

THE RETAIL JEWELER™

The Jewelry Business

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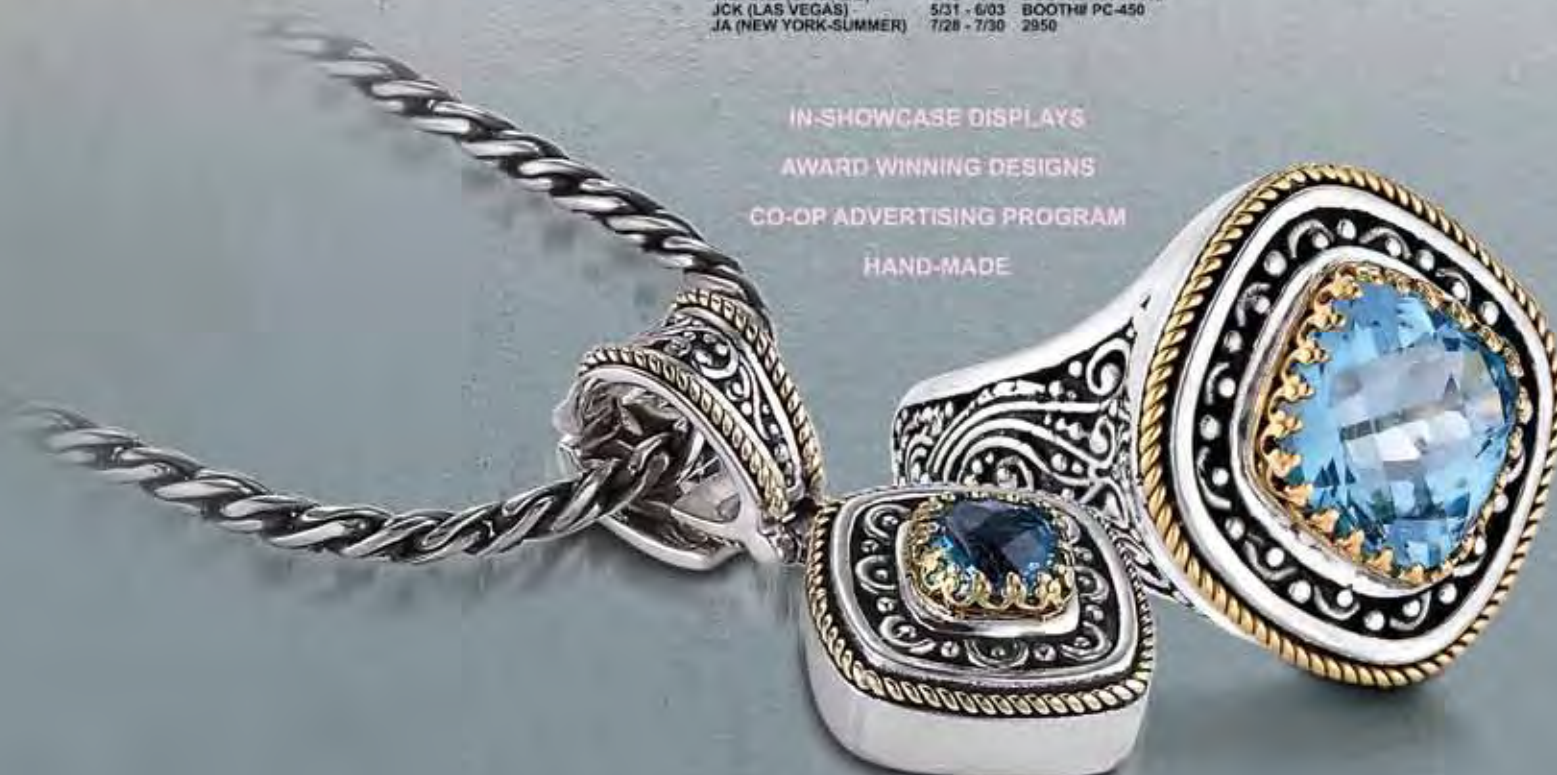
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150 River Rd., Ste O-4
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Publishers

Andrew Kohler 973-263-2498 ext 18 • andy@theretailjeweler.com

Edward Coyne 908-637-8461 • edcoyne@theretailjeweler.com

Frank Dallahan 267-229-2475 • frank@theretailjeweler.com



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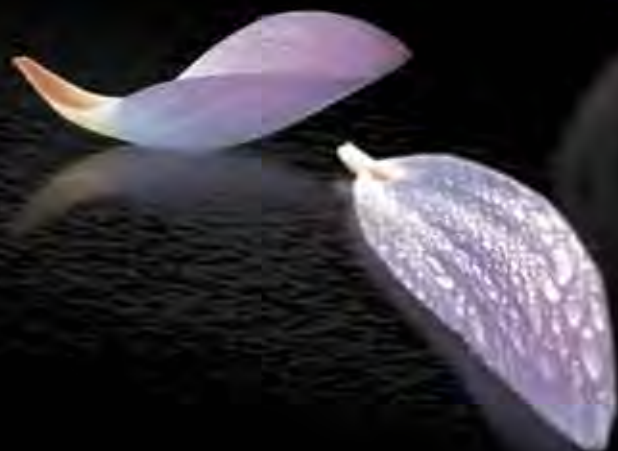
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Those Who Fail To Learn From History

By Frank Dallahan

For many years industry writers, consultants, and retailers have talked about the question of inventory turnover, reordering best sellers, and acting on getting rid of aged inventory. To no one's surprise, this conversation continues as do the various reasons or perhaps better said, excuses for ignoring and/or disagreeing with the principle.

During the past year, The Retail Jeweler has presented several articles on the topic advocating that retailers should use the concepts of aggressive inventory control. One presented the concept of the 80/20 rule. This rule holds that 80% of a jeweler's sales flow from 20% of his inventory. The 80/20 rule can be applied to many activities accurately. 80% of the money raised for political campaigns comes from 20% of the donors. 80% of the workload in any group is shouldered by 20% of its members. This would include state jewelry associations, jewelry manufacturers and suppliers, the Twenty-four Karat Clubs, and Diamond Grading Laboratories. In your own communities, you know well if you have something to get done, you go to the busiest people to get it done. It's the 20%ers that carry the business, the profitability, the workload and the success of any enterprise.

