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The Official Magazine of The Independent Jeweler • Volume 9, Issue 1 • Jan/Feb 2018



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THE RETAIL JEWELER™

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By Frank Dallahan



THE SHOW WARS HAVE STARTED

“Those who fail to learn from history are condemned to repeat it” is a quotation of George Santana and it is so appropriate in this current circumstance. The history to which I refer is the story of the origination of the JCK Show in Las Vegas and the circumstances that resulted in the industry’s major show developing in Las Vegas moving from New York City.

In the late eighties, Jewelers of America owned the show in New York. Their show was the big one and was held at the Javits Center. If you were to ask the exhibitors of the JA Show then, you would get an extensive list of complaints. Show management did not listen to the exhibitors. The timing of the shows (Spring and Fall) was all-wrong. The spring show was too early (January) and the fall show (July/August) was too late. There was an arrogance connected with individuals who ran the show. They didn’t listen and treated many with disdain and you might even say with disrespect. A take it or leave it attitude probably characterizes it best.

In this environment Charles Bond, Publisher of JCK Magazine and the current Co-Publisher of The Retail Jeweler, Ed Coyne, presented to Chilton Management (JCK’s parent company at the time) the idea of starting a new show for the industry located in Las Vegas at a time of the year more suited to the industry’s needs in late May/early June. JCK needed the financial clout of Chilton to deal with the Las Vegas convention site and hotels for the necessary room blocks. JCK’s management and staff went to the trade to solicit their opinions of the idea.

At the time, I was vice-president of marketing for Krementz & Co, and was contacted by my space rep Joy Englebert to solicit my opinion of the idea of a new show in Las Vegas and in late May/early June. My response apparently mirrored the reaction Joy received from her other clients. She was literally shocked with the responses she received and couldn’t believe the depth of animosity toward the JA Show and particularly the show’s management.

On December 6 AGTA Gem Fair announced it would move from the JCK Show in 2019 to the Las Vegas Convention Center (LVCC). Within a day or two of the announcement JCK announced they would replace the AGTA space by soliciting other gemstone dealers presumably from around the world to fill the space. A few days later the U.S. Antique Show announced it will continue to exhibit at the LVCC and intends to co-locate there with AGTA. What will come in the days ahead will be interesting to see.



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THE SHOW WARS HAVE STARTED



JCK announced the dates of the show and the reaction from most of the “industry experts” was the show would not succeed. To the contrary, The JCK Show became the industry’s new leader after several years.

Charles Bond established an advisory board of manufacturers and retailers to discuss plans for the show. We met periodically throughout the year to discuss plans, ideas, and problems. It was a good group. They were forthright and not bashful about expressing their opinions. The result of their meetings was a good show that became better and better. Bond’s goal was to have a show where all were welcome.

Reed Elsevier acquired Chilton. And, gradually, Reed imposed its will on the show and show management. As with most corporate entities, this pressure from above eventually resulted in the departure of many of the people who had managed the transition and indeed adapted to the jewelry industry. Dave Bonaparte and John Tierney are two prominent examples of personnel who left Reed.

The current AGTA – JCK situation is the result of Reed not listening to the realities of today’s jewelry business similar to what JA did in the late eighties. I know the current key people at Reed and I know they understand the industry’s situation. Reed’s decision to raise prices by 45% on booth space and layer on top of that a 6.5% annual increase locked in for three years clearly indicates a lack of understanding and a lack of common sense.

The rest of the industry is talking about AGTA’s decision to leave the JCK Show after a year’s effort to negotiate a more reasonable deal all to no avail. If AGTA can successfully leave will other groups now consider the same decision and join AGTA at LVCC? Exhibitors, large and small, think the cost of exhibiting has gotten well out of hand. Retailers, too, evaluate the cost of sending their buying staffs to Las Vegas for the show. Their reaction will also be interesting to watch.

Shows make a great deal of sense for both retailers and exhibitors. Buyers and sellers come to shows to see new products, hear about new programs and talk with principals of their respective suppliers and clients in a safe business environment. This is unchanged from 25 years ago.

However, looking at the shows you can see significant changes have taken place since 1992 when JCK first took place. Many of these changes involve significant cost components. The question is are these cost components worth it or are they just revenue generating ideas for the show management companies? The answer is AGTA chose to say No Mas. The more things change...the more they stay the same.



Frank Dallahan

co-publisher of The Retail Jeweler
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By Bill Boyajian



WHAT MAKES A SUCCESSFUL JEWELER SUCCESSFUL?

As a consultant and coach to jewelry professionals, I see a lot of people beating the odds today. Despite all the negative hype about the demise of the independent jeweler, many of them compete and win in their communities across North America.

One of the things I try to do is help people build on their natural strengths in business, but minimize their weaknesses as they assertively adapt to change. Interestingly, while there are similarities in all jewelry businesses, I'm amazed at how different these jewelers are in sales volume, client focus, and selling style. Still, every successful jeweler has habits that leverage their unique strengths and talents, and make them successful.

Here are the ones that I find almost universal in all successful jewelers:

They don't complain about everything. Successful jewelers don't blame the internet, or diamond reports, or Rapaport, or Blue Nile, or Millennials, or any number of other factors that have emerged over the past few decades as a reason for a decline in business, margins, or profitability. Instead, they compete really hard for new business, new customers, new products, and new ways of doing things.

Successful jewelers don't live in the past. They learn from the past, but they don't dwell on it. They know that if they don't learn from history, they'll simply repeat it. But they also know that if they're consumed with the past, they'll be stuck in a rut – spinning their wheels trying to dig their way out of a hole that is too big to climb out.

They learn from their mistakes and don't repeat them. Mistakes will occur even when you take measured risks, but the key is to be making new mistakes, not old ones you never learned from.

Successful jewelers don't feel sorry for themselves. They don't engage in self-pity by magnifying their problems or exaggerating whatever hardships they encounter in business. In effect, they get over themselves and move on.

They are courageous in making decisions about people who need to shape up or leave the firm. This is tricky in most small

to medium-sized businesses, especially family businesses where relatives are involved and where long-time employees become like relatives and friends. But successful jewelers put the business first and are willing to make the hard choices.

Successful jewelers are willing to make changes.

Change is always a little scary because we get comfortable with the way things are, at least until problems arise that seem insurmountable. The world is changing and successful jewelers aren't afraid to make the adaptations necessary to be better.



They focus on things they can control. We can't control the national economy, but we can control our buying habits, our attitude with staff and customers, and our assertiveness on the sales floor. Successful jewelers focus on what is within their control and don't worry about things outside their control.

Successful jewelers learn from other successful jewelers.

Rather than be jealous of others' successes, they are inspired by those who have achieved success and learn from them. They seek them out and are unafraid to admit their own shortcomings in order to become better.



They think long term, not short term. Even in an age of rapid technology and instant gratification, successful jewelers don't look for immediate results. They are in it for the long term and for the longevity of the business. Effective succession planning isn't always possible, but the better the business, the better the chance that the store can be taken over with a continued legacy of success.



Bill Boyajian

Bill is the former long-time president of the Gemological Institute of America, and is currently founder & president of Bill Boyajian & Associates, Inc. His company consults for a wide variety of businesses in the gem and jewelry industry, specializing in leadership, business, and organizational development, family transition, and succession planning. Bill

is the author of *Developing the Mind of a Leader – Your Path to Lead and Inspire People*. He is a sought-after business coach and speaker, and can be reached at bill@billboyajianassociates.com.

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AVOID BUYER'S REMORSE

By Susan Arlin

WHEN HIRING THE 'PERFECT' PERSON

HOW MANY TIMES HAVE YOU HIRED THAT 'PERFECT PERSON', ONLY TO FIND OUT THAT THEY WERE FAR FROM IT?

You spend a tremendous amount to hire the perfect person—from time and money, to emotional energy and stress. There are multitudes of training programs and books out there designed to help you do this. And yet, despite all of your efforts, you are still dependent upon your best opinion of what that applicant will do for you—based on their responses to your interview.

Imagine how different that picture would be if you could identify the competencies and behaviors that would indicate success in your environment. If you had predictive measurable data that would allow you to make a decision based on criteria, rather than only opinion. Data that would also help you to manage, support and motivate that person from Day 1.

After all, when you select your diamonds for sale, you wouldn't be satisfied if the vendor told you: "These look great for your store! They meet all your needs: they're large, sparkly, and they won't cost you too much. You can expect them to sell fast—they perform well!"

You would NEVER buy your diamonds without determining the specific criteria necessary to complement your inventory needs—would you?

This happens all the time however when selecting staff. The information that you have about them is limited. They tell you what you want to hear: "I sell well, I look the part, I build relationships, I'm a team player and I'm really committed. I'll perform well for you!" Oftentimes, the biggest concern is how much you have to pay them for this promise of performance. It's only a guess as to how well they will complement your team and your vision. How exhausting and frustrating it is to find out that they don't fit!

The answer is to take the 'subjective, gut instinct, best guess based on the applicant's answers' method and to complement it with metrics, criteria and a scientific, data driven approach. This allows you to measure an individual's alignment to competencies necessary for them to succeed in the specific role. Think about how much that would save you in time, cost and peace of mind.?

Calculating the cost of turnover is complicated. The estimates



are anywhere from 16% of an individual's yearly income to upwards of 35% for high salaried individuals. This means that, if you are hiring the person in at \$15/hr. for full-time, the turnover cost could be upwards of \$4,992. And that's not even considering the impact of turnover on your stress level, the workload and related morale of the team.

Metrics are the missing piece of the puzzle. Consider adding a measurement factor to your hiring process, as well as your developmental strategy for your team. There are multiple assessments out there measure different things, such as personality, and communication styles. The Caliper Assessment is a tool that does all of the above, and adds the critical component of the competencies necessary based on the position, and the behaviors needed to fit the specific job. Caliper also provides specific a coaching framework to develop each individual who takes the assessment.

