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from the publisher



The evolution of men's jewellery and the allure of alternative metals

en's jewellery has undergone a radical transformation in recent years. No longer simply limited to a wristwatch or a plain gold wedding band, modern men's jewellery embraces a broader esthetic and more diverse materials. At the heart of this evolution is a rising interest in alternative metals titanium, tungsten, stainless steel, and even black zirconium—which offer bold style, unmatched durability, and a departure from traditional luxury norms.

This shift is driven by changing attitudes toward masculinity and personal expression. Today's male consumers want pieces that reflect individuality, modern design, and everyday wearability. Precious metals like gold and silver, while still popular, are being edged out by industrial-inspired materials that better align with contemporary lifestyles. These alternative metals cater to men who seek strength and sophistication without excess polish.

Titanium, for instance, has become a go-to material for men's rings and bracelets. Its lightweight nature and resistance to scratches make it ideal for active lifestyles. With a cool, grey sheen and hypoallergenic properties, titanium balances form and function beautifully. It's particularly popular in wedding bands, where its resilience mirrors the commitment it symbolizes.

Tungsten carbide—denser and heavier than titanium—offers a masculine weight and unmatched hardness. Its scratch resistance and mirror-like finish make it a favourite for men seeking something sleek, modern, and nearly indestructible. Tungsten jewellery can also be infused with carbon fibre or wood inlays, offering a fusion of organic and industrial style.

Stainless steel, once seen as utilitarian, has emerged as a versatile material in men's fashion jewellery. Affordable, durable, and easy to work with, stainless steel is now crafted into chains, rings, and minimalist cuffs that deliver clean lines and contemporary elegance. It's ideal for trend-forward pieces without the luxury price tag.

Black zirconium is another standout, known for its matte, jet-black finish and edgy esthetic. Often used in statement rings and urban-inspired jewellery, black zirconium is lightweight yet strong, appealing to men who want something distinct and unconventional.

What makes these metals particularly attractive is not just their practicality, but their symbolic appeal. In a world increasingly focused on sustainability and authenticity, alternative metals represent a break from ostentatious wealth and a move toward purposeful design. They appeal to men who value innovation and understated luxury.

Designers are responding to this growing demand by creating collections that blend modern architecture with raw materiality. Geometric shapes, matte finishes, and mixed materials are replacing traditional filigree and gemstone-heavy designs. The result is jewellery that feels masculine, modern, and meaningful.

As gender norms continue to evolve and self-expression becomes more central to style, the men's jewellery market is likely to keep expanding. Alternative metals are leading the charge—not only redefining what men's jewellery looks like but also what it represents. From commitment rings to everyday pieces, these materials offer a compelling combination of durability, innovation, and style that resonates with the modern man.

To mark its 20th anniversary, *Jewellery Business* reflects on two decades of industry coverage, celebrating the evolution of design, craftsmanship, and cultural relevance in jewellery. The milestone tribute revisits standout features that captured key trends, ethical shifts, and emotional storytelling that have shaped the trade. Through personal reflections and archival highlights, the anniversary piece honours the publication's ongoing role as a thoughtful, forward-looking voice in the jewellery world.

Until next time, stay well and be safe. 🛇

Linda Dalke

"My thing was always about individuality and about creating a world, because you don't just wear clothes, you live a life. You have style. You project who you are."

–Ralph Lauren

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on the cover

Some of the most memorable covers of Jewellery Business over the last 20 years. As Jewellery Business celebrates its 20th anniversary, we take a walk through the archives—unearthing stories that still shimmer with insight, charm, and relevance. Choosing just a few favourites was nearly impossible—each issue sparkled in its own way. But these features reflect the shifting heart of the jewellery world, through evolving tastes, technologies, and traditions.

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By Duncan Parker

ewels and watches (and almost everything else) have value based on many factors. Beauty is a prime factor in creating desire for things. There are so many ways to see beauty: In looking for a meal, the architectural marvel of a meal presented in a Michelinstarred restaurant will usually hold a far greater appeal than a really tasty, but perhaps boring-looking ladle of stew in a bowl. A fruit tree in full blossom is usually more photogenic than the same tree in its winter nakedness. A poet's declaration of love is more likely to draw water from my eyes than a sticky note on my computer monitor asking, "How about going for a coffee sometime ?"





