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722 Lari Dawn
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Steve Konetzke
skonetzke@jmiservices.com
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Editors

Mary Mochilar
Rex Solomon

Publisher

Brad Koen

President

Joe Koen & Son Jewelers
Austin

Vice President

Mark Priest
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Print & Design

ArtJam Productions, Inc.

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President's Message

Brad's Corner



The Texas Jewelers Association is looking strong after 110 years of service to our unique industry. Since we met at our annual convention last year you have undoubtedly noticed changes in consumer behavior and vendor relations. These challenges and/or obstacles not only affect our businesses but spill over into our personal lives. Belonging to TJA gives us a legitimate way to bond together so that we can learn from each other and protect our businesses. Our mutual goals are not just to survive but to grow and thrive.

Honor in the jewelry business is essential. I believe this to be the basis of our success. Through the years accredited retailers and wholesalers have built their business foundations on reputations as honest business men and women. Together with me, your president, the past president, vice president, secretary/treasurer and the convention committee chair have been working hard to insure that our 111th year is going to be a good one! We started off the New Year strong and because of this we have increased our membership numbers. Please join me in encouraging your vendors and colleagues to consider joining forces with us!

Since we are a non-profit 501 organization all of our information is public. Therefore, I would like to invite you to go to our website and take a look at our past records and see for yourselves where we have been and where we stand now. Our Treasurer/Secretary, Rex Solomon has done a great job updating our website. It now includes past magazines, past financials and even tax returns along with past board meeting minutes. When you go to www.texasjewelers.org you will find all of this information located under "Archive Items" under the "Financials & Tax Returns" icon.

I'm so happy to announce that our annual convention is coming up October 28th in Austin, Texas! It will be so great to welcome you all to my great hometown of Austin! Mark your calendars now! This show is planned well in advance by Lucinda Rogers! Thanks again Lucinda for your commitment to TJA and for serving as our Convention Committee Chair. As our big event approaches we will welcome any members who could offer a few hours of volunteer time. It's good for your spirit and business.

This year Texas Jewelers Association Convention will be hosted at the wonderful Crowne Plaza on IH35 near downtown Austin. Since the convention is taking place the weekend before Halloween, we are planning on playing it up by having a Halloween theme! Don't be scared! I know how creative some of you are and I can envision some potential Gold Prospectors, Diamond Lils or Harry Winstons to show up!

A vibrant event poster for the Las Vegas MEET & GREET 2017. The background is dark blue with colorful balloons (red, yellow, green, purple, pink) and confetti. The text "Las Vegas" is in a white script font. "MEET & GREET" is in large, bold, white block letters with a slight shadow. "2017" is in a white, outlined font. In the center is a logo for the Texas Jewelers Association, featuring a map of Texas with a blue diamond shape in the center, and the words "TEXAS JEWELERS ASSOCIATION" in gold and blue. Below the logo, the event details are listed in white text: "When: Tuesday, June 6th from 6pm to 7:30pm", "Where: AGTA BOARD ROOM at MANDALAY BAY", and "Snacks and Beverages Provided". At the bottom, there is a note: "*Some of us will be meeting for a dutch dinner at the Mandalay Bay Buffet afterwards. For more information contact the President Brad Koen @ 512-699-7600 or email at president@texasjeweler.org".

New Year calls for new look at Inventory

Bob Epstein



It seems simple enough – keep an adequate supply of the most popular items, but make sure you don't overstock -- yet inventory management should be more than keeping the appropriate selection on hand. Successful inventory management involves balancing the costs with the benefits. Many jewelers fail to appreciate the true costs of carrying all of that inventory.

These can include insurance, taxes, storage and the sheer cost of money. As these costs continue to rise, tight inventory control is still one of the best investments a jeweler can make for long-term success.

The key to successful inventory management is adherence to strict controls, and this requires an uncanny ability to anticipate customer demand so that sufficient stock is on hand to accommodate sales volume, all the while avoiding shortages. The best way to do this is to understand inventory turns and create an accurate sales forecast. Inventory turnover is the measure of how often, at the current rate of sales, you sell your entire inventory in one year. (To calculate inventory turnover, divide total annual sales by your average monthly inventory at retail, or annual cost of goods sold divided by average inventory at cost.) High profit stores generally have a 20 percent greater inventory turnover than their low profit counterparts. For this reason, it is important to understand exactly which inventory is moving and what part of inventory is collecting dust. Employing the simple strategies listed below can help improve inventory management.

- Computerize your inventory system to gain a better understanding of what your customers are buying and to simplify the buying process. Code your inventory with a purchase date to create an accurate aging report, and take action on slow moving goods.
- Review the reports to identify the fastest sellers, and make sure to keep them in stock.

