

THE RETAIL JEWELER

The Jewelry Business Magazine • Volume 2, Issue 5 • July/August 2011

*Countdown
to Christmas*



Sara Blaine
Page 19



Makur
Page 18



**"There were two
guys in hooded
jackets. The first
shoved a gun
into my chest and
pushed us back
into the store."**

Dave

DAVE PAGE
HINGHAM JEWELERS, BOSTON

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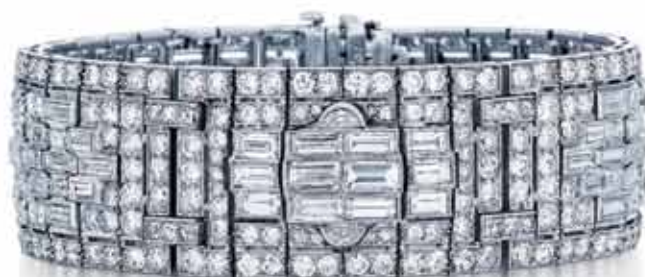
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Countdown to
Christmas

25
DECEMBER



Sales Forecasting and Inventory Planning

By Frank Dallahan

Ready, Fire, Aim is a philosophy from Sam Walton, the founder of Wal-Mart. The concept is appropriate for our editorial topic Countdown to Christmas.

The Christmas selling season is your single biggest sales and margin-generating period. With a good Christmas season jewelers make their sales numbers, generate gross margin dollars and are able to make important year end contributions to profit sharing plans and pay off credit lines.

With a poor season, the reverse is true. There are reduced or no payments to profit sharing plans. The payoff of the bank credit line becomes a more serious issue.

Getting ready for the season means serious study of sales and marketing plans, an in-depth review of current sales and margin performance year to date with comparisons to budget and prior year. Another important element is a detailed review of your merchandise plan. What is your current inventory? Where are you strong? Weak? What manufacturers lines are doing well and not so well? What categories are doing well? Poorly? What are the actual sales price points in the past six months? What is your sales forecast for the next six months?

Breaking inventory down by price points is an important part of the analysis. So is breaking down actual sales and comparing the two results. The point of these analyses is understanding your actual sales history and where your inventory investment is now and where it should be.

Your sales forecast for the most important six-month period of the year should focus on the 80/20 rule. 80% of your business will come from 20% of the product. The 80% will contain elements from each department. It is these individual products where your inventory has to be right to make your goals a reality. Develop a list of specific items for your 80/20 analysis and do a sales forecast of these items to assure that you will be in stock for each of them.

The process of doing a detailed sales forecast is the important part of the Walton Ready, Fire, Aim program. It will be generally on target. It won't be 100% correct. Don't expect it to be. Buying to the 80/20 rule will keep you from straying too far from reality.

There is one more thing to do before "Firing" (buying to the plan). In planning your sales forecast and thus your inventory

positions, you need to make a number of adjustments. The adjustments are for special and custom orders and for repairs. Just because you had a special order last year for \$50,000 doesn't mean that sale should be included into this year's inventory buying plan. You may well get sales like that, but they are impossible to predict. The same logic applies to repairs and custom order merchandise. Know that you will have sales in these areas but exclude them from your buying plans.



Once the analysis of sales and inventory positions is completed, you're ready to buy product. Knowing this information allows you to do a number of other important things. Among them is identifying inventory you want to move. Anything that hasn't moved in six to nine months is a candidate. Identify these products and bring them to the attention of your sales team. Consider reducing the prices to move them out of inventory.

From a merchandise perspective you are now at the Aim part of the program. Aim means adjusting to the changing environment. The plan you develop in July will certainly change by the time September and October rolls around. Revisit your merchandise plan monthly to see if you are on-target and need to adjust. The 80/20 rule also applies to your suppliers. Knowing their ability to supply as you go into the season is critical.

Once you have completed your merchandise planning, it's time to move onto the other important parts of the fall plan: advertising, sales promotion, and personnel.

TRJ



Frank Dallahan

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

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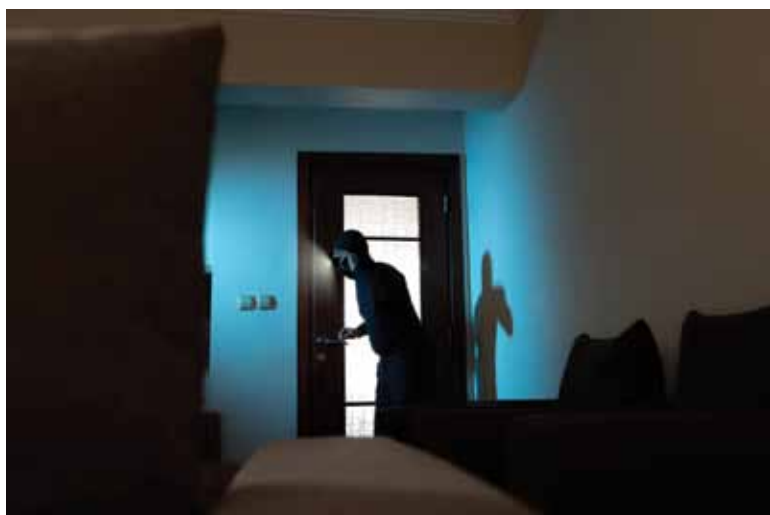
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BURGLARIES ON THE RISE: PROTECT YOUR BUSINESS



Imagine getting ready to open your jewelry business for the day and learning that your alarm system is disabled and your safes are destroyed and empty. This time, you now realize, the call from the alarm company at 2 a.m. wasn't a false alarm.

Safe burglaries are on the rise, especially in the southern United States, according to recent claims at Jewelers Mutual Insurance Company. The trend indicates that professional gangs trigger alarms, wait for police response, and then enter jewelry businesses through an adjacent business or rooftop if no response occurs. This leaves the experienced burglars with hours of uninterrupted time to burn and cut safes or vaults.

You can take action and decrease the chances of burglars attacking your jewelry business by following these important tips:

Respond to all alarms. As soon as your alarm company alerts you to an alarm at your jewelry business, contact the police immediately. Always wait for police or security guards to secure the area before you enter your business. If you have received several "false alarms", work with your alarm company to identify and resolve the problem, but never ignore alarms.



Assure your burglar alarm system has operational line security and test your system regularly. Effective burglary protection requires line security. Without it, burglars can block the transmission of the alarm signal or compromise an alarm system before a signal is sent. Test your system regularly to make sure it's fully operational, and if it's not, contact your alarm company. Have them resolve any problems immediately.



Monitor all potential entry points. Your burglar alarm system should immediately detect break-ins through all areas of your building; i.e., roof, back door, bathroom window, adjoining walls, etc. If not, work with your alarm service company to ensure that it does.

Don't leave any jewelry in showcases. Most burglars target the jewelry that is left in showcases they can see from outside of the store. Using covers to hide jewelry left in showcases further tempts burglars by implying there is valuable jewelry underneath.

Learn more about how you can protect yourself against crime in the jewelry industry by ordering the new security guide from Jewelers Mutual. Receive your free copy by e-mailing Jewelers Mutual at communications@jminsure.com and include your name, business name, complete mailing address, and phone number. Please write "Free security guide" in the subject line.