Cartier fine emerald ring

Jewellery is a representation of the beautiful. We can find a jewel that we determine to be a most beautiful thing and we can purchase it, hint at a gift of it, or, indeed, make it, and wear it. The beauty of a jewel is "proven" when the recipient beams at the giver, even if that is the same person (self-selected jewels are a very important part of our industry, and we're usually pretty pleased with our own choices). The beauty of a jewel is at least as important to the person facing it as it is to the person wearing it.

Jewels are worn proudly. They are a statement of our personal style, our good taste, and discerning understanding of textures, colours, design, designers, and makers. For much of the world, the maker plays a huge role in the value placed on a jewel.

Quality is crucial

Another factor that determines value is quality. Many years ago, I had a modest budget and also had a lot of holes to drill (I was fixing up my fixer-upper house). I purchased an inexpensive electric drill. My new drill worked okay, got kind of hot, slowed down, and was generally sluggish, but it drilled holes. I had a friend who offered to help me (I can't quite remember what required so many holes drilled), he arrived with a metal box like a tinsmith's briefcase, opened the box and revealed an electric drill. His drill looked kind of like mine, but then he started drilling. My jaw dropped. The drill was fast, robust, and, half an hour later, the job was completed. He placed the drill in its case, curved the cord in, snapped the case closed and simply said, "You never regret buying the best quality." Eventually, I saved up and purchased one of those drills, but not before wearing out two more



Cartier Fleur du Lys brooch.

cheap drills. We still both have those "best quality" drills made by a famous tool company.

Quality in jewellery speaks out loud, just like the drill. If you have a jewel that is well designed, expertly constructed, and beautifully set, it will be the best thing to do its assigned task; it will be beautiful and will make people happy.

Famous jewellery houses are well known and highly regarded, not because they are famous. The most desired jewels in the world are

produced by houses with exceptional design, the finest materials, and impeccable work that goes into the finished jewel.

Cartier

Cartier didn't just appear one day and suddenly everyone wanted a Love bracelet. Cartier opened in 1847, and the company brought a focus on high style, fine quality, and the best materials to the Paris market. The focus on quality was important to the Cartier family, and the atelier took

estate

time to gain a reputation for the overall beauty of their jewels. This focus was never lost, and the demand for their work has never diminished. If you walk past the window of a Cartier store, it will be difficult to walk past the door. We are drawn in by the marvellous coloured gems, the top design, and the captivating quality.

Tiffany

Similarly, Tiffany had a focus on design and embraced elements of European style but with a unique American element. Tiffany, established a decade before Cartier, gained a reputation and has held strongly to its traditions, and you can still look at any Tiffany jewel from front or back, or look at the quality of its diamond cut, and it's clear they don't cut corners. Tiffany proudly features the names of many of its designers who bring the beauty of their ideas to enthusiastic customers. The combination of the brand and the names of the extraordinary designers creates a provenance to be sought. From the days of Louis Comfort Tiffany and his imaginative and impeccable work, names like Schlumberger, Peretti, Picasso, and even Canadian architect Gehry have drawn shoppers because we know Tiffany's work is exceptional and designs are enduring.

Van Cleef and Arpels

Van Cleef and Arpels, founded in 1906, quickly attracted a stylish Parisian clientele for their leading-edge modern design, fine quality,

and quintessential style. Van Cleef and Arpels remains one of the most desired brands, and, again, this is because they have remained bound to their original vision and the quality required by that vision. Van Cleef continues to lead the world in recognition and innovation in design. One of the most desired names in the auction world, Van Cleef & Arpels jewels, period to modern, routinely bring multiple strong bids.

I have only named a few of the biggest names in the jewellery world, and there are many others who fit the description. Bulgari, Harry Winston, David Webb, Buccellati, and Graff, are just a few other examples. All these houses have international reputations based on vision in design, consistency of materials, and quality of work. You never regret buying the best quality.

All this talk of quality and famous houses does a little disservice to new designers, artists, metalsmiths and creators. All the famous houses started small and unknown. It was a combination of location, timing, and marketing that helped establish a name, certainly, but mostly consistency of quality and design, which made those houses what they are today. There are new ateliers working commission by commission today who will eventually join the other immortals on the Mount Olympus of the jewellery world.

