every free display a vendor gives you.

I know it is tempting to put that shiny new display from your supplier in the showcase but ask yourself if you are making more work for yourself in the long run. Now you have introduced a brand (other than your own store brand) to the client and you must explain to the interested customer who (or what) this new line is. You are actually now having to "sell the new brand name" before you can "sell the piece." If the merchandise is in your regular store displays, you only have to sell the piece. Sometimes these vendor displays are a strange color combination or too big or too over-logoed to look good in your store. My rules of thumb are:

- Use the vendor's display if your customer comes in asking for that line by name. (ForeverMark, Rolex or Tacori)
- Use the vendor's display if it has some feature that helps sell the line and you cannot duplicate that feature with your own display elements. (dancing diamonds or Hearts on Fire)
- Vendor provided displays get extra points with me if they have the retail store brand name emphasized on the display as well as the name of the line. (The Acme Diamond Collection by Joe's Jewelers)

Another side note about this subject bears some additional emphasis. If you choose to use a shiny new, fancy vendor provided display in your bridal case, make certain the displays with your store brand goods adjacent to that vendor display look new too. After all, most independent retailers will make more profit dollars if they sell their own brand ring as opposed to one from that designer. If your store brand pieces are being displayed on old, soiled, shopworn elements, right next to that new display from the designer, your goods will compare poorly by presentation and could cost you the sale. Go ahead and use the shiny, new display but spend a few dollars and make sure your goods look great too.

Next issue, we will climb higher in the tree and find other fruit that is ripe for the picking. Issues like signage in the case, where to put things in the case for the best sales and using your store sales data to display appropriately will be our next targets. If you have any comments, questions, and suggestions of your own or would like a copy of the earlier article on this topic, drop me an email at Larry@LarryJohnsonConsulting.com. Success in retail jewelry requires intention, diligence and a strategy of seeking constant improvement. Fixing simple errors is obviously a good start.



Larry Johnson

Larry Johnson is the author of "The complete guide to effective jewelry display." The Larry Johnson Consulting Group. (www.LarryJohnsonConsulting.com) is dedicated to helping independent jewelers and manufacturers improve their visual merchandising strategies and displays. He is affiliated with the Edge Retail Academy. You can reach him at 817-980-2135 or Larry@LarryJohnsonConsulting.com.



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The logo for SILVER features a stylized four-pointed star or flower design composed of interlocking lines, positioned above the word "SILVER". The "S" and "I" are in a tall, narrow serif font, while "L", "V", and "E" are in a wider, bold serif font. A registered trademark symbol (TM) is located at the top right of the "R".

Kelim Jewelry Design



Phillip Gavriel

Thistle & Bee



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New and NOTEWORTHY

The Edge Retail Academy Introduces "Health Insurance for Your Inventory"

The Edge Retail Academy introduced a new program designed to help jewelry retailers improve the strength and profitability of their inventory through one-on-one assistance from industry merchandising and inventory leader, Sally Furrer. Christened "Health Insurance for Your Inventory", the program offers assistance to jewelry retailers on a per project basis, with no long-term contract required. For stores burdened with aging inventory, or requiring a transfusion of new brands or assortments, Furrer will determine the scope of the project on a case-per-case basis and provide a quote for improving the overall health of the client's inventory and merchandising activities. Results are guaranteed.

"The Edge Retail Academy is fortunate to have one of the industry's leading specialists in inventory and merchandising on its team," says David Brown, founder of The Edge Retail Academy. "Sally Furrer has decades of high-level experience, including tenures as VP of Merchandising for Robbins Bros. and owner of her own successful consulting service specializing in merchandising, product development, supply management and more. With the introduction of our program, Health Insurance for Your Inventory, jewelers can now hire her to make a 'house call,' so to speak; take the pulse of their inventory; and prescribe steps to make it more robust."

Cost is based on the size of the project and the amount of time required. It could be as simple as three hours a week over three months including two on-site visits. Retail jewelers are given the parameters and fees up front, and sign up for that project only, with no need to commit to the Academy's mentoring program.

Sally Furrer is a Merchandise Specialist and Business Mentor for the Edge Retail Academy. Her experience in jewelry retail began in her family's Montreal, Canada jewelry stores. Over the years, she has served as a sales associate for the jewelry chain Bucherer in Switzerland; worked in Europe's SSEF gemological lab; and been employed at



Cartier. Earning GIA degrees in Jewelry Design and Gemology, Furrer eventually relocated to the U.S. where she worked as a colored stone wholesaler, and then for Robbins Bros., the World's Biggest Engagement Ring Store, where she became Vice President of Merchandising. Following her 22-year tenure at Robbins, she accepted a position as Vice President of The Shane Company, a \$300 million national retailer; then in 2007, founded her own consulting service, working extensively with jewelry companies in the retail, wholesale and non-profit sectors. Backed by decades of experience and numerous trips to tradeshows and buying expeditions in Bangkok, Hong Kong, Basel, Tel Aviv, Antwerp and New York, Sally Furrer is a skilled mentor in the areas of merchandising, product development, team building, diamond buying and supply chain management.

"You go to a doctor for general complaints," Brown states. "But for specific problems, you rely on a specialist. When it comes to inventory and merchandising, Sally Furrer is that specialist."

Growth at M. Geller to Better Serve Their Customers

Loose diamond wholesaler, M. Geller continues to build a stronger team in order to better serve their customers. The company has now announced the addition of Account Executives, Zach Grosser and Joseph Busuito. Retail jewelers will primarily get to know Zach and Joseph as their go-to guys when first learning about the many advantages of working with M. Geller as a source for special order diamonds. But both bring a lot of energy and innovation to the table as the company develops paths to better serving their customers.



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Parlé
800.635.9800



Diancee Bridal Collection

This 14kt white and rose gold two-tone engagement ring is set with a 0.40 ctw. of diamonds. Handcrafted in USA. MSRP \$1,750.

Paragon Couture Group
800.435.6664

Schlusselberg-Global

Sparkle by the Yard(TM) necklace features 14 bezel-set diamonds in an 18-inch necklace. This new concept comes in classic yellow and white gold, but also rose gold. MSRP ranges from \$900 to \$4000.

Schlusselberg-Global
800.351.0099



Zorab

This dramatic rubellite ring (Style 21116Z) features over 30 carats of pink rubellite accented with black diamonds, white diamonds and 18kt gold. MSRP \$23,000.

Zorab Atelier de Creation
818.400.5583



S&R Designs

From the Four Keeps collection lockets and charms offers open-able sterling silver lockets set with natural stones and an extensive range of charming treasures to be kept inside. MSRP; Lockets from \$250. Charms from \$50.

S&R Designs
856.985.0303



Color Craft

This beautiful diamond and honey quartz earring contains 0.25 ctw. of diamonds and a 3.70 ct. honey quartz. MSRP \$800.

Color Craft
212.840.1881



LeStage

The LeStage Convertible Collection® crafted in sterling silver features easily interchangeable centerpieces in a wide variety of motifs and designs. Featured piece with diamonds MSRP \$499.

LeStage
508.695.7038

Jane Taylor

From the Rosebud Collection, 14kt and 18kt rose gold hook bracelet with .55ctw lavender amethyst. The MSRP is \$1,890.