To see a video recounting a real-life burglary story and to learn more ways you can safeguard your business, visit www.CountOnJM.com. For more information and to find an insurance agent in your area, contact Jewelers Mutual at 800-558-6411.

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Risky Business -

Determining Your Degree of Loss Aversion

By John Politi

As a retail jeweler, whether your store is open or closed, the possibility for loss either in the form of inventory, employee dishonesty or someone's honest mistake, remains all too real. Let's assume that you employ "good practices," as recommended by your Insurance Broker or the Jeweler's Security Alliance. Even better, you have chosen to implement a Risk Management Standard. This will allow you and your staff to be aided in the process by which Risk Management can be addressed. As the owner, the onus will fall on you to determine the organizational structure and objectives for risk management. As always, the standard recognizes that risk has the potential for events and consequences that constitute opportunities for benefit (upside) or threats to success (downside). In today's retail environment, it is no longer an option to conduct a real-time risk management assessment for your business – you must be proactive. A good place to start is by researching the guidelines available from the International Standards Organization (ISO). In particular, ISO/IEC Guide 73 Risk Management.

Great! You've decided to survey and structure a proper risk management process for your business. Now what about pre-determining the limits of your personal risk or loss aversion psychologies regarding your personal financial plan and portfolio? A good place to begin is by brushing up on the groundbreaking paper by Eugene Fama entitled, "Efficient Capital Markets: A Review of Theory and Empirical Work." This should help in grounding you to the reality that it's impossible to beat the market. Since 1993 Mr. Fama has held the office of the Robert R. McCormick Distinguished Service Professor of Finance at the University of Chicago's Booth School of Business. The Efficient Market Hypothesis remains as true today as almost 50 years ago when it was written. The basis being that when new financial information appears and is made public, expectations are updated as well. The last two recessions we have weathered put his theory to the test and several prominent opponents in Behavioral Finance have dismissed his findings. Still, a case can be made for Mr. Fama's research.

Who better that you and your personal financial advisors to be pro-active in regard to your financial plan and portfolio. It is important to continually reassess your personal situation and risk tolerance in order that your Life Planning and Financial Plan are in synch. This is where the economics of personal planning take on a more holistic view. Simply put, this is your ability or willingness to accept declines in the prices of



investments while waiting for them to increase in value. The famous financier George Soros once stated, "It's not whether you're right or wrong that's important, but how much money you make when you're right and how much you lose when you're wrong." In essence, this is the trade off between risk and reward. One's comfort level for investing depends on several factors, including: your age, financial needs, number of dependents and level of debt. Having reviewed a number of tests intended to reveal where an individual's current risk tolerance level is seated, I've come to the conclusion that those that remain well informed also remain well advised.



Measuring risk begins by understanding that it is the "loss" that concerns you. Those professionals advising you need to be more cognizant of your tolerance for loss aversion. As noted in a past issue of Behavioral Finance, "In economics and decision theory, loss aversion refers to people's tendency to strongly prefer avoiding losses to acquiring gains." In order to serve your best interests, these professionals need to know:

The client's economic tolerance
for sustaining loss.

The client's psychological tolerance
for sustaining loss.



It is important for your professional financial advisors to be cognizant of your level of economic fragility and individual level of risk tolerance. Be it either economically or psychologically, one will be forced out of the market if unprepared for the unknown. You want your financial planning team to focus on loss probabilities, ask you the right "indirect" questions concerning your level of personal risk, and lastly explain to you that most measures of variability do not get at the risk of an investment for the individual client. You need to stop listening to what you want to hear, and start to understand everything that could possibly affect your investments and the planning process. This is not to say that one should necessarily second guess their advisors – although you should understand all that they're communicating to you. What you must know and understand is your own personal level of how much risk you can tolerate. This is what you must share.

When it comes to your retail business, loss is something that you can insure against and hopefully mitigate by implementing efficient risk management standards. In personal financial planning you must know the limits of how large a loss you could sustain and tolerate. Be as honest with yourself as possible and share your degree of loss aversion with those professionals working for you. Lastly, please remember to be realistic in your financial planning goals and objectives. **TRJ**

Author's Note: Please consult with your Certified Financial Planner, Estate/Tax/Eldercare Attorney and/or Certified Public Accountant when discussing your financial needs and developing the appropriate personal/business financial plan.



John Politi

John honed his professional career as a business owner, CEO and Director with some of the industry's most prestigious organizations. John's experience spans precious metal manufacturing, quality assurance testing as well as diamond

certification. During his tenure as a Board Director for the JBT, John gained greater insight and sensitivity for the "small business owner." John is currently a member of the Financial Planning Association, Financial Management Association, NYSSA and 24 KT Club of New York.
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Jewelers and Appraisers LINKS IN A CHAIN

“In every industry there is a chain of distribution for the products and services within that industry.”



For the jewelry industry, and others, there is a part of the chain, which is useful to both the industry and the public. It is the part that spans its services to buyers and users of the supply chain and, in most cases, authenticates the descriptions made by the sellers in the chain to the buyers of the products sold within that chain.

No buyer can always buy at the lowest price or sell at the highest. They should make it their business to comparison shop and learn to judge if they are looking at apples and apples or apples and oranges. Sellers go overboard to explain their products to their client, but the client needs verification from a neutral source and here is where the appraiser comes in. It is the appraiser's responsibility to offer an educated opinion and describe the items, and it is the clients' job to satisfy themselves as to the manner in which the description matches the sales talk. An honest seller does not have to fear an honest appraisal.



As appraisers, one of our ongoing debates has been the division between appraisers who buy and sell, and the independent appraiser. Some will say that the ones who buy and sell cannot be objective enough if two hats are worn instead of one. On the other hand the independents have been told that they don't have the resources to appraise properly if they are not in the marketplace themselves. Both questions are being answered every day with satisfying results to all concerned. A jeweler who does not appraise what he sells will suggest an independent appraiser and that appraiser (who does not sell) will verify product value and quality. This verification will send

the client back to the jeweler who made the sale because it took both the sales pitch and the objective appraisal to satisfy the client. Many appraisers will recommend sellers they know to be honest merchants and many of these merchants will honestly appraise a client's purchase even if it was not purchased from them. A client happy with an appraisal description will return another time to the appraiser and/or the store that also gave them an objective opinion.

It takes the experience and expertise of a seller and an appraiser to make buyers happy. Both sellers and appraisers need to understand the skills needed by each other to keep a buyer's trust in our industry, and have faith in our products and our words. They need to share their knowledge, and understand how each fits into the puzzle that makes up a buying decision. Above all, they have a duty to their industry to provide an honest and objective approach to dealing with the client.

At NAJA we have appraisers who sell and those who don't. It has been our mission to create an atmosphere among our members in which they may network and brainstorm to serve each other. In this way they keep the respect in that part of the distribution chain they represent, and in our industry as a whole. They share their experiences and expertise because they don't compete with each other, but care about their industry and have confidence in the products they sell.

Each level in our distribution chain needs to be constantly aware of how their actions reflect on the other levels of the chain and act in a manner in which our clients (the final link) will be happy enough with the experience they had, within our industry, to come back for more.

