

THE RETAIL JEWELER

The Official Magazine of The Independent Jeweler • Volume 8, Issue 4 • June 2017

Actress
Holly Robinson Peete



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Jyes
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Allison Kaufman
Page 32



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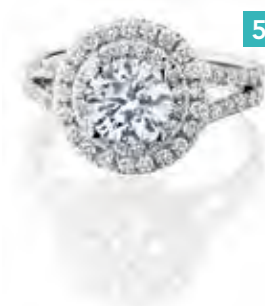
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COVER COURTESY OF AGTA

Actress: *Holly Robinson Peete*

Photographer - Andrew Macpherson; Production and Styling – Tod Hallman; Hair – Valerie Abron Harrell; Makeup – Adam Christopher; Manicurist – Tracey Sutter for Ivy Eleven Dress: Caroline Herrera - royal blue gown

Necklace: *Robert Pelliccia*, J.R. Dunn Jewelers - 18K yellow and white gold pendant featuring a 23.94 ct. boulder Opal accented with blue and pink Sapphires (.58 ctw.) and Diamonds (.92 ctw.) on a black Diamond bead necklace.

Ring #1: *Phillip Dismuke*, Jewelsmith, Inc. - 18K yellow gold and platinum ring featuring a 13.53 ct. black Opal accented with Sapphires (1.01 ctw.) and Diamonds (.07 ctw.).

Ring #2: *Erica Courtney*, Erica Courtney, Inc. - 18K yellow gold "Easter Egg" ring featuring a 7.46 ct. Paraiba Tourmaline accented with Paraiba Tourmalines (1.09 ctw.) and Diamonds (2.45 ctw.).

Cuff: *Wolfgang Vaatz*, Earth Terra Erde, Inc. - 22K yellow gold and silver cuff featuring a Chrysoprase cabochon.

Earrings: *Mark Loren*, Mark Loren Designs, Inc. - 14K yellow gold earrings featuring black Coral accented with Drusy Agate spheres and purple Sapphires (.80 ctw.).

THE RETAIL JEWELER™

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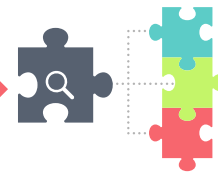
THISTLE & BEE

NEW YORK



OVAL DIAMOND CUFF WITH MATCHING EARRINGS

LAS VEGAS – 2017 – THEN AND NOW



By Frank Dallahan

By the time you read this, you will be a week or so away from travelling to the shows in Las Vegas. 1991 seems an eon ago when JCK began the westward migration of the industry show circuit to Las Vegas. The industry since then changed considerably on both sides of the sales counter. The Internet was just starting to be used for email if indeed your company had email. Today, a frequent topic of conversation and strategic thought is given to the use of the Internet to actually do business.

The manufacturing community was largely domestic and manufacturers were just beginning to form relationships with manufacturers in Hong Kong and India. Today, the domestic jewelry manufacturers are a much smaller segment of the business as the Chinese and the Indians have taken over more and more of the manufacturing function.

Then, DeBeers was a marketing powerhouse driving demand for diamonds through various programs geared to both consumers and the trade including both manufacturers and retailers. DeBeers advertising was heavy in print gearing itself to both the bridal and the post bridal markets. Their television advertising was compelling and persuasive for so many diamond products – The Tennis Bracelet, The Three Stone Ring (Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow), the Twenty-fifth Anniversary Diamond, and the Diamond Anniversary Ring. DeBeers also initiated the notion of how much to spend for the purchase of a diamond engagement ring by relating it to so many months salary to be allocated for the diamond engagement ring.

The Diamond Promotion Service was the DeBeers entity charged with personally communicating the DeBeers message and training directly to jewelry retailers throughout the U.S. The DPS was an actual sales team charged with selling the DeBeers message programs and products to retail jewelers. Today, no one leads the parade extolling the diamond's significance, and value to the marketplace either at the consumer or trade levels. The DPS is gone. There has been no new product developed and sold successfully save the current two stone diamond ring now being advertised by Jarrod. The jury is out on the appeal and results of this concept. For my money, Yesterday, Today, and tomorrow was a much stronger concept.

Today, we have man-made diamonds made in factories turning the story of the diamond as a symbol of love to one of man-made diamonds being a better ecological choice than diamonds mined from the earth, presumably playing on the Millennials' desire, demand, and preference for more acceptable green products.

And, speaking of Millennials, their counterparts in 1993 were significantly different than today's consumers. Brides and grooms were younger and less well educated. Today, they are better educated, many with graduate degrees for both the

bride and the groom. For wedding information they now view the Knot along with Bridal magazines.

In 1993, an ounce of gold sold for \$393 per troy ounce. Today it is \$1257. Silver sold for \$4.30 per troy ounce in 1993. Today it is \$16.80. Platinum sold for \$375 per troy ounce. Today, platinum sells for \$925 per troy ounce. These increases in precious metals prices have had a significant impact on the retail prices of jewelry products and consequently sales of gold, silver, and platinum are also seriously affected. Of perhaps greater importance perhaps, is the effect precious metal pricing has on product design and development over this 26-year period. It stands to reason that the unit sales of jewelry are impacted with these price movements. Is it any wonder that wedding rings, as an example, are now offered in different metals such as titanium in order to keep prices at what is perceived to be an affordable level.

Is it any wonder that retail sales of silver jewelry have literally gone through the roof as the price of gold has nearly tripled since 1991! Similarly, silver product design has moved from lightweight to more generously weighted product. Platinum seems to be squarely anchored in the bridal market for engagement rings and to a lesser degree men's wedding rings,

This little trip down memory lane has a point. According to the Department of the Census, retail sales of jewelry in jewelry, luggage, and leather stores plus the separate category of only jewelry stores (who knows why there are two such categories of retailers selling jewelry?), sales amounted to \$34 billion in 1993. In the latest period (2015) sales were \$65.7 billion. While total retail sales from every category amounted to \$1.235 trillion in Q4 of 2016, e-commerce sellers accounted for 8.3% of sales up nicely from 2015's share of 7.6%.

Despite the somewhat hysterical, ominous warnings some forecast, consumers still continue to patronize retailers. The analogy of television's impact on radio, it seems to me, is applicable to the retail vs. the Internet story. The Internet will gain market share over time even in jewelry just as QVC and HSN grew, as did jewelry retail sales grew.

Focus on your business. Focus on customer service. Focus on the products you sell. Decide which market segments where you place your focus. And most of all communicate with your target markets every way you can. It worked then and it works now!



Frank Dallahan

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

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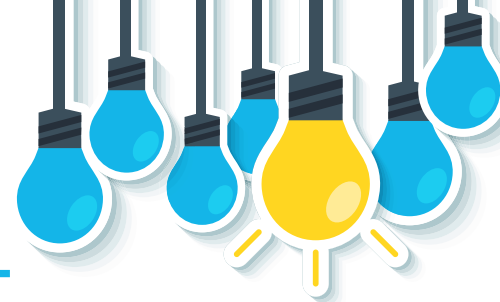
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THE FUTURE OF JEWELRY RETAIL

By David Brown

A heading such as this may well be better suited to a book – at the very least it might expose me to a level of crystal ball gazing that may come back to haunt me later. That said, there is no doubt significant change is afoot in the retail sector generally, much of which will impact jewelry retail in the next five to ten years.

How much of the speculation will come to pass remains to be seen. There are some who believe that retail will not be significantly impacted by the Internet to any further extent than it already is. Others predict the eventual elimination of retail stores altogether.

The reality will probably be somewhere in the middle. In the same way that the passenger ship industry underwent huge upheaval when the airline industry arrived, only to reinvent itself in the last decade or two, I believe retail will see a similar situation develop. Cruise ships found their niche when they no longer saw themselves as a means of transportation, but instead became an experience in themselves. Retail will need to adopt a similar approach.



INTERNET

The Internet is here to stay, no one doubts that. But will it take over? You only have to look at the number of online retailers opening retail outlets to realize that the Internet, of itself, is not a complete solution. Online retailers are craving the chance to interact face to face. Where the jewelry industry needs to improve is its online presence. It is genuinely a struggle to find any retailers who have determined how the Internet will be part of their game plan, and are conducting it successfully. This will need to be addressed moving forward.



TECHNOLOGY

Technology goes beyond the Internet. The ability to measure and track customers' needs and tailor a solution that works for each individual will become paramount. We will increasingly see an ability to deliver bespoke experiences at affordable value. Mass production may become less prevalent, mass customization may well be the answer. Apps and data management will become part of the staple for every retail jeweler. Virtual reality will provide customers with the chance to 'try' items before they buy.



CUSTOMER EXPERIENCES

In the same way that the cruise ship industry changed retail will too. Malls are increasingly looking to create an experience to attract customers to their space. Store visits will be more about the retail experience. We see this increasingly with clothing stores offering haircuts and supermarkets offering coffee shops. Time in store will increase sales and more retailers will attempt to find ways to increase the length of time their customers spend with them.



THE SHARING ECONOMY WILL IMPACT RETAIL

In the same way that Uber, Air BNB and other sites have encouraged use ahead of ownership, the retail environment may increasingly see opportunities for customers who want to use rather than buy. Why own a car when you can travel in someone else's? Likewise why buy an item if you can rent it as you need? Customers have shown a preference for this in other areas – it may become the norm in retail too. Will we see stores where customers pay a monthly fee to use jewelry as and when they need? I won't bet against it.



All we know is change is certain. How that will happen is anyone's guess. Being ready for the next big thing has to be the mantra for every retailer to follow.



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



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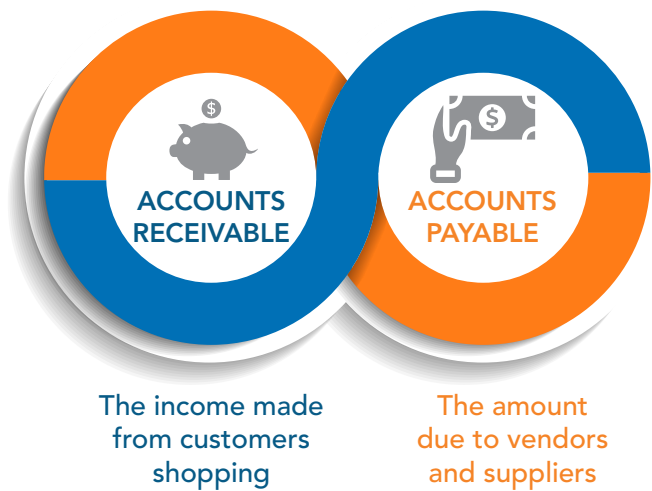
By Jim Sartori



One of the most challenging aspects of being a business owner or financial executive for a retail jewelry store centers on the delivery and interpretation of strategies and results to non-financial managers in-house. From those managing HR and sales, to inventory and appraising, it is key that those involved in operations have an understanding of the financial standing of the business. Practicing proper reporting not only ensures security and stability, but also motivates growth for the business from within the team. It is important to be prudent in not only explaining the financial processes of the store to all, but to have the right jewelry systems in place for success and growth.

Irrespective of a team’s collective level of acumen, it is essential to keep things simple initially, communicating that the store’s financial goals don’t necessarily differ from that of the local coffee shop frequented on the morning commute. Every retailer should have more cash coming in than going out. While the size and complexity of operations (i.e. how many stores/employees, or how much inventory is carried) may make the task seem more or less grandiose, there are a few fundamentals that any retailer can adopt.

Two of the more basic components of an organization’s cash flow are **ACCOUNTS RECEIVABLE** (the income made from customers shopping) and **ACCOUNTS PAYABLE** (the amount due to vendors and suppliers).