Jane Taylor Jewelry, LLC
413.256.8404





Frieda Rothman

Iconic Metropolitan Flora three set bangle stack. Black rhodium, 14kt matte gold, and hand-cut CZs. MSRP \$650.

Freida Rothman
718.513.4114

Elizabeth Buenaventura

Primavera Stud of 14kt gold set with 0.11ctw of diamonds. Studs are sold individually, style #: WWEGD-001, MSRP: \$415.

Elizabeth Buenaventura
212.921.9675



Berco

Paw print pendants set with Swarovski crystals. These sterling silver pendants are perfect for animal lovers and customizable with initial charms. Also available in plain high polish silver. MSRP for the pendant is \$125. Initial charms \$25 each.

Berco
800.621.0668



Gina Pankowski

This Verve bracelet is in 18kt gold with diamonds channel set in freely moving rings. The largest diameter link is 12mm. The shapes of the links are graduated and roll freely over your wrist. MSRP: \$11,000.

Gina Pankowski
206.288.6668

Artistry, Ltd.

Stunning London blue topaz and diamond (.13ct) necklace in 14kt white gold with 16"/18" chain. MSRP, \$775. Matching earrings available.

Artistry, Ltd.
888.674.3250



Marco Moore

Marco Moore numbered limited edition to 499. 14kt rose gold set with a 14ct smoky quartz, accented with 0.47ctw of rubies and 0.19ctw of diamonds. MSRP \$1,295.

MARCO MOORE
212.575.2090



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New and NOTEWORTHY

White House Announces and Implements An Immediate Ban On Ivory

JVC has received information from the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service that the comprehensive ivory ban announced by the White House as part of their new National Strategy for Combating Wildlife Trafficking goes into effect immediately. The White House has stated that this ban is the best way to help ensure that U.S. markets do not contribute to the further decline of African elephants in the wild.

The comprehensive strategy includes:

- All commercial imports of African elephant ivory, including antiques, are prohibited.
- All commercial exports are prohibited, except for bona fide antiques, certain noncommercial items, and in exceptional circumstances permitted under the Endangered Species Act.
- All sales of ivory across state lines are banned, except for bona fide antiques. Sales within a state are also banned, unless the seller can demonstrate an item was lawfully imported prior to 1990 for African elephants and 1975 for Asian elephants.

To qualify as an antique, an item must be more than 100 years old and meet other requirements under the Endangered Species Act. The burden is now on the importer, exporter or seller to demonstrate that an item meets these criteria.

Individuals are limited to importing two African elephant sport-hunter trophies per year. (Previously, this was unlimited.)

The current rules for Asian ivory remain in place. Asian elephant ivory trade is permitted, with proper permits from and declaration to USFWS, only if it is a bona fide antique, or if it is pre-convention (removed from the wild prior to June 14, 1976, has not been commercially held, and is accompanied by a pre-Act affidavit. Pre-convention Asian elephant ivory can only be sold intrastate.)

Any questions on current imports and exports of plant and wildlife products can be directed to Sara Yood at sara@jvclegal.org or the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service at www.fws.gov. or JVC at www.jvclegal.org.



Gemvision Retires The Revo540CX

Gemvision's mission to deliver current, relevant tools and services to jewelry retailers and manufacturers in today's dynamic market is driven by change. For this reason, Gemvision is announcing the retirement of the Revo540 Milling System.

In August of 2003, Gemvision launched the first Revo540 mill, offering a turnkey CAM solution to complement its Matrix CAD counterpart. Gemvision led the industry first-to-market with a CNC mill specifically for the jewelry industry, boasting fixtures designed specifically for standard jewelry items, and it continues to be the industry leader to this day.

"We strongly believe that the Revo540CX ease-of-use, simple integration into existing manufacturing processes and low cost consumables is an ideal turnkey solution for manufacturing jewelers. But we also want to stay focused on how to provide the most value to our clients." says Doug Kerns, Director of Sales for Gemvision.

As the jewelry business continues to evolve, so does the responsibility for leaders in all sectors of the industry. When trends emerge that others may perceive as problems, Gemvision confronts them as opportunities to deliver products and services that help retail and manufacturing-based jewelers. "When we look to the future, we have to focus on tools and services that make the retail jeweler the hero," says Jeff High, President of Gemvision and Chief Merchandising Officer of Stuller. "We will be concentrating Gemvision's design and development efforts on providing tools and services that create a unique customer experience for retailers around the world. This allows jewelers to focus on their own businesses and customer's, while letting Gemvision focus on what that same customer will demand next year, five years from now, and beyond."

Gemvision will continue to offer warranties, support, and training on all Revo540 products. The Gemvision support team is standing by to answer your calls, assist with tool path creation, and offer training classes from basic to advanced levels, allowing developmental efforts to focus on creating the most robust tools for the future. Gemvision is imagining tomorrow's technology today.



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New and NOTEWORTHY

Rio Grande and Metal Adventures Introduce New WHITE COPPRclay™

Rio Grande and Metal Adventures present another great advance in metal clay: WHITE COPPRclay™.

WHITE COPPRclay widens the design opportunities for base metal clay artists by adding a third color to the available palette. In addition to the bright yellow of BRONZclay™ and the rosy pink of original COPPRclay™, the silvery gray of WHITE COPPRclay provides new design options for the jewelry-maker.

Like other clay varieties, it can be textured, or accented with color using oxidizers or patinas, or simply polished to a bright white shine. After firing, the solid metal piece that emerges from the kiln is an alloy of nickel and copper. WHITE COPPRclay adds contrast to metal clay jewelry designs and hollowware creations:

- Create accent pieces that, after firing, can be partnered with other metal components.
- Before firing, layer accent pieces can be layered with original COPPRclay™.
- Stack layers of clay extrude and slice thinly to create mokume gane-like wood grain patterns.

WHITE COPPRclay™ is available in 30g, 100g and 200g packages, suited to the individual studio, the classroom or more production-minded environments.

Jewelry-makers and clay artists are invited to visit riogrande.com to see the entire line of metal clays as well as the almost endless selection of tools, findings and accessories that make this medium so creatively rewarding.



Emmett Receives Antonio C. Bonanno Award For Excellence in Gemology

Dr. John Emmett received the Accredited Gemologists Association Antonio C. Bonanno Award for Excellence in Gemology in Tucson. The Bonanno Award recognizes those who have made significant contributions to the gemological field.

Dr. Emmett's contributions to gemological research are numerous. In the 1990s, John studied heat treatment of ruby and sapphire and today is the world's foremost corundum enhancement expert. His work in educating traditional gemologists is where he excelled. For nearly two decades he has cooperated with the former AGTA GTC and the GIA, along with a host of other gemological organizations and individual gemologists to advance knowledge about treatments and their detection. He was instrumental in unmasking the beryllium diffusion of corundum through a series of experiments that he designed and conducted. He worked tirelessly to train gemologists in modern scientific methods and encourage gemology to move beyond theory to experimentation in an effort to understand the identification and treatment issues facing this industry.

His work has been largely self-funded, donating his time and home lab. Because of his work, with its emphasis on experimentation as a fundamental part of the gemological process, gemologists now have a better understanding of the causes of color not just in corundum, but also in all gemstones. This idea of experimentation as a means to understanding has revolutionized the science of gemology. John has repeatedly stressed that knowledge is the common property of all humanity and has willingly shared his expertise with that principle in mind.