Identifying the sku's that contribute 80% of the revenues and a lion's share of the margin and profit should be a relatively easy task. Computers and computer programs from a variety of sources provide the ability to search a store's data to identify the skus and their sales history. With this information a retailer can determine the level of inventory for those items necessary to stay in stock based on the item's rate of sale.

An example of the results of this process was illustrated recently at the IJO Show in Tampa, in a conversation with Dick Abbott of The Edge. Dick related a story summarized below. The story demonstrates dramatically the effectiveness of the principle. "Putting your money where your mouth is," is an excellent way of driving a big hole in the objections to the concept.

Dick's firm, The Edge, has long promoted the importance of keeping best sellers in stock at all times. The story he told was simple and straightforward. He put together a program that placed \$31,000 at cost in inventory at a retailer's store. The deal was: the jeweler agreed to reorder weekly for the last quarter of the year. The results of the test program were released recently. The store had \$17,000 inventory of the original \$31,000 that did not sell at all. The remaining inventory, \$14,000, produced sales in excess of \$100,000!

The products making up the \$14,000, on average, turned nearly 8 times in just three months. Assuming a gross margin of 50%, this retailer generated \$50,000 in gross margin and a gross margin return on the investment of \$3.50 per dollar of inventory investment, considering only the \$14,000 piece. If you consider the entire \$31,000 as the investment, the gross margin return on investment is reduced to \$1.61 per dollar of inventory investment.

Financial analysts consider GMROI the single most important number to evaluate the effectiveness of a retail business. Bringing this concept back to the store level, GMROI reveals the effectiveness of the job a buyer is doing. It shows how good an eye he/she has for selecting new product. More importantly though, it also shows how focused the buyer is on identifying and keeping in stock the store's best sellers.

Trying to understand the objections to this basic principal of retailing is difficult. It is as though the tradition of buying twice a year has become so ingrained in the jewelry retail community it literally has become a part of the retail jeweler's DNA. What is given as a reason not to reorder a best seller is: how do I know it still is a best seller? How do I know it is not now on the downhill of the sales curve? Another reason frequently offered is: "I sold the ring/necklace/bracelet to Mrs. Smith and she would be upset if one of her friends purchased the same item. This objection is one of those objections that is seemingly passed along by word of mouth. On the face of it, there might be some credibility to it. But given serious analysis, it suggests that simple solitaires shouldn't be reordered so as not to offend a particular client. One of the more humorous answers to this objection was applied to designer clothing. Actually it was a question, do you think that Dior makes a dress style in only one size? To the contrary!

The Dick Abbott story shows clearly that the objections are really just clouded thinking. It's time to get with the program and do something to improve your inventory turn, profitability, and cash flow.

Those who fail to learn from history are condemned to repeat it!



Frank Dallahan

co-publisher of The Retail Jeweler
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PASSWORD PURGATORY

(Why You Need A Social Media Will...Right Now)

By John A. Politi



How can you blame us, I mean we're only human. There are so many more important things to think about in the here and now. Dying without even a hint as to how someone would retrieve my digital assets, I'm sure that the Maytag Repairman will come and save the day. Maybe, maybe not. Just maybe my digital assets will remain in Password Purgatory, and on my gravestone it will read, "Here Lies One Dumb Dangling Participle – He Died Without A Social Media Will." As a matter of fact, I recently polled my friends on that exact subject during our annual Super Bowl Party. "Linda" I asked, "since Charlie passed away have you given any consideration to incorporating a Social Media Will into your Estate Plans?" Now mind you, when I proffered that query I was competing against the AB Clydesdales – hands down, I lost. She was very kind to me though, and offered to pick up the conversation, if she remembered it, in the near future.

We all realize that our life portrayed in Social Media – eBay, Facebook, Twitter, Snapfish, YouTube, Amazon, Yahoo, PayPal, LinkedIn, iTunes, Tumblr, etc., and what gives us our lifeline to those sites, i.e., Usernames and Passwords, could very likely be lost forever if we perish without first drawing up the aptly named, Social Media Will. I didn't even mention your account at Vanguard, Charles Schwab or Chase Online Banking. Is this what the age of the Internet has come to? I mean, Al Gore

never shared this fact with us when he created the Internet. Trust me; it's going to be a great challenge for all of our families to deal this with this one. As I write this column, our darling Lawmakers in Washington D.C. are desperately trying to right this ship and clarify the rules governing the passage of email and social media accounts, and all else of financial value that exists in our individual digital world. Given the fact that we're going to rely on Congress to sort this out for us I say, "Good Luck." If you're fortunate, and have a Financial Advisor as your fiduciary then spring to attention when he or she poses the question – "Have you considered establishing a Digital Asset Trust?"



Let's take a closer look at what we all most likely take for granted – hey, we're all immortal, right? Personal Digital Assets would include Photographs, Video Storage, and sharing sites like Flickr and Shutterfly. Social Media Digital Assets include Facebook, email accounts, Twitter, websites and blogs. We also store an awful lot of gigabytes of personal information on websites including bank and brokerage accounts, medical records, and monthly financial statements. Let's not forget those monthly bills for loans, mortgages, credit cards, and utilities that are delivered to us via email and expected to be paid online and on time. Now realize that some of these accounts are not truly assets, but simply licenses to use a website's services. Still, somebody beside you better know how to access this information.

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PASSWORD PURGATORY

(Why You Need A Social Media Will...Right Now)

in the sky, someone with their feet on the ground will have to make some informed decisions. Leave your account open, close the account, convert the account to a memorial account – and what about your email and bills to pay? Oh the tangled web we’ve woven.....

If you want your wishes and directives to count an ounce, you might want to consider creating a Social-Media Will, as the US government is now recommending as part of its advice on Estate Planning. You’re going to need to:

- ✓ **Choose your Digital Executor**
- ✓ **Be clear and succinct on how to handle your accounts**
- ✓ **Create a reference guide**
- ✓ **Complete a digital asset trust document**
- ✓ **Meet with your Financial Advisor and Attorney – the best ones will have already addressed this with you**

Your trusted advisors will help you determine if you too should be establishing a trust, or even just an informal agreement containing information about your usernames, passwords, etc., and how you would like your accounts to be handled after you’ve departed on the 5:15. The US Government shares that “planning for the care of your online trail post-mortem presents different issues than planning for money and physical objects. In part this is because our legal regimes and social norms are less solidified in these areas, and, in part because they are actually different animals.”