FOR ACCOUNTS RECEIVABLE

For **ACCOUNTS RECEIVABLE**, the importance of collecting payments when they become due is key. Most customers are charged when they purchase a piece of jewelry, but sometimes storeowners are flexible with payment options. For example, a returning customer may be on a payment plan, or a ring may go on consignment to someone proposing.

ACCOUNTS PAYABLE

For **ACCOUNTS PAYABLE**, asking for longer, or more flexible, payment terms from designers, or from maintenance/facilities management can help manage cash flow when needed. A vendor listing can be developed for active suppliers with their terms, to be reviewed periodically.

After these concepts are introduced, implement **Days Sales Outstanding** (Accounts Receivable balance divided by sales/number of days) and **Days Payable Outstanding** (Accounts Payable balance divided by cost of sales/number of days) for effectiveness, which are important metrics for all stores, from mom and pops to chains.

Two of the more basic components of an organization’s cash flow are **Accounts Receivable** (the income made from customers shopping) and **Accounts Payable** (the amount due to vendors and suppliers).

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Because of inventory, it is important to have a system in place that works to measure the age of stock, executing timely purchases. To be financially astute, avoid bulk purchases of inventory, even when lower pricing can be enticing, since the cost of carrying and handling inventory can often rival, or even eclipse, initial price advantages over time. Inform the sales team about what needs to be moved, coming up with creative strategies to move old jewelry stock. Stagnant merchandise injures a store's liquidity, forcing late payments to vendors, or even bankruptcy.

Introducing basic financial principles can reshape the way your store does business. As the owner, allow for training centered on financial tutoring for non-financial managers. Numerous organizations have resources on this topic, helping retailers educate on cash flow concepts and basic metrics. Often, the instruction is greatly appreciated by employees and treasured even more so by the financial executives, especially as these concepts are understood and placed into action behind the counter.

To keep it all organized, it is essential that retailers have the right jewelry systems in place for point of sales (POS), customer relationship management (CRM), real time reporting, and inventory tracking. Although there are dozens of solutions on the market, here are some of the most popular to consider when handling the financial systems for a store, ensuring that there is a process in place that non-financial managers can easily understand:

1

ShopKeep

The leading iPad point of sale system in retail, ShopKeep provides an affordable point on the cloud. The software makes it easy to track customer purchase history and manage pricing, while also linking to an iPhone app. The system allows for an unlimited amount of users, as well as unlimited inventory items, and provides analytics in real time for retail stores. Inventory can easily be imported in bulk or individually, and ShopKeep updates on bestsellers, as well as when inventory is running low. It also captures information and reports on staff hours, as well as sales, for ease in performance comparisons. The system is intuitive, working offline, which avoids issues when the internet is down. ShopKeep accepts cash, credit (including EMV chip) and mobile payments, and has gift card integration. The software also has portable barcode scanners and printers. The company offers 24/7 customer support, and pricing starts at \$49/month. Learn more at: www.shopkeep.com.

2

GEMINI

GEMINI®, by MPI Systems, is well respected by jewelry retailers. Unlike generic systems that have been modified for the jewelry industry, MPI has built software for retailers from the ground up using the best Microsoft® SQL technology.

GEMINI's Point of Sale is easy to use, with integrated EMV/debit card processing, and many features, including gift cards/receipts, certificates of valuation, multiple imaging throughout, wish lists, and the ability to be installed on tablets, like Microsoft® Surface Pro.

GEMINI® controls items and inventory, manages purchasing, pricing and re-pricing of items with changes in metal and diamond pricing, as well as manages memos of items in and out, and printing of barcoded tags with optional RFID. For jewelry repairs, it creates job tickets with BOM and images on take-in, and allows for tracking the status of orders. GEMINI® handles special order management for purchased or manufactured pieces.

The system's robust CRM helps retailers reach out to customers, including on special and recurrent occasions (helping with follow-up jewelry sales), helps staff contact customers when orders are received, manages mailing lists, and controls house accounts. GEMINI® has extensive reporting (170+) including business intelligence reporting, which assists retailers in buying and selling smarter.

GEMINI® can be set up on a server on the site or in the cloud, and is designed to easily scale up for multiple stores (up to 200). To make accounting seamless, it integrates in real-time to QuickBooks for the General Ledger and Accounts Receivable/Payable, with no double entry. Contact MPI for pricing. Learn more at www.mpisystems.com.



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3

Lightspeed

With over 45,000 customers around the world, Lightspeed is making its mark as an omnichannel system. Focused on independent businesses, the darling of the food and fashion industry has been gaining popularity in the jewelry industry as one of the leading POS jewelry software providers.

The cloud-based system is aesthetically pleasing to use, with an Apple app that is fully brandable with the store logo. The app is free to download, as long as there is a Lightspeed account login, and can be used on both iPads and iPhones. This mobile touchscreen option makes it easy to show images and options to clients on the floor of the store, and also makes it easy for stores to generate POs while on the road, such as during trade shows.

The software generates barcodes, can be integrated with a variety of credit card processors, and tracks work orders and jewelry repairs. It has a three attribute matrices (stone size, precious metal type etc.), and makes it easy to customize inventory, as well as do mass updating to inventory (for example, the price update of a particular style in different gemstone colors). In addition, inventory listings can be added that aren't physical items, such as in-store events and training workshops. Lightspeed allows for control permissions, allowing storeowners to limit employees who can discount, as well as blocking prices on the system from select employees, if desired. The system has built-in real time reporting, and simplifies PO making, which can be created and sent over the cloud. It also serializes jewelry, as well as prints barcodes and jewelry tags. Pricing starts at \$99/month. Learn more at: www.lightspeedhq.com.



4

The Edge®

As an industry specific system, The Edge® is familiar with the nuances of the industry, with features and functions of the software specifically addressing the needs of jewelry retailers. The Edge® allows for tracking repairs and custom jobs, as well

as the issuing of appraisal reports. Trading in jewelry, initiating special orders, and handling layaway sales, in addition to straightforward product sales, are some of the integrated features. With intuitive settings and responses, The Edge® is aware of the way products are inventoried and is capable of managing a combination of fine jewelry items, including: findings, melee, pre-ticketed, assembled and manufactured goods.

Unlike generic POS systems that report numbers sold, average sales, and gross profit, The Edge® takes reporting to another level with valuable information for retailers, such as stocking levels and sales velocity at key price points, rather than average price points. As a jewelry industry specific system, it has more potential to provide the user with quality data analytics for making informed decisions. Pricing starts at \$4,600. Learn more at: www.theedgeforjewelers.com.



5

Jewel Mate

Jewel Mate Enterprise 9.0 Software by Logic Mate Intl. is a user-friendly business management system available exclusively for the jewelry industry. Logic Mate has been designing software



since 1989, and has a well-rounded understanding of the busy demands of wholesale, manufacturing, and retail operations. Their software programs handle various aspects of daily operations, including: customer texting when repairs are ready, CRM tools such as wish lists, a referral system and loyalty points. This POS solution offers real time inventory



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reports, and emails daily sales reports nightly to business owners. Advanced tracking metrics allow for tracking of peak selling hours, as well as the tracking of individual sales performance. Jewelry inventory is simplified, with Jewel Mate suggesting items to be re-ordered, and the software automatically generating a purchase order with a click. Pricing starts at \$11,000. Learn more at: www.logicmate.com.

6

Virtual Diamond Boutique

For stone sourcing on the floor, the Virtual Diamond Boutique (VDB) is breaking ground by offering a stunning mobile storefront for retailers to use in front of customers. Retail markups can be pre-programmed (or no price can be shown), and diamond inventory can be searched by price range, as well as the 4Cs. Customized folders can be created for each customer, and the search can be further refined by factors such as depth, table, polish, symmetry and fluorescence, amongst other factors. Images and 3D videos of each stone are available, as well as GIA certificates. VDB software also matches pairs of stones, making it easy to recommend diamonds to request on memo, so the client can review before purchase. The app is available across platforms on Google, Apple and Microsoft, functioning on both phones and tablets. The app is free for retailers to download. Learn more at: www.vdbapp.com.



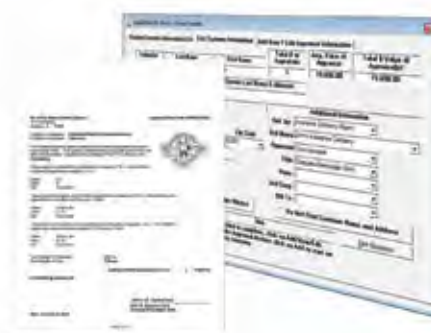
7

GemGuide

Gemworld International has been serving the jewelry industry for more than 35 years, providing pricing information on diamonds and colored gems. They also have an appraisal software product, GemGuide Appraisal Software, that offers solutions for jewelry stores that do appraisals. This software is fast, easy, and affordable and fully integrated with pricing of diamonds and gems for those that subscribe to the publication

as well. The software will maintain records of your customers and all the appraisal items that are done for said client. When it comes to updates, the software has an easy method to update prior appraisals without redoing the appraisal. A few fast keystrokes and the appraisal is updated and ready to print. For retailers looking to purchase an off-the-shelf POS system, but that want to supplement with adding appraisals to their list of services, GemGuide Appraisal Software is an excellent addition. The startup fee is \$295 for the appraisal software, including installation training, and 105 initial appraisals. The software is hosted on the retailer's server; Gemworld International does not have access to records. There is a counter for every appraisal done, and more clicks can be purchased to increase the counter, starting at \$1 each, with bulk discounts available. Learn more at: www.gemguide.com

When choosing the right jewelry systems for non-financial managers, it is important to consider a variety of factors: whether one prefers something server or cloud based, ease of user interface, platform and omnichannel options, to reporting, inventory and appraisal tracking. The extent of jewelry industry specific customization should also be considered, with some systems being highly intuitive, incorporating memos and wish lists. These features should be factored alongside important financial considerations, such as ease of accounting integration and reporting. Each system has its strengths, but in the end it is key to prioritize the system that will best produce and organize desired monetary growth in a way that is easy for employees to understand.



Jim Sartori

Jim Sartori is the Chief Financial and Administration Officer at RIVA Precision, a leading fine jewelry manufacturer, and has more than 25 years of financial, administrative and operational experience, with the majority spent in publicly-held corporations. Jim is a Certified Public Accountant in New York State, who graduated from Boston University with a Bachelor of Science and a concentration in Accounting.