Just as you wouldn't choose your diamonds based on another's perception alone, don't make your choice of your next Perfect Person based solely on subjective criteria. Make your next 'purchase' decision one that minimizes the risk of 'Buyer's Remorse'.



Susan Arlin

Susan Arlin is a staff and leadership development specialist in the jewelry industry and a Caliper Certified Partner. With over 30 years of experience in the jewelry industry, and a Master's Degree in Organizational Behavior, her specialty lies in developing groups of individuals into high-performance teams. Her company, Brilliant Performance Group, LLC <https://www.brilliantgrp.com> is dedicated maximizing the

return from your most important asset—your team. To contact Susan directly to discuss how your team can improve, email her at susan@brilliantgrp.com.



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6 RED FLAGS

TO WATCH OUT FOR WHEN HIRING A WEB DESIGNER

By Drew Barton

The web designer you ultimately choose will play a critical role in the digital success of your business, which is why you need to be able to ask the right questions and identify obvious red flags during the interview process. After all, recognizing and avoiding red flags can be the key to protecting yourself against a bad business deal.

When it comes to hiring a web designer or digital agency, there are a few bright-red flags that you should never ignore.

While not every red flag will be an automatic deal breaker, they should at least prompt you to dig a bit deeper and ask some more questions. If the designer or agency can't assuage your concerns after bringing up one of these red flags, it's time to walk away.



HERE ARE THE TOP SIX:



1. THEY GIVE YOU VAGUE ANSWERS TO YOUR QUESTIONS.

When you ask a digital agency a question — whether it's about process, timelines, or communication, the agency should be able to give a clear, detailed answer. For example, if you ask an agency, "If my website goes down, who do I contact and how long before I can expect a response?" they should be

able to answer those questions without missing a beat. If you are instead met with something like "Well, you shouldn't run into any trouble, but if you do, call us and we'll figure it out for you," then you have reason to worry. If the digital agency can't give you a clear, concise answer to a simple question, make a note of it and keep listening. If you continue to receive vague answers like this in response to other questions you ask, you've got a clear red flag.

Can **you** solve the puzzle?

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puzzle #1

Answers at:
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- 5. Repair pricing guru
- 6. Every store can use more
- 7. Diamond lab
- 8. Difference between cost and sale price
- 11. Popular digital form of communication
- 12. A stores' biggest investment
- 13. Gross profit divided by average cost of inventory
- 14. Bane of our industry
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Down

- 1. Leading jewelry store management software
- 2. Movie: _____ From the Edge
- 3. Added protection
- 4. Cost of sales divided by average cost of inventory
- 9. Every sales staff could use more
- 10. Website and store converging as one
- 13. January Gemstone

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*INSTORE's Big Survey Volume 6, Issue 4

6 RED FLAGS TO WATCH OUT FOR WHEN HIRING A WEB DESIGNER



2. THEY DON'T HAVE A CLEAR PROCESS OR TIMELINE FOR YOUR PROJECT.

A reputable digital agency will have a tried-and-true step-by-step process to build and launch your website, and they should be ready to walk you through what those steps entail. Likewise, every website project should have a definitive timeline assigned to it, along with a set of agreed-upon milestones at various points on the timeline.

An agency that can't provide concrete details on your project's process and timeline is not an agency you want. Why? The lack of accountability puts you in a vulnerable position. You'll have no idea what's going on with your website until the agency deigns to release those details to you.



3. THEY DON'T PUSH BACK WHEN THE SCOPE BEGINS TO CREEP.

Making changes to a project after signing a contract and establishing a statement of work is known as scope creep. This could mean adding a few extra pages, implementing a new ecommerce element, or requesting copywriting services that were originally not planned. When not handled appropriately, scope creep can add up to additional time and cost, causing friction in the process.



4. A HEALTHY COMPANY WILL ADDRESS CHANGES

like these upfront by saying, "This was not in the terms of our agreement; we're happy to do it, but it will cost more money." This demonstrates that the company is willing to protect both your agreement and their product. After all, changes usually cost the agency money, and if they aren't passing those costs to you, they're absorbing them (and they can't do that for very long and remain solvent).



5. THEY DON'T HAVE A CLEAR CANCELLATION POLICY.

It can be uncomfortable talking about when things will end, especially when your relationship is just beginning. But in reality, every relationship ends. That's why both parties in a business relationship should agree on terms of cancellation. If your digital agency is uncomfortable even broaching the subject, that's a red flag.

If they jokingly laugh off the question with a "Why would you ever want to leave us?" Be prepared for a messy breakup down the road. If they make inflated promises about how they'll ensure you never want to leave and bend over backward to keep you, chances are you're not dealing with a reputable agency.

They might have good intentions, and there may be no scam involved, but when you choose to leave that company (again, not if, but when), it's going to be a sticky situation because they don't have a process in place. You'll have to ride the learning curve with them should you ever decide to leave.



6. THEY SIMPLY RUB YOU THE WRONG WAY.

If the behavior exhibited by the agency rubs you the wrong way during the initial interview, you're only seeing the tip of the iceberg. While it's important to keep an open mind, you should still listen to your gut.

It's like feeling a pebble in your shoe. It only bothers you a little at first, but if you don't take off your shoe and remove the pebble, it's going to feel excruciating after about a half mile of walking. If something annoys you or makes you uncomfortable at the beginning, you'll be even more uncomfortable the longer you let it go.



By keeping these red flags in mind as you interview prospective web designers, you will be well equipped to evaluate your choices, narrow down your top candidates, and ultimately, select the designer that makes the most sense for your project.



Drew Barton

Drew Barton is the former Webmaster for CNN.com and the founder and president of Southern Web, an award-winning digital agency specializing in web development and digital marketing solutions. He is the author of *The Buyer's Guide to Websites: What You Need to Know to Get the Website of Your Dreams*. For more information, please visit, www.southernweb.com.

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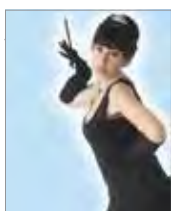
EASY IDEAS FOR MORE & GREATER SALES

EASY IDEA #1

BUY A CHARGING STATION FOR CUSTOMERS TO USE IN STORE

Often little things can make a big difference. My husband always talks about this restaurant where the waiters throw rolls at you. Silly? Yes, but it's cheap, easy, memorable, and most important it keeps customers coming back. So what easy little things can you do to sell more jewelry (besides throwing diamonds at them)? Over the next few months, I will share some easy things you can do in your store.

Today's idea is for you to spend \$27 to buy a phone charging station to put in your store for customers to use. Aleah, how will that help my business? The reason this simple idea is so wonderful is that it means people will put down their phone and look at your jewelry! Customers used to look in your cases when they were waiting on a watch battery or while their spouse shopped. Almost gone are the days when a woman would come in for a battery and leave with a \$5000 bracelet, because customers are not looking at your jewelry they are looking at their phones, often while talking to you! \$27 could lead to thousands of dollars in sales if customers actually look at your jewelry. Bonus? It also makes you look like you care about them since you are providing a service. Win, Win Win.



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

EASY IDEA #2

ASK CUSTOMERS TO MODEL FOR YOU

By Aleah Arundale

You may know that the chances of making a sale go up when a customer tries on a piece of jewelry. People are connected to things by touch. A study done with a car salesman found that if the salesman touched the customer's arm, the customer rated that salesman as being more kind, more friendly, and more agreeable. Giving out coffee in your store is also good because when people held and touched something warm, studies showed they had a more positive outlook than if they held something cold.

Get them to touch, feel, and try on your jewelry and you are a lot closer to closing the sale. So how can you get customers to try on MORE jewelry? Ask them to model it for your Facebook page! This is win-win. First, the customer feels flattered and important. Don't forget how vital making someone feel important can be. It is one of our basic human needs. Something as easy as asking a customer which ad they like better or if they can hold this vase for a minute makes them feel helpful, useful, and important. Asking a woman to model for you makes her feel important and beautiful. Everyone woman would be flattered to model a piece of beautiful jewelry. It makes them feel like a star and jewelry sales are all about how the piece makes the customer feel. The second reason this is great is because today's customer wants an awesome buying experience. This is why people pay more for Tiffany's or Starbucks. They buy the experience. How great, engaging, and fun is the act of having your photo taken. By asking your customers to model, you provide a memorable experience for them. So, tell them to tell their friends. It adds to their experience. BONUS if you can get them to share the picture on their OWN Facebook page you can reach a whole new audience for free.



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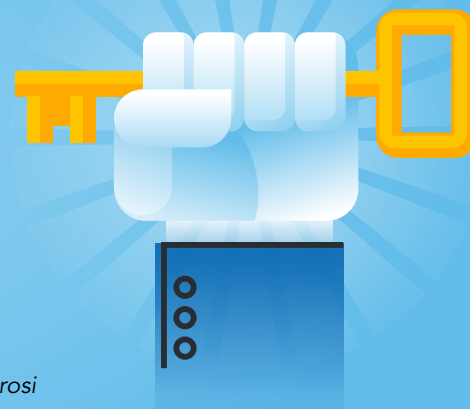
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MAYBE A KEY FOR JEWELERS TO UNLOCK BUSINESS IN 2018

By Matt Perosi



The year 2017 was not a good year especially for large brick and mortar stores. According to the financial services company Credit Suisse, the number of store closures was predicted to exceed the previous record set in 2008 during the recession.

More purchases are shifting online because shopping is faster and easier. Shopping simply isn't fun anymore. Your age group doesn't matter. Everyone longs for a more convenient shopping experience that will free up time.

It's been 20 years since retail sales started migrating online, yet the jewelry industry continues to lag behind other retail sectors. Originally, it was thought that consumers would not purchase high value jewelry online because it needed to be touched and viewed in-person. Companies like Blue Nile, James Allen, Whiteflash, and Amazon proceeded to sell jewelry at every price point. Over time, each one of those websites has evolved into something user friendly, feature rich, educational and even fun to use.

