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The official publication of the Texas Jewelers Association



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Inside This Issue Spring 2014

From the desk of TJA President Robert Harrison 4

Industry Trade Show Schedule 5

Connecting with the Modern Day Customer By Brian Barfield 6

Notes from TJA Executive Director Ann Glynn 8

10 Minutes with Amber Gustafson 9



Color of the Year 10

Happy Years Already? by Bob Epstein 12



Spring 2014 Jewelry Trends! 14

Atlanta Jewelry Show 16

The Personal Shopper by Michael Lebowitz 18



About the Cover: TJA Design contest winning pieces, photos courtesy of Jo Barr, Peter Barr Designing Jewelers for the Texas Jewelers Association.



From the desk of
Robert Harrison
T J A P R E S I D E N T

Dear TJA Members & Friends,

It's hard to believe that 2013 flew by so fast, and here we are, welcoming in 2014. It's been an honor for me to serve as your president this past year, and oversee so many positive changes to our association. The New Year brings many new opportunities. Opportunities to learn, to share, to network, and to prosper.

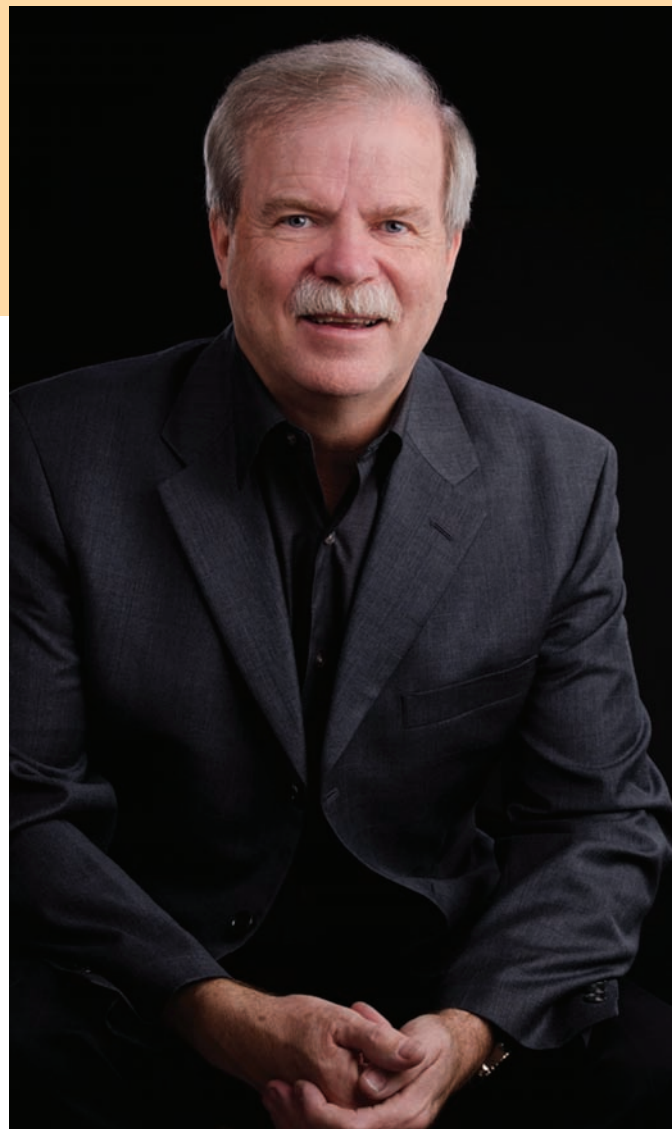
I'm proud to announce we have introduced several new tools for our members and friends to use to keep up with TJA news. Networking is so important in our industry, and our new website, TexasJewelers.org along with our updated Facebook page and Twitter feed help us to communicate our TJA message and TJA news with greater frequency and reach.

We have several amazing things happening this coming New Year., including our first annual joint conference with the Jewelers of Louisiana to be held January 18-19th, in Tyler, Tx. Please sign up now, before time gets away from you, on our new website at TexasJewelers.org. I hope you will all take advantage of the great opportunity for networking and education this event presents.

We have also partnered with the Atlanta Jewelry Show, and have received generous benefits from show management that allow us to extend to our members the opportunity for a free, 2-night stay at either one of their two annual shows. Certain restrictions do apply, so if you are interested in hearing more, please feel free to contact me or Ann Glynn, TJA Executive Director. The Spring edition of the Atlanta Jewelry Show is March 8, 9 and 10 at the Cobb Galleria, and you can find more information on that show here in our new Texas Jewelers Magazine, or online at: <http://AtlantaJewelryShow.com>

We will soon be unveiling new marketing tools and "goodies" on our website for you to use, and are working to create a network of strong vendors and partners that can bring our members value, information and services that will help grow your business in 2014.

As many of you already know, the Smart Show has decided not to return to Dallas again this year. I feel strongly that we need to continue providing an annual convention for our members, and we are working



on the details now that will allow us to hold an event in September of 2014.