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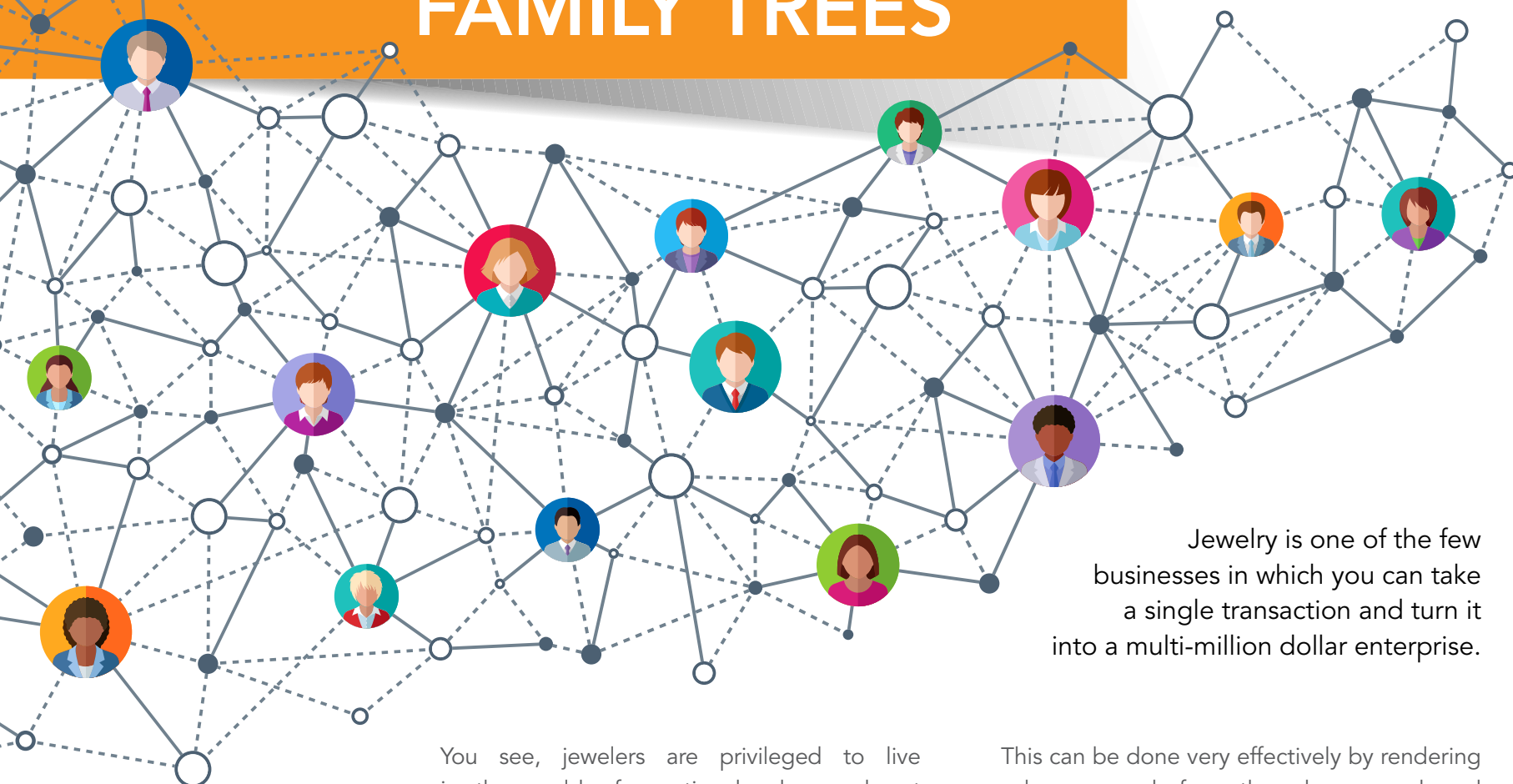
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JEWELRY SALES GROW ON TREES...

By Jim Ackerman

FAMILY TREES



Jewelry is one of the few businesses in which you can take a single transaction and turn it into a multi-million dollar enterprise.

You can turn a customer into a ever-spreading family tree of never-ending clients.



You see, jewelers are privileged to live in the world of emotional sales, and not one in a hundred takes advantage of it. Gemstones and precious metals are symbols of love. As long as people are connected by the bonds of love, there will be a need for what jewelers bring to their clients. But because, when it comes to marketing, most jewelers “let it happen,” rather than “make it happen,” they never reap the easy windfall that awaits them within these deep connections.

Most jewelers see a customer as a customer. They’re in the store and they’re going to buy something. But look closer. A client has parents, grandparents, aunts and uncles. They may have children, nephews and nieces. Play your cards right and you can turn a customer into a ever-spreading family tree of never-ending clients. You see, once you get a customer you can and should get the whole family.

Begin by making a customer part of your family. Think of them as clients, not merely customers. Think of them, in fact, as friends. Do whatever you can to strengthen your bonds with them from the first time they set foot in your store.

This can be done very effectively by rendering value, even before they have purchased anything. Offer some education, a free report, an appraisal of something they already have. Do something for them that has value, let them know what the value is, but don’t charge for it. You will begin to cement a relationship and you will begin to invoke the principle of reciprocation. They’ll feel a sense of obligation to you because of your service.

When a purchase is made, take the time to get critical information about relationships and events. Within the scope of exceptional service, you can easily suggest that you will keep your client reminded about important events.

Naturally, the most important of these is spousal birthdays and anniversaries. But don’t stop there. The next logical step is to inquire about parents and children. Who are their parents? When were they married? What about their anniversary and their birthdays?

In the case of older clients, you may ask the same questions about their children. You’ll



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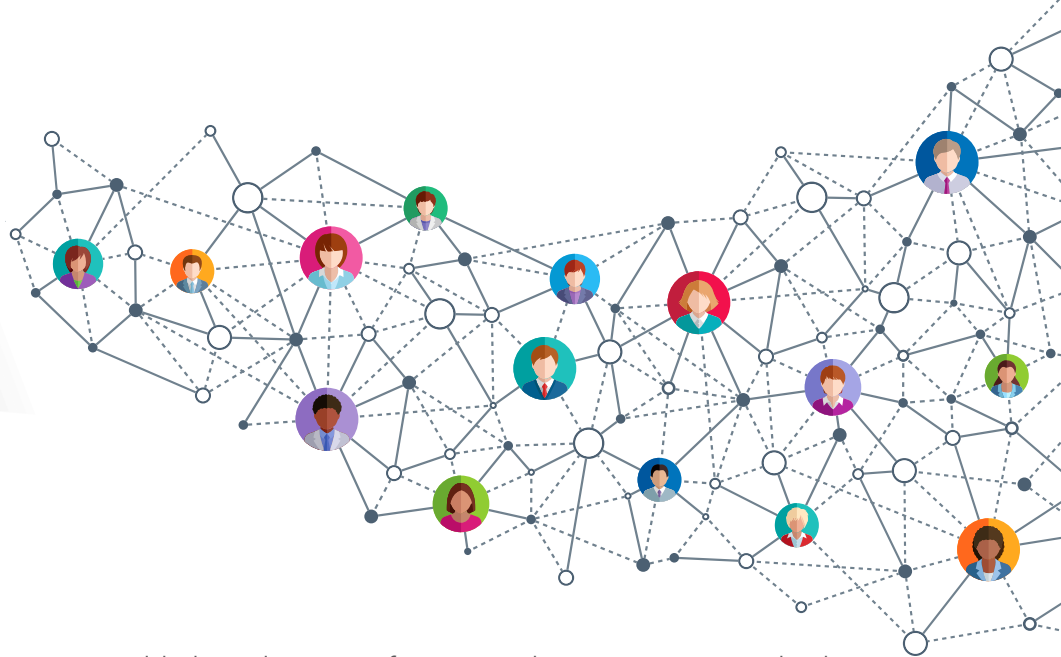


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JEWELRY SALES GROW ON TREES...

FAMILY TREES



A birthday card with an offer attached; an anniversary reminder with some suggested gift ideas.



want to know about their married kids and their spouses. You'll also want to know about the ages of their unmarried children. When do they graduate? What are their hobbies, activities or passions? Your customers may also have brothers and sisters, some of whom may be married and with children of their own.

Can you see how one person is almost certainly connected to dozens, if not hundreds of others, all of whom are potential additional clients for you?

"But how dare I get this information from my customers?" you ask.

Simple... You ask. And listen.

Much information may come up naturally in the course of conversation. If a young couple has come in search of a wedding set, it is quite natural to ask the familial status of both the bride and groom in the course of conversation. How many brothers and sisters do you have? Where do you fall in your family?

By asking a few key questions, an excited couple is quite likely to open up and give you information about siblings, parents, even friends. Make notes as you go along and keep them with your customer records.

You don't have to get all the information all at once. You can "assemble" information about your clients' family trees over the extended course of doing business with them.

But you can get a surprising amount of information by blatantly asking. The birthdays and wedding date of the clients themselves is a perfectly legitimate question to ask in the course of your transaction. Finding out

information about parents may also be very natural, especially when a client is seeking financing.

When asking for referrals, prompting your clients by suggesting they give you the names of relatives can help fill out the branches of a family tree.

Occasionally you may have a client ask why you want this kind of information. Tell the truth. You want to help them with all of their gift-giving needs, and you want to help their relatives with all of their jewelry needs as well. If a client objects, simply withdraw the question for now. Remember, you can always re-approach the subject on subsequent visits. As you gather information about clients and their families, enter it into your database. You're then in a position to pro-actively market specifically to these people. And because you have specific information about the people and events that are important to the relatives of your clients, you can create direct and personalized communications, specifically targeted to them.

A birthday card with an offer attached; an anniversary reminder with some suggested gift ideas. These become the cornerstones of your direct marketing efforts.

Mail is a very effective way to conduct this one-on-one marketing, but it's not the only way. Email and telephone calls can also be effective. And the best part is, not only will you generate new customers and new sales, but your clients will see you as a customer-service oriented jeweler who takes exceptional care of his clients. You, of course will know, you're really just climbing the family tree.



Jim Ackerman

Jim Ackerman is President of Ascend Marketing, the only source of marketing and advertising TRAINING for jewelers. Jim has teamed with jewelry sales and management icon, Shane Decker to create the Ultimate Jewelry Sales & Marketing Boot Camp, to be held in Denver and Atlanta in August of 2017. For details go to: www.ultimatejewelrysalesbootcamp.com. Jim is also offering Retail Jeweler readers a FREE Marketing Fitness Check-up (\$397.00 value) to provide jewelers with at least 3 simple-to-implement marketing recommendations to get more customers, increase average ticket or get existing clients back more often. Interested jewelers can get details at: <https://ekk89994.infusionsoft.com/app/form/mfc>.

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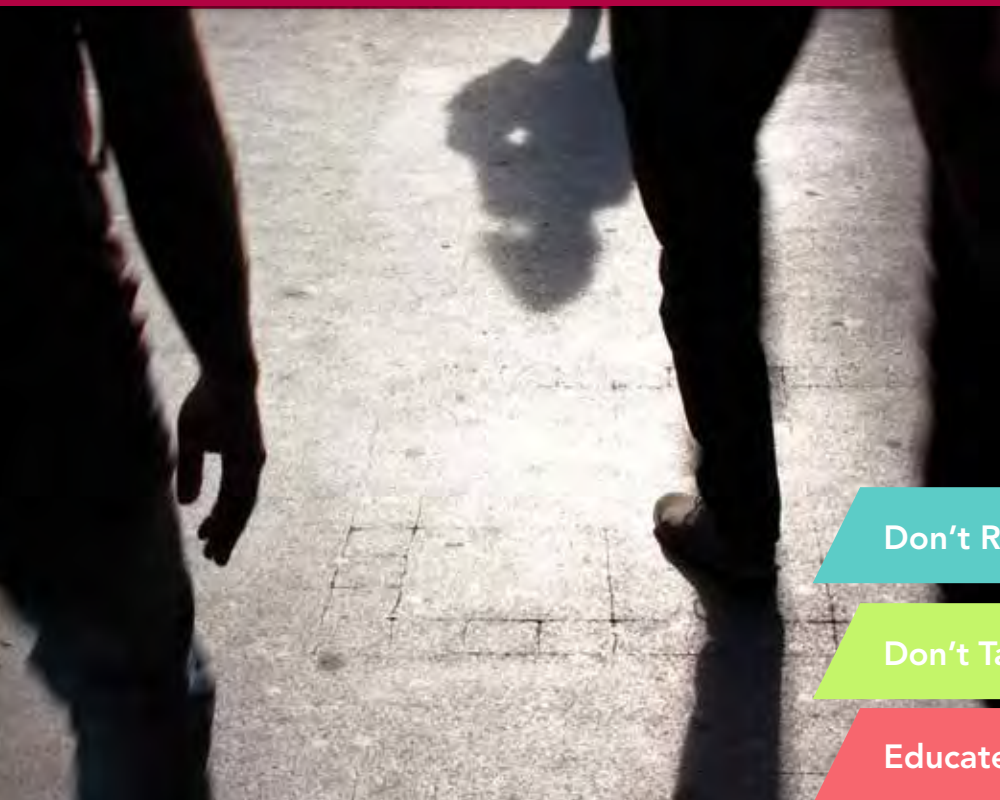
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LIFE-SAVING SECURITY TIPS Every Jeweler Needs to Know



When police officers, pilots, or firefighters begin their careers, they expect to face some degree of adversity on the job. Their lines of work frequently require them to be prepared to handle life-threatening situations.