With regard to high-ticket items, consumers will make the purchase if they feel secure in the belief that what they purchase is what they, in fact, will get. With this in mind, successful websites have invested a lot into photography and video presentations, plenty of online documentation, past user reviews, and customer service techniques. Successful online retailers have also figured out how to continue engaging consumers over time through both social media and a website to keep them connected and focused on that inevitable big-ticket purchase. This is something retail jewelers need to learn and implement.

Having an ecommerce website won't shorten the consumer's buying cycle. The cycle of first thought, to research, to purchase, still exists online the same as it would in the physical stores. Building online success requires that you come up with ways to extend your in-person sales techniques into a digital medium. In specific terms, this means your website must have all the information you'd tell someone in-person in either a written or video format, preferably both. Instead of follow-up telephone calls with customers, you continue to engage with them through email or social media. Online ads should also be used to maintain top of mind awareness. I've had experience with financing for website projects so drop me an email if you'd like a referral to a reasonable business funding company.

Jewelers I speak to often don't understand the importance of social networks as customer engagement tools. They simply

view them as advertising platforms. Facebook is the most popular social platform worldwide yet few jewelers are using it to engage consumers. Jewelers can build the long-term customer relationship through friendly Facebook conversations and comments. Those engagements can lead to trust and the security that they need when purchasing big-ticket items online.

Discovering your own ways to mix your website and social engagement to build your online success will take time and money. With all the time and technology involved, ecommerce businesses have the similar operational overhead as their brick and mortar counterparts. Building a website to satisfy current consumer expectations takes time. Ecommerce isn't in the future anymore; that future is here and it is growing. Store closings are a symptom of the problem. Brick and mortar stores do have an advantage over ecommerce-only-stores, because they can tap into the full range of online and offline marketing methods that will support in-person sales while also supporting worldwide ecommerce sales.

If your foot traffic is declining, and if ecommerce isn't in your future, then you need to reinvent your store as something more fun for your customers. Reinvention could mean moving or remodeling your store. You could start small with a concerted social engagement effort. Online contests and daily questions could build your local customer interest, build community involvement, and get them back in the store again. This type of social media management can't be outsourced and should be managed by one of your knowledgeable staff.

If ecommerce is in your future, plan your long term goal of big-ticket sales but start with smaller ticket items. Lower price items have a shorter sales cycle and can trigger impulse buying. The experience you gain with lower ticket items will help you hone your online sales skills and build towards the larger ecommerce project. If you haven't already begun your ecommerce strategy, then I recommend you start now. With dedication and hard work, your ecommerce site will be ready for the 2018 holiday season.



Matthew A Perosi

Matthew Perosi reports the latest Internet trends and methods that are most relevant to the jewelry industry in his newsletters, videos, and blog available through jwag.biz. Tap into the more than 1,500 free newsletters to guide you towards better usage of websites, social, and mobile. Matthew invites your feedback and questions at matt@jwag.biz or 973.413.8211. Many questions from TRJ readers have turned into great newsletter topics.



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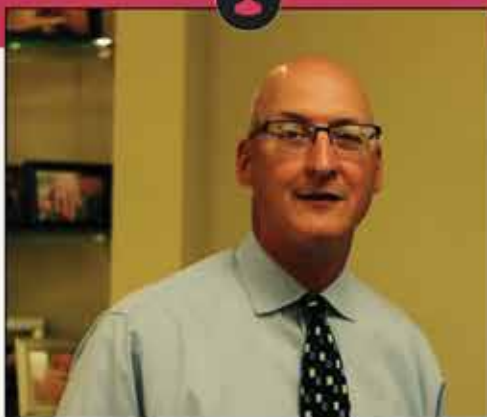
• 770-394-6727 and schedule a demo. •



Anish. Thank you so much for this wonderful custom design software. It has changed the way that I have done business. I have always tried to add tech into the sale of jewelry and custom studio is the perfect way to do so with extreme ease. After 17 years in the industry it has lighted my fire again for this wonderful career. Everyone I have dealt with at star gems has been extremely kind and know their trade. I look forward to growing with star gems and look forward to all of the wonderful updates that are coming.

"Thank you so much to you Anish and all of your staff at Star Gems"

**ANDREW DUMONT
(PRINCESS JEWELERS)**



I feel Custom Studio is highly important to today's customer shopping for any jewelry whether they shop in store or online. It gives people the ability to take millions & millions of jewelry styles & change them on the fly & work with a local jeweler to make their dreams come true. It's completely different because before we used email & we got to converse with customers we were using our social media we were using technology. We are truly using technology in an affordable manner.

**DAN FOSS
(FOSS JEWELERS)**



Hi, This is Dan with Ellis Jewelers in Downtown Concord. Custom Design has become such a big part of our business we are always looking for new ways to share with our clients & make it easier for them & non threatening & I have found something and that's the custom design studio through STAR GEMS. Its a great way to stand beside your client & just talking about custom design demystified & let them have fun. Its almost like coloring, its like playing, its like a game. You can sit down with a Custom Studio tablet & you can play with it, you draw on it & really make it easy for your clients.

Anish & His team at Star Gems has been great to work with. We have been doing custom work with them since 3-4years & they are doing beautiful work & now we have this extra tool of the custom studio app & also they have this oversized iPad in store. It really really allows us to help people & they really speed up with the design process It is recommended enough Thanks.

**DAN LEVINSON
(ELLIS JEWELERS)**

Anish Desai

President-CEO
Star Gems Inc.



- ◆ Instant Free Price Quote. Being a direct manufacturer our pricing is most competitive in the industry
- ◆ One of the Best Custom Design houses with **NO CAD** fees producing the largest number of custom pieces in the country
- ◆ Online tracking of your order through our Website
- ◆ CAD for confirmed quote in **1-2 business days**
- ◆ Custom Studio App is available to qualified retailers with a store front, territories are still open to sign on.
- ◆ Watch our videos on the app at www.stargems.com under the tab Customstudio

◆ To set up an appointment for App test drive, send email to sales@stargems.com ◆



HOW TO INCREASE YOUR AVERAGE TRANSACTION VALUE



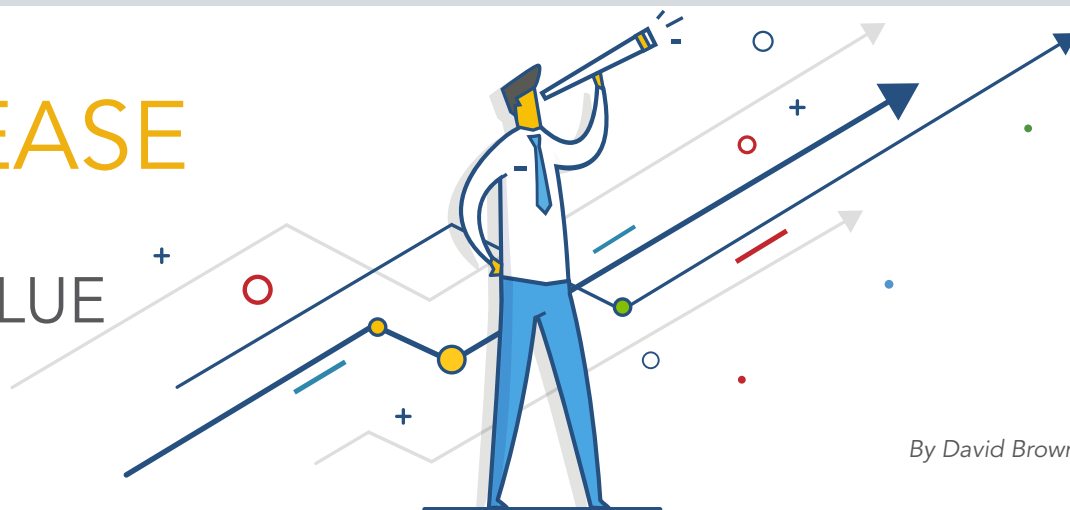
It's very easy to focus on finding the next customer – our marketing efforts are invariably aimed at drawing more people into our stores with a view to increasing sales one customer at a time. As we've discussed often in other articles there is never a more captive audience however than the customer who has just purchased from you. Getting someone who has just said yes to buy again is considerably easier than finding a new customer who will do the same – and it doesn't cost you any extra to do it.

It's often said getting a new customer can cost up to 7 times the cost of selling to an existing one. If that existing one is already standing in front of you with their credit card out that ratio will be even stronger – yet few retailers take full advantage of the opportunity to sell to those people who have already demonstrated they have trust in what you do.



David Brown

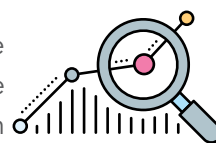
David Brown is President of the Edge Retail Academy, an organization devoted to the ongoing measurement and growth of jewelry store performance and profitability. For further information about the Academy's management mentoring and industry benchmarking reports contact inquiries@edgeretailacademy.com or Phone toll free (877) 5698657



By David Brown

HERE ARE A FEW IDEAS TO HELP YOU MAKE THE MOST OF THIS SALES OPPORTUNITY:

UP SELL. Before they get to YES have you shown them a more expensive item that may meet their needs even better? You may be surprised at what they can spend. At the very least it may help them realize the item they are going to purchase is the right one for them



CROSS SELL. Show them a similar item. Even if they say no you are planting the seed for next time



PACKAGE A BUNDLE. Make it easy for them to say yes. Don't just offer the earrings and pendant separately but make a deal for the two and display it prominently when the decision making process is being done. This silent salesperson can do a lot of the work for you.

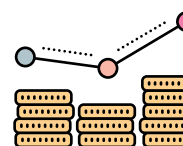


OFFER ADDED VALUE FOR A MINIMUM PURCHASE.