Dune Jewelry Announces Its Product Launch

"Live for the moment, then take it with you™" is the guiding principle of this Boston based jewelry manufacturer. This has been a dream in the making for self-taught jewelry designer Holly Daniels Christensen. Raised on Cape Cod, her summers were spent mostly on Marconi Beach in Wellfleet, Massachusetts. "To be able to combine my fond memories and love I have for the beach, and generate rare, beach inspired accessories with my dedicated and creative team is something I have always wanted to be able to do. We don't just sell jewelry, we preserve cherished moments, we sell memories that people will keep with them for a lifetime," says Christensen.

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New and NOTEWORTHY

Dune Jewelry is a keepsake, collectible jewelry line made with sterling silver & beach sand from your most cherished coastal memories. They are modern, beautiful accessories with meaning... accessories that hold a memory! Carry a piece of sun, sand and surf wherever you go with Dune's unique collection. "People have such a strong emotional attachment to specific beaches, and jewelry is a great way to keep those memories alive and with you at all times," says Christensen, Owner and Creator of Dune Jewelry.

With over 1,800 sands in their Sandbank™ spanning all 7 continents, Dune Jewelry custom makes all orders out of their Boston, Massachusetts studio. Their Sandbank™ count keeps growing, almost daily, thanks to customers sending in their own sand for their very own one-of-a-kind pieces. The Sandartists™ only need a tiny bit (soda cap full) for most designs.

There are two different patent-pending processes that are involved in creating Dune Jewelry. The first process requires cleansing, layering and polishing the sand and resin to form a domed, glass-like finish. The second process calls for the designer's to hand sand the piece to "open up" the grains of sand inlaid into sterling silver for a flat, matte finish. This is a very detailed, intricate process that makes Dune Jewelry's collection extremely unique. All items have a lifetime warranty, come with care instructions and literature that indicates the source of the sand.

Dune's Collection ranges from \$40-\$380 and includes necklaces, earrings, bracelet, Sandbeads® that fit on all interchangeable bracelets, bangles, key chains, tie bars, wedding bands and more. Recently Dune has also been working with sand from golf courses to create exceptional tournament gifts as well as baseball parks including Fenway Park in Boston, MA. Browse the entire collection at www.dunejewelry.com



Stuller's Bridge Conference To Continue In 2014

Eight events focused on increasing retailer profitability

Looking ahead to its fourth season, Stuller's Bridge conference series provides attendees with profitable solutions for the changing retail landscape. Exploring contemporary areas of potential improvement for traditional jewelry stores, Bridge blends educational seminars and group dialogue discussing a range of topics including being highly connected to customers, innovative, and more profitable.

Touching on three main themes: customization, in-store experience and retail challenges and opportunities, the 2013 conference series helped independent jewelry retailers identify potential problem areas within their businesses and proactively develop innovative solutions. These themes will continue to be the conversation drivers in 2014.

"Words cannot express the gratitude I feel from attending the Bridge event hosted by my new friends at Stuller," says Ted Blais of Ted's Creative Jewelry in Southampton, MA. "I came away with a new feeling for the trade that I have never experienced before. Seeing the new innovations and the eagerness for your company to make sure I succeed was short from miraculous."

"Today, jewelers are collaborating more than ever, propping each other up with ideas that work. And this is what's happening at Bridge," says Ken Dugas, Stuller's executive director of events. "After a powerful Bridge series in 2013, Stuller is ready to share even more in the coming year."

The 2014 Bridge conference series dates are as follows:

- April 13-15 (Canadian customers)
- May 18-20
- June 23-25
- August 10-12
- August 25-27
- September 7-9
- September 15-17
- October 12-14

For more information on Bridge and to request an invitation, visit Stuller.com/Bridge, call 866-751-5692 or email events@stuller.com.





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JCK Las Vegas Announces New Show Perks For 2014

JCK Las Vegas announced today that the show will offer some exciting new features and perks. Among the new and notable items attendees can expect to see:

- An address from Philippe Mellier, CEO, De Beers Group, to all retailers;
- Grammy Award-winning recording artist and songwriter, Rob Thomas (of Matchbox 20), headlining JCK Rocks the Beach;
- The introduction of "Food Truck" Alley
- The inaugural Diamond Empowerment Fund 'Diamonds in the Sky Event'
- An improved floor plan
- The morning Jewelers For Children's Rings of Strength 'Run, Walk, Ride' event.

"With JCK Las Vegas just over two months away, the excitement is definitely starting to build," said Yancy Weinrich, Group Vice President, JCK Portfolio. "With new events, headliners, and entertainment at JCK and LUXURY, we're always striving to infuse a healthy dose of fun to complement the week's business agenda. We're also thrilled to welcome The Diamond Empowerment Fund's 'Diamonds in the Sky' event to the week's agenda."

The anticipated keynote address to be given by De Beers Group CEO, Philippe Mellier, is an important highlight because it will mark the powerhouse brand's inaugural address to an all-inclusive retailer audience in Las Vegas (to date, Mellier has only addressed Forevermark retailers). Taking the stage on Friday afternoon of the show, Mellier will undoubtedly have everyone captive as he shares his company's perspectives on the outlook for the diamond industry. Indeed, the roster of added value opportunities to take part in is something to enthuse about.

"Food Truck" Alley in particular will bring a casual outdoor (not to mention trendy) dining option. The trucks will station next to the Bayside entrance alongside a cooling and tented eating area. Four trucks per day will serve up quality, cost-effective meals that are sure to impress the hipsters among us.

Ambling throughout the show, attendees will notice a BIG change from years past-wider aisles will ensure less traffic jams and an overall easier show experience. Additionally, in the realm of improved navigation, the new Exhibitor Recommendation program, JCK Match, (retailers are surveyed during registration

and matched with exhibitors based on product category and price-point interest), will benefit from a Geo-locator function; where they will receive notification of what's around them on the show floor, no matter where they are, when using the official JCK Mobile app.

Come Sunday evening, the annual JCK Rocks the Beach party with title sponsor Effy; will invigorate show attendees with an evening of networking on the sand at the Beach at Mandalay Bay. The industry's famous Beach Party will have everyone feeling "Smooth" thanks to the sounds of Matchbox 20's Rob Thomas.

A new ticket format is in place this year, with attendees having to pick-up their ticket (one per badge) at JCK's Ticket Distribution Centers throughout the show. With all of this and more, the JCK Events team looks forward to opening its doors on May 30th.

M.B. Mumma Helps Retailers Engage Customers in Conversations that Lead to Sales

M.B. Mumma is proud to offer a new, innovative line of halo engagement rings that can give your customers a custom look without the custom price. Flexible in design, the collection features modern and classic rings designed to easily accommodate a 1/3, 1/2, 3/4 or 1-carat center stone—without the cost of custom CAD drawings. What's more, the rings are made in the USA and ship in about a week.

To make it even easier for your staff to sell without any special training, M.B. Mumma has created an attractive Halo Ring Showcase that enables customers to easily envision their perfect engagement ring. For only \$275, M.B. Mumma will send you the Showcase with a large selection of sterling silver and CZ halo rings from the collection. To order a Halo Ring Showcase, call 1.800.521.2356.

About M.B. Mumma: Located in Pennsylvania, the Mumma family has been producing fine jewelry for over 35 years.