Desirability of a jewel

Another thing that contributes to value is rarity, which is often closely associated with desirability. What we can't get, we tend to want more





Tiffany & Co. 1890s Art Nouveau opal and enamel brooch.

than what we can get. A reason we cannot attain something is that there isn't any availability. How many things do we see stating that it's part of a limited edition, or the "last one," or we're booking on a plane and the website says "only two seats left,"or, the worst—"collectable." These terms convey the idea of rarity, but, on average, it's pretty likely that something that is genuinely rare will not make a claim of rarity.

One of the world's most desired jewels is anything made by Paris jeweller JAR. Joel A. Rosenthal, simply known as JAR, makes very few jewels each year. The jewels are not offered outside of his atelier, but occasionally appear at auction. These jewels are truly rare, with a focus on exceptional quality and exhilarating colour choices. JAR's work is constantly in demand and rarely available. Sometimes things are so rare that they are not on many people's radar, and remain niche things, highly desired, but in very rarefied territory.

The Art Deco period

Another factor that makes something rare is that it's no longer produced and, therefore, not readily available. There has always been a demand for Art Deco jewels, but about a century has passed since the true Art Deco period. So, naturally, Art Deco jewels are very rare. Again, whatever we can't get, we want more.

At auction, we have the good fortune to offer jewels that cover a huge historical range, and we find Art Deco jewels will regularly drive strong bids. If we have a bracelet from 1890, 1905, 1930, 1950, and 1990, and, all other things being equal, if the 1930 bracelet is Art Deco, it will most likely be the one with the most bids and realize the best result. Sometimes, the age of an item is not the driver of price, but the beauty of design, and who can argue against Art Deco?

As we discussed before, another factor in price is brand. This can be where the desire for a name may dominate. At an auction, we may have two very similar Art Deco bracelets. If the bracelets are examined closely, perhaps the quality of work is pretty similar, the grading of the gems may match, and the two may be comparable. If one bears the name of a famous house, it may change everything.

A lovely 1925 to 1930 diamond and platinum Art Deco design bracelet without a known signature may sell at auction for \$20,000 to

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Jewelry provided courtesy of The ClearCut.



Van Cleef & Arpels sapphire and diamond necklace.

\$30,000, while a very similar Art Deco bracelet bearing the name of a famous house, such as Cartier, will possibly triple the selling price at maybe \$70,000 to \$100,000.

A ring with a pretty little flower or ladybug, in gold with gems, may sell at auction for \$1,000 to \$1,500 or so, but a ring with a quatrefoil shape inset with a gem, part of the Van Cleef and Arpels Alhambra line may sell for \$4,000 to \$6,000.

A client came to see us and brought a bracelet which would have sold for \$10,000 to \$14,000 if it hadn't had the name Van Cleef and Arpels affixed to it. It sold for \$68,750. The name was a differentiating factor. People knew it was Van Cleef and knew it was fine quality. The consignor was not aware of who made it and was very pleased with the result.

Conclusion

Often, when I examine jewels people bring to Dupuis for possible consignment for auction, they don't know what they have. Sometimes, they are not aware of the name. "This is a (American Art Deco designer) Raymond Yard brooch," I might say, and they may ask, "Who's that, and does it make some kind of difference?" Yes, it does.

Others bring unsigned items, and they tell me something like "it was made by such and such goldsmith, who ran the Cartier Paris workshop." The quality is usually not what I would expect from Cartier, and even if it were, the name is no consequence if the goldsmith was moonlighting. It might be lovely and a beautiful jewel, but without the signature, the name of the famous house can not be assigned to the jewel.

The value of a jewel is driven by beauty, quality, rarity, demand, and name. The name that drives demand is usually established on the basis of the three factors of beauty, quality, and rarity. The big houses started with a focus on those and made their names on that basis. The continued demand for their work is due to the fact that they never lost that drive for the finest in design, materials, and workmanship.