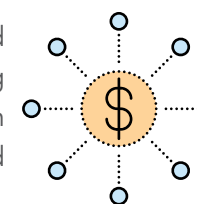
If your average sale is say \$75 then offer a free gift package at \$99 or some other value added offering that will make it worthwhile for them to spend more.



INCREASE YOUR PRICING AND MARGINS. Do you review your prices for fast selling items? The best way to increase your average sale is to increase your prices



POINT OF SALE PROMOTIONS. What do you have around the cash register that can help make an extra sale? Even something as simple as jewelry cleaner can increase your average transaction value. Supermarkets are excellent at doing this and you should follow their lead.



Being proactive about increasing your average sale will yield results. Even if one in ten customers take up one of your offers you can make a significant increase to the sales you achieve each year – and it can happen with very little effort or cost for your business. Marketing isn't just about what happens externally but the internal efforts of your selling staff as well. Plant the seed with your customers and a cash flow tree may just grow!



IJO Is Part Of My DNA!

We've been a member of IJO for so long that I really can't recall what our business was like without it. Since I started working here in high school, I think it's fair to say that I pretty much grew up at Jack Lewis Jewelers.

I stayed through college and left for about five years to rep a watch line, but my retail home was always calling to me. In 2002, I came back with an idea and a plan to buy the store in ten years. I did it in eight and half!

IJO played a part in that. Two shows a year since 2002 has helped me to build a network of industry peers who are not only my friends, but also, my mentors and advisors. The time I spend with them on and off the show floor has proven to be a commodity impossible for me to measure or put into words.

What I CAN say about it is that many of the ideas I've gleaned from my fellow IJO members have led to seismic shifts in my business and our bottom line. From introductions to new vendors to the special events that succeeded for other people, I've found and implemented so many things from so many.

The time between meetings is the hardest part as I consider many of these folks to be among my best friends. I genuinely enjoy my time with them and the laughs we have make all the hard work seem like vacation.

These friends and IJO are part of my DNA and I cannot imagine being in business without them. If I had to sum up my membership in a sentence it would be this: IJO has made me a better retailer and it will make you better too.

John Carter, Jack Lewis Jewelers, Bloomington, IL



IJO will be at the Houston Marriott Marquis March 10-13.

Call Penny Palmer at 800.624.9252 to see if you're eligible to attend.



The largest jewelry buying group in the world.

www.ijo.com

AGS Announces Keynote and Emcee Lineup for Conclave 2018

The American Gem Society announced its three keynote speakers for Conclave 2018, in Nashville, TN, April 23-25.

The legendary Marie Osmond, world-famous entertainer and entrepreneur, will open Conclave on Monday, April 23.

Jon Dorenbos famed magician, professional football player, and one of the most sought-after speakers today, will be the breakfast keynote on Tuesday, April 24.

On Wednesday, April 25, Mike Rayburn, world-class guitarist, will strike a chord in Music City as that day's keynote speaker. Returning as Emcee—and featured speaker—will be Joel Zeff, back for his third straight Conclave.

"We are so excited about this lineup, and there is more great news to follow in the upcoming weeks," said Katherine Bodoh, RJ, CEO of the American Gem Society and AGS Laboratories. "Conclave is known for its talented lineup of sought-after speakers and this year is no exception."

Marie Osmond has spent five iconic decades in the entertainment business performing as a successful singer, television performer and talk show host, dancer, actor, author, entrepreneur and public speaker. She has continued to maintain relevance, remaining an instantly recognizable figure across the globe.



Marie Osmond

Ms. Osmond is a multiple gold and platinum selling artist and CMA winner, garnering numerous Billboard chart-topping singles and albums, and three New York Times Bestselling books. She has entertained millions throughout the world through television, radio, film, literature, live concerts and Broadway performances. As a philanthropist, she co-founded Children's Miracle Network Hospitals®, which has raised over five billion dollars for children to date.

Jon Dorenbos graduated from the University of Texas, El Paso, with a degree in Business. He was picked up by the Buffalo Bills as a free agent in 2003, but has since played for the Tennessee Titans and Philadelphia Eagles. He is currently playing for the New Orleans Saints and entering his 16th season in the NFL. Looking for a means to overcome a childhood tragedy, Mr.

Dorenbos got into magic just before his 13th birthday. Magic became an escape during a time of mourning and transition in his life. Mr. Dorenbos talks about overcoming adversity while entertaining the audience with sleight of hand magic.

Mike Rayburn uses guitar and comedy to teach three simple, powerful tools which took him from playing empty bars, to headlining Carnegie Hall—eight times! Being a successful artist, as well as a savvy entrepreneur and business owner, Mike Rayburn is uniquely qualified to teach artistic principles in a business context, to give businesses and organizations the edge they so desperately need to innovate and perform at peak "virtuoso" levels... and thus transform their success and significance.

Joel Zeff connected with the American Gem Society audience as a featured speaker in 2015, and was so well received that the AGS asked him to return as emcee in 2016 and 2017. He's back again this year doing double-duty as both the Master of Ceremony and a featured speaker on Opening Day. To learn more about Conclave, contact Conclave@ags.org. For more information about the American Gem Society and to visit the new website, please visit AmericanGemSociety.org.

The EDGE® Adds New Profit Center for Independent Retail Jewelers

Abbott Jewelry Systems, creator of The Edge retail jewelry management system, has added jewelry care protection plans to their software, providing independent retail jewelers the same sales advantage as the jewelry chain stores. Independent jewelers can now offer jewelry care protection plans for their customers' peace of mind, in addition to helping them close sales at the counter. The plans offered are available through industry insurance leader JM Care Plan™, a member of the Jewelers Mutual Group, and IJB/Wexler/Montage Group.

"The jewelry chains have long offered jewelry care protection plans not only as an added revenue stream, but also as an advantage over the independent jeweler," stated Dick Abbott, CEO of Abbott Jewelry Systems. "It's high time independents level the playing field," Abbott continued.

Jewelry sales, jewelry care income, and financing are three important profit centers for chain jewelry stores. Abbott Jewelry Systems has been looking for innovative ways to help their customers beyond the scope of traditional jewelry software. "We're committed to providing the independent jeweler with the features and functionality which enable them to compete and win in an ever-evolving retail environment," Abbott added.



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Artistry Ltd

14K yellow gold earrings from the Ginkgo Collection. MSRP: \$390. Matching necklace and brooch are also available.

847-674-3250



Scott West

Custom argyle pink and white diamond eternity ring with 12 pear shape pink diamonds totaling 1.35 carats and 12 pear shape white diamonds G VS totaling 1.25 carats. MSRP: \$80,000.

212-997-0940



Gemlok

Winsome 3.80ctw diamond bangle set in 18K white and rose gold, with pink, green and blue chalcedony cabochons crafted in a floral pattern. MSRP: \$18,600.

212-755-2522



Jyes International

Diamond drop earrings in 18K yellow and rose gold with white and natural fancy color diamonds, 7.73ctw. MSRP: \$44,600.

415-621-8880



Variety Gem

Newly introduced line of adjustable slide closure diamond bracelets in 14K white gold set with 0.33 ctw of diamonds. MSRP: \$2,215.

800-735-4367

Alisa

From the Traversa Gold Collection, 4mm signature basket weave bangle with twin interlocking circles accent in silver and 0.13ctw diamonds. Exclusively made in Italy. MSRP: \$1,595.

888-253-6600





Belle Étoile

White stones pavé-set into 24K yellow gold vermeil, nickel allergy-free, 925 sterling silver. MSRP: \$165.

415-626-9223

Bellarri

This Galaxy of Love necklace is set in 14K rose gold with 194 dazzling diamonds, 0.86ctw, 13.65ct center genuine Swiss blue topaz, 23.25ctw combination of Swiss blue topaz and Iolite with ten strands of genuine faceted blue topaz detachable beads. MSRP: \$10,990.

800-255-0192



SDC Creations

Cushion amethyst ring with diamond ribbons from the Colore Oro collection. MSRP: \$1,399.

844-732-5900



Midas Chain

14K gold cross is available in yellow and white gold. This uniquely designed piece is adorned with a beautiful diamond in the center. MSRP: \$399.

877-643-2765

Benchmark

The delicate leaf scrolling on this 14K two-tone 8mm design band is contrasted by a subtle blackening detail for a look of classic refinement. Comfort-fit. MSRP: \$1,118 (size 10).

205-345-0555



Michou

One-of-kind bangle bracelet featuring larimar, amazonite, Paraiba topaz, sky blue topaz and pearl. MSRP: \$750.

530-525-3320



David Connolly

Sapphire and diamond 14K white gold hoop earrings. \$1,450.

800-526-4597

MAXIMIZE THE STORE EXPERIENCE

By J. Vanderhouten

The store experience is more important than ever. According to a 2016 report by Forrester Research, the brands that offer exceptional customer experiences bring in 5.7 times more revenue than their competitors¹.

As a luxury retailer, the expectation of exceptional service is even greater to today's consumer. It is the experience that will get customers talking about you.

In an age where everyone can comment, like and share online, outstanding customer service defines your brand. It is the biggest differentiator and plays a key role in making this holiday season the most successful ever.



What can you do as a retailer to “wow” your customer in your store this holiday? Here are five tips:

1 HAVE A ROBUST WEBSITE.

Although not an experience your customers will have in your store, a great website visit is an integral part of the purchase journey. According to a survey conducted by Retail Dive, more than 65% of consumers conduct online product research before stepping foot in any store². But, there is good news for retail jewelers. In a survey by TimeTrade, 85% of U.S. consumers prefer to buy in a physical store even if they can purchase the same product online³.