Winner of the Pennsylvania Craftsman of the Year Award, they offer a full line of bridal and anniversary jewelry. For more information about the company, visit mbmumma.com.

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Mileny whole Mining Donates Important Csarite™ Gemstones to the Smithsonian's National Gem Collection

The Smithsonian Institution's National Gem Collection, housed at the National Museum of Natural History in Washington, D.C. Is the new home to two rare and significant Csarite™ gemstones, after a donation by Mileny whole Mining, Ltd. Csarite™ is an unusual gem quality, color-change diaspore actively mined at only one global source in the Anatolia Mountains of Turkey. The donation was presented at the AGTA Tucson GemFair and accepted by Dr. Jeffrey Post, curator of the National Gem Collection.

"Large color-change diaspore gemstones are rare, indeed," stated Post. "The 159.33 carat cats eye cabochon and 44.48 carat faceted oval are both significant upgrades to the collection, so we are very appreciative of the contribution."

Murat Akgun, president of Mileny whole Mining adds, "To our knowledge, currently there are fewer than twenty faceted Csarite™ gemstones in the world that have a weight of 40 carats and above. Given the rarity of this unusual gem, we feel the Smithsonian's National Gem Collection is a fitting home for two of the few examples available in this size and quality."

MML is the world's only actively mining source supply of Turkish diaspore, a natural, unenhanced colored gemstone. Responsible for cutting and marketing of this phenomenal gemstone, MML's mission is to introduce gem and jewelry connoisseurs around the globe to Turkish diaspore's unique beauty and rarity. MML is a member of The International Colored Gemstone Association. The Smithsonian Institution's National Gem and Mineral Collection consists of approximately 350,000 mineral specimens and 10,000 gems, making it one of the largest of its kind in the world. It is the home of the Hope Diamond, one of the most visited museum objects in the world.



Gemesis Rolls Out the Green Carpet

Gemesis, the world's principal distributor of gem-quality lab-grown diamonds, helped Hollywood roll out the green carpet at Global Green USA's 11th Annual Pre-Oscar Party. The green event of Oscar week attracted eco-friendly celebrities – including the likes of "Twilight's" Ashley Greene and "Taken's" Maggie Grace – who were on-hand to bid on a stunning three-stone ring donated by Gemesis. Celebrity supporters, leading environmentalists and other eco-luminaries gathered at Avalon Hollywood – one of the city's most historic venues – to enjoy a gourmet plant-based dinner and musical performance by Moby. The evening also featured a live auction, benefitting Global Green USA and its ground-breaking efforts in advocating for smart solutions to curb climate change – including green building for affordable housing, schools, cities and communities – that save money, improve health and create green jobs. Designed exclusively for the event, Gemesis provided a three-stone lab-grown diamond ring set in platinum – featuring a fancy yellow 2.08 ct. pear-shaped center with two colorless side stones, just under 1 ct. each. The ring was auctioned for \$12,000.

"This was a great opportunity to interact with like-minded celebrities and help raise funds for the amazing work done by Global Green USA," said Gemesis management. "As an eco-friendly brand, we were honored to donate a Gemesis grown diamond ring for inclusion in the Pre-Oscar Party auction." Available in the purest Type IIa colorless and rare fancy colors, Gemesis grown diamonds possess the same exceptional cut, color and clarity, as well as identical chemical, optical and physical characteristics as high-quality mined diamonds – the only differentiator is point of origin. As massive diamond mining operations are not in pace with increasing consumer consciousness, Gemesis is proud to offer diamonds grown in a controlled environment, resulting in a smaller carbon footprint when compared to mined diamonds.

Gemesis grown diamonds are origin guaranteed and fully disclosed as lab-grown, so any concerns related to "conflict" or "blood" diamonds are eliminated. Additionally, Gemesis operates at the highest level of safety standards and fair, humane, ethical labor



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practices. The Global Green USA Pre-Oscar Party marks the brand's second appearance in Hollywood for the Academy Awards. In 2013, Gemesis made its debut on the Oscar red carpet with Gianna Palminteri – wife of Academy Award-nominated actor Chazz Palminteri – who wore a Gemesis fancy yellow pendant and earrings on loan to the ceremony.

Luxury 2014 To Honor, Inspire, And Entertain Attendees

With little more than two months to go, LUXURY 2014 is poised to impress. The show will feature the first annual LUXURY Retailer of the Year award, a re-imagined format for events that will include more networking, outdoor gatherings at the pool at the Four Seasons, Cirque Du Soleil's Michael Jackson show, and our ever popular Dine-Out, including six restaurants at Mandalay Bay, never before offered.

You'll see more brand environments with Tacori joining Scott Kay in a ballroom, which provides each brand the opportunity to entertain, sell, and network within their own intimate, exclusive environments. "We are very excited about the LUXURY program this year," said John Tierney, Industry Vice President for LUXURY and Swiss Watch. "With the fresh new exhibitors at LUXURY, the Italian designers in Elite Enclave, to the always popular breakfast speaker program and plus plenty of networking opportunities (during show hours and after), there is so much to take advantage."

"We are also thrilled to initiate the longtime-coming Retailer of the Year Award for the LUXURY group," John continued. The LUXURY Retailer of the Year Award, in its inaugural year, will honor the luxury retailers who best innovate and sell both fashion and fine jewelry. The five finalists will be featured throughout the LUXURY show, encouraging retailers and exhibitors to cast their votes. The winner will be announced in a special presentation on Thursday, May 29.

What's new in product? Retailers will enjoy a fresh crop of new talent within the walls of LUXURY and Elite Enclave this year. Joining the prestigious group for 2014 are Getana, Stroili Oro Group, Italian Design srl, Krizanti, Andreoli, and Unrounds, to name a few.

Both retailers and exhibitors alike will delight in LUXURY's speaker program. A highlight year after year, the speaker roster will be kicked off by veteran jewelry professional, Diane

Warga-Arias. With her influential blog, The Jewelry Activist, Warga-Arias advocates for quality standards across fine jewelry categories and serves as an in-the-know jewelry champion.

Finally, the annual LUXURY Gala event will take its revelry up another notch this year, morphing from a sit down dinner to a cocktail party followed by an evening with the immortalized King of Pop. After libations and plentiful hors d'oeuvres, LUXURY All-Access badge holders will be given a ticket to Cirque du Soleil's Michael Jackson: The Immortal World Tour Show-moonwalking and networking are sure to ensue.

LUXURY will take place May 27 through June 2 at Mandalay Bay Resort and Casino.

IGI Celebrates 15 Years Of Operation In India

IGI, the first international lab established in India commemorated its 15-year anniversary recently. Since its inception in 1999, IGI India played a pioneering role in providing structure and setting standards for certification and the study of gemology – including jewelry design courses – in India, with retailers and consumers.

At the time, almost no one in the Indian marketplace utilized independent diamond grading reports. Today, IGI India serves the leading diamond traders, jewelers, jewelry showrooms and the most popular jewelry brands across the country and has substantially contributed to the overall growth of India's diamond and jewelry industry. IGI India has 10 gem testing laboratories, with locations in Mumbai, Surat, Kolkata, Thrissur, Chennai, Ahmedabad, Hyderabad and New Delhi. Just recently, the New Delhi lab shifted operations to a larger, upgraded space in Karol Bagh, the central jewelry hub of the city. "Fifteen years ago, most local manufacturers and traders did not believe there was a demand for certification.