It is my hope that you all will be eager to take advantage of the new tools and opportunities we are working hard to develop for you. I understand that "time is money" and it's often a challenge to make time for educational opportunities, but if you look at opportunities such as our Tyler, Texas conference as an investment in yourself and your staff, then your business will definitely benefit.

With the attendance and support of our membership, along with the Jewelers of Louisiana, this can be the start of something great!

See you there!

Robert Harrison
President, 2013 - 2015
Texas Jewelers Association

Industry Trade Show Schedule January 1, 2014 - June 31, 2014

Texas Jewelers Association/

Jewelers of Louisiana Conference

Dates: January 18 - 19, 2014

Location: Tyler, Texas

Venue: Courtyard by Marriott, Tyler, Texas

Website: <http://www.TexasJewelers.org>

RJO (Retail Jewelers Organization) Show

Dates: January 25 - 27, 2014

Location: Savannah, GA

Venue: Savannah Westin Harbor Resort & Spa

Website: <http://www.rjomembers.com/>

Centurion Jewelry Show

Dates: February 1 - 5, 2014

Location: Scottsdale, Arizona

Venue: Scottsdale

Website: <http://www.centurionjewelry.com/>

JCK Tucson

Dates: February 3 - 8, 2014

Location: Tucson, Arizona

Venue: JW Marriott Star Pass Resort

Website: <http://tucson.jckonline.com/>

AGTA Gemfair Tucson

Dates: February 4 - 9, 2014

Location: Tucson, Arizona

Venue: Tucson Convention Center

Website: <http://agta.org/tradeshows/gemfair-tucson.html>

GJX Gem & Jewelry Show

Dates: February 4 - 9, 2014

Location: Tucson, Arizona

Venue: GJX Pavilion

Website: <http://www.gjxusa.com>

Atlanta Jewelry Show

Dates: March 8 - 10, 2014

Location: Atlanta, Georgia

Venue: Cobb Galleria

Website: <http://AtlantaJewelryShow.com>

MJSA Expo New York

Dates: March 9 - 11, 2014

Location: New York, New York

Venue: Hilton New York

Website: http://mjsa.org/events_and_programs/mjsa_expo_new_York

The Smart Show

Dates: April 5 - 7, 2014

Location: Chicago, Illinois

Venue: Chicago Navy Pier

Website: <http://smartjewelryshow.com/>

JCK Luxury

Dates: May 27 - June 2, 2014

Location: Las Vegas, Nevada

Venue: Multiple Venues

Website: <http://luxury.jckonline.com/>

The Couture Show

Dates: May 29 - June 2, 2014

Location: Las Vegas, Nevada

Venue: The Wynn Hotel

Website: <http://www.thecoutureshow.com/>

JCK Las Vegas

Dates: May 30 - June 2, 2014

Location: Las Vegas, Nevada

Venue: Mandalay Bay Resort & Casino

Website: <http://lasvegas.jckonline.com/>



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The Modern Day Sales Presentation

CONNECTING WITH THE MODERN DAY CUSTOMER

By Brian Barfield

In the beginning your sale has unlimited potential. It has the potential to be quick, easy and effortless. It also carries the potential to be a long-winded, drawn-out marathon. The final outcome is going to be based solely on whether you truly connected with your customer or not. From the moment your customer walks through your doors your actions set the course of the current sales process as well as the future sales process - if they choose to shop with you again.

For those of you who did your homework in reading The Four Basic Customer Types series, I'm sure you could see that there was an ultimate goal by design. By taking care of your customers' individual needs you have the potential to turn every customer into a Simple Minded Customer. Once the bond of trust is established and the customer knows that you have their best interest in mind, sales become easy and almost effortless. This is the way to build your customer base and create an environment that makes selling fun.

Now you have a clear vision of what true and lasting success will look like. However, achieving such success takes a lot of hard work and effort. So today we will start by focusing on the customer who is shopping at your store for the very first time. Every new customer who enters through your door is walking into a world of unknown. Some may be guarded wondering if they will be pounced on or cheated. Others may appear confident while fear and insecurity are bringing out the worst in them. The bottom line is that the Modern Day Customer has been trained by negative experiences to not trust you.

The first priority in assisting your customer is to overcome their fear and establish a connection to open the lines of communication. You do this by offering a service that benefits the customer. Offer a free jewelry cleaning and inspection while they browse. This allows them the necessary time to adjust to the store and begin to relax. If they refuse, offer them a beverage while they shop. These simple things assure the customer that you are there to serve them and it sets the tone for the sales process.

The old-school training would go something like this: "OK, Michelle, I am going to clean her jewelry. While I'm doing that you go see if you can sell her." Today's customer is no longer naïve or stupid. They see right through that and you are worse off than you were to begin with. I like my customers to see me working for them with no pressure or gimmicks. This creates a beautiful word called "obligation". The customer feels obligated to shop with you even if they are not purchasing that day.