More than **65%** of consumers conduct online product research before stepping foot in any store



85% of U.S. consumers prefer to buy in a physical store

2 BE PERSONAL.

You're not just selling a product; you're selling something your customers loved one will treasure. Get to know the person across the counter and make a connection. To do this well, you need to make sure your staff is adequately trained. Providing outstanding customer service is the key to an enhanced store experience. Exceptional product knowledge instills confidence and provides the value of shopping with a local independent.

Beyond product knowledge, speak to them about services they may not be familiar with such as how to care for their

jewelry. Include a complimentary Pearls of Wisdom brochure from Jewelers Mutual Insurance Group, which explains how to care for their jewelry. You can order free copies for your store by visiting <http://info.jewelersmutual.com/order-jeweler-resources>. Explain your store benefits and mention the importance of insuring their new purchase.

3 DO SOMETHING UNEXPECTED.

Consider an inexpensive gift to give the customer as your holiday gift to them. Surprise them with the gift at your point of sale while the one they purchased is being wrapped. Send cookies or a special treat to your top 100 customers. During some of your busiest days and times, hire carolers to sing in your store to get everyone in the holiday mood.

Have a store (non-alcoholic) signature drink offered to every customer. Perhaps this is served in an engraved glass everyone can keep. Something special will be memorable.

4 MAKE SURE YOU ARE ADEQUATELY STAFFED.

The key to a great store experience is to understand and respect your customers' time. People want convenience. Consider hiring temporary help during those busy last few weeks. Temporary help can be in charge of gift-wrapping; serving your customers a drink or snack; ringing up the sale; everything needed to ensure your customer isn't waiting any longer than they should and is being tended to in a manner you would like yourself.

Remember, even if they aren't directly involved in selling or bench work, everyone at your business should be properly trained on safety and security best practices.

Editor's Note

Time and again we hear about the important difference between on-line and bricks and mortar shopping is the in-store experience. We received this piece from Jewelers Mutual and placed it on our website in December for the holiday season. The message was so good, we adapted the material for your consideration now that the holidays have past and we're on to a whole New Year. We hope you like and profit from the thinking contained in the article.

5 REMEMBER THEM AFTER THE SALE.

December is busy, but when traffic slows down a little in early January, every customer should receive a hand-written thank you note. If you are an owner, send a hand-signed letter welcoming them to your "family". In a world of everything digital, something hand-written will be noticed and appreciated.

Mark Devereaux, vice president of Sales for Jewelers Mutual, weighed in on the subject. "It's time to recalibrate and reset expectations as we move into the new era of retail. Retail jewelers are in an enviable position," stated Devereaux. "Jewelers sell emotion and something that will be treasured long after the sale. Couple that with an exceptional customer experience, and that's the recipe for a successful holiday season," he added.

Jewelers Mutual has several premium service programs to support storeowners in their quest to provide exceptional service. Simply contact a Jewelers Mutual sales manager at 800-336-5642, ext. 2118 or email sales@jminsure.com or complete a request form at <http://jewelersmutual.com/customer-loyalty-pro>

1. Dicso, Jim, CEO, Sunday Sky (2017, October 19) Why Personalization is Key for Retail Customer Experiences Retrieved from <https://www.retailcustomerexperience.com/blogs/why-personalization-is-key-for-retail-customer-experiences/>.

2. Skrovan, Sandy (2017, May 17) Why Researching Online Shopping Offline is the New Norm Retrieved from <https://www.retaildive.com/news/why-researching-online-shopping-offline-is-the-new-norm/442754/>

3. Timetrade, 2017 State of Retail Survey Report, Retrieved from https://media.timetrade.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/29134355/TimeTrade_State_of_Retail_2017_Report.pdf



J. Vanderhouten

Jessica VandenHouten, Brand Communications Manager at Jewelers Mutual Insurance Group. Her integrated communications approach has been instrumental in bringing awareness to the jewelry insurance category and gaining recognition of the Jewelers Mutual brand throughout the jewelry industry and with jewelry-buying consumers.

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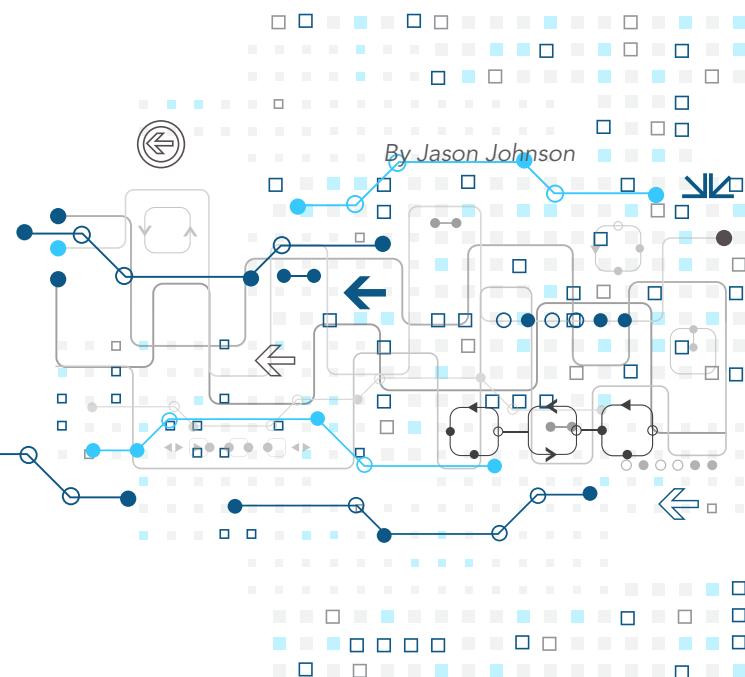
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9 STEPS TO PROTECT AGAINST RANSOMWARE ATTACKS



With the rise of cyber-attacks, you can never be too careful or prepared when protecting your digital information. Whether you own one store or several, you need to be equally as cautious, anyone can fall victim to these thieves.

Picture this: You arrive to work, check your email, and suddenly your computer's files are infected with an encryption that requires a "secret code" to unlock, and a ransom note scrolls across your screen with a demand, such as "Pay the price or all your files are gone." What would you do?

Ransomware is a type of virus that can attach itself to a very harmless looking email or website, often from a legitimate-looking company. Once opened or otherwise activated, the virus infects all of the computer's files with strong encryption that requires a "secret code" to have the encryption removed. Then, a ransom note appears on your screen, typically demanding a certain amount of money, with no guarantee that the hackers will actually provide the promised code in return. Even if they do, there's no guarantee the code will actually unlock or release your files.

Your digital security should be a top priority, alongside your physical and procedural plans. You can never be too safe when responding to/defending against ransomware hacking attempts and attacks.

Follow these tips from Jewelers Mutual Insurance Group to protect yourself against ransomware attacks:

- Only use secured wireless providers to gain Internet access and encrypt your router to protect your connection. Contact your system administrator to confirm your system's security.
- Limit your encrypted Wi-Fi connection to necessary employees only. If you allow wireless access to your customers, make sure it is via a "guest network" with different login credentials.
- Computers should be frequently checked with anti-malware, anti-spyware, and anti-virus software. Perform frequent scans on your systems to ensure no hacking attempts have been made. Also run frequent software updates, as many software vendors publish security updates frequently. Many software applications can be configured to update automatically when security patches are available that address new security threats.
- If you are on a website that seems suspicious, leave it immediately. Never enter sensitive information, such as account information or passwords, into questionable websites. If you think a website is suspicious, check with your IT provider to confirm its legitimacy before continuing to access it.
- Run ad-blocking applications on corporate machines. Pop-ups and free downloads are frequent offenders of carrying viruses. Configure your Internet browser settings to disable pop-ups so you don't accidentally click on one.
- Limit employee access to data and information, and limit authority to install software. Do not provide any one employee with access to all data systems. Employees should only be given access to the specific data systems that they need for their jobs, and should not be able to install any software without permission.
- Confirm computer screens and confidential information is out of sight of your customers and visitors. Careless placement of computer screens, documents or other sensitive materials could result in a visual hacking



incident. Confirm your sensitive information is out of sight of the general public. Just looking over someone's shoulder or across the counter, customers might not be able to see large amounts of data, but it still counts as an unauthorized disclosure, a confidentiality breach.

- Properly dispose of sensitive information by destroying or wiping hard drives. Consider having a locked box for physical items that need to be shredded. Contact a local electronic company to discuss options for safely disposing of electronics.
- Back-up your information. Consider having a copy of your files backed up and stored offsite in a secure location. In the event that you do experience a ransom ware or data catastrophe, you will be able to recover your information safely and efficiently.
- Create a plan. In the event that you experience a ransom ware or phishing situation, have a plan in place. Training your employees on proper protocol is essential to protect your electronic information and data systems. Have frequent team meetings to review safety processes to keep security at the forefront of your employees' minds.
- If your business does experience a ransom ware attack, contact law enforcement immediately. Any attack on your business should be reported to the police so they can record any hacking incident. If customer data is lost, such as credit card details, you will need to notify the Federal Trade Commission (FTC). To report Internet fraud: www.ic3.gov
- If your company website or systems have been hacked, you may want to contact your attorney for advice on your responsibilities, such as letting your customers know. The public and companies are encouraged to collaborate with the FBI and local law enforcement.

Data Breach and Cyber-Related Coverage


Learn more about protecting yourself against ransom ware and other risks to your business, contact Jewelers Mutual Insurance Group. To find an experienced Jewelers Mutual agent in your area, visit JewelersMutual.com.

Jason Johnson

Loss Prevention Specialist
Jewelers Mutual Insurance Group

Jason Johnson joined Jewelers Mutual Insurance Company in 2013 as a Commercial Lines Claims Examiner. In his current role as a Loss Prevention Specialist, he is responsible for providing sound advice to jewelers on ways to prevent insurance-related losses. Prior to joining Jewelers Mutual, Jason worked as a private investigator. He has also worked for American Family Insurance as a Claims Adjuster. Jason is a graduate of Carroll University. He holds a bachelor's degree in criminal justice.