While we are just beginning to learn more about this subject in the news, planning for digital assets is still very much a developing area within the law. Everyday we’re certain to see more and more cases regarding the rights of the decedent’s family and their hand picked Personal Representative come before Judge Judy. Without the proper Estate Planning all bet’s are off. This is due to the complexities inherent in this area and the lack of clarity. No doubt that the failure to properly plan may lead to unintended consequences for the decedent’s family. Unfortunately, we all know what that means – more delays and more legal expenses. We’re now at that proverbial fork in the road, and without the proper planning we may never go down that path that leads to our digital asset redemption.

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



John A. Politi, Jr

John Politi is Executive Director of the Jewelers for Veterans Foundation, a 501(c)(3) Non-Profit, dedicated to connecting US Military Veterans with training & employment in the jewelry industry – www.jewelersforveterans.org. He holds an MBA in Financial Management, MBA-Advanced Certificate in Health Care Management, Series 65 (Investment Advisor Representative), and successfully completed the required CFP® Financial Planning Educational

Program. John would enjoy receiving your feedback and/or questions in regard to your Financial Planning activities, especially, Defined Contribution Programs (401K), 403b, 457, and Pre/Post Retirement Planning – both personal and business. He enjoys active membership with the Financial Planning Association-Greater Hudson Valley, NY, serving on their Pro Bono Committee, as well being a member of ACHE, Healthcare Leaders of NY Chapter, and the 24KT Club of New York. John welcomes your input and can be contacted at, john.politi@verizon.net, or telephone 212.600.2475.



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Cinderella, Glass Slippers, Dreams and Diamond Engagement Rings

By Tim Ell

Jewelry stores have different types of customers. Each type has a different need and thus a different reason to visit your store. Think about how many different types of customers will visit your store this week. Some are there for a repair. Others are there for a special occasion gift for a birthday or an anniversary. In addition, if you're running a sale or event you may see customers who have come in seeking savings, or a "deal". The list can go on and on. Each type of customer has a unique want or need that brings them to your store. In this article, I am going to talk about the highly prized Diamond Bridal Customer.

Unlike most other types of customers, the diamond bridal customer doesn't come in to make a business transaction; they come in... to make a dream come true. The diamond bridal customer is unlike all other types of customers that will visit your store. That's because the diamond bridal customer isn't value driven. They are DREAM driven. They don't necessarily buy where the biggest value is, they buy where and when they find the "Glass Slipper". The jewelry store where they buy from is the one that gives them the fairy tale moment that the bride has always dreamed of. I call it the Glass Slipper Experience.

In Disney's 1950's classic, Cinderella, there was a young lady with a life absent of glamour or adventure. She lived out the ultimate dream of having Prince Charming choose her over all others to be his bride. This story points out that "a dream is a wish your heart makes" and the fairytale ends with the prince sliding the glass slipper onto Cinderella's foot. Soon after, wedding bells ring and they live happily ever after.



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Cinderella, Glass Slippers, Dreams and Diamond Engagement Rings

It is a fairytale but it is also a real dream of many little girls everywhere. So, if you want to be in the diamond bridal business, if you want your store to be THE bridal store in your area, you need to be in the shoe business. You need to be the store that gives those customers the "Glass Slipper Experience."

When you give your bridal customers that experience, and that feeling, then the engagement and wedding rings on her finger will come from your store and you have just become their jeweler.

If no store in the area gives them that experience, then, those customers will buy based on value. With a bridal customer, you don't have to be the cheapest to get the sale. You need to be the place that gives the fairytale experience. Because bridal customers don't want Wal-Mart, they want WOW!

Your job is not to make the moment she's been dreaming about cheaper... your job is to provide him with the glass slipper she's been waiting to try on since she was a little girl. In order to do that you need to reach for the magic wand not a calculator. That experience, and that feeling can't be produced with a discount. It can only be made with your commitment to provide an atmosphere of excitement and wonder.

The bridal side of your showroom shouldn't look like the rest of your store. Incorporate elements that embrace the moment. For instance, network with a local bridal gown shop and have a new gown on display at all times, have a local wedding photographer display framed samples of some of their best work, have a local cake designer give you photos of their best work and sprinkle the grand wedding cake photos in the case along with the jewelry. Buy a scent machine and have your entire showroom smell like a rose garden, there are even scents created to smell like wedding cake! Decorate your cases with bow ties, and cake toppers, perhaps even a glass slipper or two.

But the décor of your store is just part of the experience. Create events that focus on bridal customers, such as, one month every engagement ring receives a gift, the next month each engagement ring sale includes a 1 hour limo service or dinner for 2 at the area's most romantic restaurant. Just make sure you are always doing something. You can likely offset some of the costs with the businesses you are using for such events

simply by telling the limo service, the florist and the restaurant etc. that you want your customers to become their customers. You will be surprised at just how eager those other business owners are to make a deal with you for such a promotion. But the key is to always be doing something extra for your bridal customers.

In addition to daily "fun" things, you can do some larger events throughout the year, such as a gift with purchase promotion. Two such promotions are the free cruise with purchase promotion or the free HDTV's with engagement ring purchase promos. Both are very effective in causing excitement and word of mouth sales. Plus it is a great way to close the sale. Don't forget to include some financing options. Much of the bridal demographic is made up of young adults, many of which will need to finance such a significant purchase.

It is a fairytale but it is also a real dream of many little girls everywhere. So, if you want to be in the diamond bridal business, if you want your store to be THE bridal store in your area, you need to be in the shoe business. You need to be the store that gives those customers the "Glass Slipper Experience."

G.E. and Wells Fargo are a few well-known options jewelers can provide. Price the items based on payment per month to show them how affordable that glass slipper can be. Financing simply makes it easier for him to get her the ring of her dreams today, instead of that "starter ring" he can afford outright.

Remember, Make it Fun, Make it easy, and Make the sale!

Lastly, fill your cases with "glass slippers" in every price range. From 1/3 carat solitaires to as big as you want to go...and make sure they all come with that "Glass Slipper Experience" you have become known for.



Tim Ell

Tim Ell, ELLevated Ads Inc.
Tim Ell is the owner of ELLevated Ads, a jewelers marketing company that specializes in "advertising that's magnetizing". To ELLevate your Business, ELLevate your ads!
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PROTECT YOUR BUSINESS AND YOUR CUSTOMERS

Prevent slip-and-fall accidents and lawsuits

By David Sexton



If there is snow or rain in the forecast, your jewelry business is at risk of having slippery walkways and sidewalks outside, as well as wet, hazardous floors inside. Are you covered if someone slips and falls on your premises and sues you? This article will provide useful tips to help you protect your customers from falls and your business from costly lawsuits.