Duncan Parker, FGA, FCGmA, CAP-CJA, is vice president of Dupuis Fine Jewellery Auctioneers, based in Toronto. He has worked as a gemmologist and jewellery specialist, appraiser, and consultant for nearly 35 years. Parker is an educator and lecturer on jewellery

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CONTRACTOR OF STREET









Gems for men

By Lauriane Lognay

he world of gemstones is a rich and wonderful spectrum of colours. Often following the year's trends or fads, they offer a wide variety to choose from, for all purposes and tastes. We make gem suggestions for a night out, for a special occasion, birthstones, weddings, anniversaries, or simply as gifts, but these events often portray a woman. A lack of ideas or even originality comes for men in the coloured stone market. Very rarely will they, or we for that matter, stray from the classics: onyx, hematite, tiger eyes, etc. Those gems we know by heart in our industry. I would go as far as we know them to the point of rolling our eyes! It's time, I think, for a coloured revolution, it's time for coloured gemstones for men!

Types of gems

There are hundreds of gems on the market, and honestly, at the end of the day, one chooses what they like, and the jeweller and designer make that dream come true. Jewellery trends for men are not forgiving. Most of the time, they follow a rigid



line of thinking and very specific types of jewellery. Yet, let's say you have a customer, looking for something, something dashing, something original, something not to do with onyx, but that would go well for a more masculine look? Hematite, lapis lazuli, onyx...even malachite! These gems are great, but very overused for the same generic looks and jewellery.

I could name dozens of options, some ranging from inexpensive to collectable, some ranging from common to rarer than a diamond!

Since we cannot write a whole book, I will name just a few options here and let your imagination run wild for the rest.

Pietersite—a commercial term for a variety of chalcedony and quartz. Originating mainly from Namibia and China, this gem is known for its chaotic chatoyancy and its beautiful colours. Like an abstract painting, it's reminiscent of lava flowing on charred earth. With hues of red, blue, grey, some oranges and yellows, this gems is perfect for an original look, without being too showy. Being a quartz, it has a hardness of 7 on the Mohs scale.

Meteorite—an out-of-this-world gemstone that can show you a lot of variety in its mostly grey scale colours. A chic, sturdy option for those who like a metallic look and originality. You can find different styles of meteorite and etching to fit your clients' needs. It mostly polishes like silver or gold, having a common iron-based composition in every meteorite. The surface etching can be redone by a professional over time. Palasite and gibbsite are examples of meteorite. You can also have full bands made out of meteorite, just be careful of the varieties that rust over time.

Agate—a highly versatile variety of quartz. Now, I know what you are thinking of: isn't tiger eye a form of agate quartz? Isn't it redundant? The simple answer would be no. The world of agate is so vast and full of choices, why choose the same gem over and over again? Earthy tones, dark shades, bright colours, all the choices are there; the client just has to learn about them. Fire agates are perfect for a bit of mystic, banded

gemmology



Meteorite in white gold ring. PHOTO COURTESY LAURIANE LOGNAY/RIPPANA INC

agate for a more classical look, even moss agate, a growing trend, has its place in men's jewellery with its green tones. With a hardness of 7 on the Mohs scale, whatever agate you keep at your store or that you supply could be your next customer's choice.

Black diamond—has always been an option over the years, but hasn't been considered enough in terms of men's jewellery. Some nice faceted emerald cuts or oval shapes to replace the boring onyx add a certain cachet. It's a bold option that differs from the traditional colourless diamond, and adds a mysterious side to the piece. It has a hardness of 10 on the Mohs scale, making it a perfect option for any celebration or gift for men. It offers a subtle luxury to the owner. For those who don't like the absolute in black, they can choose salt and pepper diamonds to add a bit of spice to their jewellery.

Colourless diamond—a good option to add sparkle to their life. Accentuate the main gem, or just make a statement that diamonds are forever for women and men! A timeless classic no one minds, especially with the Canadian diamonds on the market making a better option









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Silicified dinosaur bone ring. PHOTO COURTESY RIPPANA

for clients. You can request other shapes than the classic brilliant. Be it portrait cuts, rose cuts, or even rough. It's also the birthstone of the month of June.

Green tourmaline—a gemstone often overlooked but not missing in terms of shades and tones of green. Chrome tourmalines offer the best deep forest green for any refined jewellery for him. With a hardness of 7 on the Mohs scale, it's a good gemstone for any type of jewellery. It's also the birthstone of the month of October. Tourmaline offers such a vast array of colours, the choice doesn't stop at green. Brown, black, purple, electric blue, red, etc.—the choice is his.