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HEART**
on Valentine's Day

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Gemstones - Synthetic Opal



Model - #1992
MSRP - \$143
Gemstones - Garnet



Model - #1998
MSRP - \$236
Gemstones - Alexite



Model - #13022
MSRP - \$107
Gemstones - White Cultured Pearl



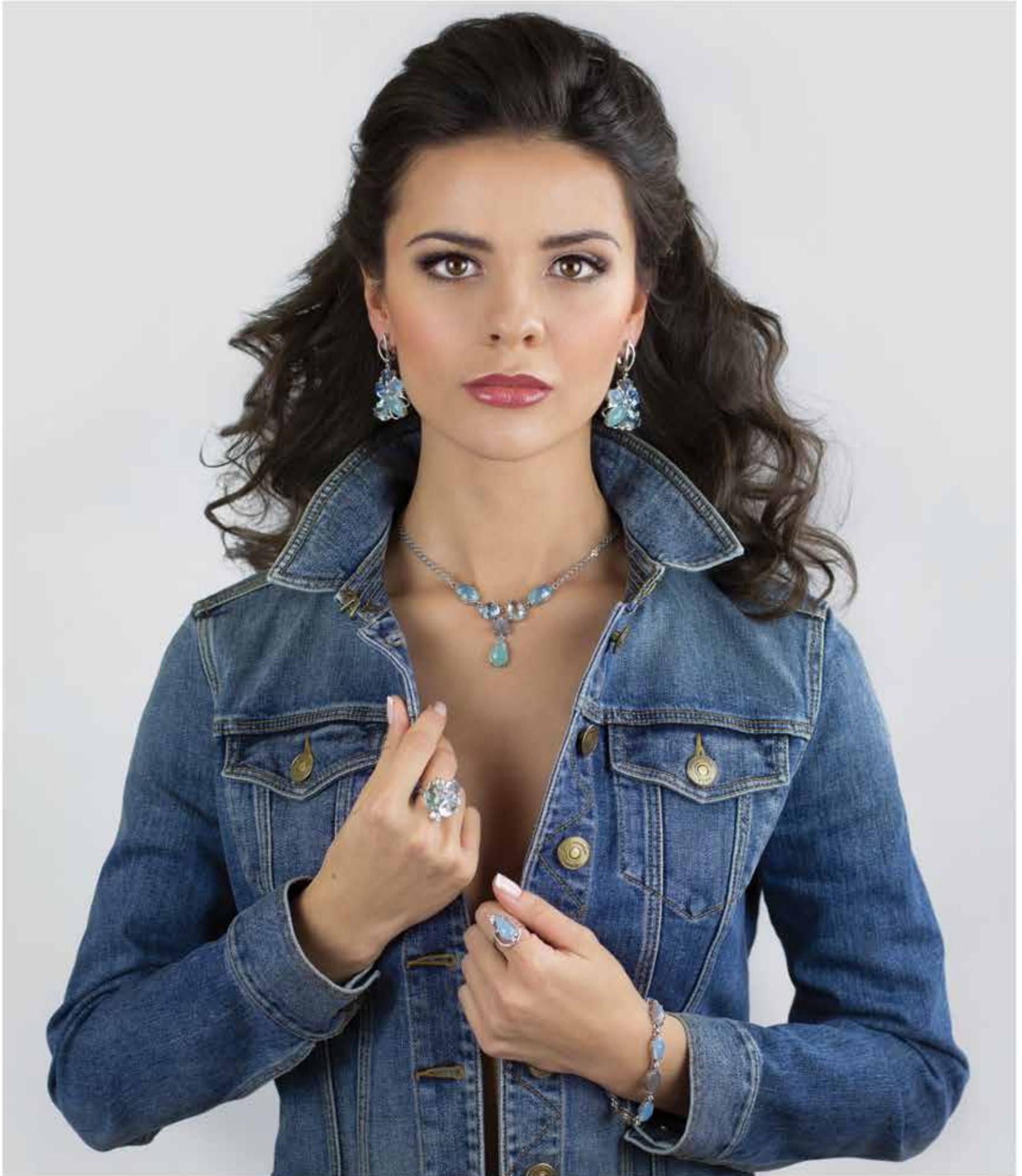


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AGTA GemFairMoves 2019 Las Vegas Location

American Gem Trade Association GemFair™ and U.S. Antique Shows to Co-Locate in Las Vegas

AGTA and U.S. Antique Shows are pleased to announce their Las Vegas events will co-locate at the Las Vegas Convention Center, beginning in June of 2019. AGTA GemFair™ Las Vegas is a destination event that is integral to the vitality of businesses for thousands of retailers, brands, manufacturers and designers, while for over two decades, the Las Vegas Antique Jewelry and Watch Show has been the largest trade-only event serving the antique and estate jewelry and watch industry. The co-location of these two indispensable industry events will serve to augment and enhance their respective markets through increased access to global buyers, and compellingly cohesive exhibitions.

"We carefully researched all facets of this partnership prior to making the decision to align with U.S. Antique Shows at the Las Vegas Convention Center," explained Douglas K. Hucker, CEO of the AGTA. "Through on-going conversations with our members, as well as multiple discussions within the board and in committees, we came to the conclusion that it's time for an evolution for AGTA GemFair™ Las Vegas. The collaboration with Emerald Expositions was a logical choice; not only is the move mutually beneficial to both of our exhibitors and attendees, but there is also a commonality in the perspectives and goals of each of our organizations."



Douglas Hucker

"We are thrilled to join forces with the AGTA during Las Vegas Market Week," said Gannon Brousseau, Senior Vice President of Emerald Expositions' Jewelry Group. "As a group, we carefully weigh all decisions that potentially affect the industry as a whole. We firmly believe that AGTA's vendors and buyers are crucial to the success of our industry, and our Las Vegas Antique Jewelry and Watch Show vendors cater to a unique and varied group of qualified buyers. There is tremendous cross-promotional appeal between these two autonomous yet complementary events, and this partnership will ultimately contribute to the prosperity of the entire trade."

"There are paradigm changes going on in the industry. We see an exciting future for our exhibitors and buyers; the synergy of AGTA GemFair™ Las Vegas and the Las Vegas Antique

Jewelry and Watch Show is incredible. We will have a show that is easy to work, and one where a store owner can find profits at every booth," enthused Jeffrey Bilgore, President of the AGTA Board of Directors. "Establishing our independence in Las Vegas provides us with so many opportunities for growth and improvement, and partnering with a like-minded organization like Emerald Expositions allows us to provide a vital and affordable show experience for our members, and to expand our resources in strategic and consequential ways."



Jeffery Bilgore

Further information about the 2019 events will be released in the coming months. Vendors or buyers interested in more information about AGTA GemFair™ Las Vegas should contact Mary Lou Keen at marylou@agta.org or (214) 742-4367, while anyone interested in The Las Vegas Antique Jewelry and Watch Show should visit <https://www.usantiqueshow.com/>. Press who would like to obtain an interview with AGTA or Emerald Exposition Decision Makers can contact michelle@LastWordComm.com or at (646) 302-5521.

GIA Offers Postdoctoral Research Opportunities Fellowships and Internships

GIA invites qualified candidates to apply for the Richard T. Liddicoat Postdoctoral Research Fellowships at its Carlsbad, California and New York City locations. The one-to-two year fellowships encourage early-career scientists to pursue full-time academic research on fundamental scientific problems in gemstone geology, defect physics and diamond synthesis; and other fields related to gemology – the study of diamonds, colored gemstones, pearls and their treatments. A paid research internship program is also available for students pursuing a Bachelor or Master of Science degree in related fields.

"GIA's fellowship and internship programs provide unique opportunities for researchers to fully perform specialized research in their areas of interest and expertise," said Dr. Wuyi Wang, vice president of research and development for GIA. "Researchers are given full access to in-house research instruments and information including FTIR, UV-Vis-NIR absorption, Raman, photoluminescence and EPR spectrometers; an SEM microscope equipped with EDS and CL spectroscopy and imaging; laser ablation ICP-MS and a CVD diamond growth lab with laser cutting and polishing facilities." The start date of each fellowship is flexible, but accepted

New and Noteworthy

candidates should begin the program by Jan. 31, 2019. Applicants must have received their Ph.D. in a relevant field by the start date, and preferably within the last three years. Candidates should be willing to travel domestically and internationally as needed. The fellowship includes a competitive annual stipend, research funding and approved travel subsidies. Benefits include full health, dental and vision insurance, and the potential reimbursement of relocation expenses. Appointments are for one year.

The internship program is a paid one-to-two month period working on an agreed-upon project focused on a specific gemology topic. Work will include using instruments, analysis and data processes to determine a conclusion by the end of the internship. Interns will receive ongoing mentoring from experienced GIA scientists and gemologists.

Fellowship applications are due by April 30, 2018 and must include curriculum vitae with a publications list, a three-to-five page research proposal and at least two letters of reference. Internship applications are due by May 31, 2018. National and international students are welcome to apply for either program. Incomplete applications will not be considered.

For more information about the application process, the Liddicoat Postdoctoral Fellowships, the research internship program, GIA's facilities and current and past research projects visit GIA.edu/research-careers.

The Richard T. Liddicoat Postdoctoral Research Fellowships and the internship program are funded by the GIA endowment fund. There have been a total of six current and former research associates who have been part of the Postdoctoral Research Fellowship. The opportunities offered in this program makes advanced research attainable for early scientists. Former GIA Postdoctoral Research Fellow Evan Smith and coauthors published a cover story in the December issue of Science magazine on the origins of big diamonds and what those diamonds tell us about the earth's mantle.

Karen Smit, a postdoctoral researcher for GIA from 2014-2016, is a research scientist at GIA.