- Determine which products are the least profitable, and consider reducing stock in those categories.
- Review your open orders and speak to vendors about canceling orders for products you don't have a great demand for.
- Review some of your long term vendor lines and compare them to new vendors for similar, lower priced options.
- Look at purchasing inventory from jewelers going out of business, or manufacturer close-outs.
- Consider re-merchandising your store, and pair up older merchandise with newer goods. Price the older goods at great values to generate cash to use for newer, faster selling goods.
- Review your commission structure for your salespeople, and offer additional incentives to move dated goods.

When reviewing your inventory and considering markdowns, it can be helpful to use this mantra: "Better a dollar in your pocket than gathering dust as unsold merchandise." A successful business knows how to move merchandise and understands that the price points may be different according to the type of inventory.

By using all of these strategies and your own judgment, you should be able to improve your cash flow and better manage your inventory for a new day and a more profitable new year.

Bob Epstein is CEO of Eaton Hudson Jewelry Advisors. Offering a legacy in sales strategies for jewelers, Eaton Hudson provides guidance to store owners seeking to turn around a business, sell off unwanted inventory, or liquidate an entire store. For more information, visit www.eatonhudson.com or call Bob direct at 1-843-881-3383.

- TEXAS TWO MINUTE TIPS - For members only!

Very Clever Credit Card Scam! This is a New One!



Give this wide distribution. This scam is actually very clever. Just when you thought you'd heard it all. Be very careful out there! Beware of people bearing gifts. The following is a recounting of the incident I received from the victim:

Wednesday a week ago, I had a phone call from someone saying that he was from some outfit called: "Express Couriers," (The name could be any courier company) He asked if I was going to be home because there was a package for me that required a signature. The caller said that the delivery would arrive at my home in roughly an hour. Sure enough, about an hour

later, an uniformed delivery man turned up with a beautiful basket of flowers and a bottle of wine. I was very surprised since there was no special occasion or holiday, and I certainly didn't expect anything like it. Intrigued, I inquired as to who the sender was. The courier replied, "I don't know, I'm only delivering the package."

Apparently, a card was being sent separately... (The card has never arrived!) There was also a consignment note with the gift. He then went on to explain that because the gift contained alcohol, there was a \$3.50 "delivery/verification charge," providing proof that he had actually delivered the package to an adult (of legal drinking age), and not just left it on the doorstep where it could be stolen or taken by anyone, especially a minor. This sounded logical and I offered to pay him cash. He then said that the delivery company required payment to be by credit or debit card only, so that everything is properly accounted for, and this would help in keeping a legal record of the transaction. He added couriers don't carry cash to avoid loss or be targets for robbery.

My husband, who by this time was standing beside me, pulled out his credit card, and 'John,' the "delivery man," asked him to swipe the card on a small mobile card machine with a small screen and keypad. Frank, my husband, was asked to enter his PIN number and a receipt was printed out. He was given a copy of the transaction. The guy said everything was in order, and wished us good day.

To our horrible surprise, between Thursday and the following Monday, \$4,000 had been charged/withdrawn from our credit/debit account at various ATM machines. Apparently the "mobile credit card machine," which the delivery man carried now had all the info necessary to create a "dummy" card with all our card details including the PIN number. Upon finding out about the illegal transactions on our card, we immediately notified the bank which issued us a new card, and our credit/debit account was closed. We also personally went to the Police, where it was confirmed that it is definitely a scam because several households had been similarly hit.

WARNING: Be wary of accepting any "surprise gift or package," which you neither expected nor personally ordered, especially if it involves any kind of payment as a condition of receiving the gift or package. Also, never accept anything if you do not personally know or there is no proper identification of who the sender is. Above all, the only time you should give out any personal credit/debit card information is when you initiated the order or transaction!

Sincerely,
Susan Eisen
Membership Chair

NOW is YOUR Time

Randy and Lee Ann own a jewelry store in the Midwest. They have 5 employees including one bench jeweler and 4 sales staff. Their annual volume is just under \$1 million and it's been stuck there for 5 years now. Despite checks written, books read, consultants hired and marketing companies engaged, they just can't seem to get over that \$1 million hurdle. With expenses rising but sales staying flat, they're becoming more stressed by the week and it's affecting their business, their family and their marriage.

Scott and Lynn were in the exact same place a few years back, but things changed. The first thing they did was DECIDE they were going to change. They knew they needed to do something NOW or soon there would be a G.O.B. and they would be looking for jobs. So they made the decision. That was step one. Next, they prioritized the parts of the business that would cause growth, Marketing and staff training. Scott was very comfortable with inventory management and was quickly re-ordering fast sellers as well as getting rid of old merchandise. But their hurdles were getting people in the door and closing those people.