While a jeweler's line of work may be quite different than these occupations, many people can forget some of the potential dangers a jeweler faces every day. Because jewelry is highly transportable and precious metals are so easily traded, it is not surprising that robbers are highly motivated to steal.

Don't Resist During the Robbery & Remain Calm

Don't Take Matters Into Your Own Hands After the Robbery

Educate Your Staff

This is especially true when they feel that the reward of gain outweighs the risk of getting caught. In fact, some recent robbery crimes against jewelers show an increase in violence used to intimidate jewelers in an attempt for the robbers to control the situation.

Unfortunately, the recent increases in violent crimes conducted against jewelers — like smash-and-grab and armed robberies in particular — are occurring in high-profile locations like malls. These crimes even occur at jewelry stores with above average physical and electronic security protection, too. Due to the possibility of these crimes occurring and the potential severity of loss that they present, it's now more important than ever to consistently observe sound security procedures.

The heightened importance is not just to protect your merchandise, either. What you do and how you act during an armed or smash-and-grab robbery could save your life, the lives of your associates and even the lives of your customers who could be present during an armed robbery event!

That's why every jeweler should know these tips:

• Don't Resist During the Robbery & Remain Calm

As frightening as this situation may be, the best thing to do if you find yourself in an emerging armed robbery situation is to remain calm. Whether robbers are swinging a sledgehammer or threatening you with a firearm, remaining as

calm as possible can help reassure associates and customers to do the same.

Furthermore, you should quickly follow the instructions the robber gives you, but you shouldn't make any moves or gestures that could upset or surprise the robber. You are likely to find that keeping calm will help you follow these guidelines. Ultimately, if the merchandise at your business is insured, it can be replaced. Lives, however, cannot be replaced. Your correct response in a crisis like an armed or smash-and-grab robbery can help assure the safety of others in the store at the time of the robbery. Modeling a response behavior that conveys cooperation and compliance with the robber's instructions is your best chance of remaining unharmed.

• Don't Take Matters Into Your Own Hands After the Robbery

Once again, it's important to first remember that after a robbery event unfolds, your only safe option is to cooperate and not offer any resistance.

As soon as the robbers have fled your store, make sure all access doors to the store are immediately locked so that the robbers cannot return. Then, if anyone is injured, you can tend to them and report the crime to local law enforcement. It's also important to protect the scene until local law enforcement has arrived and begins to collect evidence. Cooperating with investigators to the best of your ability can aid in their apprehension of suspects and recovery of stolen merchandise.

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KEEP IT FRESH:

By Matt Perosi

Updating Your Website for Your Customers - And Google

There is a lot of confusion over how businesses should use the Internet today. Even though Internet technology evolves every day, many people still believe what they originally learned ten or more years ago. Today, I'll share a few of the most underutilized features that websites should have, along with consumer engagement strategies and the current state of SEO.

**01****Mobile Websites**

In May 2015, Google reported that more than 50% of search traffic was taking place through smartphones. Then in May 2016, Hitwise reported their study showed mobile traffic had reached 60%. A peek into your own Google Analytics and you'll likely find mobile users to be more than 45% of your traffic.

Smartphone usage continues to grow every day and consumers expect you to have a mobile website so they can find information about you easily. If your website isn't easy to use on a smartphone, then talk to your web developer and implement a mobile strategy as soon as you can.

**02****Website Abandonment & Freshness**

Website abandonment refers to websites that were set up then quickly forgotten. Sometimes abandonment happens because the business owner just wanted something online to represent the business and sometimes it happens because the cost and maintenance of the website was greater than initially expected.

Google Search Quality Guidelines (found here: bit.ly/qual2017) explain how important it is for your website to be updated often, especially updating your product information. Fresh content usually refers to new blog posts and changes to your home page, but for retail stores it also refers to regular updating and adding of new products in your catalog.

Websites are an important way for businesses to provide online credibility, even if you can't afford to maintain it. Just know that it will help your business more if you keep it fresh.

**03****Internal Linking**

Internal linking refers to how you link from one page to another from within the body of the page. I'm not referring to top, side, or footer navigation, but the random links within your written paragraphs. This type of linking allows users to jump from page to page on your site in a way that makes sense while they read it. It's a better way of helping people discover information where and when it's needed, rather than having them systematically click through every page in your navigation.

Internal linking also helps search engines find information on your site. It's faster for search engines to discover fresh updates when you link to it in your body content. For example, a new product blog posts with internal links to the catalog will help Google discover your fresh content faster.

**04****Online Catalog**

Product catalogs are paramount for physical retail stores. Smartphone users know they can save time by browsing online catalogs than visiting many stores in person. They save a lot of time making their selection before leaving their house. This is also why it's important to have an accurate representation of your store inventory online. I recommend that you tie your in-house product management system to your website inventory. Your website doesn't need e-commerce but it does need a mobile-friendly version of your entire catalog.

**05****Online Engagement**

Google recently changed the way it manages information shared by consumers. More emphasis is being given to photos, reviews, and comments uploaded by consumers. There is a de-emphasis in what business owners say about themselves. Your business will grow in online popularity as more people mention you on social networks, in Google services, and in various review websites. Each of these activities is a different type of engagement that Google may use to help it understand who you are and what you do.



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LIFE-SAVING SECURITY TIPS Every Jeweler Needs to Know

However, if you don't protect your premises, try to follow the robbers after they leave, or fail to contact law enforcement immediately, you could unintentionally escalate the situation back to dangerous levels.

• Educate Your Staff

Everyone on your team must be prepared for the possibility of an armed or smash-and-grab robbery. This education could help minimize the trauma that could otherwise result should an associate be unprepared for any type of robbery.

Although it is true you cannot control how a customer will react in the event of a robbery, you can work with your team to be prepared to respond in a manner that sets an example for your customers should an armed robbery event unfold.

It should be noted that even before a robbery actually occurs, it is important that your team understand the warning signs of robbers casing your business. Putting preventative measures in place from the get-go will help reduce the chance of crimes from happening in the first place. After telling everyone about the signs of suspicious incidents — like customers appearing nervous or asking unusual questions — remember to stress the importance of documenting and sharing these incidents in a suspicious incident log.

Also, make sure this intelligence is shared with your local law enforcement, as well as other local jewelers in your crime prevention network. Remind these other jewelers to also share information with you, as some degree of criminal surveillance precedes every robbery event!

It's imperative to remember the potential for both armed and smash-and-grab robberies at retail jewelry stores is real and the risk is always present. Just like a police officer double-checks all of his gear before going out into the field or a pilot inspects all the instruments in the cockpit of his plane, jewelers need to review their security procedures periodically. In the end, it could help save a life.



David Sexton

David Sexton is vice president of loss prevention consulting at Jewelers Mutual Insurance Company. Headquartered in Neenah, Wis., Jewelers Mutual is the only insurance company in the U.S. and Canada that specializes exclusively in protecting the jewelry industry and individuals' jewelry.

KEEP IT FRESH: Updating Your Website for Your Customers - And Google

Paying a company to post to social media every day is not considered online engagement. Engagement only happens if you monitor and reply to customers who ask questions about what you post. Other than social networks, you can also improve your online engagement by asking your in-store customers to write reviews about you online. Make sure to reply to each review, even if it's just to say thank you.

Invite customers to take and share photos of the jewelry they try on in your store. Sharing photos to one of Google's services would be ideal, but sharing photos to any social network will help expand your online reach as Google and other people see a mention of your store name.

Lastly, allow customers to leave testimonials and product reviews right on your website. This is direct consumer engagement that will certainly help.



06

The New SEO

Each of the above 5 items relates to search engine optimization (SEO) in one way or another. SEO is no longer a service that you can simply pay for without actively participating in it. Prior to 2012, SEO was all about keyword tweaking, article spinning, and several other scientific and mathematical methods of modifying a website to exploit inefficiencies in Google's ranking algorithm. That doesn't work anymore.

The Google Search Quality Guidelines I mentioned above explain that good content, new content, appropriate information, and good customer experience are important elements in ranking your website now. Keywords are not the focus anymore which means the SEO process is less mathematical and more related to how you interact with customers online.

You can improve your website and online engagement by reading online reviews about you and studying your website reports. Eventually you'll realize that improving customer experience and online engagement is the new version of SEO.



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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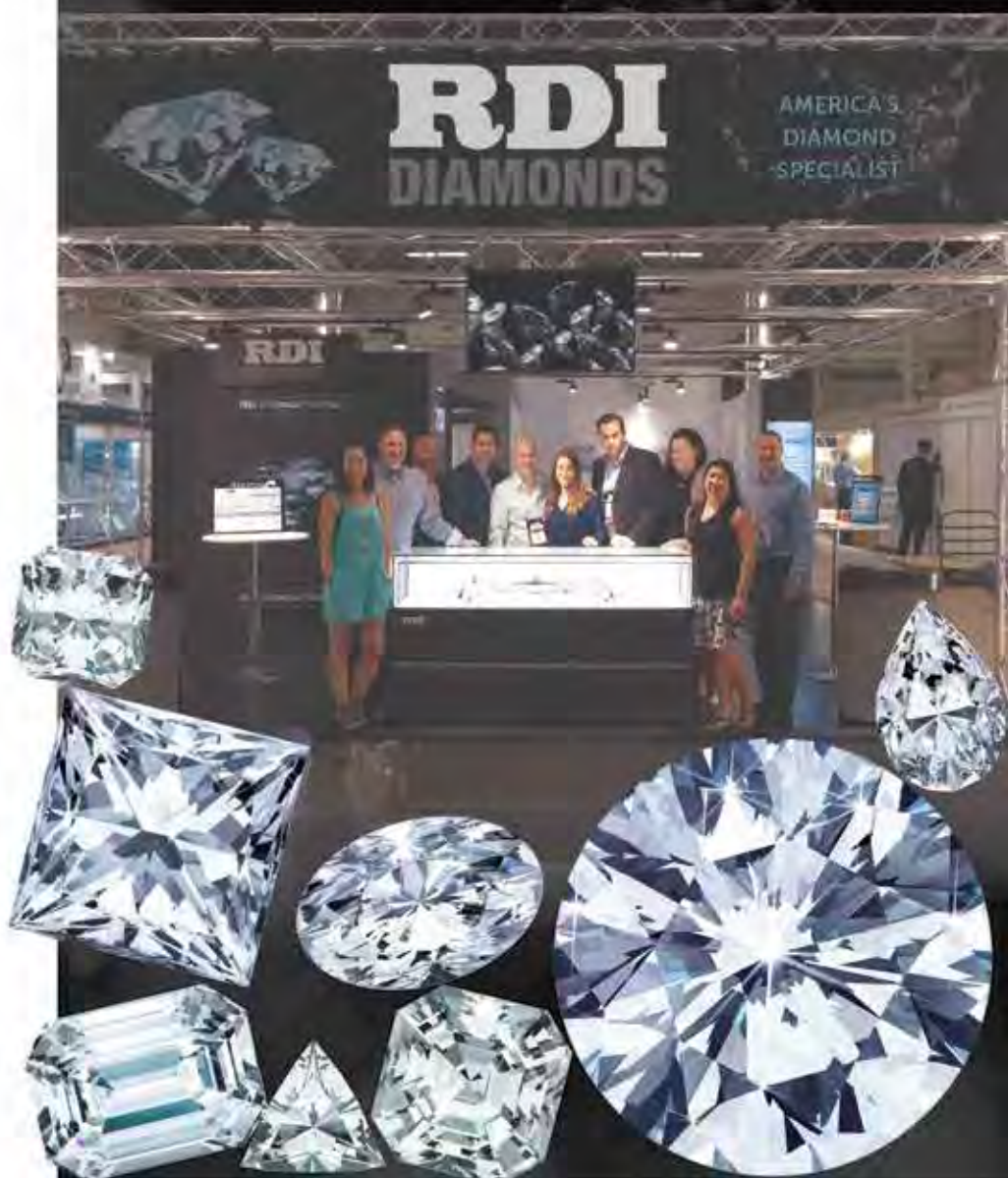
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ARE YOU “GETTING DOWN” OR “STAYING UP?”