TRJ

Howard Rubin

National Secretary
The National Association of Jewelry Appraisers



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JANY #2423-25



Sound Off

**BE
SELFISH**



The challenge to be selfish and self-serving may not be what you'd expect in a Count Down to Christmas issue. After all, "don't be selfish" was mother's mantra when you weren't sharing with your brother or sister.

Sometimes being selfish and self-serving can be good; it can even be an act of selflessness.



It's hard to escape the stories of the devastating natural disasters: the blizzards this year, the flooding in Nashville last year and also down the Mississippi this past month, as well as the tragic tornados in Tuscaloosa, Alabama, Joplin, Missouri and other parts of the nation. If you are not directly affected it may seem like just another headline to be bumped the next day by something else.

I have industry friends affected by some of these events; Rick Arnemann of the Harmon Group in Nashville, the Pooles of Hudson Poole and A.J. Tsyali and Chris Childress of Benchmark Rings in Tuscaloosa. Fortunately they were all spared by the direct affects but it really drove home the realness of these types of catastrophes.

The fact is that behind each of these headlines are real people who have suffered great loss and communities that have been devastated. Even if these people had adequate insurance or savings it isn't enough when these disasters strike. They need immediate assistance for the most basic necessities like shelter, food and clothing.

Right behind first responders like a local police and fire organization is the American Red Cross to quickly provide the services necessary to help the communities and individuals get back on their feet.

So what if it hasn't affected you... it might still manage to affect your business in the future. These situations have

SELF SERVING AND SELFLESS

far reaching consequences that affect our jewelry community. In each case, retailers' business was lost or severely interrupted, consumers displaced and even suppliers have been affected.



You and your community might be next. Faced with that prospect, it may be in your best interest to be selfish – the donation you make may actually be used to help you.

I spoke to Gene and Jamie Poole at the Las Vegas show and they gave me the names of two organizations in Tuscaloosa helping with the aftermath of the tornado.



M.A.S.H. is a fund set up for the 225 plus hospital employees that were affected by the storm. Donations can be sent to MASH attn. Molly Baldwin 809 University Blvd. East Tuscaloosa, AL 35401. Give Tuscaloosa is sponsored by the Chamber of Commerce of West Alabama. You can go to givetuscaloosa.com for more information..

Be self-serving – your contribution that goes to helping retailers, suppliers and consumers get operational again will impact the health of your jewelry community. While being selfish and self-serving are not usually admirable traits, in some cases they can be an act of selflessness as well. When you give your time or money you are helping others and yourself.

- Andrew Kohler
The Retail Jeweler



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SELECT Preview

Trade shows aren't limited to large convention hall events. Many retailers prefer the convenience of the smaller less hectic "boutique" style shows. One of the newer entries in this show category is the SELECT Jewelry Show which debuted last year. SELECT will be held in at the Ritz in Dallas and Mohegan Sun in Connecticut this September. Here is a preview of some of the exhibitors and styles you'll see.

► Alisa

Bold multi-row silver bangle bracelet contains an interesting pattern of rondells in 18K gold and silver with diamonds.

Alisa
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► Gem Platinum

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► Amalfi Collection

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► Mastini Designs

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► Prism

Prism link bracelet in sterling silver

Thistle & Bee
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► KC Designs

Pendant features a mix of white, yellow and pink gold, colored diamonds, and black.

KC Designs
800.552.3790



► Makur

Rose gold and morganite

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877.77.MAKUR



► Lika Behar Collection

24K gold hand-made Ramona ring with pink tourmaline

Lika Behar Collection
201.933.7200



► Marietta Collection

Marietta Collection ring by Bellarri, approximately 10.75 ct. of rhodolite, 1.85 of multi-colored gemstones, .17 ct of diamonds set in 18K yellow gold. MSRP \$4,580

Bellarri
800.255.0192



► Dilamani Designs

Rainbow of sapphires set in sterling silver. The MSRP for the rainbow sapphire bangle in sterling silver is \$1,950.00.

Dilamani Designs
516.466.6767



► St. Barths Blue

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Dove's Jewelry Designs
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► Forge

These black titanium styles come in various modern styles, designs and finishes. As with other rings in this collection, these are also backed by Benchmark's Lifetime Guarantee. MSRP: Starting from \$264

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► Rhapsody Collection

From the Rhapsody Collection, sterling silver woven blue topaz bracelet is complimented by a gorgeous blue topaz enhancer on 16" toggle chain and etched blue topaz ring. MSRP: Starting from \$465

Sara Blaine
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► Angelique de Paris

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► Le Stage

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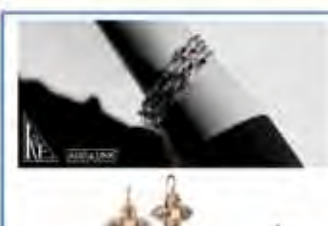
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It's July. So Where Are Your Holiday Plans?

By Ellen Fruchtmann

Back from the show. Maybe even heading for a few more. So tell me, how much planning went in to your stay in Vegas? Or perhaps the upcoming preparation for the JA Show in New York? Phone calls and dinners and meetings. Bet you spent a lot of time mapping out those fun-filled days.

In comparison, how much time have you spent planning and mapping out a strategy for fourth quarter? Yes now. In July.

"The best - laid plans of mice and men often go awry"

Familiar with that saying?

Do you really think that you can spend too much time planning for a season that virtually makes or breaks your entire year? Let's be honest, if you spent as much time planning your marketing as you did booking your hotel reservation, or dinner at Mandalay with your closest cronies, you'd be in pretty good shape.

Planning early is simply, good business practice. And, it can save you a tremendous amount of money if you give it some serious thought.

Time to:

■ Budget

Develop—or at the very least update your budget through December 31, 2011. In theory, a budget should have been put to bed in January. But, this is a great time to assess the first six months; review trends and make some financial decisions.

Review month by month sales numbers for the previous five years; make a conservative projection and divvy up spending dollars based on projected sales.

Once dollars are allocated, determine percentages to media (digital and traditional), events and promotions.

■ Direct and Email Marketing

Start list preparation—make sure you use a mail-house that can clean your current list for change of addresses and anything

that might cause the piece to not be delivered. In the Direct Marketing world, this is called "list hygiene".

If you don't have a substantial email list, begin cultivating that as well. Train your sales staff to ask at your point of sale. Offer spiffs if that will do the trick. Make sure that every direct mail postcard has an offer and a data capture area so you can continue to get information from your customers.

■ Promotions

If fourth quarter plans include some level of product promotion, begin researching ideas, pricing and availability. Order these hot products before someone else actually does!



Make decisions on gift cards or incentive offers to your best customers. Get this creative rolling!

Bridal is huge during this time of year. Coordinate efforts with diamond vendors for a fantastic diamond event. Discuss and determine pricing and financing offers. This age group is looking for 12, 24 or 36 month interest-free offers.

Fall is the perfect time for custom design promotions. Now is the time to begin preparation to promote something special for the holiday season. Custom remains a lucrative category.