The Indian diamond industry was focused solely on manufacturing, with all business decisions being made in Antwerp, Tel Aviv or New York," said IGI Worldwide Co-CEO Roland Lorié. "By establishing our lab in India and training thousands of people in the industry, IGI has been a key player in establishing India as the primary trading hub in the world." Lorié elaborated, "India has become the world's foremost diamond center, and we are very proud to have been a significant part of this development. At the same time, there is still room for growth, so we look forward to many more years of continued success in the region."



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The EMOTIONAL Side of Mergers and Acquisitions

By Ann Arnold

Over the past decade, the number of mergers and acquisitions in every industry has been on a steady rise. Just look at our own industry and you notice that it has changed a lot over the last few years. We've read many stories, books and articles about how to do a merger and/or an acquisition. We've heard many speakers on the subject. We seek out professionals to help make it happen. But, there is one thing missing. No one really ever talks about the range of emotions that accompany the transaction.

Each situation is different and unique. Granted there are times that the end goal of the owners, and their "way out", is setting up their company in a manner that will result in an eventual sale. In these situations, many times joy and pure excitement come at closing. However, when you are in a family business, it is more of a mixed bag of emotions.

For many of us that have grown up in our family business, it is sometimes expected and understood that the next generation will eventually take over. However, there are many factors that can get in the way of this successfully happening. Whether it is internal family dynamics or external economic factors, sometimes the end result is that the family business enters into a merger or acquisition.

When a sale or merger is determined to be the viable solution for the given circumstance, no matter if it is profitable or not, there is a host of emotions that rise to the surface. The thought of someone else running "your" business, the company you worked so hard to build, seems unrealistic. "No one can run it like me", "They will ruin my name", "What will I do once I don't have this business?" "Do I define my business or does my business define me?" These are just some of the thoughts that start running through an owner's mind. If it is a multi-generational company, the older generation may feel nostalgic, and the younger generation may feel apprehensive. When the

company gets sold to an outsider, the feelings of failure can creep up as well. All those nagging questions start to creep in from the subconscious to the conscious, such as "What could I have done differently?" "Am I failing my children (or parent)?", "What will my role be in the new company, or will they need me at all?".

It's at this point, the harsh reality begins. When two companies are joined together there will be or should be cost savings that come as a result of the merger. These

situations mean you probably will lay off people. Some of them will have worked with you for many years. These decisions are tough and painful.

On a personal note, my father and I sold our company a little over 2 years ago. Probably the hardest and saddest day of my life was when we had to tell our employees. Some of them had been with my dad for almost 40 years and I had known them since I was a young child. They were loyal, hardworking men and women that had become more like family. We knew that what we were doing was the right thing for the company and for us, however that did not make it any easier. Facing those people and letting them know that the home they had for the last few decades was closing was heartbreaking. It was a day that many tears were shed.

From denial, to anger, to sadness and finally acceptance, the range of emotions that one experiences, is sometimes much like going through a period of mourning. What advice can I give those going through it?

Accept the emotions: Give yourself permission to feel them and accept the fact that these feelings are normal. That is one of the hardest things to do.

Find your new path - I tell people that my path had always been laid out for me. I knew from a very young age that I would:

- Go to college
- Get a job for a couple of years outside of my family business
- Work with my dad and eventually take over the family business
- Get married and have kids.

The joke was, that until 2 years ago, the biggest deviation I had from my pre-planned path was getting a dog. Now all of a sudden I find myself on a path that I had never thought of paving. Yes, it is scary but exciting at the same time. Anytime you lose something that is dear to you, there is a sadness that is inevitable. Remember, the sun will always rise tomorrow bringing a new day, new hopes and new dreams. Embrace it!

**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@ArnoldAdvisoryGroup.com.



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SOUND OFF



Attention to detail is an important element in any business. Morris Zale once said to me, "The jewelry business is a business of details." In the jewelry business another element that is an important detail is security. It is a topic that is of constant interest and concern. The following letter to the Hilton Corporation from Abe Sherman is a perfect example of paying attention to details and security. Abe connects the dots by observing a situation that has a security implication and does something about it.

With the shows in Las Vegas looming ever so soon, it seems to us that the show management people would carry a lot more weight than a single guest in addressing the question with the many hotels in Las Vegas.

Abe's efforts were, lets say acknowledged in a recent letter from the Manager of Guest Assistance at the Hilton Corporation. They will in the future send an e-folio to guests who have their e-mail on file with Hilton. Ms. Evonne Moye' concluded her letter to Sherman by stating, "The Voice of our Customers" is critical in making enhancements and/or adjustments to our processes and I certainly appreciate your feedback."

Dear Hilton,

Hilton has a security issue.

I work in the jewelry industry and security is a concern of mine and everyone else in the business. For the past two years I have tried to get my home address (as well as the home addresses of my staff) removed from the bills shoved under my door overnight on the last day of my stay at Hilton hotels. I have also tried to get Hilton to email my bills upon checkout but apparently, there isn't a way to request this on your website or any other way to go paperless. I book my travel online, receive my confirmations online and would appreciate the option of getting my final bill online.

Two days ago, when leaving my hotel room at a Hilton property near Napa, CA, I saw the checkout bill for the room across the hall from me lying on the hall floor, with perhaps a ¼ of it under the door. I don't know who was staying in that room, but if I wanted to, I could just pick up that bill and see their name and address. Who cares, you may ask? Well, the women I work with care.

My team and I do onsite consulting for jewelry stores all over the country and while we don't carry merchandise, our visits could easily be misinterpreted as sales calls with the assumption that we are carrying merchandise and not computers in our bags. For your information crime against jewelry stores and jewelry sales personnel is a major problem for the industry and law enforcement. The perpetrators would know what we looked like, our names, and where we live. A friend of mine – a sales rep for a jewelry manufacturer - was followed from a store and held up outside his hotel at gunpoint. Our security concerns are real.

I have called Hilton at least three times over the past two years (when I find bills laying out in the halls) and each time when I explain my concerns, I'm told by your customer service reps, "Gee, I've never thought of that, but removing home addresses is a great idea" to, "Well, just let them know when you check in that you don't want a paper receipt."

There are four areas that I believe will be served by removing addresses or better, going paperless:

SECURITY: First of all, this is a much bigger problem than my issue. This is a security problem that should be addressed at the highest corporate level at Hilton. Any woman traveling alone has a tough enough time without having to worry that someone who saw her walking into her Hilton hotel room would be able to pick up the bill (or even pluck it from the door were it not shoved all the way under) during the night, and thus know her name and address.



COST SAVINGS: Second, I KNOW where I live... having that information printed out on my receipt is unnecessary as well as costly. How many millions of dollars does it cost Hilton worldwide each year to print out millions of receipts and have staff running all over hotels during the wee hours to push them under doors? With

January 18, 2014

SOUND OFF

642,000 rooms worldwide, let's say Hilton sells approximately 164,000,000 room nights a year (at 70% occupancy). Cut that by a third for multi-night stays and you are printing at least 55,000,000 bills, many with more than one sheet.

Environment: You ask me to hang up my towels, and I hang up my towels. You want to walk the walk? Stop printing paper unless it's requested upon checkout. These bills just wind up getting shredded. This unnecessary process costs everyone time and money. I have my Amex receipts and if you email me, I'll have all of my Hilton receipts in one place. Printing paper makes no sense.