Lynn managed the people, so she decided to have a 10 minute pow-wow every single day before the door opened. That meeting consisted of a discussion of everyone's schedules, who was taking lunch when, what customers were coming into the store today for appointments, a review of any marketing messages out there, their store goal for the day as well as individual goals, a repair goal and finally what Lynn calls "Good news from yesterday". Then once a week they had a half

hour training session where they went over selling strategies, product information, vendor information, store procedures and team building.

To make changes in their marketing, they first looked at their expenditures from the prior years and determined they had to make some hard decisions. They needed to become more relevant to the younger buyers in order to keep the pipeline of new customers coming in. They were seeing too many "old" faces and not enough new, unfamiliar faces. So they decided on an action plan that they

could implement that would take more effort than money. Tina was pretty good with a camera and Lynn was pretty good on camera. So they decided that they were going to make a 90 second video every single week no matter what. They did videos on ring sizing, the price of a diamond, why they close on Sundays, lab-grown diamonds plus about 30 other subjects that people are interested in. They created a YouTube channel and Google loved them because they had a ton of content. They posted the videos on their website, Twitter, LinkedIn, Facebook and as many others as they could. Now they were organically at the top of the area search engines because of all the content they had. More people came in. They asked for and received many Google reviews.



Now, new faces are constantly at the diamond cases and they're closing bridal sales. Their team has great communication and are regularly engaged in group sales, turnovers and add-on sales, all from one simple decision and following that decision with action.

Now it's YOUR time. This is YOUR YEAR to take that step, bringing your store to a whole new level. Decide today, RIGHT NOW that you're going to make that change and support that decision with action, every single day. I've seen far too many jewelers go from trade show to trade show, listening to one great presentation after another, and then following all that up with writing a check and expecting the problems to go away. That way requires a pretty healthy checkbook. But deciding on doing it yourself every single day is the only way to make a lasting, impactful change and smash that glass ceiling that's been hovering over you and our store for years. Yes, I'm sharing this article with Randy and Lee Ann and they will take that first step in growing their store... the decision.



Jimmy DeGroot is a jewelry store trainer and marketing consultant who has managed multi-million dollar operations and is actively working in stores today. He is a jewelry business speaker, blogger and owner of jewelrystoretraining.com.

How to Keep Your Jewelry Business Safe on Social Media

Brought to you by Jewelers Mutual Insurance Company

Jewelers are increasingly turning to the internet and online social media as effective ways to build their brands, raise potential customers' awareness of their offerings, and boost sales. And with every revised web page, blog entry, Facebook post, YouTube video, photo upload, and Tweet, Jewelers are hoping that members of their target audience are viewing, reading, and taking interest.

Remember, however, that members of another audience are also logging in and taking interest. The statistical findings that [Jewelers Mutual Insurance Company \(JM\)](#) and [Jewelers Security Alliance \(JSA\)](#) have repeated over the years continue to hold true today: nearly **all** crimes against jewelry stores are preceded by days or even weeks of close and continual observation — **casing** — performed by individuals with criminal intent.

[“How do I know if I’m being cased?” Be alert for these five warning signs.](#)

Today more than ever, that process of researching and casing an intended target includes digging up as much information as possible online. Unfortunately, because of the type of information that jewelers are unwittingly revealing with their posts, criminals are finding that there's quite a lot of useful, and potentially business-damaging, information to be gleaned.

In their attempts to engage closely with their online audiences, jewelers are giving away information that could help criminals plan their attack.

Law enforcement agencies and Jewelers Mutual have published very few hard-and-fast rules about information sharing via online avenues and social media. The broad variety of topics and the diverse content of jewelers' online communications make the development of a comprehensive checklist of dos and don'ts impractical.

However, there are some broad considerations that every jeweler may contemplate before posting information to the public via the internet and/or social media. These considerations all relate to the discipline of stepping back and assessing your communications through the eyes of individuals who are intent on committing a crime and taking your valuable merchandise:

- Does the information help criminals identify members of our staff?
- Does it reveal patterns regarding our staffing levels at particular times or on particular days?

- Does the information give away too many specifics regarding our travel plans or transport of merchandise?
- Do posted images reveal specifics regarding our store's physical configuration, location of merchandise, or placement of security equipment, the safe, the vault, etc. that could help criminals plan a crime?
- Does the information indicate when the store is receiving a new line of merchandise?
- Do our promotions of trunk shows or special events tell criminals about after-hours activities at the store that could present robbery opportunities?