Other ways I offer service is finding a customer's need and address-

ing that need. The watch they are wearing might be too big on them. Offering to take a few links out for free while they shop goes a long way. If it is someone shopping for an anniversary, I will go the extra mile and buff their band while they shop. This would be a need they did not even know existed. It could be a simple prong that is bent or a ring shank out-of-round. The list could go on and on. In my seminars people are amazed how many little things you can find to serve your customer. All you have to do is stop and think. Owners and managers, I suggest you do this little exercise with your staff.

Another way to establish a connection with your customer is to make them laugh or smile. When a couple walks in together and I introduce myself I always follow it up with the following line: "Bill, I am here to make this process as painless as possible for you." Instant smile every time! It is little things like this that relax your customer and begins to establish a bond of trust. Sometimes I actually tell the customer, "You're the boss. I work for you."

As you can see the common theme is letting the customer know that you are there to serve them. If you learn to do these little things well that "Just Looking Customer" will open up to you like never before.

There is a way to fix the problem that we as an industry created. In order to do so you must first understand the problem and see it with clarity.

Many years ago we created a concept called "the sales tactic" which was intended to be good. Over time these sales tactics became fueled by greed, which disconnected us from our customers. Instead of focusing on our customers we began to focus more on the dollar amount and commissions. Those tactics worked well for a season, until the customer awakened and decided they no longer wanted to be treated like that. This has lead to years of sales associate vs customer and the sales floor has become a grind of relentless stress and pressure. Those who have worked in the industry for a long time can testify to this.



Brian Barfield

In closing I will leave you with the final ingredient to help you connect with your customer. It's the benefit of using passion and energy when connecting with your customer for the first time. When your customer enters your store do they hear the excitement in your voice? Do they feel the energy and enthusiasm that you give in your hustle to work for them? Can they see the desire that you possess within to take care of them?

Unfortunately in today's world many of us are weary and run down by the demands of business life. We are lacking the proper passion and energy to impact our customers' lives in a meaningful way. This month's homework is to read my old articles titled, "Maintaining your Levels of Passion and Energy," and "Understanding Life's Defining Moments." They can be found on the Southern and Mid-America Jewelry News websites, www.SouthernJewelryNews.com and www.MidAmericaJewelryNews.com under columnist Brian Barfield. Within these two articles you'll find the answers on how to give your customers the proper service they desire.

It is my hope that this article has opened your eyes to see the new opportunity you have to make your sales career more fun, meaningful and successful. For more information I encourage you to purchase a few copies of my book, "Modern Day Selling" for your staff for the holidays. It's the perfect gift that will keep on giving.

Brian Barfield is a two-time published author, world-wide, who specializes in offering fresh new insight in retail sales training. Modern Day Selling offers a unique perspective in teaching sales associates how to reconnect with their customers and how to achieve greater success in their sales career. For more information please visit his website www.moderndayselling.com. Brian also offers in-store sales training and can be reached at brian@moderndayselling.com.



Contest winning pieces photos, courtesy of Jo Barr, Peter Barr Designing Jewelers for the Texas Jewelers Association.

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DIRECTOR'S NOTES

ANN GLYNN

TJA EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Happy New Year!

Over the last few months, the TJA Executive Board and I have made many changes within our Association. I'm excited to announce our efforts are beginning to pay off, and I'd like to share some of the most significant with you today.

Our brand new website has been up and functioning since mid-September. Just recently, we incorporated several new modules that allow us to bring added benefits to you straight from this site. Modules that our members will see immediate and direct benefit include Member Account Login/Log Out; a Password Recovery system; and a Theft Alert System. We also now have an integrated event creation and registration system, which allows both members and non-members to register directly from our TJA website for any upcoming events, and submit payment for such events directly from the website.

In addition to the benefits that are visible to our membership, we have added several administrative functions that make it much easier for us to edit member profiles, view and confirm member payment history, and navigate easily through membership renewal.

We are also working on several new additions to the website, which will be introduced over the next several months. These additions include a "Goodies" section, where you'll find TJA logo's, links and information that you can incorporate into your own website; a TJA Marketing section, which will give you suggestions, tips and recommendations on things that will help you create and deploy successful marketing ideas, and a section that will be dedicated to important industry news, such as design contests, upcoming trade shows and the like.

If you'd like to register for your new Member Account, visit the TJA website at: <http://TexasJewelers.org> and click on "Access My Account Now," under the "New Features" box.

I am proud to announce that we have created an agreement with IDEX, under which, all of our members receive the weekly IDEX Diamond Price report for Rounds and Fancies, branded under the TJA Logo, for free. If you have not been receiving this report on a weekly basis, please email me at Ann@TexasJewelers.org and let me know so I can add your email address to the list.