■ Media

Contact your media reps and set appointments to communicate expectations. Provide them ballpark budget numbers and flight dates. Tell them that you're looking for added-value promotions.

Ask them to preview the fall-line-up schedules.

If you're in a competitive market, you may want to hold the time – you don't have to buy it, just reserve it or have first right of refusal. This is particularly true of not only broadcast media, but billboards.

■ Digital

Review your website with a critical eye. Have you been putting off





those changes and updates? Get them in the cue and ready to go live by October 1 at the latest. Don't have one? Big mistake!

Update your new vendors online; begin securing photography and information. Doing Paid Search? Update your keywords. Make sure that your Facebook page is ready with traffic building promotions —specifically designed for this medium.

■ Co-op/Vendors

Make sure all major vendors are contacted and provide you with available dollars in writing. Also make sure that you have reached any spending goals that are mandatory to hit next levels. Confirm what materials are available from your vendors (i.e. catalogs, flyers etc.).

Holiday Party/Open House
Confirm and book date.

Check community calendars for any conflicts (Chamber of Commerce, Visitors Bureau, Arts Calendars etc.).

And you thought summer days and the livin' was easy...

TRJ



Ellen Fruchtmann

Ellen Fruchtmann is Founder and President of Fruchtmann Marketing, a full-service agency headquartered in Toledo, Ohio, representing independent jewelers, jewelry manufacturers and trade organizations throughout the U.S. You can reach the agency by contacting Ellen Fruchtmann at 1-800-481-3520, visit her blog or sign up for a free weekly newsletter at fruchtmann.com. Fruchtmann Marketing is a member of the American Gem Society®.

Stackable expressions™



Stackable Expressions™ is a simple and stylish assortment of rings to adorn your hands and express your own style, your family and your personality.

More than 450 Sterling Silver rings in a wide assortment of textures, finishes, widths and colors. Some feature **DIAMONDS, GEMSTONES, and ENAMEL** to brighten your fingers with sparkle and shine.

The Stackable Expressions™ rings were designed to ensure that all fit together nicely and will have a **LUXURIOUS FEEL** when worn. There are endless combinations possible to cultivate thousands of unique and personal designs. Every ring in the assortment is available in whole sizes 5 through 10.



NOW INTRODUCING OUR STARTER KIT!

The Stackable Expressions™ Display and Sales Kit (QSKKIT1) is a great way to introduce this collection in your store!

Includes a wide assortment of rings, acrylic display and lighted signage to promote the line.



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GOLD**

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WWW.QGOLD.COM
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www.StackableExpressions.com

Countdown to
Christmas

25
DECEMBER

IS IT CHRISTMAS ALREADY?

By Andrew Kohler



✓ IF YOU FAIL TO PLAN, YOU PLAN TO FAIL

While it may seem like it's too early to be planning Christmas advertising, in some ways it is already too late. Christmas is just part of the year, albeit an important part. For most retailers, the percentage of sales from Christmas has reduced in the past 10 years so your plan really shouldn't be just for the Christmas season but the entire year.

This article is intended to help with developing an ad plan. It does not address strategies and tactics, SWOT (strength, weakness, opportunities and threats) or market analysis, all of which should be part of your over-reaching marketing plan.

When working with Tiffany's I was always impressed by my visits to the "war room," where they had the current year's New York Times ads displayed on the walls in chronological order. This powerful visual helped keep them on track regarding what they had featured and what would be featured.

Independent jewelers can employ this same concept of long term planning leading up to Christmas and beyond. First, you need to determine which products or categories you will feature. There are a number of jewelry store software programs, like the Edge, that can help you determine your most profitable products, but they may not necessarily be what you want to advertise.

Develop your advertising plan by determining what media you will use and when the ads will appear or mail.

✓ PARTNER FOR SUCCESS

I am a big advocate for taking advantage of co-op offered by your suppliers. The suppliers that offer co-op are the first ones you should focus on because in essence they are partnering with you to help you sell their product in your market.

This co-op may be offered in a variety of formats such as simply providing professional product images, direct mail pieces, co-op ad dollars, or tie-ins with national ads. No matter what your suppliers are offering; credit, dollars, or materials, it will help your bottom line by increasing your advertising funds or reducing your production costs.

Develop a spreadsheet listing your various suppliers and the types of co-op they offer. From there start to fill in your advertising plan with the names of the suppliers from the spreadsheet, then narrow it down to specific items or categories.



This plan along with any co-op materials is given to your agency or graphic designer to integrate into your store's brand look to create a cohesive professional campaign.

The finished materials can then be displayed in your "war room" for review prior to launch as well as during in-season sales staff meetings to remind everyone what your store is promoting.

Following this plan will make your overall marketing effort more efficient and cost-effective and help assure a cohesive campaign.

TRJ



Andrew Kohler

Andrew Kohler, co-publisher of The Retail Jeweler, is also the Founder and President of AB Kohler & Co/Advertising. His career in the jewelry industry spans 30 years involving work with a broad range of manufacturers, organizations and retailers.

C.G. Creations

800.431.1606

C.G. Creations has been supplying the Jewelry industry with quality gold & silver and fashion jewelry for over 35 years. The company's exceptional sales staff specializes in helping retailers zero in on today's hottest trends.

C.G. Creations' current collection focuses on Fine Sterling Silver European Beads and Charms. Zable® Beads and Charms feature intricately detailed sterling silver beads and three-dimensional charms, Murano Glass, hand-painted enamel, as well as sterling silver bracelets, necklaces, earrings and rings. The Zable® Collection features popular icons representing animals, nature, birthstones and ornamental designs. C.G. Creations offers over 1500 styles of collectable beads and charms to mix and match and create a unique look. All Zable® items are compatible with all major brands of European beads. A unique marketing system makes it easy work to display and price individual beads & charms with a minimum of hassle.



C.G. Creations has in-house design staff enabling them to offer custom bead design services.

The Zable® Collection is a benefit to retailers as an expandable product, providing increased traffic and repeat business as customers add to their bracelets. Additionally, C.G. Creations does not require a large initial commitment or minimum order size.



Sterling Silver
CHARMS by



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Countdown to
Christmas

25
DECEMBER

The Internet, Catalogs and Holiday Planning

By Ken Schulz

There has been an explosive increase in all forms of digital communication (Facebook, Google, Twitter, websites, emails, etc.), yet print catalogs have become more necessary than ever before. Yes. The need for printed marketing materials has increased with the advent of the Internet and, incredibly, the Internet is making the making the printed catalog even more effective.



QR ("Quick Response") codes are those postage stamp sized hieroglyphics appearing with increasing regularity on various print ads. Simply put, the QR code links a printed piece to an Internet site. Here's how: the owner of a smart-phone (iPhone, Droid, etc.) scans the code and immediately is transported to a web page. The web page can be easily changed as the situation or season dictates. To say the

least, I am a hearty proponent of their use. Here's why:

A beautiful catalog is printed in November; it includes an invitation for the reader to scan the printed QR code with her smart-phone. Scanned in November, the customer may be linked to a video of the store's owner inviting her to a Christmas Sale. The same QR code scanned in January would link to an invitation to a Valentine's Day event. The printed catalog's messages can change throughout the year. Their uses are unlimited. (Use them on pages of product to display items on models, etc.)