Public Relations: If, heaven forbid, a Hilton guest were followed home and the source of that information were found to be a Hilton hotel bill, it would get even more costly as a public relations nightmare for Hilton. I've asked to speak with someone at Hilton who can remove my name from the invoices, but no one knows who that might be at Hilton. I've asked to speak with security and the answer is: "not possible."

I've asked people in customer service to help me edit my profile without my address – again not possible. With the recent Snowden / NSA debacle and the even more recent hacking of Target's credit card numbers, protecting one's privacy/security is ever-more top of mind. There is no reason that anyone walking through a hotel hallway should have easy access to learn who I am and where I live. Add to this the many thousands of front desk workers, who really only need to know my name and Hilton Honors number. Show ID upon check-in, no problem... I understand security.

I would appreciate it if someone would let me know there is a way to deal with this issue. I've grown weary of leaving messages with people who are going to have other people get back to me, and no one does.

Sincerely,
Abe Sherman, CEO
Buyers Intelligence Group

Hilton Honors Member #
Address, of course, withheld.



Abe Sherman

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New and NOTEWORTHY

Sarine Technologies Innovation for the Diamond Jewelry Industry

Sarine North America Inc. held an invitation-only grand opening at their new diamond district offices. Situated on the 10th floor of the International Gem Tower, at 50 West 47th Street, the evening commenced with a welcome reception for many of the industry leaders.

Sarine North America's VP of Business Development, Ohad Axelrod, hosted the evening and introduced Daniel Benjamin Glinert, Executive Director and Chairman of the Board for Sarine Technologies. Mr. Glinert delivered opening remarks, stating, "Opening these offices on the first day of spring, though admittedly unintentional, is truly symbolic as we are bringing new technologies with new opportunities for the US diamond trade which truly are harbingers of a new era." He also noted the spelling change in the company name, from "Sarin Technologies" to "Sarine Technologies".

Following Mr. Glinert were remarks by Ronnie VanderLinden, President of the Diamond Manufacturers and Importers Association of America, and Reuven Kaufman, President of the Diamond Dealers Club, who both enthusiastically welcomed the international partner as the leader in technological solutions for the diamond and gemstone manufacturing and trade industries.

Guests were led through live demonstrations of Sarine latest products and technologies in the Rough; Polish; Trade and Retail segments. Demonstrations, given by executives from



Left to right: Ohad Axelrod, Sarine NA, VP of Business Development, Alen Rehs, Rehs &Co., David Block, COO Sarine Technologies, Yoav Efrat, Product Manager, Sarine Technologies.

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New and NOTEWORTHY

Sarine Technologies who came in especially for the occasion from Israel, and Sarine North America staff, centered on innovative solutions that add value to diamond manufacturing and the wholesale and retail trades.

For the first time in the US, Sarine introduced and demonstrated the Galaxy™ rough scanning system that does inclusion mapping, the identification of internal imperfections. This information is then utilized by Sarine's world leading polished diamond planning product – the Advisor™, to truly optimize the yield achieved from the rough diamond. These systems are augmented by Sarine's quality assurance products, the DiaMension HD™ and the just-released Instructor™ 3.0, which help users realize the desired polished gem.

Even more exciting are Sarine's revolutionary products for the polished diamond trade. Sarine's patented Light Performance solution (Sarine Light™) is an accurate, consistent and cost-effective measurement system linked to a cloud-based platform. Implementing a new consumer oriented light performance-grading standard the Sarine Light™ provides a realistic link between science and beauty. The Sarine Light™ provides Light Performance reports and a tablet-based in-store sales tool for the consumers' added confidence in the quality and beauty of the stone they are buying.

Sarine's other radically new offering is the Sarine Loupe™. Based on patent-pending technology that captures images of the diamond from all directions, it creates a virtual floating diamond that can be manipulated, viewed and inspected under varying magnifications as if held in your hand. Sarine expects this technology will significantly streamline the B2B buying and



Kenneth Applegate, Pacific View, Daniel Glinert, Chairman of the Board, Sarine Technologies.

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Egyptian Pyramids at sunset

New and NOTEWORTHY

selling process as a true visual rendition of the diamond can be viewed online, immediately from anywhere, providing accurate information on the diamond's Clarity and Cut.

Finally, taking the polished diamond's proportions and symmetry measurement to an entirely new level, Sarine is planning to shortly introduce the Axiom™, based on radically new (patent-pending) technology that will take the measurement accuracy down to single-micron accuracy and allow grading and automated documentation of features previously only possible manually, using microscopes.

Mr. Axelrod observed that, "with a New York office centered on building brand awareness and set to provide outstanding customer support in the United States, Sarine North America is well positioned to provide innovative products and services to the jewelry industry here".



Daniel Glinert, Chairman of the Board, Sarine Technologies, Mayer Herz, M. Herz & Son.

PTAK Brothers Introduces The "Loving Embrace" Contour Wedding Band Program

Exclusive, Patent-pending Measuring Tool Helps Jewelers Determine What Wedding Band Fits Snugly Against an Existing Engagement Ring without It Leaving Her Finger. Ever.

New York City-based Ptak Brothers Jewelry, Inc., an American manufacturer of high fashion jewelry, formally introduced today its newest business-to-business product, "Loving Embrace", specifically created to help jewelers close more bridal sales. The program includes an exclusive patent-pending measuring tool that identifies what shape band will fit snugly against a customer's unique engagement ring. In addition, the program provides jewelers with access to 72 wedding band styles that

New and NOTEWORTHY

fit perfectly with over 95 percent of engagement and three-stone rings. The wedding bands are currently available in the customer's choice of precious metals as well as five different diamond setting styles. An in-case display of sample bands is provided free of charge, and an affordable buy-in allows jewelers to retain solid margins.

"Over the last few years, we have noticed an uptrend in the demand for matching wedding bands which sit flush with an existing engagement ring style", says Ptak Brothers President, Peter Morfino. "On a daily basis, our customers were shipping us expensive engagement rings, and our CAD operators would design a curved wedding band which would align with the unique curves of their engagement ring. The result: a perfectly matched wedding band. As we all know, not all customers are willing to part with their engagement rings and there is always a risk when shipping a customer's ring, and always a cost. With the launch of our new Contour Program, this is a risk you no longer need to take!"

With the patent-pending "Loving Embrace" contour sizing set, the jeweler can have customers try on different contour bands until they find the perfect fit for their ring. Once the proper contour number is identified, the jeweler then assists them in choosing from five popular setting styles, or a plain shadow band. Ptak Brothers ships the selected style in the contour number that matches the customer's ring in about a week. Bands are available in all precious metals including gold, palladium and platinum. For an additional fee, customizations and engraving are available, with delivery of a customized ring averaging ten business days.

Customers enjoy all the benefits of a custom design without expensive CAD charges, and can have the band of their dreams delivered quickly with no stress. Jewelers secure more wedding band sales, enjoy higher margins, and minimize their shipping and insurance costs. "New diamond setting styles are already in the works," Morfino concludes, "and so are plans to continue building the library of designs and contours."

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New and NOTEWORTHY

AGS Labs Opens New York Take-In Window

The American Gem Society Laboratories announced the opening of its New York Diamond District take-in window, located in the Brinks offices in 580 5th Avenue, Suite 400, New York, NY. To celebrate the launch, the AGS Labs and the New York Diamond Dealers Club formed a special partnership for DDC members. Beginning March 13, the AGS Laboratories will offer free shipping for 60 days to DDC members.