On the social media front, we are continuing to build a following on both our TJA Facebook page, and our TJA Twitter account. If you haven't "Liked" us yet on Facebook, or followed us yet on Twitter, I encourage you to do so now. You'll find TJA on Facebook at: <http://Facebook.com/>

[TexasJewelersAssociation](https://Twitter.com/TexasJewelers) and you'll find TJA on Twitter at <https://Twitter.com/TexasJewelers>

And last, but not least, I hope you enjoy the new look and layout of our TJA Magazine. We'll be publishing 3 times per year, in January, May and September, and combined with our monthly newsletter e-blasts, we're on track to keep all of our members and friends up to date. Whew - are you tired yet? You can bet we are, ... but we've got lots more exciting changes, great

information, and tools to help you in every aspect of your business coming your way!

I want to again extend my sincere appreciation to you all for allowing me to serve as your Executive Director. I'm deeply honored, and excited about the amazing path we're on for 2014. As always, please feel free to email me with any questions, comments or concerns at Ann@TexasJewelers.org, or to call me directly at (504) 615-1191.

Ann M. Glynn
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10 Minutes with Amber Gustafson



Texas Treasure Amber Gustafson owns Amber's Designs which is tucked away discretely inside the Enterprise Bank Building in Katy, Texas. But don't let the nearly invisible store front fool you. Clients near and far seek out Amber, whose motto, "Where the Jeweler is the Owner," for her unique one-of-a-kind creations, and outstanding customer service. Recently, Amber graciously took some time out of her busy schedule to talk with us here at TJA Magazine. Read what Amber has to say.

TJA Mag: It's unusual in this mostly male-dominated industry for a woman to be a bench jeweler, retail store owner and to be successful at both! How long have you been involved in the jewelry industry, and have you always been passionate about being a bench jeweler?

Amber Gustafson: Yes, it is unusual! I have met a handful of women bench jewelers in my over 34 years working in the jewelry industry. Often when I am at a jewelry convention and my husband is with me, people will turn to him first. He quickly responds that Amber is the one in charge and he is there for support. I've learned not to be bothered when that happens because to be successful in this business you need a very strong will, perseverance, creativity and an upbeat, positive outlook!

TJA Mag: You are extremely active in many clubs, charities and events. How do you find time for it all? Do you have a personal motto that keeps you going?

Amber Gustafson: I believe in giving back without expectations which includes virtually anyone who walks through my door. When you express positive energies into the universe, you attract positive energies back. People receive satisfaction from different things, and I consider myself fortunate and want to give back as much as possible. That's what makes me the happiest!

TJA Mag: What are some of the biggest changes you've witnessed within the jewelry industry in your 34 years as a bench jeweler?

Amber Gustafson: Hands down the Internet. Lack of face to face communication internet diamond and jewelry searches have changed the way we do business.

TJA Mag: What inspired you to found the Houston Jewelers Breakfast?

Amber Gustafson: I am a people person and love this business, so I took it upon myself as a personal challenge to form the Breakfast Group. In Austin members from Texas Jewelers Association meet in every week and that was the inspiration. The Houston Jewelers Breakfast meets the second Friday of every month. I'm proud to say that we also inspired the Houston Police to attend our meetings. They have formed the Houston Precious Metals Squad which keeps our

group of jewelers informed of recent crime in our area and the changes that are occurring in the laws regarding the jewelry/precious metals business within Houston.

TJA Mag: Two years ago you did a large expansion to Amber's Designs. How did that help your business?

Amber Gustafson: The custom design and repair side of our business had been exploding, and I needed to expand to accommodate the workload and additional people. I went from 600 square feet to over 2100 square feet in 12 years. I'm staffed with 6 bench jewelers, always looking for another, along with seven other full and part time people on staff. The beauty of Amber's Designs is that my staff shares in my passion and enthusiasm with jewelry and the jewelry industry. Everyone contributes something unique. We have a Graduate Gemologist (one time an instructor at GIA), award winning designers, stone cutters, and one of our jewelers was trained in Vienna. I believe what contributes most to our success is that everyone has a winning attitude.

TJA Mag: What is your favorite thing about being a jeweler?

Amber Gustafson: The traveling I can do with the business, being able to be creative and help customers design their treasures and overall share in their memories. I have traveled to the mines in Brazil, the manufacturing factories in China, the cutting houses in Thailand, diamond cutting houses in Israel and Antwerp

just to find the connections closest to the source. We deal in the language of love, happiness and hope, and that's a universal language for jewelers.

TJA Mag: What changes or challenges are you anticipating for 2014?

Amber Gustafson: To keep up with technology. Balancing the personal touch with designing and the influx of technology is the biggest challenge. Cad Cam is being used by many and we are only in the beginning stages of using it in my business. Keeping things with the personal touch as my customer base grows has become more difficult. I will not take "No" as an answer in projects that come before me. From the beginning I faced challenges and obstacles through every phase of my career, but I just kept pushing through the barriers. Being a jeweler and designer is more than a job for me, it is my life, and oh what a life it is.

To find out more about Amber, visit her website at:
<http://AmbersDesigns.com>

To find out more about the
Houston Area Jewelers Breakfast on Facebook at:
<http://Facebook.com/Houston-Area-Jewelers-Breakfast>



Amber Gustafson



Color of
the Year
2014

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TM

Radiant
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“Radiant Orchid,” a purple hue that blends fuchsia, purple and pink undertones, is Pantone’s 2014 Color of the Year.