She is using a Scanning Electron Microscope to image a sample's shape or composition and see the internal growth structure of diamond. Photo by Jian Xin (Jae) Liao/GIA.



Karen Smit

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— Joy Krasner,
Harold Stevens Diamond and Jewelry Studio

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New and Noteworthy

MVI Research Shows Classic Luxury Brands Among Wealthy Millennials' Favorites

Some classic luxury brands are starting to capture favoritism among the USA's growing wealthy millennial consumer segment according to a consumer research study conducted by MVI Marketing LLC (MVI) in November 2017.

Rolex, Jimmy Choo and Tiffany show the strongest leadership positions in their respective product categories (Watches, Shoes, Jewelry).

"In this study we asked wealthy, younger, male and female consumers in the USA, to pick their luxury brand favorites in key product categories," stated Liz Chatelain, President of MVI.

Product categories researched in this study included: Fashion (apparel), Shoes, Handbags, Jewelry, Watches, Hotels, Automobiles and Eyewear.

"While some categories had clear outlier favorites, the majority including Fashion (apparel), Handbags, Automobiles, Hotels and Eyewear are all white spaces looking for brand leadership," continued Chatelain. "It's a significant opportunity for brands to penetrate this growing wealthy, consumer segment that will drive purchasing power for the next 30 years."

The research study and report titled: *Luxury Brand Favorites of Millennials* is among the first designed to capture a benchmark understanding of the brands achieving penetration with this emerging consumer segment.

MVI conducted this research online from 20-22 November 2017 with 978 male and female respondents, 25-40 years of age, \$80,000 household income and higher.

With this study and report MVI has launched LuxConsumer, a new research service assisting luxury brands to better understand and communicate with younger luxury consumers. The full report is available at MVIMarketing.com

For more information please contact: Theresa Jones at Theresa@MVIMarketing.com



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Parcel Pro launches of Jewelers Block Coverage

Parcel Pro, a UPS Capital company, is offering a special insurance program to help protect the property of jewelers against the most common types of losses. The comprehensive and customizable insurance policy provides coverage for the jewelers' merchandise on premise, as well as for trade shows, travel, private dwelling, goods on loan and more. It also offers businesses an option to carve out coverage for small package shipments from the conventional block policy so jewelers can tailor coverage to fit their needs.

Protection for small parcel shipments typically included in most jewelers block policies is not sufficient for businesses that frequently ship high-value goods. One large monetary transportation claim can result in loss of experience ratings, higher jewelers block premiums or lost coverage. To protect themselves, companies have added additional coverage or used multiple providers.

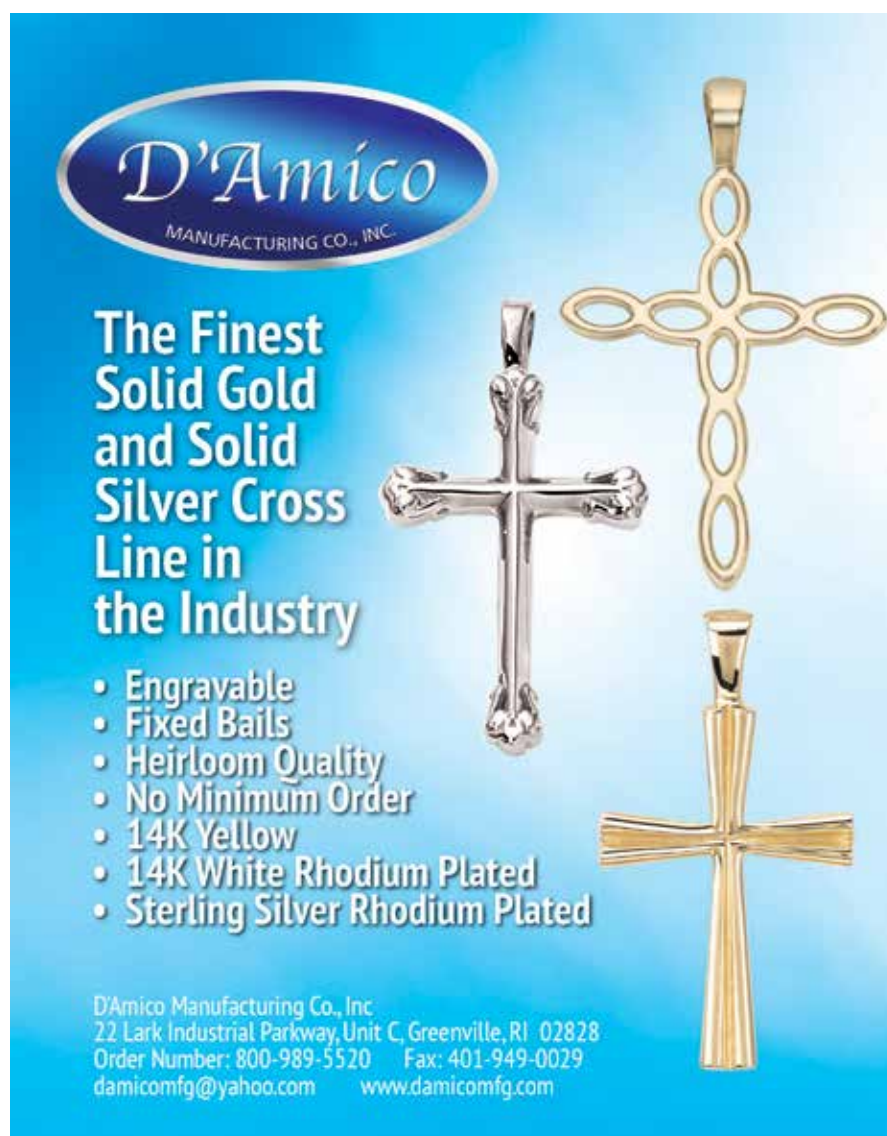
"This extensive new offering provides complementary layers of protection not found in other options, so jewelers can get all their needs through one provider," said Mark Robinson, President of UPS Capital. "As luxury ecommerce grows, more small packages will be shipped and that will increase the risk to jewelry businesses. Parcel Pro helps mitigate those risks by offering insured transportation solutions coupled with a block policy that enables broader protection without unnecessary coverages and wasted premiums."

Coverage Underwritten by Jewelers unBLOCKed, an insurance managing general underwriter specializing in the jewelry industry, Parcel Pro's jewelers block policy addresses the unique exposures faced by retailers, manufacturers, wholesalers, refiners, designers and appraisers. It focuses on loss prevention, risk mitigation, and employee safety.

Policies provide maximum coverage for the industry, yet allow customization based on risk tolerance. Clients can customize their policies based on their unique needs and can insure all or a portion of their goods. The offering provides worldwide coverage, up to 125% valuation of the goods and transactional coverage can be carved out of the policy for insured transportation of small package shipments.

Coverage can include the following:

- Jewelers' merchandise and goods of others
- Salesperson lines
- Shipping



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- Transactional coverage

"This exciting new product offers the jewelry industry an integrated, seamless solution for their insurance and shipping needs," explained Pat Low, President of Jewelers unBLOCKed. The fusion provides the jeweler the best of both worlds, with the ability to maximize coverage, and enhance efficiencies, through a solution tailored to their specific risk tolerance."

About UPS Capital

Nobody understands transportation and logistics like UPS. And while you've probably never thought of a UPS company for financing and insurance services, the global supply chain expertise of UPS Capital uniquely positions us to help protect companies from risk and leverage cash in their supply chains. Insurance companies and banks can't say that. UPS Capital and its affiliates have offices throughout the United States, as well as operations in Asia, Europe and Latin America. For more information, visit www.upscapital.com.

About Parcel Pro

Parcel Pro, a leading logistics provider, offers insured transportation services, business insurance solutions and payment services for the jewelry, wristwatch and collectibles industries. Parcel Pro has offices in Los Angeles, New York, Miami, Chicago, San Francisco, Hong Kong, Bangkok, Tokyo and Singapore to support the global needs of the luxury jewelry trade. For more information, visit www.parcelpro.com.

Rembrandt Charms Expands Operations

Rembrandt Charms is expanding its Williamsville, New York operations to include a new state of the art, eco-friendly electroplating facility. Rembrandt Charms was awarded an Empire State Development Grant by New York State for this project. The expansion is an integral part of the Company's long-term vision that will create numerous jobs. Rembrandt Charms products are manufactured in the United States and Canada.

"Retail jewelers and their customers expect exceptional quality and customer service. We pride ourselves in our hand-craftsmanship and quality. This expansion will make us even stronger. As we continue to invest in supporting our

retailers, we ask that retailers continue to select Rembrandt Charms before turning to alternative companies that do not specialize in the charm business," states Michael Metzger, Chief Operating Officer, Rembrandt Charms.

"With every charm they sell, retail jewelers learn more about their customers' interests and lives. Relationships develop that lead to repeat business. By offering Rembrandt's complete charm collection in Sterling Silver and Karat Gold, our retail jewelers can offer the perfect charms and price-points to each customer," states Kimberly Burzynski, Marketing Manager, Rembrandt Charms. "We do not sell direct to consumers, but, we are increasing our consumer advertising to send customers to our Preferred Retail Jewelers, listed on our Retail Locator."

"The beauty of a charm bracelet is that it is a timeless collectible that can be passed down for generations. Each charm bracelet tells a unique and personal story that can be sentimental or amusing. Charms are credited as the earliest jewelry, dating back to 560 B.C. The staying power of the charm business, combined with the success of our Business Building Charm Program and customer service, is why Rembrandt Charms stands the test of time," states Eric Lux, Vice President, Rembrandt Charms.

Rembrandt's Business Building Charm Program enables retail jewelers to save valuable time, increase sale, and easily develop new and repeat business. Program partners receive a dedicated account executive, inclusion in the Charm Ambassador Program, stock balancing, no minimum orders, digital and print marketing support, charm displays with inventory control labels for easy re-ordering, and much more. Rembrandt's charm customers return to their retailer throughout the year to add to their charm bracelets, and to shop for family and friends.