QR codes' inclusion in printed catalogs appeals to a young, internet-savvy, demographic. I think they'll be a powerful force, and they promise to contribute to the wonderful effectiveness of printed media. More than ever before, I believe a well-targeted and superbly produced printed piece is far and away the most effective way to drive new customers to your store.

Why do I believe printed pieces are more necessary than ever? The best attribute of a printed and mailed piece is the fact that YOU decide who receives it. Want to contact every doctor

and lawyer in town? Fine, purchase the mailing list and mail to them. Direct mail allows you to target your advertising far better than any other form. You can't make a person see your billboard or hear your radio spot, but you can be positive that an arresting piece will be read by virtually every person you target.



What about digital forms of advertising? Well, they have a number of drawbacks. E-mail can be useful communicating with existing customers, but it is a woefully ineffective method to contact NEW customers. (How often do you open emails from unfamiliar sources?) Increasing your location in Internet search engines is an arcane process that can be astoundingly expensive. A good website is important, but it will be accessed mostly by your existing customers; getting new customers to visit it is very difficult and expensive.

How has the Internet made catalogs even more effective? Here's how:

The days of the static print catalog are drawing to a close; a living, breathing, changing and responding printed catalog is emerging. And the metamorphosis is the result of a simple printed link to the digital world, the QR Code.



Kenneth Schulz

Kenneth Schulz is the president of the Harmon Catalog. The Harmon Catalog has been producing catalogs and brochures for independent fine jewelers since 1968.

800.530.1863

LeStage Manufacturing Company is a privately owned and operated fine jewelry manufacturer, which was, established in North Attleboro, MA in 1863.

LeStage produces a variety of beautiful jewelry in 14 karat gold and sterling silver, including two branded lines - The Cape Cod Jewelry Collection® and the LeStage Convertible Collection® and a line of traditional jewelry such as locket, crosses, charms, and men's goods.



The LeStage Convertible collection offers over 150 interchangeable clasps in a variety of styles and themes to match any mood or fashion. The recently introduced Dangles, Charms for The Convertible Clasps lets the customer further customize their LeStage bracelet creating almost limitless possibilities.



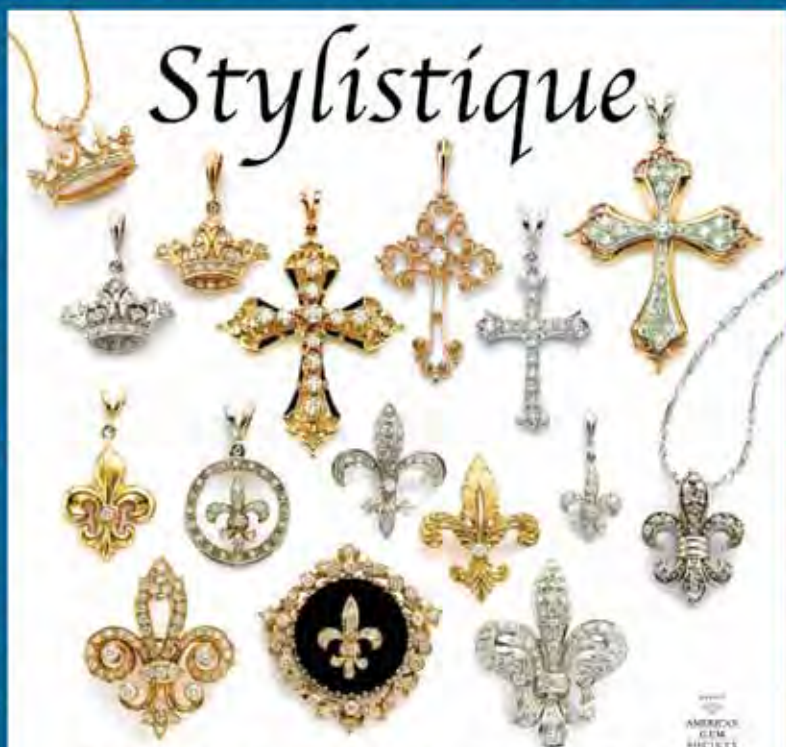
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Popular and classic themes with the style and quality of K. Goldschmidt. Select from a broad assortment of beautiful fleur-de-lis, crowns, crosses and so much more. Available in white or yellow gold.



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800-598-3456



NEW AND NOTEWORTHY

The Kate Middleton Effect

A frenzy started with the Royal Engagement photo. Kate Middleton chose to wear her Links of London Hope Earrings, a gift given to her by Prince William, in the official Royal Engagement Photo shot by Mario Testino.



Following the announcement, a flurry of customers ran to Links of London stores in the US and abroad to own a little bit of the action. The earrings, made of sterling silver with sparkling white topaz, dangle elegantly from one's ears perfectly complementing daytime or evening wear.



"We're delighted that Prince William chose Links of London as a gift for his future bride," says Michelle Catucci, Vice President of Links of London North America. "The earrings have always been a customer favorite, but now we can't keep them in stores. There is no doubt about the strength of the Kate Middleton Effect."

The excitement built up in the week before the Royal Wedding, especially when Kate Middleton left her house for the last time as a single woman wearing the earrings and was featured on the cover of newspapers all across the world. The brand even gave non-royals the chance to own a pair by running an enter-to-win contest.

The Peace Day Watch

It all started with a simple idea from British filmmaker and Peace One Day founder, Jeremy Gilley. It was to convince government leaders around the world to observe a day of peace annually. A day where violence and conflict would cease. A day where humanitarian groups could provide much-needed medical care, food and water to the sick and starving. A day where compassion, cooperation and generosity would replace strife, violence and unrest. It all starts with a single day of peace — each and every year.

That idea became a reality when the United Nations declared September 21st as Peace Day. Since that historic declaration, Peace Day has become a proven catalyst for life-saving activities.

For example, on Peace Day 2008, according to the UN Department of Safety and Security, violence was down by 70%. In Afghanistan, Peace One Day was instrumental in instigating Peace Day agreements that enabled over 4.5 million children to be immunized against polio in recent years. And on last year's Peace Day, 88 humanitarian initiatives were successfully conducted by 28 organizations in 31 countries around the globe.

Bob Guidara, Managing Director of GDP Imports had a simple idea...to create a watch for both men and women that would serve as a daily reminder of the importance of peace. With the purchase the new Peace Movement watches for your store, a donation from the proceeds will be made directly to Peace One Day.

>> Continued to Pg 30

Lieberfarb

800.631.7898

The name Lieberfarb has been synonymous with bridal jewelry for decades. The Lieberfarb collection encompasses exquisite engraved and plain wedding rings, engagement rings, men's diamond rings, and diamond anniversary rings in platinum, palladium, and gold. An endless pool of design elements, the collection features a range of metal combinations and finishes. Lieberfarb believes that brides and grooms deserve jewelry of quality and style to symbolize the depth of their commitment, "For a Love that Lasts a Lifetime."™

Lieberfarb is a robust family owned operation with a reputation for quality and service. The Schonwetter family purchased the company from the Lieberfarb family in the 1970's, transforming it into a nationally renowned bridal jewelry brand. The collection is designed and crafted on-site in their New Jersey factory, and the company specializes in rapid order fulfillment and customizations including: inside ring engraving, metal finish, millimeter width, and stone size.