“Radiant Orchid reaches across the color wheel to intrigue the eye and spark the imagination. An invitation to innovation, Radiant Orchid encourages expanded creativity and originality, which is increasingly valued in today’s society,” says Leatrice Eiseman, executive director at Pantone.

The new shade replaces “Emerald,” Pantone’s 2013 Color of the Year, which served as a symbol of growth, renewal and prosperity, Eiseman says.



Hannah Connorton

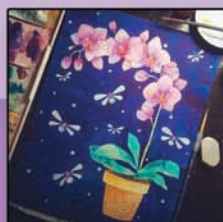
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Happy New Year Already?

By Bob Epstein

January? February? Valentine's Day?

Most retailers just want to make it through this year's holiday shopping season before thinking about 2014. Besides, January is typically not a strong month for retail jewelry sales. Yet many shoppers have cash-in-hand to spend from work bonuses and family gifts. So it's a good time to contemplate running a January clearance or customer appreciation sale to move some of your older inventory that did not sell over the holidays and to attract new customers into your store.

No doubt it's a challenge to manage and juggle all aspects of your store at the busiest time of the retail season. Taking care of customers and selling merchandise is obviously the first priority. But in the process of selling you can learn - on a daily basis - what's working (and what's not). You don't have to wait to play Monday morning quarterback with your sales efforts; observe what's going on now and be agile enough to react to your specific marketplace and customer demands. Spot these trends today and you'll be able to better position your store to kick off a profitable New Year.

As customers flow through your store, try to do an on-going sales analysis. What are you noticing about this year's sales that is different from last year's holiday shopping season? What is your average price point compared to year's past? Have you noticed a shift in your customer demographics? Older, younger? Male, female? What are your best-selling categories? Do you have all price points and categories in-stock or are your customers requesting products that you don't have?

A quick review of daily sales will allow you to catch relevant sales trends and make sure you have the right mix of inventory and price points. Do you have gemstone jewelry? Diamond jewelry, custom jewelry, necklaces, estate jewelry, earrings, pendants, pearls, bracelets and watches? During the holiday shopping season there should be merchandise for every occasion, every taste and every budget.

As you continue your daily, "real time" sales analysis, pay attention to your competition. Specifically their advertising: radio, television, newspaper and direct mail. Is your competition offering merchandise, discounts or services that you aren't? Think about your own advertising efforts. What was the most effective form of marketing and promotion you employed this past year. What kind of response are you getting from your current efforts? How do customers learn of your special offers? Have you started to use social media resources? What makes your store different from the competition - especially the big box stores?

Collecting all this data during the holiday season may seem like an overload when you just want to get through the day to store closing. Wait until the end of each day when the store is closed and the staff has gone home to jot down your observations. Keep an informal journal; something as simple as a

spiral notebook. Do this on a daily basis for a week or two and you'll start to see patterns emerge. Store owners work very long hours during the holiday season, but obtaining information to better manage your store will make for a more relaxing summer vacation.

The holiday rush and influx of shoppers into your store is also the ideal opportunity to beef up your customer database by confirming current customer contact information - and specifically e-mail addresses. A simple, half page Product Warranty and Returns form (with your store policies), that customers complete at the checkout counter, can be a quick and easy method to capture e-mail and mailing address information. Simple and short is

best. Having current customer contact information and an updated database is an essential marketing tool you'll want to have to advertise your upcoming January sale event.

Of course many point of sale systems used today have the ability to transfer customer information into your database every time you run a credit card, but the abbreviated written form will give you their e-mail address as well. Make sure you put a disclaimer that makes it clear that all contact information, including e-mail addresses, are kept confidential and are for store use only.



Bob Epstein

Another approach to capture contact information for both customers and prospects (people who look but don't buy) is to have a customer appreciation raffle. Again, simple and short is best. Have an uncomplicated raffle ticket form that gives you the customer or prospect name, mailing and e-mail address, with the drawing to be held the first week in January. Winners of the raffle prizes will be notified by e-mail which, of course, gives you the opportunity to send an e-coupon; an offer to save up to 40% off on any one item or entire purchase.

Retailers who take time each day during the holiday rush to evaluate their on-going business; spot sales trends; manage their inventory; take note of the competition; plan and implement good marketing strategies and techniques; will be in a great position to launch an aggressive January sales campaign and kick start sales in 2014.

Bob Epstein is CEO of Silverman Consultants, LLC. Offering a legacy in sales strategies for jewelers since 1945, Silverman Consultants provides guidance to store owners seeking to turn around a business, sell off unwanted inventory, or liquidate an entire store. With offices located in Charleston, SC; New York City; and Saskatoon, Canada; the company helps jewelry store owners and chains formulate strategies designed to maximize revenue in times of transition, whether due to retirement, store closing, or simply when needing a boost in sales. For more information, visit www.silverman-consultants.com or call Bob direct at 800-347-1500.



