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INDIA RISING...
THE CHOKSI INTERVIEW

INSIDE EMERALDS

**THE HARSH REALITY
OF BANKRUPTCY**

**FINLAY FILES
CHAPTER 11**

HOW ARE YOU DRIVING TRAFFIC INTO YOUR STORE?

The 4Cs are not the only things that make a piece of diamond jewelry a sales winner. In an ongoing series, *Rapaport Diamond Report* explores the “3Ws” — what’s selling, what’s not and why — by going straight to the people who really know — jewelry retailers. Each month, we ask a sampling of retailers to comment on the important issues that are facing the industry today. Here is what they had to say when asked: *Are you planning any special advertising or in-store promotions to bring in customers?*

**MICHAEL BRYANT, PRESIDENT
BRYANT & SONS, LTD.
SANTA BARBARA, CALIFORNIA**

“Yes, we have quite a few in-store events, usually tied in with some sort of local charitable organization. For example, we do things with the symphony here and we will have an evening where, for example, Cartier will bring in their diamond watch collection and we’ll have a cocktail party and invite the symphony board members and big donor list. Along with the special collection from Cartier, we’ll show our own inventory. We do that with various organizations — the art museum, the hospital. It seems to work better for us than just having a night of a designer collection. I like to do a trunk show, but I like to tie it in with some kind of local organization. We’ll get a better turnout that way.

“We’re doing a little more of this in the current economy to stir up interest and get some more traffic into the store. We did one with a company called Méche that sells dog-motif jewelry. They have all the breeds from Westminster Kennel Club in charms. I did it in conjunction with this organization in town called Dog Adoption Awareness

Group and we sold more than \$20,000 of charms in two days. Some of the charms had diamond collars, some of the bracelets had pavé diamond dog bones and toggle-style clasps. The charms ranged from about \$400 to \$1,000; bracelets were more. I’ve never done anything with a dog group before but we had a great turnout and I’ll probably do it again.”

**BARBARA STRAUSS, CO-OWNER
STRAUSS JEWELERS
MT. VERNON, WASHINGTON**

“I’m planning my annual anniversary sale for the end of October, as usual; we’re not doing anything additional. We promote it with direct mail and in the newspaper. It’s an annual sale we’ve had for 23 years. It’s two days, Friday and Saturday. We get a good turnout in dollars, not always necessarily in numbers. But it gets our face in front of our customers again. And then the other promotion that we do annually is a Christmas card that we send out with our pictures on it and we actually give away stuff. That’s pretty much what it’s going to be.”

**CHRISTOPHER STRADER, MANAGER
HOOD RIVER JEWELERS
HOOD RIVER, OREGON**

“We’re doing the same thing we did before the so-called economic crisis — a little bit of everything, except for TV and billboards. We do things all the time and on a regular basis and they change all the time. We’re on the same rhythm we’ve always had. We do some trunk shows, we do some in-store promotions, we do some parties, we do some print advertising, we do radio.”

**RANDY COOPER, OWNER
RANDY COOPER'S FINE JEWELRY
WICHITA, KANSAS**

"Yes, we always do advertising for Christmastime; we advertise heavily with the *Wichita Eagle*, the local paper. We also have two duratrans that run year-round in the airport, one in each concourse. And on the first of November, we have a very well-attended, high-end cocktail party, dinner and open bar. We try to treat our customers the very best we possibly can, give everybody a treat at the end of the evening so they can take it home and use it and remember us.

"We are also going to do a little bit more in a magazine called *Splurge!* We're going to advertise in that magazine for October, November and December."

**GEORGE REINAS, OWNER
BOVE JEWELERS
KENNETT SQUARE, PENNSYLVANIA**

"Basically, what we're sticking with is our direct mail. We do some newspaper, but it's primarily the direct mail to the customers and emails. And yes, we're absolutely doing promotions; we have been doing promotions since Valentine's Day, pushing what we normally do even stronger. So we had our Valentine's Day sale and our Mother's Day sale. My wife made a nice newsletter and explained to the customers about the economy and how it's affected us and how we're trying to go on and what products we have and what our plans are through Christmas.

"We're going into a designer sale now, where we try to get merchandise from as many people as we can that we can discount and sell at a better price. We do a wine-tasting and other events all the time. But the big thing is we're trying to do things more electronically, where we get customers' emails and we'll send text reminders about their anniversaries and that their wives liked this piece, or follow up on wish lists. I'm not sure how effective it is, but if we didn't do that, I'd really be down."



**SUSAN PURNELL, OWNER
KUHN'S JEWELERS
SALISBURY, MARYLAND**

"Right now, I am starting our own trade-in program, but instead of 'Cash for Clunkers,' we're calling it 'Treasures for Trinkets.' I'm putting together an ad campaign and I'm going to do it on TV, where I'm going to say, 'Do you have any old jewelry you don't wear anymore? Kuhn's can now help you turn your old trinkets into treasures. We invite you to use the jewelry you don't wear as a down payment for the jewelry you want to wear. ...' I'm not sure how long we'll do it for; it depends how well it works. It will probably start in September.

"I also bought the cover of our local *Metropolitan Magazine*, which is the see-and-be-seen-in publication that everybody here reads every month. We'll have an article inside and it will be dedicated to gift ideas for Christmas with value. That's the magazine that's in every doctor's office and so everybody will see our faces.

"I'm also being a lot more diligent than I ever was about sending out mailings. I used to send out birthday cards, but now we're sending out actual gift certificates to everybody on their birthday and their anniversary.

"This is a time when a lot of people will not market because they don't think they have the money to do it and I totally understand that it's scary. But if you don't market, you might as well march yourself right out of business." ♦