Unfortunately, if someone is injured on your premises, he/she may state that you, the property owner, were negligent. An allegation of negligence is an attempt to prove that the property owner created an unreasonably dangerous condition, failed to reduce or eliminate this condition, and/or failed to acknowledge or provide reasonable care following the incident. Liability for being at fault can be devastating to a jewelry business, so many business owners insure themselves against slip-and-fall lawsuits.

To make sure that you have proper coverage to protect your business against slip-and-fall injuries, contact your insurance agent to discuss your policy. In addition, follow these precautions from to help you avoid accidents at your store and help minimize the possibility for someone to file a negligence claim against your business.

Make sure you and your staff adhere to the following tips, especially when wet weather is in your forecast:

- Purchase entry mats for all indoor/outdoor entrances. Make sure mats don't block the door, lie flat, and are thin enough that no one trips.
- Monitor the building for wet or slippery floors, especially during inclement weather or when customer traffic is high.

- Place a sign where there may be wet or slippery floors. This will call extra attention to those areas and prevent accidents.
- Salt or sand all exterior walkways or parking lots during snowstorms, if they affect your area. Make sure you stock up on salt, sand or ice melt as winter approaches.
- Keep a log and maintenance record. Know when your sidewalks and parking lot have been shoveled or plowed, if applicable. If you hire vendors to do this work, keep copies of your contracts and bills.
- Inspect awnings, gutters, roofs and downspouts regularly. A dripping gutter could cause ice buildup or a slippery walkway.
- Ensure that your premises are well lit, especially around stairs or other elevation changes.
- Keep all customer walkways clear.
- Make sure the premises are in good shape and well-maintained, including sidewalks, flooring, stairs, hand railings, outdoor lighting, etc.

Finally, if someone suffers an injury while on your premises, offer assistance and express your empathy; however, don't admit guilt or assume responsibility. Make sure to report it to your agent or insurance company immediately, no matter how small the incident. That individual may say that he or she is fine at that moment, but may take legal action against you later. Document everything related to the incident and discuss it only with your insurance company and your counsel.

To find out more about specific coverages and to work with an experienced insurance agent in your area, contact Jewelers Mutual at 800-558-6411. Learn more about how to protect your jewelry business by visiting JewelersMutual.com.



David Sexton

CPCU, Vice President of Loss Prevention at Jewelers Mutual Insurance Company

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Is Your Staff Equipped for the Occasion?

By David Brown

Managing staff can be a frustration for any business owner, it seems sometimes they can be more time consuming than any other aspect of the business and the larger the store the more staffing hassles you are likely to have.



That said any blame for poor performance often doesn't rest with just the staff. I can honestly say whenever there are circumstances involving staff non-performance, in at least 50% of cases there is some blame that rests with the storeowner himself or herself.

Often this rests with not being clear on the objectives required, being overly critical of performance (or worse not providing any feedback at all) or failing to provide the staff with the necessary knowledge or skill required to do the job.

Now there is a positive in all this...by dealing with these matters you just may be able to eliminate 50% of your staffing headache once and for all. I don't know any jewelry storeowner who doesn't want to do that!

Sometimes owners are reluctant to invest money or time in their staff's training requirements. We all know the frustration of training a staff member, spending money and time on their education, only to have them up and leave...and sometimes to use those skills in a competing environment.

However what isn't noticed is the cost in missed sales and opportunities that an untrained staff member can pass up. Most businesses can tell you the sales they have made, but there are very few who can tell you about the one's that got away!

Taking the time to invest in training resources can be one of the most valuable investments you make in your business.

Before you even invest money in inventory or getting traffic to your store, you must have the right staff and the right training in place. There is little point in having the hottest sellers and the best marketing ideas if you don't do anything with the customers when they come! Identifying the right staff is half the battle, but merely having potential is not enough. Most stores can show inexperienced staff the basics of the product, but it's the skill of selling that can be so hard to find and nurture. It's not something that everyone has and when you find someone with that ability you have to give them every opportunity to flourish.

When training your staff it's important to consider the following points:

Get the right people in the right positions.

As we mention some people are more suited to selling than others. If you have staff that isn't as strong in the selling area they can still play an important role in the business in a supporting role, performing functions that the business still requires.



Make sure your best salespeople get the "big money shots". It is nice to share the sales around but in reality you can't afford the luxury of seeing large sales walk out the door. A \$5,000 ring sale is not the environment for a new person to be cutting their teeth! Make sure all staff know who is responsible should a bigger sales opportunity come along.

Train regularly.

Once is not enough. You must reinforce it regularly. It may not always be possible to get all staff to training seminars every time but with the Internet there are many online resources available that can be accessed 24/7. Lack of time or opportunity is never an excuse.



Use everything you can.

Get access to training and experience from a variety of sources. Sales reps from vendors have often been successful retail sales personnel themselves and are happy to pass on both product knowledge and sales skills, as it's in their interests for you to sell their product well. Organize training with them and your staff when they are in-store.



Invest both time and money.

Itemize training in your profit and loss accounts separately, and allocate a percentage of your payroll to training. When you see what you spend relative to wages, marketing, rent and other costs it puts the cost of training into perspective. It's also good to see, how much you spend on training relative to every dollar of wages. You wouldn't book an expensive day on a luxury charter fishing boat then turn up with a stick and a piece of string to fish with! The same is true of your training. If you invest in paying staff then invest in training them as well. Bank on spending 5-10% of your payroll on staff training – it will be the most rewarding part of your HR investment you make.



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 Carol Druan at carol@edgeretailacademy.com or Phone toll free (877) 5698657



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Debbie Brooks
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Robert Manse

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Robert Manse Designs
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Perfecting Google AdWords Advertising

By Matthew A Perosi

Over the last 10 years, many negative stories about the high cost of Google AdWords have circulated on the Internet and frightened small businesses. The truth is that you can control your budget and targeting more accurately with Google AdWords now more than any other form of advertising online or offline.

Most people believe that online advertising is only for e-commerce, but you can actually use paid ads to achieve any business goal. Online users who achieve your set goals are called "conversions." Example goals include someone "Liking" your Facebook Page, signing up for your email, or simply buying something from your website.