While rooted in its rich heritage, Lieberfarb looks to the future. Vice President Ann Schonwetter Arnold described her creative process: "We are constantly developing new designs to meet the needs and taste of our customers. We ask ourselves, "Would our friends and contemporaries want to symbolize their love for each other with this ring?"' says Arnold. Lieberfarb also has a strong social media presence with a loyal fan base, and the company frequently cross promotes with its retail partners. Lieberfarb is dedicated to maintaining ethics, professionalism and excellence in the jewelry industry and is a proud member of AGS, JBT, MJSA, JSA and WJA.



Honored to say made in the USA since 1918

**Visit us at the Luxury/JCK Las Vegas Show
Booth LUX1033**

See us at the Select Shows



www.lieberfarb.com

Email: service@lieberfarb.com

1-800-631-7898

Twitter: www.twitter.com/lieberfarb

Facebook: www.facebook.com/lieberfarbinc



NEW AND NOTEWORTHY

Suggested retail prices for the Gents and Ladies Peace Movement models are under \$150! Your cost as an authorized Classique retailer will be around \$400 for the set of all six models! For more information about Peace One Day, visit www.peaceday.org. And, for more information about Classique Watches, visit www.classiquewatches.com.

Unique Settings of New York Launches "Multiple Diamond Quality" Program

Retailers struggling to offer consumers more options now can offer shoppers more options with Unique Settings of New York's innovative new service called "Multiple Diamond Quality" choice.



Renowned in the industry for their ability to meet independent retailers special requests, Unique Settings of New York has developed a new service that gives retailers a wider range of choice for their clientele.

This innovative "Multiple Diamond Quality" program offers different diamond qualities for side stones in any style and any precious metal. In addition to Unique Settings of New York's standard G-H SI1 standard diamond quality, they offer three different diamond quality options on all round and two other qualities on all princess cut styles. All other fancy diamond cuts come in G-H VS diamond quality.

"By carefully considering feedback from our valued retail customers, we've decided to offer our products with higher and lower diamond quality options in addition to our standard quality. We're confident that this option will help our clients increase their sales," says Joseph Ceylan, COO of Unique Settings of New York.

"There are other companies offering a similar service," Ceylan says. "But what makes Unique Settings of New York so different is our state of the art software, which allows us to give different diamond quality quotes to our retailers while their customer is in the store."

Links of London Ramping Up for a Major Wholesale Expansion

The second British invasion? Links of London certainly hopes so as the brand looks to expand its North American business with a key focus on growing its wholesale business exponentially.

Last year marked the first phase of the brand's North American expansion with the opening of three new Links of London retail locations in Bloomingdale's. For the second phase, the brand is taking advantage of current market conditions and turning its attention toward the wholesale market.

The market has seen a major shift with brands expanding their offerings to include alternative materials such as leather, ceramic and sterling silver due to the rising price of gold over the past

decade. At the same time, many fashion and fashion jewelry brands have introduced jewelry lines with the same focus on alternative materials. As a brand with a strong history of offering sterling silver products, Links of London sees this market shift as an opportunity to expand its footprint.

"We have put a lot of thought and planning into our expansion strategy," says CEO Andrew Marshall. "Not only does the North American market offer a landscape of great potential, but we have many new exciting projects and product developments on the horizon to support these efforts."

The brand brought in industry veteran and consultant Bob Filotei to help build the strategy which includes showing at this year's Couture Show in Las Vegas. Preparing for the expansion, the brand made significant changes in infrastructure such as building a New York City-based distribution center in early 2011 to support the fulfillment of orders quickly and efficiently. Links of London plans to increase head count this year by adding a Director of Wholesale to the team.

Links of London's popularity with celebrities and tastemakers such as Kate Middleton, who chose to wear Links of London Hope Earrings in the official royal engagement photo, as well as Madonna's daughter and aspiring designer Lourdes Leon, Uma Thurman and Ed Westwick certainly helps put the brand's name on the map in the US. It is also very fortunate timing that Links of London is the official jeweler of the London 2012 Olympics offering a wide array of products developed in honor of the Games.

For the second half of 2011, Links of London will continue to open doors throughout the country, and is planning a new shop-in-shop in one of New York City's major department stores, and is also preparing for the frenzy that comes with being an official partner of the London 2012 Olympics.

For more information, contact: Naomi Mansbach, Marketing Manager, Links of London, at naomimansbach@linksoflondon.com.

Stuller Launches New Contemporary Metals

Expanding its recently launched contemporary metals line, Stuller introduced two new metals—White Dura Tungsten™ and Dura Cobalt™—at the recent JCK Show in Las Vegas.



With 30 ring styles available, White Dura Tungsten is the first scratch resistant tungsten of its kind on the market. This newly developed metal creates a white-gold look while preventing any discoloration, scratching or flaking.

Dura Cobalt will feature a 70-ring style selection. Its new formula adds a unique look and feel to the emerging material allowing for durability and ring expansion up to 1/4 of a size.

"This emerging market embraces the contemporary soul of Gen X and Gen Y," says Glenn Miller, vice president of Contemporary

>> Continued to Pg 32

Alisa

888.253.6600



The three words "Made in Italy" have long been synonymous with the finest ingredients and unparalleled creativity and craftsmanship. From clothing and accessories to food and wine, an Italian label is cachet and appeals to the most discriminating taste.

The same is true for jewelry. Although founded nearly thirty years ago, Alisa® has been

entirely committed to manufacturing exclusive collections in combination silver, 18k gold, diamonds and color gemstones at our factory in Italy since 1995. So the Company is not new to the manufacture of fine jewelry in a category that has gained popularity during the past few years. Throughout, we have never compromised on the quality of our designs, materials or workmanship.

What makes the Italian-made Alisa® brand extremely popular with so many prestigious fine retailers and their clientele is at the core of our success—women just love the distinctive jewelry that we produce and they self-purchase it. The company's exclusive lifestyle themes are entirely versatile and ideal for both formal and casual settings. Our designs are not only chic and luxurious, but quite affordable as well.



We take pride in both our products and the selected group of authorized fine jewelry retailers across the U.S. featuring the Alisa® brand in their stores. Defining Luxury in Silver Jewelry™, the Company is dedicated to providing the highest level of craftsmanship to the legions of American women who simply enjoy wearing the timeless silver and 18k gold designs of Alisa®.

Alisa®...the essence of Italian creativity!



Alisa®

... the essence of Italian creativity



Defining Luxury In Silver Jewelry™

*A distinctive combination of silver, 18K and diamonds.
Handcrafted in Italy since 1984.*

Our extensive collection priced from \$200 to \$1,500 retail.

JA New York - 1215 Inner Circle • Atlanta - PV 29
Select - Mohegan Sun • Luxury at JCK

888.253.6600 www.alisadesigns.com

KC Designs

800.552.3790

Friends first and business partners second, Lenny Krol and Joe Carullo have established KC Designs as a purveyor of fashionable, yet timeless, diamond jewelry. Built on a 45 year friendship, KC Designs proudly claims a reputation of excellence, originality, and affordability in the jewelry industry.