The AGS Laboratories offers turnaround time on grading results in five to seven business days to all its clients.

On March 12 the NYDDC hosted a reception to commemorate the launch. Peter Yantzer, CG, Executive Director of the AGS Laboratories, and Ash Shah, CGA, Director of Membership at the American Gem Society, will be in attendance for a presentation on AGS Laboratories and to meet members of the DDC. Representatives from Brinks will also be in attendance to answer questions.

"We've had requests from our clients to open a take-in window in New York," according to Ruth Batson, RJ, CEO of the American Gem Society and AGS Laboratories. "With the shortest turnaround time of any of the major laboratories, along with the name recognition of the American Gem Society, and grading reports that provide consistency and accuracy based on science, our laboratory services are in high demand. The partnership with the DDC is very synergistic. Both organizations are focused on the betterment of the diamond industry."

We appreciate the investment that AGS is making in the New York diamond community and our members," said Reuven Kaufman, President of the New York Diamond Dealer's Club. "The expansion of their services in New York is a testament to the strength of our market and the central role that our members play in the diamond trade."

For more information contact the AGS Labs at 800-250-2600 or Brinks at (212) 704-5262.

New and NOTEWORTHY

Diamond Empowerment Fund Announces Signet Jewelers To Sponsor "Diamonds In The Sky"

Signet Jewelers – the largest specialty jewelry retailer in the US and UK, trading primarily under the store brands of Kay Jewelers and Jared The Galleria Of Jewelry in the US – will support the Diamond Empowerment Fund as the first Premier Presenting Sponsor of the "Diamonds in the Sky" Gala Event on May 29th at the Four Seasons Hotel in Las Vegas, Nevada.

The event will bring together a unique mix of the international diamond jewelry industry, government officials from diamond producing nations, dignitaries and celebrities from fashion and entertainment. The proceeds will benefit D.E.F's 'Diamonds Do Good' mission of providing higher education scholarships for youth from diamond producing countries.

Presentation of the Diamond Empowerment Fund 2014 Global Diamond Industry Achievement Award will be made to H.E. President Ian Khama and the Government of the Republic of Botswana in recognition of their global leadership and contributions to democracy, sustainable economic development and the growth and expansion of the international diamond industry. "On behalf of the Republic of Botswana, we are grateful for this global recognition by the Diamond Empowerment Fund," said H.E. Tebelelo Seretse, Ambassador of the Republic of Botswana to the United States.

Michael Barnes, CEO of Signet Jewelers Ltd., said, "We have been supporters of D.E.F. and its mission from its founding in 2007 and are honored to be a Premier Presenting Sponsor. We look forward to joining others in honoring H.E. President Ian Khama and the Representatives from the Government of the Republic of Botswana."

Phyllis Bergman, President of D.E.F.'s board of directors added; "We are thrilled to congratulate Signet as the first Premier Presenting Sponsor for D.E.F on this occasion. We encourage other industry leaders to consider sponsorship opportunities of this important event which celebrates the 'good diamonds do'."

The Diamond Empowerment Fund was co-founded by Russell Simmons and leaders in the diamond industry in 2007. For more information on sponsorship opportunities at Diamonds In The Sky Las Vegas, please contact Executive Director Nancy Orem Lyman at n.lyman@diamondempowerment.org or visit www.diamondsintheskylasvegas.org.

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New and NOTEWORTHY

GIA Debuts GemKids

Offers Students an Engaging Experience with Gemology

Interactive site features gemstone facts, glossary and tools for educators

Students, parents and teachers now have easy access to interactive, online gemology and geology education through GIA's (Gemological Institute of America) new GemKids website. The site, geared toward students ages 9-12, features a Gem Explorer, Gem Glossary and Classroom Guides, and is user-friendly on desktops and mobile devices. Visit www.gemkids.gia.edu for more details.

"Bringing engaging gem information that is fun for kids is a great way to extend our 83-year history as the world's leader in gem and jewelry education," said Bev Hori, GIA's chief learning officer and vice president of education. "Students can learn about the fascinating world of gems directly on their

computers and tablets, and teachers can use this information to supplement their science curriculums."

The "Gem Explorer" highlights 15 popular gems – such as diamond, ruby and pearl – with information about each, including fun facts about color, history and lore; name origin; image galleries and micrographs of the gem under different



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– **Kathy Corey, Day's Jewelers, Waterville, ME**

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New and NOTEWORTHY



microscope magnification levels; and a localities map. The "Find My Gem" feature lets students explore different gems based on their birthday, favorite color or by country of origin. Additional gems will be added on an ongoing basis. The site's easy-to-navigate content means children and adults can explore the world of gems. Common gemological and

geological terms are defined in the "Gem Glossary," which also offers an audio pronunciation and descriptive image for each entry. Parents and educators can use the "Classroom Guides" to prepare interactive programs on gemology, geology and birthstones, or to prepare Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts for earning a merit badge.

The lessons are adapted from GIA's Junior Gemologist Program™, which offers 10-15 year-old students the opportunity to discover the world of gemology through hands-on, practical training. Taught by expert gemologists and regularly offered at the Institute's Carlsbad, Calif. campus and in other global locations, the program makes the complexities of gemology easily understood by all.

It also meets federal curriculum guidelines, and enriches school district and youth science programs. GIA has partnered with Boy Scouts of America and Girl Scouts of America to create a specialized Jr. Gemologist Program where scouts can earn geology and jewelry merit badges, belt loops and pins.

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New and NOTEWORTHY

Belle Étoile Launches 2014 Spring Collection

Belle Étoile, one of the fastest growing fashion forward brands in the jewelry industry, announced the launch of its 2014 Spring Collection, featuring on-trend patterns and colors for the new season. The collection plays with an impeccable fusion of natural geometry, textures, patterns and colors.

"For our latest collection, we wanted to present the modern woman with a fun, bold look, while playing with very classic elements. We used textures and patterns, some abstract and some found in nature," says Carolyn Thamkul, Executive VP at Belle Étoile. "This season's colors were so much fun to incorporate into the line, especially since we love working with coordinating palettes to pair with the season's hottest apparel trends."

Belle Étoile incorporated many shades of Pantone's Color of the Year, Radiant Orchid, within the palette, as well as complementing color schemes, to create unique and classic looks to match with any outfit. "Two of our hottest collections are our Stardust Collection and our Royale Collection in our Orchid tones," states Thamkul. "We have also had great success with our warm palette colors, such as roses and browns in our Riviera Collection, as well as our brighter hues, like our turquoises and apple greens in our Amazon and Zen Collections."

Using unique materials, including hand-applied Italian enamels and hand-strung Italian rubber to create luxurious, modern-yet-classic ensembles that exhibit the exceptional craftsmanship for



New and NOTEWORTHY

which Belle Étoile is well known. Retail price points for the new collection start at \$125.

Bryce Harenburg, Sales Manager at Belle Étoile, notes, "This season's launch is fantastic for both its exceptional design aesthetic and its well-tailored price points. There are collections that cater to every personality and occasion. The response from both the retailers and consumers has been extremely positive."