The challenge is to walk the fine line between marketing your business and avoiding the disclosure of information that could be beneficial to criminals.

[The risk may be greater than the reward for resources such as Google Business Photos.](#)

Also, by stepping back and viewing your communications through a criminal's eyes, you'll remain cognizant of occasions where you may need to beef up your security.

For example, you might very well want to promote an after-hours trunk show via social media. By wearing the “criminal's glasses” as suggested above, you'll be reminded that [you may need to hire security for the event](#) and find ways to include references to the event's security in your communications:

“To attend our special event, please call us at 800-555-0123 to provide your contact information and to request a guest pass. Be sure to bring your pass to the event and show it to the security professional at the door to gain admittance.”

By including a statement such as that, you might dissuade a criminal from targeting your store.

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Easy Breezy JIS Miami October 2016



From the moment they got off the flight from Houston to Miami, Britt & Rosa Caffarena from Sugar Land Jewels knew they were in for a fun, lively time! This trip was a special prize that Britt won after entering the raffle at the Texas Jewelers

Association (TJA) convention in September 2016. Although she had previously attended jewelry shows in New York, Las Vegas, Hong Kong and Bangkok, this was her first Florida show. Britt was really grateful for the opportunity and described the overall JIS experience as wonderfully “easy breezy!”

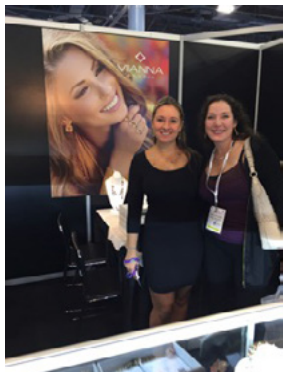


The JIS Miami show was held at the convention center located a short taxi ride away from the legendary strip of colorful art deco hotels along Miami beach. An additional nights stay gave them time to enjoy the show and local sites. They found that the hotels in the area were very reasonably priced relative to other jewelry show venues, with great restaurants and shopping on the promenade near the convention center. This was discovered on the first night when they walked over and joined the Miami area Women’s Jewelers Association (WJA) for cocktails and sushi!

At the end of the day, Britt found the vendors relaxed and the buyers happy. The JIS show was large enough to meet all her needs yet small enough to leave them ready to go out salsa dancing on the hot Miami night club scene. What a fantastic show!



The JIS and Reed Exhibitions VIP concierge staff, Sara and Monalisa were ready to greet them as they checked into the show. The show-room floor was easy to navigate especially since Britt had already downloaded the JIS App onto her iPad. Even though the show is considered a regional event, Britt commented that it had a strong international vibe. There was the Plumb Club and an Italian section, and lots of Latin American buyers there as well. The show attracted vendors from all over the country and she found it remarkable how many booths were there from our home state of Texas!



The JIS and Reed Exhibitions VIP concierge staff, Sara and Monalisa were ready to greet them as they checked into the show. The show-room floor was easy to navigate especially since Britt had already downloaded the JIS App onto her iPad. Even though the show is considered a regional event, Britt commented that it had a strong international vibe. There was the Plumb Club and an Italian section, and lots of Latin American buyers there as well. The show attracted vendors from all over the country and she found it remarkable how many booths were there from our home state of Texas!

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Would you come to work for me for \$150,000.00 a year?

David Geller

I've asked this question of many jewelers and over 60% say YES! For many this would be a substantial raise in their pay. I also pay 100% of your medical expenses and have a company 401K plan in place. The month of December is mostly time off for my company, it's slow then.

Would you work for me for \$150,000.00 a year? You would? **GREAT!** You will start **June 1st**. Casual dress.

Oh, I forgot to mention. I only give out one pay check and it's for the \$150,000.00.

I pay every year on May 31st!

Is there a problem? I mean \$150,000.00 is probably more than you make now. What? You can't afford to go a year without a paycheck? Surely you can do some night work, weekend work or maybe your spouse works? Maybe you can do some repair work in the evening—there's lots of money in repairs.

O.K., it's settled then. You'll come to work June 1st and I'll give you a paycheck a year later for \$150,000.00 on May 31st.

ONE YEAR LATER, May 24th

Hi, I have a small problem and wonder if you could ride this one out. I can't pay you next week, May 31st. Just hasn't been a good year, competition and all. Can you hold out one more year, please? Great! I know someone will give us money this coming year and I can pay you the promised \$150,000.00. Just hold on as \$150,000.00 is a boat load of money.