There's a potential to exhaust your budget without any return because your choice of artwork, sales copy, and the target audience will make or break your results. Waiting a month to find out if your offline ads worked is normal since measuring results from billboards, newspaper, or radio advertising takes at least as long. Newcomers to AdWords tend to think like offline advertisers and also wait one month for results. In actuality you could find out your results in as little as 24 hours--but to do that, you need a "test budget."

A test budget is money you allocate for testing of your ads, but without any expectation to make that money back. That test budget needs to be spent as quickly as possible so you can measure results and improve your results before spending your full budget.

For independent retail jewelers, I suggest at least \$100 per test. It might take a few days of testing before you figure out the best ads and audience targeting; but once you do, you should be able to convert people to your goal much more quickly.

Running test ads through Google AdWords isn't only about the individual ads you create. You also need to consider the page that your ads link to, known as a "landing page." Typical online ads entice people to click, but it's really the message on the landing page that does the real conversion. Therefore your test budget is also a way to improve those individual pages on your website.

Here's how it works... Create your ads, build your landing pages, and give Google a budget of \$100 per day. At the end of 24 hours you can see how many people clicked the ad and how many converted.

This is how you analyze your results:

Result A

If \$100 was used and conversions were low then,

1. Your ad was misleading
2. Your landing page was poor
3. You targeted the wrong audience and keywords

Result B

If less than \$100 was used and conversions were low then,

1. Your ad probably wasn't interesting enough
2. Google realized the message of your ad didn't match the message of your landing page

Result C

If no one clicked an ad then,

1. Your ads are horrible
2. You targeted the wrong audience and keywords
3. Your test budget wasn't large enough

Any of those results mean you need to send your advertising back to the drawing board. With regard to Result C3, sometimes a test budget isn't large enough to compete against other advertisers. In this case you may need to increase your daily budget to \$200 in hopes that you will get at least \$100 in test clicks on your ads.

Ideally, you want to have the highest conversion for the test budget used. You need to be satisfied with the results. Once you find the best performing ads you can set your full monthly budget knowing the ads will work and your target audience will be reached.

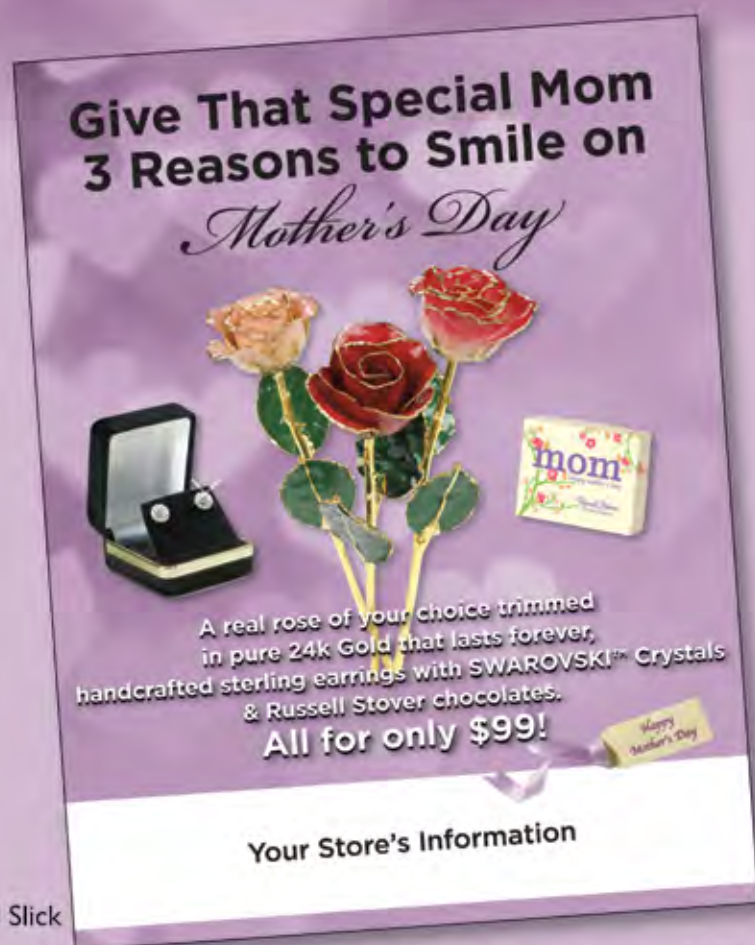
Other than using a test budget, you should always work with an AdWords agency that will manage the technical details for you.



Matthew A Perosi

Matthew Perosi is the Founder of the Jeweler Website Advisory Group (jWAG), a research team devoted to reporting how jewelers can use websites, mobile technology, and marketing trends to further personal and jewelry store goals. A library of articles, videos, and an archive of jWAG daily email "Nuggets" is freely available at www.jwag.biz. Matthew invites your feedback at matt@jwag.biz.

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CENTURION'S 2013 EMERGING DESIGNERS

Winners reflect global participation in this year's competition



Three global talents, Alessio Boschi of Australia, Erika Bertin of the United States, and Shar-Linn Liew of Thailand were announced as the winners of the Centurion 2013 Emerging Designer Competition, sponsored by Stuller. All three designers are making their U.S. tradeshow debut at the Centurion Jewelry Show, in Scottsdale, AZ.

The competition, now in its fifth year, drew almost 70 entries from luxury jewelry designers around the world. More than 300 retailers voted to narrow the field down to 12 finalists; the Centurion Board of Retail Advisors voted again to select the three winners. Each of the three winning designers received a free exhibition space at the Show, and with it the opportunity to meet and mingle among America's top prestige-level jewelers.

Says Centurion president Howard Hauben, "We received a record number of entries this year, and they were all amazing. We're proud to be able to offer the winners an unparalleled opportunity to meet the top prestige jewelers in the United States, and we're equally proud to offer our Centurion attendees this level of outstanding global talent as an exclusive first introduction."

Ashley Brown, Stuller's executive director of marketing and public relations, says, "Stuller is pleased and proud to sponsor the Centurion Design Competition. We believe innovation and creativity are essential to the future of the jewelry industry, and being able to help showcase new talent like these designers falls right in line with our mission."

These are the 2013 Centurion Emerging Designers:

Alessio Boschi, Lux2Lux Jewels, Darlinghurst, Australia
info@alessioboschi.com

Italian-born, Australia-based Alessio Boschi was fascinated by jewelry even as a child. He graduated as a jewelry designer at the "Academy of Costume and Fashion" in Rome in 1994, and, at the age of 21, was already the winner of two international jewelry awards, the Charles Perroud award in Lyon, France and the Kobe Pearl Contest in Japan.