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Spring 2014 Jewelry Trends!

As a retail jeweler, keeping up with the latest jewelry trends and fashions is a large part of your business. Although jewelry trends, which are determined by three main driving factors, (known as the “Three R’s”) the red carpet, the runway, and real life, change from year to year, and sometimes season to season, classic pieces such as pearl strands, gold chains and diamond stud earrings never go out of style.

Smart jewelry retailers know how to stock and market a mix of trendy and traditional jewelry to their customers, that will keep them coming back for more. Are you ready to jump into 2014 with a look towards fashion-forward jewelry? If so, here’s a list of the top 10 trends for Spring we’ve compiled with the help of Maren Rosen, VP of Bridal and Jewelry at Stuller, Inc. Here’s to a sparkling spring, 2014!



Maren Rosen



Radiant Orchid

It’s the color of the year per PANTONE, and is being widely used in the fashion collections of numerous clothing designers. Introduce your customers to lighter-colored Amethyst stones such as Rose de France and suggest they consider expanding their jewelry collection with pieces featuring delicate lavender jade.



Stack with Style

The stacking or layering trend will still be going strong through the Spring of 2014. Whether it’s rings, bracelets, necklaces or even earrings, women are still loving the look. And why not? It’s a great way to wear more jewelry, and show off favorite designs. Help keep your customers from creating jewelry chaos by steering them towards similar styles in multiple colors, or different styles in a similar color palette. Mixing metal jewelry with wooden beads or bracelets, or long chains paired with pearl strands in various sizes is another way to take advantage of this fun trend!



Pretty in Pink

Blush, pink and peach will continue to trend for Spring 2014 as rivals to traditional white in wedding gown styles. Help your brides carry through or incorporate this trend into her special day by suggesting pieces created with Morganite for Wedding Day jewels. And while pink is popular for brides, it’s not confined to one special day. The pink/blush trend is seeing increasing popularity in everyday fashion jewelry as well.



Go for the (Yellow & Rose) Gold

We have to admit, it’s refreshing after so many years of white metal (white gold, silver and platinum) ruling the fashion scene, to begin seeing the bright pops of yellow and rose gold being embraced again. Both yellow and rose gold mix, match and pair deliciously with other metals, and punch up the “WOW” factor when used as a backdrop for many colorful gemstones.



Opaque and Translucent Gemstones

Think airy, diaphanous fabrics such as chiffon, layers of transparent fabrics, and openwork knits, and you'll be setting the mood in your mind for Spring/Summer 2014 gemstone trends. The color palette is paired back, yet optimistic, with opaque and translucent pastels shaping the mood of the season. Less the candy-colored gemstones of last summer, these whisper soft tones ring in 2014 and will rule the trend-setter set through the end of summer. After that, look for colors to warm up through the fall and winter of 2014.



Geometric Shapes

Geometric jewelry will continue strong through the Spring of 2014. Funky necklaces, rings, and bracelets with geometric shapes like triangles, rectangles, and hexagons are a great way to incorporate "statement" jewelry into an everyday jewelry wardrobe. Added Bonus: since Geometric jewelry adds depth and dimension to any outfit, it will take any ensemble from drab to fab at a moment's notice!

Heirloom Jewelry

Items that can be passed down from generation to generation, including lockets, watches and pearl strands, continue to grow in popularity. Since vintage and art-deco styles have become popular again, we predict a slight downturn in remounting or re-purposing older-style rings, and an increasing interest in reconditioning or rebuilding the original pieces. As a jewelry retailer, you are uniquely positioned to educate your customers on the long-term value and cherished memories that come from purchasing a piece of fine jewelry that will last through many generations.



Make it Personal

Personalized jewelry, jewelry with sayings, monogrammed jewelry or jewelry that has a special finish continues to capture market share. Customers are looking to both be inspired by the jewelry they wear, and be unique. This allows the creative retailer an opportunity to up-sell added services such as engraving or adding a special finish to items that might already be in your case. Look for small ways to enhance and personalize jewelry your customers purchase and you'll add to their love of the piece, and your bottom line!

Embrace the Monotone Trend

Co-ordinating the look for a single colored ensemble often begins with the right accessories. From office, to brunch, to a big evening out, pulling off the monotone look requires thought, great clothes, and beautiful jewelry. Steer customers towards jewelry that compliments this fashion trend, such as Rhodium-plated jewelry with micro-pave stones that match the plating color.



Beautiful Blues

Pantone's 2014 Spring color report includes not one, but two beautiful shades of blue. The cloud-soft "Placid Blue" finds a perfect jewelry counterpart in Sky-Blue Topaz Jewelry. And the vibrant "Dazzling Blue" echos the strong colors of Lapis and Sapphire, both of which are an excellent addition to any jewelry wardrobe.