French for "beautiful star," Belle Étoile combines fun, bold, on-trend design with impeccable quality and craftsmanship. With five strikingly unique collections in sterling silver, Belle Étoile jewelry allows you to express your own personal style and "shine like the star you are".

For more information, contact sales@belleetoilejewelry.com or call 415-626-9223.

Midas Website

Midas has introduced a great addition to their website that gives jewelers the ability to place orders online anytime. The new website contains the entire 2013-2014 catalog with thousands of new styles that consumers will love. The website even gives the option of showing cost or MSRP when logged in, so you can show your customers the incredible new collections right on the selling floor. Call Midas at 877-643-2765 to request access.



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PhotoScribe Technologies Launches LMF-30

PhotoScribe Technologies, internationally established as the jewelry industry leader in laser marking and development, have introduced the new LMF-30, the safest and most rapid laser used to inscribe findings, tools and jewelry with intricate logos and text.

PhotoScribe has finely tuned to meet both the industry's need for detail in inscription, and the ability to mark difficult objects, such as diamond. Their latest development is the agile LMF-30 fiber laser, which incorporates a number of innovations that make it an easier, safer and more flexible laser as well.

By optimizing several key components, the maintenance-free LMF-30 set a new standard in laser development. One important feature is a red diode on the laser, which eliminates positioning and alignment mistakes, showing the boundary of the marking field, or even the projected image itself, so there is no more estimating where the image will be placed. The laser can inscribe minute text, maker's and metal hallmarks, barcodes, logos and numbers, even on small items like an earring post, making it an invaluable tool to jewelry designers and manufacturers

The laser is as easy to use as any word processing system, and does not require any special training. It comes with marking software with the capability to mark any file, including: alpha/numeric, many types of barcodes (including 2D symbologies), vector and raster files (such as images and bitmaps). Developed by vision application experts, the software has a user-friendly interface, is highly intuitive and works with all Windows operating systems.



New and NOTEWORTHY

David Benderly, CEO of PhotoScribe Technologies Inc. says of the LMF-30, "The marking laser is a true enabling technology that addresses the need for product identification and branding in the trade. Today, modern lasers are highly reliable and easy to operate. Even if you own a laser that is several years old you should look at new laser technologies; in the last few years there has been a significant improvement in both mark quality, speed of mark, user interface and operating costs. Our new laser improves all these aspects for clearly superior results."

"The new enclosure has plenty of features that not only make it easier to see the jewelry being marked. It has a Class 4 enclosure featuring LED illumination in the workspace, which opens to expose three sides for ease in both access and maneuvering inscriptions. For further information on the LMF-30 Laser System and other PhotoScribe lasers, call 800-746-8672.

Jewelers Mutual Advises Couples To Say 'I do' To Jewelry Insurance

Survey shows 40% of U.S. households with an engagement ring have not insured it. According to a spending and saving survey by American Express, 13 million couples are expected to become engaged this year. In most cases, their commitment to each other is marked with the giving of an engagement ring. Unfortunately, while the groom is busy planning the perfect proposal, he is likely to forget one critical detail to protect the symbol of his love and that is jewelry insurance.

A recent survey from Jewelers Mutual Insurance Company, the nation's leading jewelry insurance specialists since 1913, found that approximately 40 percent of U.S. households that own an engagement ring do not have insurance to protect it. Of those, one-third of the households - largely younger - consider their engagement ring one of the most expensive items they own among other investments such as their home or vehicle.

"It's taking a big leap of faith," said Don Elliott, director of claims at Jewelers Mutual, for couples who do not insure their fine jewelry. "Unlike the house or car, the engagement ring is one of the smallest, most-likely household assets to become lost. It's important for us to educate consumers early on, as they start building their jewelry collection, that they can and should insure special pieces that have both sentimental and financial value." According to Elliott, mysterious disappearance, or unexplained loss, is the most common reason for personal claims filed with Jewelers Mutual.

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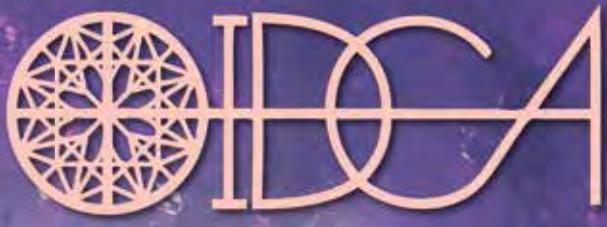
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Many jewelry owners find out too late this is also a type of loss not always covered by standard homeowners or renters insurance. "People often don't think about whether they have the right insurance until it's too late," added Kelley Green, director of personal lines. "Whether a couple is getting engaged or has been married for 5, 10, 20 years, it's important for them to evaluate their options and feel confident that if their jewelry is lost, they won't have to re-invest to have it replaced." Jewelers Mutual's Perfect Circle® Jewelry Insurance provides coverage that can go beyond standard homeowners insurance to protect against loss, theft, damage and even mysterious disappearance, with no limits on the coverage value. Learn more about the benefits of having customers insured with a policy from Jewelers Mutual at JewelersMutual.com.

Registration Open for Fifth Year of Select By Centurion Shows

Registration is now open for the 2014 Select By Centurion shows. The season starts in Dallas at the Ritz Carlton September 7-8. This is Select's fifth year in Dallas, where it has become the jewelry show to attend in Texas. On September 21-22, Select moves over to Nashville, TN, where it will take place at the Loews Vanderbilt. Nashville is America's "Music Town" and also is fast becoming a hub for jewelers to meet, have fun, and do some late season buying. Last stop for Select By Centurion will be at the MGM Grand at Foxwoods in Mashantucket, CT, Sept 28-29.



New England retailers have embraced the Select Show as their exclusive high-end jewelry show. This is Select By Centurion's fourth year in the Northeast, serving New England proudly.

Mark Cirone of Cohasset Jewelers in Cohasset, MA, says, "Select is a great regional show where I have been able to find a wonderful selection of merchandise without having to travel to New York or Las Vegas."

"I've attended the Dallas Select Show since its inception. If you're a designer, it's truly the place to be. If you're a retailer, it's truly the place to go," added Barbara Parker, president of Barbara Parkers, Inc., Conroe, TX

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Jewelers for Veterans is a 501(3)c non-profit organization, dedicated to connecting US Military veterans, men and women, able or disabled, with training and employment in the jewelry industry. Our mission is to address the high unemployment rates prevalent among returning veterans by offering solutions within our industry.

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"As an exhibitor, it is always a pleasure to be part of the Select Shows," said Michael Hujara, managing director of Breuning Inc. "I find that the retailers who attend the Select shows enjoy a very personal and enjoyable buying experience. The atmosphere is very upscale but relaxed and therefore provides a very positive environment."



"As a participant of Select by Centurion since its inception in 2010, we are proud to be members of this organization," said Susan Klemt, principal at Artistry, Ltd. "Select by Centurion offers vendors an economical way to meet with high-caliber retailers in the various marketplaces. The classy and open concept venues also offer all participating vendors fantastic opportunities to meet with existing clients and high-quality prospects."

The Select By Centurion Show is an intimate collection of designers and manufacturers, catering to regional retailers as well as hosted retailers who fly in from all over the United States. The shows are strategically scheduled in September for late season buying in time for the holiday season. For information about retail jeweler registration, call 888-427-4697. **TRJ**

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MAY 29 - JUNE 2



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