We all go through slumps from time to time, and when we get down, we tend to get really down. As an owner, leader, or manager, you can't afford to get down because every day matters in a retail jewelry store.



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.

THE CAUSES OF DOWNERS



Reduced customer traffic, a sales decline, and frustrations with employees are just a few of the things that can impair a business and get you into a depressed or angry mood. Unfortunately, this can become much more than a bad mood for a day characterized by a lack of vitality, motivation, or creativity. It can develop into a lingering downer that can affect your personal health and well-being. Your work suffers and the impact it has on your staff is doubly debilitating.

YOU NEED “DOWN TIME” TO GET UP



Sometimes we get down because we don't see progress where we expect it. We work hard on promotions, events, and marketing efforts but fail to get the results we anticipated. So we try to work harder – sometimes way too hard – instead of giving our body and mind the time they need to relax and refresh for a new day. So as odd as it may seem, giving yourself the privilege of some “down time” can help you recoup and refresh so you can increase energy and get “up” for a new day. Things tend to look much better after a good night's sleep.

YOUR REAL JOB



The job of a leader, manager, or owner is not to work endless hours but to work smarter on what is really important to grow your business. Your job isn't to work 12 hours a day in the store, even though on occasion your work requires long hours and great effort. But this need not be the norm. Your job is to get results. And this can only happen through better leadership, time management, and focus on your staff and their success.

DON'T SWEAT THE SMALL STUFF



So instead of being sucked into endless and meaningless minutia, try to prioritize the two or three key projects or areas you have to address each day. Focusing on the big picture helps you keep the long term in mind and pays dividends down the line. Unfortunately, we often get sucked into urgent (and often unimportant) issues that sap our energy, increase our frustration, and get us down before we can ever get a chance to be “up.” It's true that details need to be handled, but I'm not convinced that the owners of stores or those who run them need to take care of every small issue that crosses the jewelry counter.

FOCUS ON SALES



It's obvious to focus on sales, but I'm shocked at how seldom it happens. Jewelers wait to see someone walk into the store instead of doing something to get them into the store. And amazingly, there is often no one to greet the person when the customer does walk in. Even Home Depot has someone greet you at the door.

HOW TO MEASURE YOUR PROGRESS AND STAY UP



Measure your progress by the degree to which you are engaging customers in some tangible way. It's often in the store, but it can also be by phone, through email blasts, via social media, at the country club, in a civic organization, or on a local board of directors. And even if you aren't engaging more customers, make sure that the job you do with existing clients is better than ever.

Challenges exist in every business, but the degree to which you can see progress and still have fun is a true measure of your success. So avoid the “downers” and stay focused on what keeps you “up.”



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Tantalum is Benchmark's newest contemporary metal. The metal is extremely rare and difficult to acquire. All Benchmark Tantalum is manufactured in their Tuscaloosa, Alabama facility. Tantalum is used in many electronic devices, missile guidance systems, surgical implants, supersonic aircrafts and many other cool applications. Also, your smartphone contains many components utilizing Tantalum, including the touch screen (glass) itself. Tantalum is nearly impervious to the elements.

In fine jewelry, it is very comparable to gold in its machinability and the luster that can be achieved. It is also as simple to remove as gold bands. Tantalum is a heavy, dense metal with a natural blue-gray hue. Benchmark also has a proprietary and natural "blackening" technique to give Tantalum a darker duller appearance for a rougher modern look. The dense weight of a Tantalum ring gives the added perception of greater value and durability. Benchmark through their Benchmark, Forge, and Ammara Stone collections offers a wide variety of styles and looks available in all Tantalum and Tantalum combinations including 14K gold, titanium and even meteorite.

For additional information on Benchmark's Tantalum rings call 205-345-0555 ext.1



Top Left to right: Grey Tantalum, MSRP: \$675. Tantalum, MSRP: \$675. Tantalum and titanium, MSRP: \$825.

Bottom Left to right: Tantalum and meteorite, MSRP: \$1,115. Tantalum and rose gold, MSRP: \$1,285.

Rembrandt Charms Introduces Charming Contest

Rembrandt Charms has brought back the "Story of Your Life Contest", a monthly contest that invites consumers to tell their life stories through charms. All winning entrants will use the Locate a Retailer search feature on RembrandtCharms.com to find a local jeweler. Prizes will be sent directly to the jeweler of choice to be claimed by the winners, creating a fabulous opportunity for local jewelers to make new customers and create a buzz about charms.

"Winners become charm ambassadors," states Kim Burzynski, Sales and Marketing Manager, Rembrandt Charms. "By showing their prize bracelet to family and friends, they endorse their favorite jeweler and Rembrandt Charms."

"The Story of Your Life contest has always been hugely popular among consumers and our retailers," states Eric Lux, Vice President, Rembrandt Charms. "Winners initially visit their local jeweler to claim their prizes, often purchasing the remaining charms from their story. They have now established a relationship with the jeweler and return to purchase additional charms and other items."

The contest kicked off in May, starting with "A Mother's Love" where entrants were asked to write about their mothers. One lucky winner received two sterling silver charm bracelets, each with three charms, one for themselves and one for their mom. Visit RembrandtCharms.com or call 800-828-7840 for more information on the contest and how to be listed on the website.



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Lessons from a Photog Visonary: Tips for Working with Jewelry

Jewelry photography is not for the faint of heart. It takes resilience to get the perfect photo from life to paper. Perfectionists know the painstaking truth. If you overexpose in a light box to make the background “Photoshop white” for editorial, the edges of jewelry become blurred. If you don’t, going in with the eraser tool on a background can take hours, and maneuvering around granulation and between chain links is difficult. The nature of working with metal means you have to deal with reflection, and when looking closely at a photograph, you will often see camera (i.e. the reflection of the physical camera itself), flash, or other objects in the metal. Getting one perfect image often means digitally piecing multiple images together, and cleaning them up. How can the process be made easier?

Enter Janusz Kawa. A visionary fashion photographer, his work has graced Vogue, GQ, Cosmopolitan, New York Times Magazine and Interview. Growing up in Poland dreaming of big cities, he discovered his passion when his friend asked him to join a dark room club at the age of 11, never looking back. Teaching A-Z Photography for Jewelry Designers at the New York Jewelry Design Institute (NYJDI), he shares tried and true techniques learned over the years to those looking to photograph their own collections.

NYJDI focuses on educating those in the gem and jewelry industry to get the continuous education they need to help their business grow. Jenine Lepera Izzi, Creative Director of NYJDI says, “The school is a training ground for jewelry designers looking to continuously expand their repertoire. Photographing jewelry is much more difficult than many realize, and it is a discipline that requires its own dedication of study to master. It can be an expensive endeavor to hire a photographer when starting out, so we wanted to offer a course with a leading expert that guides our students on creating high quality images of their own. For a designer, this skill is invaluable.” Dropping by the two-day intensive, Janusz shared his top five tips for photographing fine jewelry. There, student designers implemented his techniques to create their own works of art.



1. KEEP THE BACKGROUND SIMPLE.

The background should complement the piece(s) you are working with, yet not distract from the jewelry.

Very often, inexperienced photographers over prop their images by adding unnecessary distractions around the image. Keeping a simple, neutral and uniform background makes jewelry stand out. The best backgrounds are often found in nature. Consider using sand, slate stone, or tree leaves.



2. USE A MACRO LENS ON YOUR CAMERA.

The lens should focus well from an exceptionally close proximity from the subject. Jewelry is small, therefore one needs to have macro lens to shoot close-up, so that the object can fill the frame. Most macro lenses can continue to focus while being as close as a few inches from the object.



3. USE A TRIPOD.

A tripod not only provides stability to the camera, preventing shakiness, but it also creates a quality compositional end. While shooting objects up close, composition and sharpness are critical. The use of a tripod allows the chosen composition to remain locked. The tripod grants use of longer shutter speeds, as well as smaller aperture, creating a greater depth of field and thus perfect exposure conditions.



4. USE MIRRORS TO REFLECT LIGHT, CREATING A SPARKLY EFFECT ON GEMSTONES.

Generally, soft diffused light is best for shooting jewelry, but sometimes one needs to add sparkle to a gemstone, such as a diamond. In order for a gemstone to not appear dull, reflecting a hard light from a small mirror can create a sparkling effect that illuminates the subject.



5. USE RETOUCHING SOFTWARE, SUCH AS PHOTOSHOP OR LIGHTROOM, TO ENHANCE THE FINAL PHOTOGRAPH.

No matter how perfect the actual shot is, and because we are shooting the objects at a very close range, any minor scratch or piece of dust will be visible in the final image. Imperfections must be retouched out with the use of software. Furthermore, most jewelry has to be suspended from nylon wires, or supported by pins, to keep the piece in place. Those objects have to be taken out of the final image as well. At times, adjusting the color and contrast to select parts of the image creates an overall aesthetically pleasing photograph as well. For Janusz Kawa, photography is an all-encompassing harmonization of conception, preparation and execution. Working with the New York Jewelry Design Institute (www.nyjdi.com), in a limited class size environment allows for one-on-one work both behind the camera, and with coaching for advanced retouching software, setting the standard for professional results. For those looking to experiment with an in-house studio, his photography tips are a great place to start, and for in-person guidance, look out for his upcoming courses at the school for this fall and next spring. Happy experimenting!

Quotes from students

“I loved being about to mix jewelry and photography in one class. Well-photographed jewelry takes the art to a whole new level, and it was amazing to be able to see how professionals produce such beautiful photos.” -Lim Jamison



Olga González

The CEO/Founder of Pietra PR. She currently serves as President of PRSA-NY, the New York Chapter for the largest trade association in Public Relations, and is the Networking Director for the Women's Jewelry Association New York Metro Chapter Board. She is also a member Gemmological Association of Great Britain (Gem-A) and the New York Mineralogical Club. Olga can be reached at olga@pietrapr.com



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Lessons from a Photog Visionary: Tips for Working with Jewelry

Images Taken by Lin Jamison

All of the images taken are of her own designs, and the images are labeled. <http://www.linjamison.com/>



Emerald Ring by Lin Jamison



Morganite Ring by Lin Jamison



photo: Lin Jamison

Tanzanite Earrings by Lin Jamison

Images Taken by Sidney Hollingsworth

All photos feature pearl necklaces from Hibiscus Imports, her family's jewelry company. She has titled each file to indicate which is which – one photo features a Tahitian salt-water pearl necklace and the other two photos features a pink fresh water baroque pearl necklace.