Atlanta Jewelry Show

March 8-10, 2014

The Spring Atlanta Jewelry Show returns to the Cobb Galleria Centre from March 8-10, 2014 to bring attending retailers fresh new product resources and a full roster of educational and networking opportunities.

As an added bonus, new retail members who join the Texas Jewelers Association or Jewelers of Louisiana are invited to attend the March 2014 edition as a special guest of the Atlanta Jewelry Show, including a complimentary two-night hotel stay. To learn more, contact the Atlanta Jewelry Show's producers/managers, the Southern Jewelry Travelers Association (SJTA), at 800.241.0399.

March 2014 show highlights include:

*hand
crafted*
studio

Making its debut during the August 2013 edition, the Handcrafted Studio section returns in March - bringing together a collection of artisan designs in a range of price points and styles. A showcase for up-and-coming designers, emerging trends, meticulous craftsmanship and original artisan pieces, Handcrafted Studio offers retailers an opportunity to explore and discover original creations that promise to position their stores as a key resource for fresh new designs.

TREMENDOUS PRODUCT SELECTION

The March Atlanta Jewelry Show will bring together hundreds of companies showcasing designs in a range of categories in the popular Point of View: Designer Gallery, as well as the Promenade and general booth areas throughout the show floor.

MINGLE!

Among the most talked-about features of the August 2013 show was "Mingle," the show's new after-hours gathering spot at the Renaissance Waverly hotel. "Mingle" returns in March to give attendees and exhibitors even more opportunities to socialize and network every night of the show. Look for more details coming soon on MINGLE! gatherings from 9-11 pm on Friday, March 7 and Saturday, March 8;

and from 6:30 - 8:30 pm on Sunday, March 9.

"Mingle" is an absolutely fabulous idea," said Carolyn Lennon, Simon Golub & Sons. "This business is all about relationship-building and this nightly gathering was just a great way to connect with buyers in a comfortable, casual setting."

In addition, the March Atlanta Jewelry Show will also welcome back a number of other popular programs and features. Among them:

GEMOLOGICAL INSTITUTE OF AMERICA® (GIA®) GEM ID LAB CLASS

For the fourth year in a row, the Atlanta Jewelry Show is proud to sponsor and bring these outstanding hands-on gemology lab classes to attendees. This March, the Gem Identification Lab Class is being offered from Tuesday, March 4 through Saturday, March 8. As a required class for both the Graduate Colored Stones and Graduate Gemologist Diploma Programs, this lab class teaches the time-tested procedures and identification skills used by the Institute's renowned experts.

Space is extremely limited. For registration information and pricing, contact Judy Lince at SJTA at 800.241.0399 or jlince@atlantajewelrysthshow.com

ATLANTA JEWELRY SHOW

The popular Atlanta Jewelry Show U educational series returns with a full line-up of innovative sales and marketing strategies for retailers. Among the highlights are programs on security, social media, visual merchandising, maximizing custom design sales opportunities and more.

ATLANTA JEWELRY SHOW QUICK FACTS:

WHEN: Saturday, March 8
- Monday, March 10, 2014

HOURS: 10 am - 6 pm,
March 8-9; 10 am - 3 pm,
March 10

WHERE: Cobb Galleria
Centre, Two Galleria
Parkway, Atlanta, GA 30339

INFORMATION:
www.atlantajewelrysthshow.com or
800.241.0399 | 404.634.3434

COMPLIMENTARY BUYER BREAKFAST EACH MORNING

Buyers can gear up for a busy buying day by enjoying a light continental breakfast served in the registration concourse area.

\$5 BUYER LUNCH BUFFET

To help buyers maximize their buying time, the Atlanta Jewelry Show is offering the popular Show Buffet for only \$5 on Saturday and Sunday. Located conveniently in the Market Place Café

COME & SHOP:

March 8-10, 2014 Atlanta Jewelry Show Offers One-Stop Resource For Texas, Louisiana Retailers

on the show floor, this buffet option gives buyers the chance to enjoy a delicious lunch without having to leave the show area. Buyers will receive a special coupon when they arrive at the show and need only present the coupon and their buyer badge to take advantage of this special offer.

SJTA REWARDS HELP BUYERS RACK UP REWARD POINTS ON EVERY ORDER WRITTEN AT SHOW

Buyers can earn valuable SJTA Reward points for simply placing orders for their best-sellers, required stock items, and other store necessities during the March Atlanta Show, and then redeem them for hotel and travel packages, electronics, personal accessories, home goods and more. At any time during the event, buyers need only bring copies of orders placed during the show to the SJTA Rewards desk where the representative will deposit the corresponding Rewards points to their rewards account. After the show, retailers can visit the program's online catalog to see the all the items they can order.

ATLANTA'S ELITE BUYERS CLUB

Retailers who have earned 15,000 SJTA Reward points or more at any one of the past three shows are automatically enrolled in the Elite Buyers Club -- the exclusive club of Atlanta VIP buyers. As a member, they receive special badges signifying VIP Status; access to an exclusive registration counter just for Club Elite Members; and entry into the exclusive, member-only Club Elite lounge. To find out if they qualify for membership, buyers should contact Fran Strauss at SJTA: 800.241.0399 or email: fstrauss@atlantajewelrysthshow.com.