TWO YEARS LATER, May 24th

Hi, I have a small problem again and wonder if you could ride this one out too. I can't pay you next week, May 31st. Just hasn't been a good year (or 2 good years for that fact), competition and all. Can I either pay you \$75,000 **this** year with a promise to then next year pay you the \$150,000.00? So you've decided just to hold out one more year. Great! I know someone will give us money this coming year and I can pay you the promised \$150,000.00. Just hold on as \$150,000.00 is a boat load of money.

THREE YEARS LATER

Phew! Thank the lord; we finally had a good year! I can now pay you your \$150,000.00. In fact I'm even going to pay the taxes for you (I'm such a nice guy). Here's your check for \$150,000.00 and it's good, you can go right to the bank. I'm happy and you're happy.

FIVE MINUTES LATER

Me: "What seems to be the problem?"

You: "I'm short."

Me: "Yes, I know but that has to do with genetics, why is this my problem?"

You: "No, the problem is I only got \$150,000.00."

Me: "That's what I promised you and I paid up, in fact I paid the taxes too."

You: "Yes, that's very kind but I've been **sitting in this company for THREE YEARS** and I expected to get \$150,000.00 **EACH AND EVERY YEAR I SAT HERE.**I should have received \$450,000.00, not \$150,000.00."

Me: "Listen, I know people who'd die to work here for me and get a check for \$150,000 for a year's salary!"

You: "If you had paid me \$150,000.00 each year as you promised I would have received \$450,000 in three years, not \$150,000. **I LOST \$300,000 not being paid for the 1st two years!** Heck 3 years ago Smith & Company offered me \$75,000 a year to work for them. It was a **discounted salary** compared to what you **promised** me, but at least I would have received \$75,000 a year and in 3 years I would have collected **\$225,000.00** rather than your \$150,000. Gee, I lost \$300,000 waiting for you to pay me from your **profits** and if I had taken a lower paying job but got paid each and every year like clockwork. Just working for Smith & Company I would have received \$75,000 more than waiting for 3 years for your **large salary**. Working for you and waiting to get paid has caused me to:

1. Have a large accounts payable as I can't pay my bills on time.
2. Have a lot of credit card debt.
3. Haven't been able to upgrade my home and car, nor send my kids to college.
4. Put any money away for retirements, and
5. I'm really stressed out."

Me: "Welcome to my world!"

REALITY

In this scenario just replace being paid a salary per year for **Gross Profit Dollars a year from inventory**. Just like you might be able to wait a year to get a good salary check, but it's tough to wait three years, isn't it? But you wouldn't mind even waiting three years to work for me because you're expecting \$450,000 in 3 years. But I only paid you one years SALARY in the 3 years.

Move the decimals over my friend. Don't look at \$150,000.00, see it as **\$1,500.00**. That's the gross profit per year you should receive from selling a diamond bracelet as an example. It costs \$1500, you keystone it to \$3000.00. You wait for one year for it to sell and you get your "salary" of \$1500.00 (the gross profit).

If you **did** sell this each and every year for 3 years you would have collected \$4,500.00 in 3 years.

But if it takes **three years** to sell, you'd have only \$1,500 rather than the \$4,500 you expected in 3 years. You'd be short \$3000.00 because you waited and it did not sell. It's **exactly like working for me and only getting paid 1 year's salary every 3 years**. And yes in this example you'd been better off to had a "discounted" profit (or a lower salary), even though it was a smaller one, but once for each year for 3 years. You'd have more money. In other words:

If you can't make a years salary (Gross profit) find another JOB! (Or deep six the item and find another saleable product to replace it with or just take the lower salary (profits) and pay your BILLS).

Read this story over again. Replace salary with "Gross profits" and where you see my employee talking about his debt, think about yours. His debt came from not being paid yearly. Your debt comes from not **selling** the item yearly.

My new employee finally got his FULL SALARY CHECK, but just like you who thinks you come out ahead if you sell a 3 year old item for FULL TAG PRICE, you still come out **short by the 2 years of profits you thought you were going to get.**

You'd be better off right after the 1st of the year to find another job, even if it pays less. In inventory you'd be better off find a lower profit (discount it) and replace it with a better performing "job" (item that will sell).

The position is still open by the way. Can't figure out why I can't fill the position. Oh well, someone will buy it (I mean apply for the job).

TEXAS JEWELRY INDUSTRY REGULAR NETWORKING EVENTS:

Houston Area Jewelers Breakfast

Friends in the Jewelry Business:
Second Friday Every Month @ the Egg & I Breakfast Meyerland.
4938 Beechnut St, Houston, TX 77096
Approx 7:30 – 9:00 A.M.