Freshwater Baroque Pearl Necklace by Hibiscus Imports



Freshwater Baroque Pearl Necklace by Hibiscus Imports



Tahitian Saltwater Pearl Necklace by Hibiscus Imports

"With the rise of social media and e-commerce, professional product photography is of ever increasing importance to jewelry retailers. NYJDI's A-Z Photography Class was a cost-effective means to help my family's jewelry business take our online presence to the next level by teaching me how to take professional photos, instead of hiring an outside photographer." -Sidney Hollingsworth

Janusz Kawa, showing Kimberly de Geer how to photograph and adjust camera settings when using a lightbox.

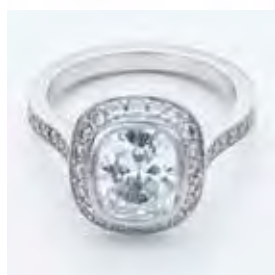
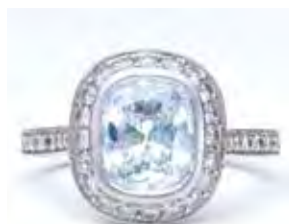


Photo: Janusz Kawa



Photo: Jenine Lepera Izzi

Images Taken by Kimberly de Geer



Labradorite Necklace with Tassel



Estate Pendant with Seed Pearls and Emeralds



Diamond engagement ring

photo: Kimberly de Geer

"Photography from A-Z was one of the best crash courses I've had the pleasure of attending. Janusz managed to teach us so much information and tricks in just two days that I feel like I have the tools to progress on my own now. Jenine as always is such a pleasure to see, and I just love the NYJDI. I've attended a couple of other classes, and try to join their workshops as often as I can!" -Kimberly de Geer



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Gesswein offers the PUK4c precision welder - a compact and versatile TIG impulse welder. Fine and minute welds are carried out under a 10x welding microscope (SM03 Microscope). Very close to laser welding, the PUK4c allows the exact positioning of small, stable spot-welds or welds in hard-to-get-to or deep lying positions. In contrast to soldering, the area of the work piece affected by heat is very small. So small in fact, that problem free welds adjacent to precious stones or pearls can be handled with ease.

The PUK4c precision welder puts a whole host of possible jewelry production applications at your fingertips. Structures made from sheet or wire elements can be just as easily done as tack welds and repairs to jewelry parts. Restoring missing parts or filling of pores by applying welding wire are only a few further examples of the PUK4c's versatility. All metals or alloys which can be TIG or Laser welded, (many precious metal alloys, many non-ferrous metals such as copper and tin alloys, many steels, titanium and aluminum alloys, etc.) are suitable for use. Using the "tack welding" function, workpieces made of suitable metals can be temporarily attached to each other. 3 Year Warranty. Made in Germany

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- Set (10) Electrodes With Sharpener
- Fiberglass Brush
- Alligator Clip With Wire

For more information call Gesswein at 888-296-8803.



Leo Wolleman Relocates

The Stonehouse of Leo Wolleman, Inc. relocated their US headquarters to Mount Vernon, NY "Our new facility affords us the opportunity to reimagine our Stonehouse and to focus on what we do best, provide the trade with the finest in calibrated quartz and topaz stones. We look forward to our move to Mount Vernon." Says president, Todd Wolleman. All email addresses and phone numbers will remain the same. The new address is: 31 South Street, Suite 4-N-3, Mount Vernon, NY 10550.

Gemological Science International Bring International Standards to India

Gemological Science International, one of the world largest gemological organizations, will participate in the 2nd edition of Diamond Detection Expo & Symposium, a two-day event which aims to provide a platform for companies offering machines, expertise & equipment for the detection of synthetic diamonds.

Gemological Science International laboratory department was the first to bring innovating methods of the batch-testing for star and melee- sized diamonds to Surat. Gemological Science International, in the past, has taken active steps to impart industry knowledge on detection of synthetic diamonds by conducting seminars led by its expert research and development team.

At this premium industry platform, GSI is proud to announce that its services in Surat office moved to its new bigger facility and is offering grading, testing and detection services like diamond jewelry random origin testing, comprehensive origin testing, jewelry screening, loose diamond testing, loose diamond screening, melee and star batch origin testing and screening, diamond jewelry treatment testing and its unique MobiLab service for on-site diamond origin screening and diamond jewelry screening. Therefore, it has grown to become one of the largest gemological entities in the world with offices spanning four continents

For More Information contact:

Priti Dubey, priti.dubey@gemscience.net.



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model photography by Liam Alexandre



Minuet suite



Moon Dance earrings



Hula earrings



Tango bracelet



Jitterbug bracelet

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The Value of Small Investments - Moving from Drab to Fab

In retail, your storefront is like a smile. It greets people and invites everyone on the street or driving by to stop, come inside and shop.

A successful storefront achieves four things:

- It communicates your store's personality
- It tells people what you sell
- It provides a 24-hour brand icon—just like your smile
- It provokes action, inviting people to come inside and shop

If you're a destination location, you need a bolder, more dramatic storefront to encourage motorists to pull over and come in to see what you're selling. As a billboard, your storefront operates 24 hours a day, advertising your presence on the street. You can't avoid spending money when you redo your storefront but there's no reason you must break the bank.

Here's how to start the process. Assess what you've got by asking yourself:

- What do you like about it?
- What would you like to change?
- When was the last time it was refreshed and changed?

- What does it tell you about your store and merchandise?
- Is it surprising? Exciting? Eye-catching?
- Does it bring in fresh air and daylight?

The answer to the last question will tell you something about how up-to-date your storefront is. Downtown stores built in the fifties and sixties tend to have three- or four- foot windows, with a closed base, like two eyes in a face. In other words, they have a minimum of glass and they let in little, if any light.

This has two disadvantages:

- It's not friendly. Larger windows let the staff see out; they let passersby see in. This helps overcome the threshold barrier, which often keeps people from entering a store.
- It doesn't let in any daylight. Studies have shown that daylight invigorates and cheers us up naturally. It makes us more productive, always good for the bottom line.

Dan Levinson at Ellis Jewelers says, "The extension of our windows has lifted staff morale. We all like it because we can see a lot more on the street and it's opened-up the store. Light comes in and it's a lot more open feeling. Customers notice it too."



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The Value of Small Investments - Moving from Drab to Fab

"By pushing drywall and windows around a bit, we have gained more space and the openness is great. I've really noticed it at our guys' night and ladies' night, when we need the room for the crowds of people who come to our events. Plus, on either side of the foyer and entrance, we have beautiful glass boxes on pedestals up against each window pane which allows us to tell four merchandising stories, one in each window."

That's another benefit to giving your storefront such a facelift: it creates good community feeling. Dan Levinson can vouch for that advantage. "When we redid the front of our store, GRID/3 suggested something small and surprising—a rich purple awning. It's made all the difference to us. When people stop to say hello and thanks, they always comment on the purple awning. We stand out as distinctive, even though we fit right into the community."

Own the look that you create. When you're bringing attention to your store with an updated storefront, make sure that your store logo is large enough and well enough lit to be clearly seen as part of your new look.

One of the considerations in changing the storefront is your budget. This will help you choose the materials. Materials like stucco, stacked stone and large ceramic tiles are popular these days. By repeating the use of the material inside your store in a fireplace or an accent wall, you develop your store's distinct branding.

Another trend is toward recycled surfaces like reclaimed barn boards or weathered copper. A word of advice: buy quality materials. Once you make the decision to change your storefront, have it done properly. Don't let poor quality materials or workmanship compromise your renovations.

Painting the exterior and/or interior of your store is another way to update and refresh the look of your store without breaking the bank. When choosing new colors to repaint your store, do research. Learn about the upcoming color trends at www.swstir.com - Sherwin William's website has many ideas and pictures to show you some of the newly developed hues and types of paint. Online research is interesting and packed with information. Check out www.benjaminmoore.com for color stories and ideas. The deep purple grey called Shadow is their 2017 color.

Check out fashion magazines, automobile publications and TV shows to see what's happening in the visual world. What colors are people wearing and choosing as part of their daily lives to inspire and create their personality?

The technology of paint manufacture has changed radically to keep apace with the environmental movement. Today, you can paint your store in the evening and open the next day without worrying about off-gassing.

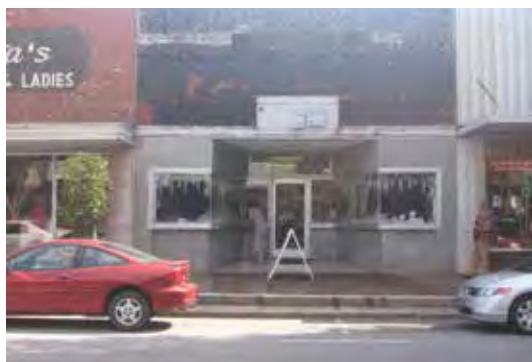
The key: use low VOC paints. These paints contain a low or non-existent percentage of volatile organic compounds and don't give off an odor as they dry. Nor is durability an issue. Environmentalism has gone beyond hype to provide green solutions that don't compromise durability, expense or color palette.

Benjamin Moore's AURA and Sherwin Williams' EMERALD paints are two low VOC brand names. We used AURA in our offices and I can vouch for their lack of odor. The morning after the walls were done, we moved in with no problems. Because these paints are stronger, they require fewer coats to give you the finish you want.

The relationships between the colors you use make a place beautiful. It's not just the color of the walls but the way the color or colors relate to your flooring, showcases and your merchandise display and signage. If you choose to repaint your store, consider the store in its entirety; every color chosen should relate to every other color in the store. When colors sit side by side in a space, you want them to create a sense of harmony. Attention to detail, including the relationships of color, is the essence of good design.

As paint technology has changed and become more available don't forget some of the more interesting accent paint types, like chalkboard paint, metallic glazes or Scuffmaster.

Despite the proliferation of online shopping, bricks and mortar continue to offer a fantastic experience, which many of us find invigorating, a wonderful way to spend time with family and friends. Refresh your store with a new storefront or a new coat of paint. Those who have taken the plunge, benefited when they moved from drab to fab.



Ruth Mellergaard

Ruth Mellergaard, BID, CID is a principal with GRID/3 International, Inc., an interior design firm that specializes in designing stores, particularly jewelry stores, including stores with Rolex boutiques.

Talk with Ruth at the JCK Show, booth #B66072, Essentials Pavilion.

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Lower Platform:

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Height from floor to top of work platform is 43¹/₂" at the highest setting and 30¹/₂" at the lowest setting.

Canadiana-inspired Men's Wedding Band Collection

It's bridal season and there's an abundance of engagement ring and wedding band styles to suit the taste of brides everywhere. But what about the grooms-to-be? Men's wedding bands seem almost an afterthought amid the excitement of preparations for the big day, which is why the Seasons Collection by Shelly Purdy for Maple Leaf Diamonds™ is putting the spotlight on gents with its line of Canadiana-inspired rings.

From depictions of the sturdy maple tree to a soothing rippling stream, this new line of men's wedding bands celebrates experiences and textures inspired by life in Canada. Crafted from 14K Canadian Certified Gold, each ring features a Canadian Maple Leaf Diamond either on the top of the band or inside it, reinforcing the Canadian theme and literally incorporating a part of Canada into each piece. The collection is also timely as it coincides with Canada's 150th anniversary of Confederation.

The Seasons Collection can be seen online at www.shellypurdy.com and is available at select Maple Leaf Diamonds™ retailers across North America and the United Kingdom.



Select Jewelry Shows Announce 2017 Dates

The Select Jewelry Show was created in 2010 to enable jewelry retailers to comfortably network and create lasting relationships with nationally recognized fine jewelry designers, manufacturers, and suppliers in an elegant, manageable setting.

The genesis of Select was to address some of the timing and venue issues associated with the big national shows. Specifically, the challenges retailers have of forecasting in June what will sell in November and the time and expense of going to shows are satisfied by the Select show.