Lenny is the man behind the magic, his creative talents combined with a business/marketing background enable him to translate current trends as well as innovative new designs that make up KC Designs' exquisite collections. Joe on the other hand has always been a "people person." He is a master on the sales floor and is the true connector... offering Lenny's "visions" to the masses. He is the voice of KC Designs and extremely active within the jewelry industry.

In the twenty five years since the company's inception, KC Designs has garnered the acclaim of celebrities and fashion authorities alike. Distinctive diamond pieces have been showcased in feature films, major television network shows and many popular publications.

KC Designs creates jewelry that compliments every style from runway chic to Saturday afternoon casual. President Lenny Krol adds, "We want to redefine the image of diamond jewelry... making it more fun, approachable and accessible for women of all ages."



NEW AND NOTEWORTHY

Metals. "And as a result, we'll continue to develop and bring new and innovative metals to the market designed to cater to this unique market sector." For more information, please visit www.stuller.com.

Quality Gold Launches Nancy Davis Collection

Quality Gold is proud to announce the launch of The Peace & Love Boutique Collection by Designer and Beverly Hills Philanthropist Nancy Davis.



The collection is the culmination of the designer's personal journey and passion for the sentiments of good luck, peace & love. The collection is elegantly designed, made exquisitely with the highest quality and attention to detail, encompassing the trademark heart & peace sign symbol, and other discreet & meaningful symbols of good luck, happiness, health & prosperity- Dreams that Nancy Davis holds true to her heart. The peace heart symbol launched by Nancy in 2002 and trademarked has grown in popularity all over the world because of the very important symbolic meaning of this symbol. It is very popular and constantly worn by the Hollywood elite. Peace & Love is the universal language that speaks to everybody everywhere as we all aspire very simply to have our lives filled with Peace & Love.

Michael Langhammer, CEO of Quality Gold, is thrilled to be working with Nancy Davis. Michael said, "Nancy's passion for celebrating women and their lives and accomplishments as well as their capacity for love are reflected throughout the line. Boundless optimism is the hallmark of Nancy Davis."

Retailers may now access The Peace & Love Boutique line through the exclusive relationship Quality Gold has formed with Nancy Davis. Call 800- 354-9833 for additional information and to be the first to behold this exciting designer collection.

Atlanta Jewelry Show to Offer GIA Pearl Grading

The Southern Jewelry Travelers Association (SJTA) announced plans to offer the GIA Pearl Grading Lab class during the August 6-8, 2011 Atlanta Jewelry Show at the Cobb Galleria Centre. Providing a mix of lecture and hands-on training in an action-oriented classroom environment, attending retailers will have a unique opportunity to participate in a comprehensive, hands-on training program. The GIA Pearl Grading Lab class is available to Atlanta Jewelry Show attendees interested in completing or pursuing a GIA Graduate Pearls Diploma or in fine-tuning their product knowledge and pearl grading skills. The class is scheduled to be held on Monday, August 8 from 8:00 am - 3:00 pm.

To receive more information on registration, contact Charlene Bridges, SJTA, at 800-241-0399 or email cbridges@atlantajewelryshow.com



NEW AND NOTEWORTHY

Liza Connolly Appointed Vice President at The Companies of David Connolly

The Companies of David Connolly including Jabel, David Connolly, Inc. and Engel Brothers are pleased to announce the appointment of Liza Connolly to Vice President. Ms. Connolly joined the company as a marketing consultant in 2008. Her innate understanding of gems, jewelry and the jewelry industry allowed her to quickly develop and strengthen the company.

"Since I was born I have been attending trade shows, watching our buyers sort through beautifully colored gemstones and wandering through setting and polishing rooms. Together with my education in business management and marketing, Jabel was a perfect fit," said Ms. Connolly in a 2009 interview.

"I am honored to be appointed Vice President of The Companies of David Connolly and uphold a tradition and belief in the expertise of the American craftsman and the fine quality jewelry we produce."

In addition to her executive work Ms. Connolly will continue to work as a sales representative throughout the Mid-Atlantic territory. She will also continue to participate in the Women Jewelers Association, which was a great passion of Jabel's own late June Herman.

Stuller Appoints Ashley Brown Executive Director Marketing Services & PR

Ashley Brown was promoted to the role of Executive Director Marketing Services and Public Relations for Stuller effective June 1, 2011.

"With her wealth of industry experience, I know Ashley will continue to be a great asset to the marketing team," said Bob Cox, Chief Sales and Marketing Officer. "She has demonstrated the passion, knowledge and skills necessary to help Stuller carry on the goal of wowing our customers."

In her new role as executive director, she will work to oversee all aspects of Stuller's brand, strategy, marketing and corporate communications. For the past year, Brown served as marketing director where she has effectively maintained collaborative relationships between Stuller's marketing/sales and merchandising divisions. She succeeds Kerry Hand following his decision to resign.

Prior to joining Stuller, Brown served as retail manager at John Atencio in Denver, CO. Previously, she was vice president of business development at Brown + Partners, an advertising agency specializing in the jewelry industry.

JVC Veratad and DCIT Partner to Offer ID Match Software

Veratad Technologies, LLC, a world class provider of Identity

SELECT PROFILE

Thistle & Bee

888.288.2801

Thistle & Bee – Classical Elegance

Thistle & Bee proudly maintains a tradition of distinctive design, fine quality and superior craftsmanship. Each Thistle & Bee piece is carefully crafted using the finest materials available today.



Thistle & Bee offers unique, clean and elegant jewelry executed in sterling silver. Drawing on years of expertise in the design and global manufacture of luxury sterling silver, the Thistle & Bee signature is finely crafted, unique collections in textures and styles that range from classic to contemporary.

New 2011 Thistle & Bee Collections - including the Prism, Infinity and Pleat Collections - are bold, multi-dimensional and build on the Thistle & Bee design paradigm - appealing to the most discerning customers.

Thistle & Bee has achieved design prominence under the guiding hand of its co-founder, Richard Castagna and Director of Marketing and Design, Jodi McLoughlin. Working closely with its in-house production team, Thistle & Bee has elicited worldwide recognition for distinctive design, superb execution, and timely delivery of fine sterling silver jewelry.

Thistle & Bee's hallmark of style and quality will make our jewelry some of your customers' most treasured pieces - jewelry they will wear with pride today and for years to come.

www.thistleandbee.net



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NEW AND **NOTEWORTHY**

Verification and Compliance Solutions and the Jewelers Vigilance Committee (JVC), the trusted jewelry industry resource for trade and consumers, announced today that DCIT, Corp. will now offer Veratad's IDMatch+PLUS, virtual identity verification along with JVC membership to its BusinessMind software solution customers.

DCIT, a company that specializes in the requirements of businesses in the global gem and jewelry industries, will now provide a seamless virtual identity verification solution that is delivered to jewelers directly within BusinessMind, DCIT's jeweler's point of sale software solution. The first of its kind, this software makes verifying an identity a simple matter of a few clicks, and is designed to protect jewelers against losses due to fines for non-compliance, as well as fraud and credit card chargebacks. The service is simple, easy-to-use and affordable.