After graduating, Boschi lived in Athens for three years and worked as designer for an emerging Greek company specializing in collections with semiprecious gems. He then moved back to Italy and worked as a freelance designer for major jewelry houses there.

Alessio Boschi, Lux2Lux Jewels

In 2003, he was named in the Guinness Book of Records for the design of the Millennium Sapphire, the biggest blue corundum ever engraved. He spent the following six years in Thailand working with a high-end manufacturer for Arab royal families. In 2006, he moved to Sydney, Australia, to become design and product development director for Autore, where his collections "Oceania," "Ice and Fire," and "Venezia" drew the attention of major international fashion magazines, and won a number of prestigious jewelry prizes around the world. In December 2010, he was invited as one of the emergent worldwide designers to participate in a major jewelry fair in Beijing, China. This was the debut of Alessio Boschi brand. In March 2011, he founded the company Lux2Lux Jewels with business partner Martino Eduardo Convertino. Boschi emphasizes eco-friendly jewelry that is made with ethical, conflict-free stones.

Right, "Ivy" earrings by Alessio Boschi feature a detachable drop. Right view is with the drop; left view is with the drop detached. The leaves are diamonds with shaded green tsavorites in dark rhodium. The berries are purple sapphires, and the twisted trunks are intertwined diamond lines with dangling chrome diopside. Leaf backs are handmade and invisibly set. Suggested retail: \$16,500



Right, Alessio Boschi's "Palazzo" ring was inspired by the Duke Palace in Venice, Italy. The ring features two secret doors that reveal hidden treasure: a tiny ring in diamonds and a ruby-encrusted heart. The ring is 18k white gold and rose gold with 1.378 ctw of VS-G white diamonds, 0.535 ctw of rubies, 1.474 ctw of pink sapphires, 15.990 ctw of rubellite, and a 2.8 mm micro pearl.



Erika Bertin, Peppermint Inc. for ALASIA, New York, NY,
erikabertin@yahoo.com

Before she entered the jewelry industry in 1999, designer Erika Bertin of Alasia already had an established career in luxury brand building with Young and Rubicam Advertising Agency in London. She left Y&R to join the Italian fine jewelry firm Favero as director of sales and, while handling the sales department, learned about precious stones procurement and jewelry manufacturing.



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CENTURION'S 2013 EMERGING DESIGNERS

Winners reflect global participation in this year's competition



Bertin moved to New York in 2000 to set up Arte Italiana, the US branch of Favero, as a partner to the owner. Favero jewelry found a responsive audience in the Americas and saw healthy and successful growth, becoming a recognized brand. Many of the Favero pieces distributed in the USA were either designed or merchandised by Bertin.



Erika Bertin of Alasia

In 2008, Bertin set up the New York-based Peppermint Inc., as a consultant to European brands on American distribution, and to continue her own design efforts. Until 2011, the largest client was the Gucci Group, for whom she consulted in the distribution of fine jewelry for the wholesale channel, as well as fine jewelry design and merchandising worldwide, and staff training.

Bertin returns to Centurion 2013 for the first time since her Favero days, with her own new line, Alasia. 100% manufactured in Italy, Alasia combines fashionable designs with materials such as oxidized silver and 10k gold, making it a creative newcomer in the affordable price bracket. She said, "Having been to the

Centurion Show in my former role with Favero, I'm doubly excited to be exhibiting there under my own name. The jewelers who attend Centurion understand creativity, fashion, and design, and I'm very much looking forward to being able to show them a range of pieces that cover the affordable classic as well as fashionable luxury category. Thank you for voting me in and giving me this opportunity."

Left, Alasia's yellow gold personalized cocktail rings with champagne diamond initials are available by special order with fast turnaround. Suggested retail prices: \$4,115 for 18K gold; \$2,500 for 10k gold.



Left, rose gold medallion and ring were inspired by a medieval incense diffuser top, and come complete with handmade double gold chain and white diamonds. Available in rose gold or darkened silver with rose gold trim. Retail prices in rose gold: medallion chain, \$9,755 for 18k, \$5,815 for 10k. Ring, \$4,985 for 18k, \$2,790 for 10k.

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CENTURION'S 2013 EMERGING DESIGNERS

Winners reflect global participation in this year's



Shar-Linn Liew, Sharart Design, Bangkok, Thailand,
contactus@sharartdesign.com.

Jewelry designer Shar-Linn Liew grew up in Singapore and was exposed to designing since she was a young girl. Her mother, who used to be a clothes designer, fueled her passion in fashion and antiquity. Her greatest enjoyment was accompanying her mother on a buying trip to Hong Kong – combining the fabric and accessories market. But it was her husband who exposed her to the world of gemstones and fine jewelry, although Liew's first foray into jewelry actually happened in college. She had come to the United States to study finance, but during her studies created handmade jewelry that was sold at the Chazen Museum of Art at the University of Wisconsin in Madison, WI.

Shar-Linn Liew of Sharart Design

After college, Liew's first job had more to do with financial statements than fine jewelry. With her husband's encouragement, she enrolled as a student at GIA in Carlsbad, CA, where she specialized in the grading and identification of gemstones. After a two-year stint as a jewelry merchandiser at a TV jewelry network, Liew decided to focus on her own collection. Her pieces are entirely handcrafted by her husband's jewelry manufacturing house, which has more than 30 years of experience.

The inspirations behind Sharart pieces are constantly evolving around the designer's Asian heritage blended with old European allure. Be it the architectural lines of Asian pagodas or a mid-century Art Deco enameled vanity case, Liew crystallizes her inspiration to design something she considers art.



Right, Sharart Design's Shinto blue sapphire earrings are fully articulated. Gem content: blue sapphire, (8.15 ct) and white diamond (0.71 ctw) in 18k white gold. Suggested retail price, \$9,800. Right, Ying Yang rotating tourmaline pendant has a pink tourmaline dome (9.88 ct), a green tourmaline dome (8.30 ct), white diamond (0.40 ct), cognac diamond (1.05 ct), and freshwater pearls in 18K yellow gold. Suggested retail price, \$4690.