The Select Show exhibitor base consists of 55-65 well-regarded jewelry manufacturers. With little overlap in categories they represent the cutting edge in fashion, bridal, and all categories a retail jeweler needs to achieve success.

For 2017, the dates are September 10-11 at the Ritz Carlton in Dallas, TX and September 17-18 the Foxwoods in Connecticut.

Qualified retailers receive complimentary hotel accommodations. Complimentary breakfast and lunch are available to all attendees. For more information, list of exhibitors and to register for the show of your choice visit www.SelectJewelryShow.com

About Select Jewelry Shows

The Select Jewelry Show was founded in 2010 by jewelry manufacturers Joe Carullo and Bryan Cohen. Having participated in many jewelry shows throughout their careers, Joe, from KC Designs and Bryan, from Timeless Fine Jewelry witnessed the decline of the effectiveness of jewelry shows as they became bigger, less personal, and more expensive.

Together they set out to create an experience where fine jewelry retailers could meet with their suppliers in an elegant, comfortable, and manageable show operated by people who understand the challenges of the industry from the inside.

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



Bespoke Lighting Specialists Parify to Launch in the US

Co-owners Andy Twigg and Scot Walker, founded the business back in 2013, when they discovered a huge gap in the market where LED lighting was concerned. They also found a number of issues that jewelers were having with their lighting systems, so they set out to find the solution. Pictured below are two of their top sellers Cerebra and Diamond Sparkle.

The initial dream, which has now become a reality, was to create a British company that design and manufacture bespoke lighting, meeting the needs of the jewelry and retail sector. Parify is proud to say that all their products are British innovated and British engineered from their factory / office in Leicestershire.

The Parify team now supply to over 1,000 jewelers in the UK which gives them a great platform to take their business to the USA. Through their close relationships with jewelry stores, Andy and Scot have witnessed many success stories where their lighting has had a positive impact on jewelers' sales almost overnight. For more information visit www.parify.co.uk



Amoro's Exclusive Eternitymark® Diamond

With its exclusive Eternitymark® Diamond, Amoro Fine Jewelry raises the bar in diamond selection with its independently certified and branded, brilliant round and princess cut diamonds allowing jewelers to confidently present a most beautiful diamond at an exceptional value.

Relying on more than 40 years of experience in the jewelry industry, the creators Amoro have set the standard for

selecting diamonds that meet the specifications required to be an Eternitymark® Diamond. In fact, less than 1% of the world's diamonds meet those quality standards.

When hand selecting the gems, Amoro's expert gemologists look far beyond the familiar Four C's of diamond grading. While a diamond's color and clarity attributes are very important, it's the perfect alignment of the the Ideal Cut that gives Amoro's Eternitymark® Diamonds the sparkle and flash of brilliant light that makes diamonds exceptional.

Eternitymark® Diamonds are sourced from ecologically aware mines and are responsibly cut and handled. Each is independently certified and engraved with a unique number, and each diamond comes with a certificate of authenticity that it has met Amoro's standards of Ideal Cut, G/H color and VS2/VS1/VS2 clarity.

For jewelry retailers looking to confidently offer beautifully crafted diamonds at an exceptional value, Amoro offers Eternitymark® Diamond rings, pendants and earrings that range in price from \$500 to \$17,995 MSRP.

For more information, please call Amoro at: 877-772-6676



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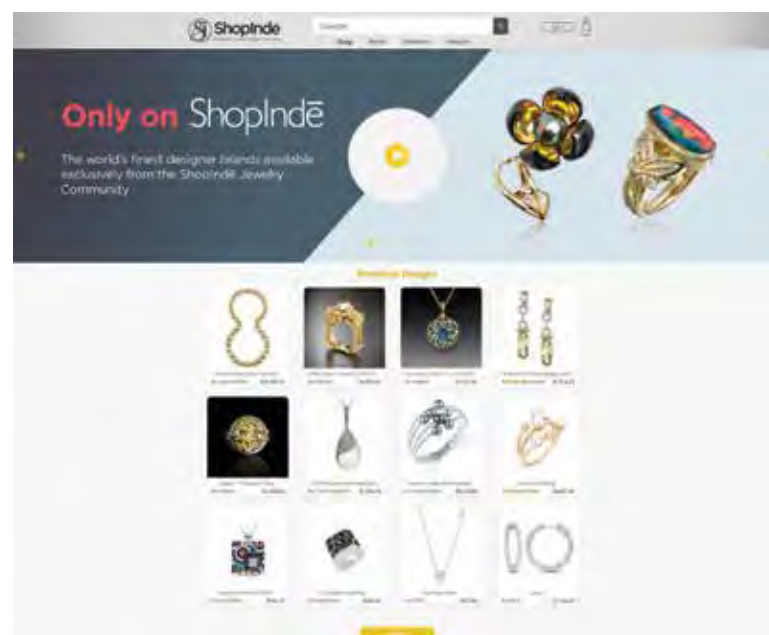
ShopIndé, the First Cloud-Based e-Commerce Platform Exclusively Designed for Retail Jewelers

Jewelers may be able to talk our way through the intricacies of diamond grading reports, an emerald's provenance or the benefits of rhodium plating on sterling silver, but when it comes to competing with online jewelry marketers, that's where the brick and mortar industry sometimes slows to a crawl. The majority of retail jewelers just don't have the technical knowledge or budget to sell online.

Welcome ShopIndé.com, the first cloud-based e-commerce platform designed exclusively for the retail jewelry industry. The site, which invites retail jewelers to create their own store site and do business with a variety of established vendors with the click of a mouse.

To date, participating vendors currently online for business include Belle Étoile, Conni Mainne, Galatea: Jewelry by Artist, Imperial Pearl, Mia Katrin, Somos Creations, Color Merchants and VEER. Ancora, Carla Collection, Chatham, Dallas Prince Designs, Dizeo, Ed Levin Designs, Frederic Duclos, NancyB, Nina Nguyen Designs, Parlé and Yael Designs have committed and will be online soon.

Developed by Chi Huynh, owner of Galatea: Jewelry by Artist, ShopIndé is designed to take back online sales for both suppliers and retailers. With ecommerce growing at an exponential rate, jewelers are being left behind as only an estimated 15% are selling online, eclipsed by mega-sellers like Amazon and Blue Nile. ShopIndé offers a free, customizable web store at the click of a mouse.



ShopIndé simplifies the process of creating an online store by linking suppliers and their products directly with retailers. Retailers select product from a community of wholesalers by a simple request. A wholesaler is free to select its own regulations for what constitutes an authorized retailer, such as requiring a certain amount of instore product. But as soon as the wholesaler hits "accept," the retailer's selected inventory immediately populates the store. Retailers are protected by zip code (one store per), and all consumer sales are commissionable for the area. A key social media component also allows consumers to reap a commission from posting products, incentivizing the promotion process and creating avid jewelry fans in the process.

"Jewelers are in dire need of a solution," says Huynh, who has spent the last year creating the platform with a Philadelphia, PA-based site development team. "Things are changing in our industry more quickly than anyone expected, which is why I believe ShopIndé is the solution for today's jewelers who want to have an online presence but either don't know how to go about= doing it, or can't spend the money needed to create a store from scratch."

Membership is always free for retailers and suppliers. The retailer's customizable page can be promoted as its own URL, by a badge on the jeweler's home page, or through the ShopIndé site. Jewelers can track orders, answer questions and check on customer deliveries, which are either shipped directly by ShopIndé to the customer or delivered to the store for personal pick-up.

Getting "Paid2Post"

There are four ways for consumers to enter into the ShopIndé system: Through the retailer's store; through the wholesaler or supplier's store; through the ShopIndé website; through an individual's social media site. Payments are split between the jewelry manufacturer, retailer and ShopIndé. Full wholesale value of the jewelry is paid to the supplier. A 20% commission is paid to Paid2Post. The remaining profit goes to the retailer. If a jeweler is not assigned to customer's zip code, the supplier may assign a retailer to access the commission or may keep the commission for themselves.

ShopIndé manages all orders and online payments. Returns are accepted within 30 days of shipment receipt.

One of ShopIndé's most unique features actually allows consumers to reap a commission should their online image post result in a sale. Special embedded product images,



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New and Noteworthy

available for download from the ShopIndé website, can be shared and tracked on Facebook, Instagram, Pinterest and Tumblr. This unique photo-sharing system gives an incentive to anyone who wants to earn extra money from the sale of a piece of jewelry. Commissions to individuals will be 10% of the selling price.

ShopIndé is designed to raise online and offline visibility for retailers, since so much of the true value of a bricks-and-mortar store is in its service and relationships with its customers.

"The world is changing and the jewelry industry must change along with it," says Huynh. "We can't sit by and see sales slip away, hoping that it will stop. It won't. Consumers are buying online now more than ever. This is a way for the industry to join together to have a piece of the online 'pie' for ourselves."

Whether you're a retailer who wants a ShopIndé store, a manufacturer or designer who wants to offer their products via ShopIndé, contact Chi Huynh directly at 951-202-1227.

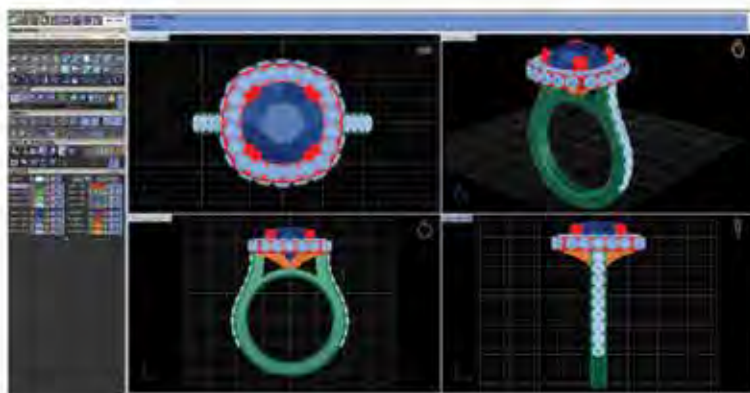
Foredom Mobile Work Station

Foredom's Mobile Work Station from Gesswein is a unique and versatile solution for small crowded labs, studios and other work spaces. Its tower construction, with built-in electrical outlets, allows users to stack multiple powered devices that would overwhelm most work surfaces or benches.

The Station has a motorized lift that adjusts the top platform up and down to work sitting or standing. Its heavy duty casters provide ease of transport for shared use wherever needed. Use this convenient portable work station in conjunction with Foredom's Lighted Chamber (850-0645), Foredom's Dust Collector (854-2200), the Handy 700 (510-2920, 2925), Marathon (510-2946, 2956), or any Flex Shaft.

The Mobile Work Station brings together combinations of Foredom and other power equipment in a footprint of only (16" x 22" x 43-1/2"). The only requirement is to be within 6 feet of an electrical outlet for powering up the unit and its 3-plug power strip. The unit comes assembled (except for the middle

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shelf). The front pivoting kickstand enhances stability for safely managing different pieces of equipment. Its 3-tier design gives you multiple options for arranging your equipment. Top and Bottom Platforms, Middle Shelf and Extension Trays have a 1/4" lip to help secure tools:

- Top Work Platform: 14-3/8" square. It features extension trays that swing out to hold workpieces and other small objects. Each extension tray is 8" x 4-1/4".
- Middle Shelf: 12-1/4" x 12-5/8". It comes with a removable yoke for mounting a flexible shaft motor. With the yoke removed, the shelf is great for holding micromotors and other equipment.
- Lower Platform: 15-5/8" x 9-3/4" tray for tools and storage. When removed, it reveals holes designed for securely mounting Foredom's Dust Collector (854-2200) with its casters off.