BUY MORE. SPEND LESS. ATLANTA JEWELRY SHOW TRAVEL SAVINGS

SJTA has arranged for deep discounts at area hotels, which can be obtained by calling the show's host hotels directly or via the show website. Attendees can find the list and direct links to the hotels, rates and group codes to reference for discounts at www.atlantajewelrysthshow.com. When calling, attendees should tell the reservations representative that they're attending the SJTA Atlanta Jewelry Show to take advantage of the special show rates.

Atlanta Jewelry Show

March 8-10, 2014



New retail members who join TJA are invited to attend the Atlanta Jewelry Show as our special guest, including a two-night complimentary hotel stay.

Shop a versatile selection of top brands, emerging artists and handcrafted designs you won't find anywhere else. Attend educational seminars that will help your business succeed. Mingle among your peers and make the right connections, right here, in Atlanta.

For more information, please contact the SJTA/Atlanta Jewelry Show office at (800) 241-0399.

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atlantajewelrysthshow.com



The ‘Personal Shopper’

Building your business by better understanding your top-tier customers.

By Michael Lebowitz

We’ve all seen those signs in upscale department stores advertising the services of what some consumers think of as the ultimate in luxury—the “personal shopper.” Some of us respond to this idea by imagining ourselves buying lots of luxurious merchandise on somebody else’s dime: How fun to be a personal shopper! Others fantasize about hiring a trusted confidant to shop for them: Wouldn’t it be kind of cool to be catered to?

Regardless, the idea of the personal shopper clearly is powerful. It hints at a deeper truth—namely, that the artful suggestion of rarified luxury can create a high level of interest and engagement among certain shoppers. So, how can jewelers tap into this? One effective approach is to help your sales staff build such strong, one-on-one relationships with your best customers that they effectively become their personal shoppers, explicitly or otherwise. The first step in this direction is to begin throwing “VIP soirées” for your top-tier clientele.

The underlying premise is simple enough—namely, that the easiest and most cost-efficient way to bolster your business is to up your game with your best clients. The “80/20” rule is the building block of such efforts. You know the rule: 80% of your business happens to come from the most productive 20% of your client base.

The goal is to make these target customers feel the same kind of excitement wealthy shoppers feel when their assistants deliver all those boxes and bags from Neiman’s or Coach. The soirée could be a lunch or a cocktail hour; it could be in your store or, better yet, in some sumptuous environment outside of it. The event should convey and confirm the VIP status of these valued customers. After all, who doesn’t love to be told how important they are?

In essence, however, you are also conducting a fact-finding mission of sorts. This is where commissioned sales associates must earn the right to proudly declare, “That woman over there is my customer.” The VIP party represents an opportunity for that associate to deepen her personal relationship with the client. After having a heart-to-heart chat about the client’s aspirational dreams regarding jewelry and watches, for example, the associate might remember to send a handwritten “thank you” card in the mail, or to email a link to a hip designer’s Pinterest page, as discussed during the soirée. Good personal shoppers have business savvy, strong fashion sense and product knowledge, as well as a bit of diplomacy, if needed.

In some cases, the relationship will evolve into one in which the associate buys merchandise for the client, sight unseen. But not

always. The key is for the sales staff to gather lots of information from these clients. Questionnaires, which are prepared ahead of the event, can serve as keystones to help unlock what these VIP clients are most excited about. The questions should be designed to gather relevant details on jewelry brands, product categories and price points the consumer considers most important. This is also a great time to get honest feedback about how you have merchandised your store in the past, and how to keep this client from going elsewhere.

VIP clients need consistent care, cuddling and attention. A gift bag to be given at your soiree needs to be up to those VIP standards. These seemingly small benefits can yield surprisingly large rewards, helping to keep clients loyal and simultaneously making them want to preserve their VIP status as well. Make sure to have gifts in the bag that provide the “wow” factor—things the client will be talking about long after the event. Along with some nice gifts (and your store’s marketing material), the bag should include a gift card of a meaningful dollar value, not a percentage discount. Research shows that dollar-value cards entice people to return.

This is your opportunity to increase sales, as well as your average ticket price, and to be talked about as the store to shop—a place that offers a personal shopping experience that is second to none. If done successfully, your efforts will pay off all year, not just for the holiday season.



Jewelry industry veteran Michael Lebowitz is Director of Jewelry for White Pine Jewelry Solutions, the consulting division of White Pine Trading, LLC, one of the world’s largest recycled diamond companies. He can be reached at mlebowitz@whitepinediamonds.com.

Many thanks to the Guest Speakers at our Tyler, Texas conference who helped make it such a success. If you'd like more information about the materials they presented, or to contact them personally, please use the contact information below:



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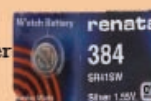
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