Organized by Amber Gustafson amberdgn@aol.com
(281) 391-6333

The Facebook Group is:
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/156147236021/>
Houston Area Jewelers Breakfast

Dallas Ft Worth Area Jewelers Breakfast

We will meet on the second Wednesday of the month at 8:15 am at Denny's on Central Expressway just North of Meadow Road, South bound.

There is no agenda, just a cup of coffee or a great breakfast, and get to talk to other jewelers.

We are out of there at 9:00 a.m., time enough to get to your office!

Come see what we are about and do a little networking!

For Questions call Dolores English
or For Snarky Comments call Jeffrey English
at [214-638-1583](tel:214-638-1583)

Austin

Breakfast every Friday at 8 AM. Different locations. We have been meeting for approximately for 35 years!

Main contact: Robert Harrison jeweler@prodigy.net
(512) 266-1715

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in Austin, Dallas or Houston at The Woodlands**



For details contact:
Craig Gentry
Texas Regional Manager
Craig@hccenter.com
www.TheHomeConsignmentCenter.com

WHY THE PUBLIC AND THE JEWELRY INDUSTRY NEEDS INDEPENDENT APPRAISERS

Why does the public and industry need independent jewelry appraisers?

The services of an independent appraiser are increasingly important in today's complex market environment. As consumers have grown in sophistication and education, diamonds and other gems have gotten more costly, and many previously unheard of treatments and ethical issues have arisen, as well. One used to fear that a diamond might be misrepresented as to color, clarity or weight. Now the list of reasonable questions is nearly endless:

Has the gem had some temporary or permanent treatment applied? Is the stone a real diamond, a man-made diamond, a color altered diamond, loaded with filler, or totally phony? Will the dealer sell me one stone and deliver another? Is the information on the grading document accurate? Is the stone damaged? Are the grading documents genuine and unaltered? Does the diamond match the grading document? Is the stone really cut correctly and does the grading paper supply enough information to make an informed decision?

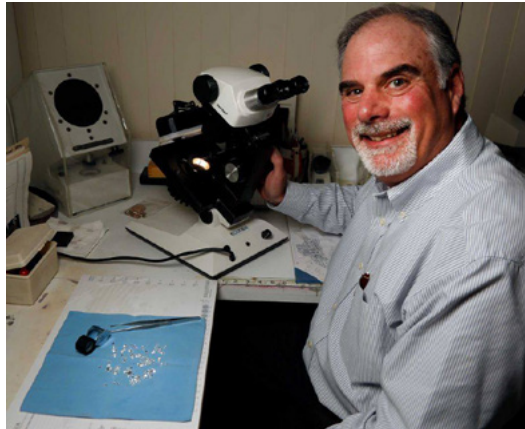
Why the retailer needs an independent appraiser:

Now the list of reasonable questions is nearly endless:

Are you qualified to do appraisals? If so what training qualifies you as such? The graduate gemology education does not cover valuation. If you say, "well I've been in the business a long time." Consider this: A real estate agent may have forty years experience, but an agent can not write a real estate appraisal. One of the root causes of the financial crisis was, a too close a connection between real estate appraisers, real estate agents and mortgage brokers. The brokers and agents had a vested interest in the highest valuations, and used friendly appraisers to provide documents to support those high mortgages and sales. What happened? Loans were made based on inflated values, and the entire financial system was brought to its knees. One of the resulting changes has been a requirement that real estate appraisers are not affiliated with brokers or agents.

If an unqualified person writes an appraisal that is not accurate, and insurance is obtained on that item, If the owner suffers a loss, it is not inconceivable that an insurance adjuster may question or deny the claim. Then the owner could look to the person who wrote the appraisal for that loss.

Are you prepared to go to court and incur legal expenses defending your appraisal?



Are you misrepresenting diamond reports, knowing they are dead wrong?

Are you able to identify treatments and identify synthetic stones?

Do you appraise other items that were not sold at your store?

Is your time more valuable appraising or selling jewelry?

What about writing appraisals for items that your store sold? That is a clear conflict of interest. The sales receipt that you issue should have enough description of the item to describe it, and the receipt clearly establishes market value at the time of the sale, unless there is some exceptional special circumstance. Some may say "well I always give really good prices, but the real value is much higher." That is a shaky legal position, because if you always sell at low prices, then there is nothing exceptional about this particular sale.

Many jewelers are concerned about having someone appraise the items they sold because they are reasonably afraid that the appraiser would "trash" their item in order to try to sell the customer another item. This is an extremely unethical, and actionable practice. This is precisely why only an independent appraiser should be used. An independent appraiser should not be in the business of either buying or selling the types of products that he or she is appraising, that is the only way to insure that there is not a conflict of interest.