In addition to the Identity verification, each jeweler that qualifies will be granted the many benefits of JVC membership with the service. Cecilia Gardner, JVC's President, CEO and General Counsel, said, "This is an opportunity for jewelers to stop fraudulent purchases, avoid costly chargebacks and meet their USA PATRIOT Act and Red Flags Rule compliance obligations while enjoying the many benefits of JVC membership."

"Veratad's partnership with the JVC has increased industry awareness of the threats posed by identity theft and fraud, and jewelers are now beginning to understand the importance of identity verification. This new relationship with DCIT will make virtual identity verification for DCIT users simple, affordable and effective," says John Ahrens, Veratad's Managing Director.

Raffi Minassian, CEO of DCIT, said, "We decided to partner with JVC and Veratad for a number of reasons, not the least of which is their respective industry leadership and experience. We are always looking for ways to improve our service." Mr. Minassian went on to say, "This combination of an online enhancement for identity verification, coupled with JVC membership, allows us to offer our jewelers the valuable benefits of membership with a tool that protects them from chargebacks, fraudulent transactions and potential fines for non-compliance."

Veratad's virtual identity verification and JVC membership are now available with DCIT's BusinessMind point of sale software for jewelers. To learn more about JVC, Veratad or DCIT, contact your DCIT Representative or call Veratad Toll Free at 888-510-7343.

Mondaine Clock Presented to Historic Tenafly, New Jersey

Family owned Orogio Jewelers and Mondaine, creator of the Official Swiss Railways Watch, have teamed up to provide a full-sized Official Swiss Railways Station Clock to the community of Tenafly, New Jersey. To help commemorate this historic unveiling, the store hosted a celebratory party and trunk show for the community on Thursday, May 19th. Mayor Peter Rustin was on hand to cut the ribbon to unveil the station clock.

>> *Continued to Pg 36*

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24k Dipped
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Leaf Ornament

"Kindness & gratitude, like a boomerang, always returns."

Author Unknown

*"Our store mailed a gold dipped sugar maple ornament to our top 100 customers right before last Thanksgiving. Amazingly it brought in **\$12,000 in purchases** that we tracked with our largest sale being a \$5,000 pearl strand. We will definitely do the Loyalty Program again for Holiday 2011."*

— Chris Brazeau, Murduff's Jewelry, Florence, Massachusetts

Wholesale pricing: \$11.⁹⁵ to \$14.⁷⁵

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NEW AND NOTEWORTHY

Edward Aydin, owner of Orogio Jewelers, said: "We're thrilled and proud to be able to provide not only our customers, but also to the entire Tenaflly community with this iconic clock to use as their official time resource. It's accurate to the millisecond and will be on full display for passersby to be able to set their watches. It will be a very special addition to our community here."

Found in museums worldwide, this is just the third Mondaine Official Railways Clock with GPS to be mounted in the United States. Fittingly, the clock will hang next to the entrance of Orogio Jewelers in the heart of Tenaflly, located directly across from the town's historic train station. Hans Hilfiker designed the original Swiss Railways clock in 1944 and its design remains unchanged since. It measures 2 feet in diameter and is both double-sided and back lit to allow for it be read from a distance during all hours of the day.

The Clock operates via a master mechanism, or "brain," which controls and operates the clock to ensure up to a millisecond precision, as it is linked to a Global Positioning System (GPS) receiver. The GPS receiver in the master mechanism (which is located inside Orogio Jewelers) receives the time signal via satellite, and provides this to the clock outside, controlling and setting the time automatically.

Mondaine is internationally known for its wristwatch and clock renditions of the immediately identifiable Swiss Railways symbol, with the signature red seconds hand. Since 1986, the Mondaine Swiss clock and watch factory has manufactured watches and clocks modeled after the official and exclusive Swiss Federal Railways (SBB) station clock, and has successfully marketed them on every continent.

NYSJA Announces Second Annual Golf Outing

The NYSJA will hold its Second Annual Golf Outing on Monday, September 19, 2011, at the Mount Kisco Country Club, 10 Taylor Road, Mount Kisco, New York. The event benefits the NYSJA Scholarship Fund. Additionally, a portion of the proceeds raised will be donated to Jewelers for Children, the industry's charity.



A full and exciting day is planned, with a 10:30 a.m. brunch followed by a 12 p.m. shotgun start. Snacks and beverages will be served on the course throughout the day. A fabulous cocktail hour/auction will begin at 5:30 p.m. There will be awards, raffle prizes, and a barbecue steak dinner at 6:30 p.m. Only 30 foursomes will be sold, so buy your tickets early! Registration is available online via the website home page www.newyorkjewelers.org

Stuller Introduces StudioFlex

Digital solutions pioneer, Stuller has introduced StudioFlex, a new custom service through which jewelers can order select mountings



NEW AND NOTEWORTHY

customized to the specific center stone dimensions they need. This new service saves jewelers both time and money.

"Jewelers' number one customization request is to adjust the center stone size to fit a uniquely sized diamond or gemstone," says Lori Carter, Stuller Studio business manager. "StudioFlex saves the jeweler time and money by virtually offering them any size mounting they need, for any job, in just 6-8 days."

Prior to the program's development, jewelers would have to purchase stock sized mountings and rework the pieces themselves to fit the size they needed.

"This service is a slam dunk," says George Fritz of Mills Jewelers in Lockport, NY. "Not only does it take away the hassle of reworking a mounting, but I get to tell my customer that this piece was created especially for their special stone." To learn more about StudioFlex, visit us online at www.stuller.com/studio/flex.

GIA Expands Pearl Testing Capabilities

GIA has announced significant advancements in its pearl testing process. Highly advanced micro-CT X-ray units that produce high-definition 3-D images of individual pearls have been installed after months of tests and evaluations. These new units enable GIA to rapidly gain fully rotational 3-D images of the internal growth structures of pearls in just 15 to 20 minutes; older units take 3 to 5 hours or more. This new technology enables GIA laboratories to assess much larger groups of pearls more quickly and in greater detail than any previously employed technology.

This newly introduced technology is in addition to the high-resolution real-time 2-D radiography that GIA has used in pearl testing for the past several years. The 2-D real-time microradiography gives immediate X-ray images of a pearl's internal growth structures. These 2-D images give far more detail and are as much as 30x faster than the conventional film-based 2-D microradiography used in most pearl testing facilities worldwide.

Both micro-CT and real-time microradiography are processes that examine the internal structures of small objects in minute detail, which is critical in determining whether a pearl is natural or cultured. Representing significant advances over film-based technology, these units produce very high levels of clarity and definition and, in both cases, images can be stored indefinitely, making it possible to further review or share them electronically with experts at any time.

"We are confident these state-of-the-art units will give unparalleled service to the pearl industry," said Tom Moses, GIA senior vice president of Lab and Research. "This equipment reflects GIA's 80-year commitment to pearl research, providing the public and trade with the most advanced pearl identification, using the most innovative and sophisticated technology. Kenneth Scarratt, Nick Sturman and the rest of the pearl identification team have more than 100 total years of hands-on experience examining and identifying almost every pearl type."

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