"It's not just about selling charms... It's about easily cultivating relationships that will last for years. The repeat business is assured. Just like watches and diamonds, you must show charms to sell charms! Our charm displays are designed to maximize limited real estate and free-up valuable showcase space. During the busiest hours, the display will act as a silent salesman. The vertical presentation of our displays, with the best-selling charms by region, lead to impulse Sterling Silver purchases, Karat Gold special-order sales, and repeat customers! Regardless of the store profile, we have the perfect Charm Program to support your store. Custom charm displays and charm departments are available as well." States Eric Lux, Vice President, Rembrandt Charms.

JIS 2018 SAVE the DATE

JIS (Jewelers International Showcase) connects the jewelry industry at four impressive trade events each year. Produced in both South Florida and Las Vegas, Nevada, JIS Shows are the premier jewelry events to explore new trends, find new suppliers, and network with industry professionals. The three Florida-based events take place in January, April, and October to support the retail selling seasons with a diverse product selection; offered through both immediate at-show delivery and order writing. In June, JIS becomes Las Vegas Jewelry Week's premier event dedicated to at-show delivery with JIS Exchange (in partnership with JCK Las Vegas and co-located at Mandalay Bay for 2018).

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Star Gems Custom Studio APP Captures Imagination of Jewelry Retailers Nationwide

What started as an idea for a unique and creative way to provide enhanced custom design services for retail jewelers has grown into one of the most creative and innovative products the jewelry industry has ever experienced. The Custom Studio App, developed and distributed by Star Gems, Inc., of Norcross, Georgia, has literally taken on a life of its own since its introduction earlier this year. Current Authorized app retailers are already starting to see an increase in their custom design business with the app subscription.

The company, originally known in the industry for its unique “No CAD Fees” business model and 24-hour price quote promises, still generates much of its business with one-off custom design orders from independent jewelers.

But the Custom Studio App’s game-changing, in-store delivery system, backed by a 42-inch touch screen monitor, has ushered in a whole new way for retailers to create, process and profit from the custom jewelry market, reaching out to the millennials.



With a simple touch of the finger, jewelry retailers and their customers can access and customize any one of the tens of thousands of designs available through the database of the Custom Studio catalog. Bridal designs, fashion jewelry, earrings, bracelets, pendants and more are all available for the customer to find, view and modify into their own personalized piece in a few easy steps.

The addition of exciting new features such as “Edit,” which allows consumers to customize their designs online while sitting in the comfort of their own home, the “Text” feature, which allows retailers to add notes to any design, and the “Browse” feature allows retailers the flexibility to accommodate consumer requests by bringing images into the Custom Studio App from the internet, these are just a few of the most recent updates that work to facilitate the ability for retail jewelers to create outstanding custom designs, within minutes, much quicker than any CAD program offered in the Jewelry Industry. Anish Desai, CEO of Star Gems, Inc., said, “We are on a mission to empower today’s Independent jewelers with tools and technology that is affordable and easy to use. Custom Studio allows jewelers in the retail market to capture a customer base far beyond their current reach, which enables them to start thinking globally rather than locally in terms of market share.”

To find out more about the app Custom Studio reach out to Star Gems at 770 394 6727 or email to sales@stargems.com. Find information and app videos online at www.stargems.com.

U.S. Antique Shows To Remain At LVCC For 2018 And Beyond

New Location Provides Opportunity for Expansion and Co-Location in Las Vegas

The U.S. Antique Shows are pleased to announce that they will remain at the Las Vegas Convention Center (LVCC) for their 2018 show and beyond. The official report of the location change comes on the heels of last week’s announcement that the American Gem Trade Association (AGTA) is going to join the Las Vegas Antique Jewelry and Watch show at the LVCC, beginning in 2019. The decision to remain at LVCC was prompted by the group’s desire to expand into a larger footprint in the coming years, as well as the antique vendor’s high level of satisfaction with the location last year.

“Our decision to remain at the Las Vegas Convention Center gives us the opportunity to build upon our two decades of success in Las Vegas,” explains Katrina Canady, Show Manager

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2018 Closing Dates

The Retail Jeweler 2018 Closing Dates			
ISSUES 2018	CLOSING DATE	DELIVERY DATE	SHOW ISSUES
Jan/Feb	12/01/17	01/12/18	JIS*, Tucson*, JANY*, Atlanta*, MJSA*
Mar/Apr	02/09/18	03/22/18	JIS*
May	03/23/18	04/30/18	JCK*, JIS*, Las Vegas Antique*, Couture*
June	04/23/18	05/28/18	JCK, JIS
July/Aug	06/11/18	07/17/18	JANY, SJTA*, Select*
September	07/27/18	09/03/18	Centurion*, JIS*, Select
October	08/24/18	10/05/18	Select, JA-Special Delivery
Nov/Dec	10/12/18	11/16/18	

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Belle Étoile, award-winning designer brand, is looking for independent sales reps for multiple territories. Please email résumés to Bryce at careers@belleetoilejewelry.com.

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Midas Chain Inc, the premier jewelry manufacturer with over 30 years in business, is seeking experienced, motivated sales professionals to represent our product lines. The extensive Midas collection includes a high quality and diverse line of Gold, Silver and Crystal jewelry. All territories are available with excellent internal sales support and non-competitive lines are welcome. Please email resumes to hr@midaschain.com or fax 201-244-1151. Attn: Human Resources Dept

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for U.S. Antique Shows. "Our strong partnership with LVCC, coupled with our ability to co-locate with other complementary industry events such as AGTA GemFair™ Las Vegas, means that we are now able to expand our outreach to an increased number of global buyers, and provide those buyers with a convenient location to satisfy many of their Market Week buying needs."

"For seven years, the Paris Hotel has been an incredible home for us and has allowed us to establish a successful footprint in Las Vegas," explains Gannon Brousseau, Senior Vice President of Emerald Expositions Jewelry Group. "While the move to LVCC in 2017 was intended to be temporary, the feedback we received from our vendors was so positive, we had to take that into consideration as we planned our 2018 event."

Furthermore, in maintaining our presence at LVCC in 2018, and with the addition of AGTA GemFair™ Las Vegas in 2019, we are establishing a solid partnership for Emerald Expositions Jewelry Group and the LVCC. This world-renown facility is not only first in its class, it is also in close, convenient proximity to our other Las Vegas event, The COUTURE Show, which gives us incredible opportunities for cross-promotion and expansion."

"We love this facility," noted Jack Weir, owner of Jack Weir & Sons, during the 2017 event. "The lighting is fantastic, the location is convenient and there is a high level of security which is so important to our ability to conduct business. It's been a great show!"

The 2018 Las Vegas Antique Jewelry and Watch Show will take place May 31-June 3, which overlaps with The COUTURE Show, May 31-June 4, held at the Wynn and Encore Las Vegas.

The U.S. Antique Shows are run by Emerald Expositions, whose Jewelry Group also includes The COUTURE Show and the JA New York Shows.



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South Coast Plaza Again Welcomes a Porsche Design First

Porsche Design opened its first American concept store after relocating its Costa Mesa retail space in California's famed South Coast Plaza. The Plaza was home to the world's first Porsche Design store when it opened nearly three decades ago in 1988.

The 1,600 square foot store sits in the popular Carousel Court, located in the heart of the Plaza. A collaboration with Porsche Cars North America, the concept features a Porsche car, varying seasonally and serving as a centerpiece on the sales floor. Porsche Design products, merchandised around the vehicle throughout the space, will include items from collections in categories such as timepieces, sound and electronics, luggage and leather goods, eyewear, men's apparel, men's sportswear, writing tools, fragrances, smoking and home accessories.

"Professor Ferdinand Alexander Porsche founded Porsche Design back in 1972, with the design of a racing-inspired chronograph," says Jan Becker, CEO of the Porsche Design Group. "Now, nearly thirty years after opening the first US store, shifting gears and taking our retail concept to the next level together with Porsche Cars North America is a logical progression for us. Our revamped customer journey embraces the Porsche DNA and provides an experience, which utilizes the synergies between both worlds."

The South Coast Plaza store will employ a 16 feet x 9 feet custom large-scale, high-definition video wall to bring the world of Porsche to life. Featured content will include the latest information about Porsche Motorsports, new car models, the Porsche Experience Center Los Angeles, and other Porsche news.

"We are very excited to bring this new retail concept to the States," says Jan Becker. "South Coast Plaza is home for us,

so it was common-sense for Porsche Design to implement the first pilot in the US here in Orange County."

"Porsche Design has had a successful retail boutique at South Coast Plaza with a loyal client following for almost three decades. We're delighted to welcome their new retail concept, which integrates luxury men's accessories with Porsche's legendary automobiles," says Debra Gunn Downing, spokesperson for South Coast Plaza.

South Coast Plaza is the nation's highest grossing planned retail center, with sales nearing \$2 billion annually, and has been home to one of Porsche Design's top performing stores for approximately thirty continuous years.

VIP attendees of the event, wearing Porsche Design products, included actor Jesse Metcalfe, LA Galaxy soccer player Sebastian Lletget, film director and racer Jeff Zwart, Porsche builder and enthusiast Rod Emory, and race-car driver Hurley Haywood.

New Series from Variety Gem

Variety Gem has designed a new series of diamond and amethyst fashion rings, earrings and pendants crafted in 14K white and yellow gold. The ring has 0.09ctw of diamonds and 8x8mm of amethyst. The earrings have 0.06ctw of diamonds and 6x6mm amethyst each. The pendant has 0.05ctw of diamonds and 8x8mm of amethyst. They offer a program with a free display and free window banners with the purchase of 18 pieces from any series. MSRP of the featured piece range from \$520 to \$925. Call 800-735-4367 for more information.





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