If a few of these questions make you think for a minute that you need to contact Jewelry Appraisal Services to help you understand what is going on in the jewelry business today. I firmly believe we can help you grow your business with no liability regarding professional appraisals for you or your customers.

Jewelry Appraisal Services is a Houston (Bellaire, Texas) based independent jewelry appraisal and gemological services company, with over 60 years combined experience in the jewelry business and jewelry appraisal services. We have built a reputation of accuracy, fairness, and honesty over the twenty four (24) years we have been in business

Jewelry Appraisal Services
6750 West Loop South, Suite 860
Bellaire, Texas 77401

Call us at 713-622-9070 or send email to steve@jewelryappraisalservices.com
www.jewelryappraisalservices.com

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ASSOCIATION

Austin, Texas

October 28-30, 2017

**P.S. Since this is Halloween Weekend, we will have a Costume Party -
Costumes Optional - Clothing Required**

Register Today at:

TexasJewelers.org



THE TEXAS JEWELERS ASSOCIATION DESIGN COMPETITION



The Texas Jewelers Association announced the winners of its 2016 Design Competition. The Competition, took place during the annual TJA Convention held in San Antonio, September 24 - 26th, 2016.

Steve Kriechbaum of Steve Kriechbaum Designer Goldsmith in Austin, Texas was awarded “Best in Show,” for his necklace featuring carved turquoise, diamonds and sapphires. 1st place, Category 1 winner Ziad Noshie of Almaza Jewelers won with his stunning “Ocean View” necklace entry, comprised of an 18K yellow gold pendant set with diamonds a silver shell from Galveston, Texas.

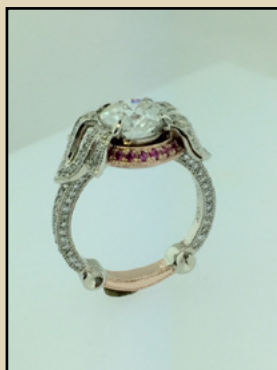




THE TEXAS JEWELERS ASSOCIATION DESIGN COMPETITION

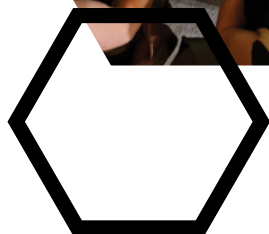


Additional winners included: Michael Von Krenner from Benold's Jewelers, and Karla Hoover in the Student Design Category.



Not only is the Texas Jewelers Association membership on the rise but our 2017 Design competition is getting better and more interesting as well. We have added a new division to include Gem Cutting Category which brings our number of categories to a grand total of 6 divisions of judging. From professionals to our student competition, this important opportunity gives craftsman and designers a chance to highlight their love of gems and jewelry while promoting their unique businesses. Please help us spread the word about this year's design competition. The deadline for submitting work isn't until September 30, 2017. So check out our website where all the details can be found and start working on your own creative designs! Let's give our judges an even tougher challenge this year!

For more information or to contact the Texas Jewelers Association please visit www.TexasJewelers.org.



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TJA 2017 Stone Cutters Design Competition Entry Form

Deadline: September 30, 2017

Eligibility

Open to anyone.

Rules of Entry

Pieces must be original designs created by the persons entering them.

Pieces may be designed and made by more than one person.

Pieces cannot have been mass produced or previously sold.

Pieces must have been produced between Sept. 2016 and September 2017.

Pieces may have been entered in other competitions, but cannot have won any awards.

Pieces should not be identified or hallmarked until after the judging.

Details of Design Entry

Each piece must be submitted with a \$100 nonrefundable entry fee. Only finished pieces will be accepted.

Category # 1 Flat Faceting

Category # 2 Concave Faceting

Category # 3 Carving

Deadline – September 30, 2017

Application, entry fee and finished piece must **arrive** by September 30, 2017.

Judging

The entries will be judged by qualified people in the gemstone industry before this year's **Convention** in Austin, TX October 28-30. When the pieces are being judged, they will be identified by number only. The judges will select the winning pieces on the basis of creative use of the gemstone, craftsmanship and originality.

Awards

Awards will be awarded to the winning piece in each category listed above and to the "best overall," which may be from any category. Display of entries and presentation of awards will be during the 2017 Convention in Austin, Texas. Entrants are encouraged to attend. The winning piece judged "best overall" will be crowned at the end of the 2017 Convention.

Dear Applicant Thank you for your entry in the Inaugural TJA Stone Cutters Design Competition. We appreciate your interest and support of the organization. Please fill out and submit the following form with your entry fee.