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Contact the JSA now at www.jewelerssecurity.org



STOP CRIMES AGAINST JEWELERS

Lighting4Diamonds Launches Two New Services

Lighting4Diamonds, the lighting solution experts for the jewelry industry, is excited to announce the launch of two new brand services. Along with the current lighting services, custom showcase creation and in-store design planning will now be offered. These additions make it easy for retailers to successfully design a store that is true to their brand.

This expansion is a natural fit for the company. Lighting4Diamonds partner Jorge Pascual, who joined the company in 2012, has extensive experience in custom showcase manufacturing. He has also worked with top industry companies to create custom retail stores that precisely represented their brands.

Pascual and fellow partner Vijay Paul felt it was the right time to grow Lighting4Diamonds.

"With Jorge's industry background, we believe these are obvious additions to our brand," states Mr. Paul. "We are delighted to offer our customers affordable, customized showcases made in the USA, and help them design their ideal store."

To introduce these new services, Lighting4Diamonds worked with their marketing agency to update their logo and craft a tagline that would better reflect the company brand.

Lighting4Diamonds is inviting everyone to visit them during JCK Las Vegas, at their booth—B63049—in the Essentials and Tech Pavilion. The first 100 appointments will receive a free triplet jeweler's loupe, and all customers will be offered a free consultation or call 855-326-6645.



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Create New Possibilities With Jewelers Mutual's Holojem™ Platform

The "Think Tank" at the JCK show is a bit like the ABC Show "Shark Tank", except technology vendors square off to pitch innovative products or services for the industry to a panel of respected jewelers. Last year, Jewelers Mutual competed in the "Think Tank" and won first prize with its Holojem platform. The Holojem platform is a system that allows customers to interact with three-dimensional jewelry images through an augmented reality platform in a self-contained unit that displays, educates and shares custom designs through its proprietary rendering system.

To operate the platform, all you need is an Internet connection. After purchasing the unit, a monthly subscription package ensures you are well supported and have everything you need to be successful with the technology. Fresh content will be added to the Holojem platform each month to keep customers engaged as well as intrigued. There are three key reasons the platform is a game-changer for your business:

It can help drive higher margins

Custom design work is more profitable. Go beyond the back-and-forth of a computer screen and become more nimble with a self-service kiosk to share unique creations.

It immerses customers in the design process

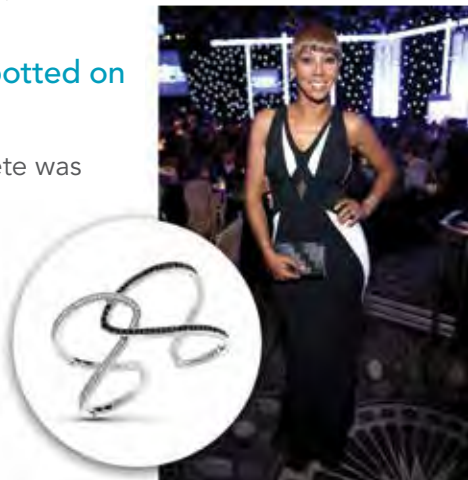
Shoppers actually become a part of the experience and as a result they have the opportunity to learn. This helps develop trust and loyalty, as customers will better understand what is involved in creating a piece.

Social sharing

Lead information is captured when a jewelry shopper uses the Holojem platform. Your store name is shared whenever your customers share their creation with friends on social media. And, it's more than a picture or plain video. Customers can recreate a similar 3D holographic projection by placing a portable mobile pyramid on top of their device to bring their creation to life and share to their hearts' content. The Holojem platform can be seen at the Las Vegas show, booth #B61086 or visit www.Holojem.com.

Belle Étoile Jewelry Spotted on Holly Robinson Peete

Actor, Holly Robinson Peete was spotted wearing Duet by Belle Étoile while attending the JDRF LA Chapter's Imagine Gala at The Beverly Hilton Hotel in April.



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De Beers Supports Artisanal Miners With New Grant To DDI

The Diamond Development Initiative is pleased to recognize another significant contribution from the De Beers Group of Companies in support of efforts to promote responsible production and improve the lives and conditions of artisanal diamond miners and their families.

According to Dorothée Gizenga, Executive Director of DDI, ongoing funding from De Beers enables DDI to ensure the sustainability of its programming. "Our objective is to contribute to the formalization of the artisanal and small-scale diamond sector," she said. "This does not happen overnight, or in a month or a year. Faithful partners like De Beers make it possible for us to take the long term view."

Feriel Zerouki, Head of Government and Industry Relations, De Beers Group, said: "Through our relationship with DDI we have the opportunity to support artisanal diamond diggers and their communities and to contribute to improvements in the sector. Any benefit to artisanal miners is a benefit to all of us."

DDI's programs in favor of artisanal diamond miners include miner registration, mining cooperatives, Maendeleo Diamond Standards for miner's rights and responsible production, mobile schooling in mining communities and professional development for miners. The De Beers Group has been supporting the work of DDI since 2008.

Stuller Announces 2017 Bridge® Event Dates

Five events aim to increase retailer profitability

Bridge, a dynamic three-day conference offering business insights, networking opportunities, and much more will soon kick off its eighth season at Stuller's global headquarters.

The new informative and interactive classes dive deep into issues such as understanding industry trends, business planning essentials, inventory management, customer experience, customization technology and branding and marketing.

"We created the Bridge conference to help our customers grow as jewelers, as store owners, and colleagues," says Taylor Burgess, executive director of customer experience. "Bridge offers a chance for jewelers to learn from Stuller experts as well as one another, and to move the jewelry industry forward, together."

"Bridge was extremely informative," says Ken Alecia with Jess

New and Noteworthy

Jewelers in Brandon, FL. "You can go to shows, you can go to different seminars, but this is something completely different. You are here with the people who are trying to help your business succeed so they're really interested in helping you, not just selling you."

The 2017 Bridge event schedule is as follows:

- June 25th-27th
- July 16th-18th
- August 20th-22nd
- September 10th- 12th
- October 15th-17th

For more information on Bridge or to receive a call, visit Stuller.com/Bridge

KeepMe Ring Keeper

Englishman Tom Blake has developed a fun new product to prevent lost rings. The product is called Keep Me! keepers and is a collection of 5 ring holders - designed to hold rings securely and be practical enough to have anywhere around the home, at work, or while traveling.

The MSRP is \$9 for a single keeper. \$30 for a 5 pack (all 5 characters) \$80 wholesale for a retail pack of 25 keepers (5 of each character in all 5 colors) \$125 wholesale for a retail pack of 50 keepers (2 x 25 pack). There are volume discounts available.

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Columbia Gem House and Sapphires of Montana Unite

Representatives from Columbia Gem House and Sapphires of Montana announced the two companies have united resulting in "Sapphires of Montana by Columbia Gem House".

Columbia Gem House is the industry leader in Fair Trade and responsibly sourced gemstones with mine to market traceability, and is the largest supplier of gemstones mined in America. A vertically integrated company, Columbia Gem House also provides heating, cutting and US jewelry manufacturing to customers worldwide. Sapphires of Montana's expertise lies in the branding, marketing and sale of Rock Creek Montana Sapphires. The merger has come about to increase the production and availability of Montana Sapphires under the successful brand, "Sapphires of Montana".

Columbia Gem House, a family business founded by Eric Braunwart 40 years ago, is known as the largest supplier of brand name gemstones. For the past 15 years, the company has focused on producing Fair Trade gems with a transparent supply chain from mine to market. Of the merger Eric said, "It's a natural fit to bring in additional strength in sapphires of a Montana origin in a market that is growing almost faster than we can keep up."

Sapphires of Montana, owned and operated by women, was founded by Lisa Brooks-Pike and Margo Bedman in 2012. After a successful sell-out show on QVC the company expanded its focus to supporting a clientele of young up-and-coming millennial and established independent designers. "Since Sapphires of Montana was modeled on the Fair Trade, mine to market principles of Columbia Gem House, uniting the brands is a positive next step," says Lisa. "Our business ethics and ideals are alignmened," says Margo, adding, "Merging the Sapphires of Montana brand with Columbia Gem House allows us to provide a sustainable supply of Montana sapphires to the industry."

In conjunction with the merger, Lisa Brooks-Pike, co-owner and VP of Sales and Marketing for Sapphires of Montana will continue with Columbia Gem House as Marketing Director. Clients are assured the same high level of customer service along with a larger selection and long term consistent supply of Montana Sapphires.

For more information call Lisa Brooks-Pike at 425-290-3063.



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The Souverän® M800 Renaissance Brown special edition was designed with a completely new color combination: Extraordinary, pearl-like ribbons of color in the brown, acrylic material reveal fine nuances of light and shadow. This aesthetically pleasing juxtaposition symbolizes a typical characteristic of Renaissance painting, making it an homage to the masterpieces painted by the period's greatest artists.

The rings and clip are elegantly decorated with 24K gold. The two-tone, 18K gold nib is available in the following nib sizes EF, F, M and B. This series also features a ballpoint pen to match this beautiful fountain pen.

These Souverän® pens are presented and shipped in an elegant gift box. Edelstein ink-of-the-year for 2017 in Smoky Quartz is recommended to further enhance the writing experience.

Pelikan founded in 1838 one of the oldest brands in Germany, www.pelikan.com.



Quality Gold Buys Luxury Giftware by Jere

Based in Marietta, Georgia, Luxury Giftware by Jere is known for their heirloom quality jewelry boxes, and extensive assortment of bejeweled trinket boxes, as well as Damascus steel blade knives featured within their Luxury Knives collection. Every design is handcrafted with precision, creating exceptional giftware for the retail industry.

Michael Langhammer, CEO Quality Gold, says, "Jere has a loyal retailer base that benefits from his assortment of high quality giftware. I have a tremendous amount of respect for the business Jere has built. He has kept current with trends in the gift industry and he has adjusted his line to meet the needs of his customers. He listens to his customers and develops product they want to display in their stores."

Jere Wright will continue in a sales and product development role. You will still see Jere at the shows and he'll be available to answer specific questions or help develop a custom bejeweled item. Jere will be part of the transition team that leads the company in the expansion and introduction of designs for Luxury Giftware in the coming year. All strengths possessed will be integrated and then built upon as this change in ownership.

Michael goes on to say, "Jere has been the lifeblood of his company for years. He knows the best-selling styles and has a tremendous relationship with his supply channels. His knowledge will benefit Quality Gold as we continue to grow our gift business. We welcome Jere Wright to the Quality Gold family and look forward to working with him for years to come." For more information visit www.qualitygold.com

Rembrandt Charms Personnel Updates

Rembrandt Charms Ltd. announced Michael Metzger has joined the company as COO. Michael, a US Navy Veteran, comes with tremendous experience in brand and business leadership. He spent 20 years at Nikon, developing solid strategic planning skills on a multinational level; and additional time as President of Quality Vision Services, Inc. where he was instrumental in developing relationships with customers, strengthening company operations and improving quality in manufacturing.

"As the Chief Operating Officer," explains Eric Lux, Vice President, Rembrandt Charms, "Michael's focus will be on providing exceptional business service to our retailers, while continuing to move the brand forward, in Rembrandt Charms' commitment to being a leader in the charm industry. As the demand for the classic charm bracelet continues to increase, Michael's main objectives will be to oversee day to day operations and strategic planning."

Michael was not the only outstanding candidate that Rembrandt Charms hired for their executive team. In November, 2016, the company appointed Kimberly (Kim) Burzynski as their Sales and Marketing Manager. Kim comes with experience in retail, having spent the last eight years at New Era Cap, Inc. where she was instrumental in supporting key accounts, building relationships with customers and stakeholders, while providing top-rated marketing.





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