Says Liew, "It is such an honor to receive this award from the Centurion Show and to be able to share my creations with retailers in the United States. I am so very grateful for this experience." **TRJ**



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**NEW AND
NOTEWORTHY**

KC Designs, Kate Upton, Irina Shayk All Featured In Sports Illustrated 2013 Swimsuit Edition

KC Designs' Diamond Mittens Necklace graced the neck of SI's Cover Girl Kate Upton for the Sports Illustrated 2013 Swimsuit Edition. The photo shoot took place in Antarctica. Ms. Upton was joined by fellow stunning supermodel Irina Shayk who wore KC Designs Black Rhodium and Diamond Chandelier Earrings.

This is the 5th issue of the popular SI Swimsuit Edition where KC Designs were featured.

For information on these pieces and the rest of the KC Designs Diamond Fashion Collection, call 800-552-3790.



Sue Carson Joins The Royal Chain Group

The Royal Chain Group is pleased to announce that Sue Carson has joined the company.

Retailers throughout the country will remember Sue's face and especially her iconic voice at Leslie's for the last 30 years. "Sue's wealth of knowledge and dedication to independent retail jewelers reinforces the commitment of excellence Royal Chain strives to achieve as the leading supplier to independent retail jewelers," says Gary Austein, VP Sales. "She will be a valuable addition to our existing and highly acclaimed customer service team."



Sue can be reached at 800-622-0960, extension 237, or by email at sue@royalchain.com. In addition, Sue will attend all trade shows.

>> Continued to Pg 34

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NEW AND NOTEWORTHY

Stuller, Inc. and Gemvision Combine Sales Forces

With the goal of establishing better one-on-one relationships with customers, Stuller and Gemvision have combined their respective sales teams into one, single organization. Thus extending the strategic partners market reach.

"Combining these two expert teams means more personalized, convenient service for our customers," says Bob Cox, vice president of business development. "And with a united force of 11 regional sales directors, I'm confident we will continue to wow our jewelers by offering the best in products, technology and business solutions."

For more information on the sales director in your area, please contact Stuller at 800-877-7777.

Stuller, Inc. is headquartered in Lafayette, LA and was founded by Matthew Stuller in 1970. The DTC Sightholder provides a wide range of goods and services for jewelry professionals. Stuller's core product categories include: diamonds, gemstones, finished jewelry, mountings, findings, bridal jewelry, tools, supplies and digital solutions.

Midas Chain Celebrates 30 Years of Success

Midas Chain and its team are very excited to celebrate 30 years as the premier jewelry manufacturer in the industry. They attribute their success and longevity to its responsiveness to customers, the diversity of product, and their ability to bring product to market before the trends take hold in a constantly changing landscape.

Midas began primarily as a gold chain manufacturer, diversified into silver and later with stunning lines of crystal jewelry. The company has always been extensively involved in research and development of new innovative products, which translated into numerous brands for Jewelers to offer consumers.

Just one example of a hot product line is the Sideways Cross from the East2West collection. This is a line of jewelry that retailers have had unprecedented selling success. The company pays close attention to Hollywood, worldwide fashion trends and styles to keep way ahead of the curve.

"We always welcome feedback from Jewelers around the country and our sales force, because they are the ones on the front lines. We are very in tune to the latest needs of consumers



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NEW AND NOTEWORTHY

before trends begin." said Roy Merlucci, VP Sales of Midas Chain. The unique details and craftsmanship of all the collections are done with the highest level of standards and quality, which has always been a symbol of an original Midas product. The complete line includes many unique styles and designs that can be seen in the new Midas catalog containing 200 pages of product.

The new jewelry catalog includes earrings, bracelets, chains, rings and a dazzling crystal line. Some of the exclusive collections included in this years beautiful counter top reference are brands such as East2West, Bon, Little Bon, Sports Bon, Chatty Charms and Crystal Persuasions collections to name a few.

Midas Chain is a premier manufacturer of fine quality jewelry with corporate offices in New Jersey and facilities worldwide. The company is a direct source for innovative, high-quality merchandise. The company provides 10k, 14k and 18k jewelry as well as sterling silver and crystal jewelry. For a free catalog please call sales at 877-643-2765 or email sales@midaschain.com. Visit the website at www.midaschain.com.

GemDialogue Celebrates 30 Years

GemDialogue® has completed thirty years of continual service to the jewelry industry with its portable color memory system. Founded in 1982, GemDialogue® offers appraisers, dealers, jewelers and gemologists a repeatable and meaningful accurate color record for gemstones and colored diamonds.

Howard Rubin, GG, inventor and founder of GemDialogue®, spent ten years developing the color system before offering it to the trade. GemDialogue® was engineered for the gem trade to supply portable, uniform color reference points in an affordable product. It offers a practical way to communicate with others in the gem trade, when talking about gemstone colors.

The color communication system contains 21 basic transparent color charts showing ten different saturation levels for each color. A black to gray mask as well as a brown to light brown mask is also included. The charts and the color masks offer 60,000 color possibilities for matching.

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Howard Rubin, who passed away early in 2012, leaves a legacy to the gemstone industry for the future. GemDialogue® is currently available and in addition to the Color Chart Manual it now contains the GemDialogue® Color ToolBox, Grading Manual, and an instructional CD.

For further information, contact Gail Brett Levine, GG, GemDialogue® Systems, Inc., 718.897.7305, gblevine@gmail.com, www.GemDialogue.com.

Third Annual Gold Conference Announced

Initiatives in Art and Culture has announced the Third Annual Gold Conference to be held April 11th and 12th.

The conference offers a holistic look at gold from extraction to the production of finished goods with a focus on jewelry, the largest sector of demand for gold. It explores the varied solutions for sustainable extraction and processing, and considers how the jewelry industry and other sectors are addressing these challenges, including those posed by what is termed "conflict gold." It also addresses the heightened demand for gold, both for adornment and as a repository of value, which is linked to increased prosperity in emerging markets such as China, and India. Contemporary makers – including those who might be termed emerging talents -- will discuss the marriage of technique and the implications for their work in light of increased gold prices.

Receptions and opportunities for book purchases will be included in the conference.