Finished entries must be received by September 30, 2017.

Name: _____

Company: _____

Address: _____

City/ST/Zip: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Categories entered (Only one piece per category)

Category 1 _____
(\$100 entry fee)

Category 2 _____
(\$100 entry fee)

Category 3 _____
(\$100 entry fee)

Identity of the gem material is required. Entrants will indicate gemstone enhancement done, to the best of their knowledge. Attach an additional page.

Total Fees: _____

Mail Entries to:

TJA DESIGN CONTEST

Brad Koen

611 Congress Ave.

Austin, Texas 78701

(512) 478-2595

brad@joekoenjewelers.com

All finished entries must be sent by **registered mail, insured with a return receipt**. Entries remain the property of the person entering item. All winning and non-winning entries will be returned by registered mail as soon as possible. TJA assumes no liability for loss or damage to any piece entered.



TJA 2017 Jewelry Design Competition Entry Form

Deadline: September 30, 2017

Eligibility

Anyone who is a TJA member, or is employed by a TJA member, or a student, currently enrolled at a college or university, who is interested in designing and/or creating a one-of-a-kind piece of jewelry.

Rules of Entry

Pieces must be original designs created by the persons entering them. Pieces may be designed and made by more than one person. Pieces cannot have been mass produced or previously sold. Pieces must have been produced between Sept. 2016 and September, 2017. Pieces may have been entered in other competitions, but cannot have won any awards.

Pieces should not be identified or hallmarked until after the judging.

Details of Design Entry Entrants may enter one piece in each of three categories. Each piece must be submitted with a \$100 nonrefundable entry fee. Only finished pieces will be accepted.

Category # 1 Materials may not exceed \$1,000. Pieces must be made of Silver, Gold or Platinum and may contain stones.

Category # 2 Materials from \$1,000 to \$3000. Pieces must be made of Silver, Gold or Platinum and may contain stones.

Category # 3 Materials over \$3,000. Pieces must be made of Silver, Gold or Platinum and may contain stones.

Category # 4 Bench Jewelers exclusive. This category is for the bench jeweler to show their expertise in jewelry design. The person entering this category must be the only one to touch the piece from conception to final polish. Materials of any value may be used.

Deadline – September 30, 2017

Application, entry fee and finished piece must arrive by September 30, 2017.

Judging

The entries will be judged by qualified people in the jewelry industry before this year's **Convention** in Austin, TX October 28-30. When the pieces are being judged, they will be identified by number only. The judges will select the winning pieces on the basis of creative use of materials, craftsmanship, wear-ability, originality, and fashion merit.

Awards

Awards will be awarded to the winning piece in each category listed above and to the "best overall," which maybe from any category. Display of entries and presentation of awards will be during the 2017 Convention in Austin, Texas. Entrants are encouraged to attend. The winning piece judged "best overall" will be crowned at the end of the 2017 Convention.

Cash awards for the student category are sponsored by: J. Patrick Diamonds, Inc., 5956 Sherry Ln. #538, Dallas, TX 75225

Dear Applicant Thank you for your entry in the 25th Annual TJA Jewelry Design Competition. We appreciate your interest and support of the organization. Please fill out and submit the following form with your entry fee.

Finished entries must be received by September 30, 2017.

Name: _____
Company: _____
Address: _____
City/ST/Zip: _____
Phone: _____
Email: _____

Categories entered (Only one piece per category)

- Category 1 _____ (\$100 entry fee)
- Category 2 _____ (\$100 entry fee)
- Category 3 _____ (\$100 entry fee)
- Category 4 _____ (\$100 entry fee)

Describe the jewelry pieces entered, including material value (cost). Attach an additional page.

Student Category – Entry Fees and Info

Student Awards Sponsored by J. Patrick Diamonds, Inc. \$15 per jewelry piece or (set) entered.

Pieces will be judged on design and execution. **PRIZE**

- 1st Place ----- \$250 w/Plaque**
 - 2nd Place----- \$150 w/Plaque**
 - 3rd Place----- \$100 w/Plaque**
 - 4th Place--Honorable mention with Plaque only.**
- (No category rules apply to Student Category)**

Total Fees: _____

Mail Entries to:

TJA DESIGN CONTEST

Brad Koen

611 Congress Ave.

Austin, Texas 78701

(512) 478-2595

brad@joekoenjewelers.com

All finished entries must be sent by **registered mail, insured with a return receipt**. Entries remain the property of the person entering item. All winning and non-winning entries will be returned by registered mail as soon as possible. TJA assumes no liability for loss or damage to any piece entered.

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