Presenters include David Lamb, managing director, jewelry, World Gold Council; jewelers Namu Cho, Kara Ross, George Sawyer, Henry Dunay, and Waris; Daniela Colaiacovo, CEO, GoldLake; Alberto Milani, CEO, Buccellati, NA; Mark Emanuel, jeweler and co-owner, David Webb; Jeffrey Christian, managing partner, CPM Group; Cindy Edelstein, president, Jeweler's Resource Bureau; Cecilia Gardner, president & CEO, Jeweler's Vigilance Committee; William R. Williams, vice president, Environment, Barrick Gold Corporation; Nawal Ait-Hocine, corporate responsibility director, Cartier; Rob Bates, senior editor, JCK; Vanessa Friedman, fashion editor, Financial Times. Where: The Graduate Center, The City University of New York, 365 Fifth Avenue (at 34th Street)

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For more information and registration please go to their website: www.acteva.com/go/gold. Ticket Price: \$350

NAJA Announced 2012 Scholarship Winner

The National Association of Jewelry Appraisers (NAJA) announces the winner of the 2012 ACE© It Conference Scholarship to attend the 39th Annual ACE© It Winter Educational Conference held on February 3-4, 2012, Tucson AZ.

Ms. Kim Pascarella, Grosse Pointe Woods, MI, is the 2012 winner of the annual scholarship. Ms. Pascarella is a current home study student at the Gemological Institute of America.



Her jewelry journey started as a retail sales associate with a large corporate company. She is currently the General Manager at Joe DiMaggio Jewelers with a rich variety of responsibilities. Ms. Pascarella says that "I love this job. I'm passionate about our clients and this trade."

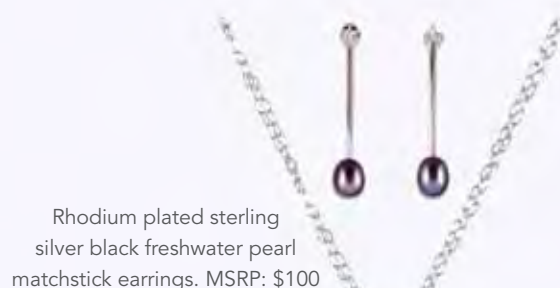
The NAJA Scholarship gives a gemology student a first hand experience of networking with appraisal professionals by attending the highly regarded NAJA educational experience during a time when Tucson devotes itself to gems, jewelry, and minerals. NAJA believes that appraising is a viable career option for students of gemology.

The National Association of Jewelry Appraisers is the largest membership association specializing exclusively in gem and jewelry appraising and related appraisal issues. It offers education and networking opportunities with knowledgeable appraisal professionals. For further information on becoming a member of NAJA, attending NAJA's Tucson education conference or the 2013 Conference Scholarship please contact Gail Brett Levine, GG, Executive Director, The National Association of Jewelry Appraisers, P. O. Box 18, Rego Park, NY 11374, 718.896.1536 fax 718.997.9057, naja.appraisers@netzero.net, www.NAJAappraisers.com.

Diamond Etching In An Hour Announced by PMG Refiners

Diamond etching defines a true diamond from a CZ. At PMG Refiners, Ben Stahelin the in-house chemist explains that Diamond Etching offers many benefits from finding out if that heirloom Diamond or new Engagement Ring have real stones in them or not. To a dealer looking to have his jewelry lots stripped of stones (separated from either gold or silver) and

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Rhodium plated sterling silver black freshwater pearl matchstick earrings. MSRP: \$100



Rhodium plated sterling silver abalone and black freshwater pearl pendant on 18" triple cable chain. MSRP: \$225

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tested to find out which stones are diamonds and which are Cubic Zirconium's, this is a critical process.

When the process is completed the stones are clean. You can easily see the difference between the CZ and diamond with the naked eye. The process of Diamond Etching is fast, approximately 45 minutes. The process is environmentally safe and once complete the CZ stones are left cloudy and diamonds do not change only glisten more through a process that cleans them. According to Stahelin the success with this process exceeds 90% in accuracy. It is simple and takes about 1 hour from start to finish. Customers can bring in a bag of stones or just one to be tested. Prices for testing vary and start at \$50. It's not a big price to pay for peace of mind.

For more information please contact Precious Metals and Gems (PMG) at 800-645-7227. **TRJ**

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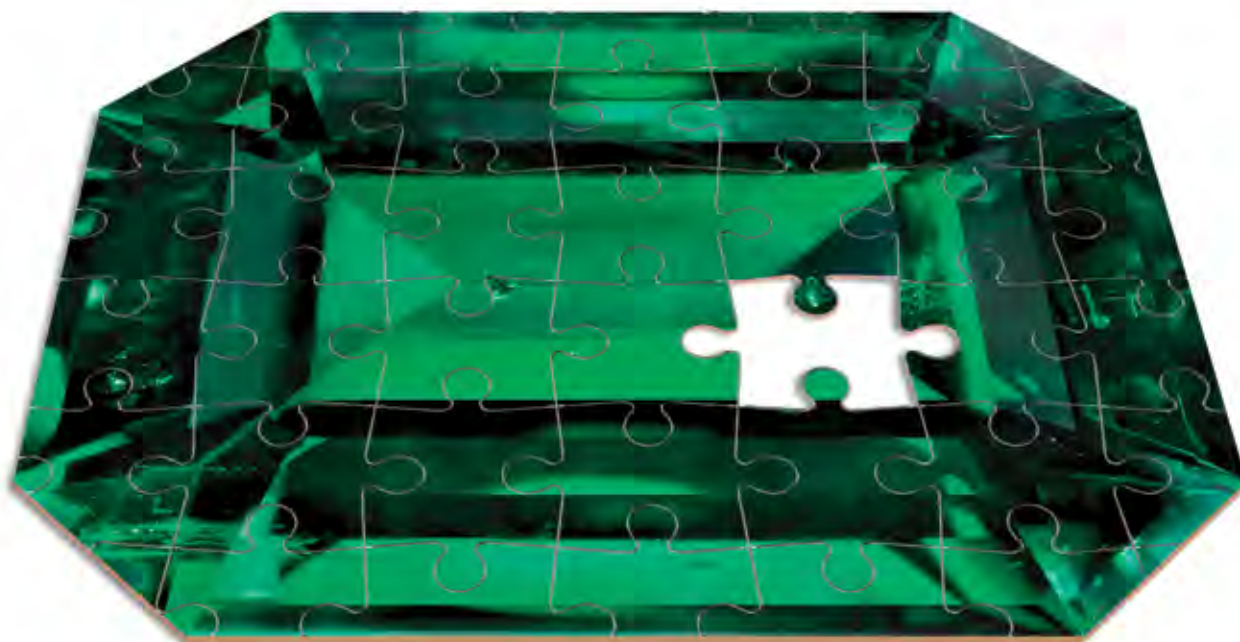
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