Tsavorite—an underrepresented gemstone, in my opinion. It has a deep and vivid forest green colour as its best quality, which can rival tourmaline or even emerald without the hassle of inclusions, and is part of the garnet group (grossular variety). It has a hardness of 7 to 7.5 on the Moh's scale, making it perfect for more risky designs. This gem mainly comes from Kenya and Tanzania, and is considered rarer to find than emerald, especially in larger sizes. It allows its wearer to stand out amidst other, more classic jewellery. It is the birthstone of January.

Emerald—cannot be ignored while talking about green gemstone options for men. It is an unbeatable classic for those who want to keep the traditional but sophisticated side of men's jewellery. Historically worn by warriors and royals alike, it offers a distinct style. One just has to watch out for the inclusions that could fragilize them. It has a hardness of 7.5 on the Mohs scale, and it's also May's birthstone. If the client wants something different, mint-coloured emeralds are taking the market by storm at the moment.

Labradorite—its mystic appeal makes it the perfect gem for someone looking for an eye-catching aesthetic. First discovered in Labrador, Canada, this feldspar offers beautiful iridescent colours on its mostly grey

base. Flashes of gold, blue, purple and green are the prime example of its optical phenomenon: labradorescence.
For someone wanting something Canadian, or just a little more mysterious, this is the perfect gem. One just has to be careful of its relatively fragile hardness of 6 to 6.5 on the Mohs scale.

Tahitian pearls—these have seen a rise in popularity for men's jewellery in the last few years. More and more, the natural and irradiated dark tones have found their place amongst more masculine lines of jewellery designs. Charcoals, steel, peacock or even bronze colours are sought after for pendants, bracelets, or even cuff links. Being the birthstone of June, it adds an option other than the alexandrite. Cultured in French Polynesia, those dark pearls offer a mysterious flair and look less delicate than their white counterparts. Worn by warriors in Polynesian culture, it's just a matter of bringing back its cultural power.

Silicified dinosaur bones—a unique material blending natural history, geology, and great looks. Silicified dinosaur bones are fossiled bones that underwent a process where silica (quartz) replaced over millions of years, the organic bone material. It transforms the bone (while leaving all the important cellular patterns and colours) into timeless gemstones with the hardness of quartz. Coming in multiple colour palettes like red, grey, green, yellow, brown, black, etc. Each pattern and type of fossilized dinosaur bones offers up a story for men's jewellery.

Conclusion

All these precious gemstones are but simple examples of the wide world of gems offered to us. Using the classics with a twist, or even just working with rough or tumbled materials instead of just faceted ones, is another way we can make leaps in men's jewellery designs.

Of course, gems like onyx or hematite will always have their space in men's jewellery wear. Classics are there for a reason after all. Having more options on your plate means more chances on your side to make an interesting sale.

Gemstones are but the accessories to a jeweller, and the real feeling of masculinity or power is for the customer to fall in love with your jewellery. \bigcirc



Lauriane Lognay is a fellow of the Gemmological Association of Great Britain (FGA) and has won several awards. She is a gemstone dealer who works with jewellers to help them decide on the best stones for their designs. Lognay owns Rippana, Inc., a Montréal-based company that offers coloured

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How FRAUDULENT PAYMENTS target Canadian jewellers

By Scott Hayes

t only takes a few minutes for a fraudster to cost a jewellery store thousands of dollars. Whether you're selling engagement rings, luxury watches, or fine gold chains, if you accept credit cards or online payments, your store is a potential target. And unfortunately, as jewellery continues to be a high-value and easily resold commodity, it remains a favourite for scammers. How do these scams work, and how can you protect yourself?

The many faces of payment fraud

One of the most common tactics involves the use of stolen credit card information. A fraudster might buy a \$10,000 bracelet using someone else's card, then disappear before the real cardholder spots the charge and issues a chargeback. You lose both the product and the payment. There is an increasingly common "friendly fraud" which occurs when a customer who might actually be the rightful cardholder makes a legitimate purchase but then disputes the transaction, claiming they never received the item. In some cases, they may even return a different or damaged item and demand a refund.

Another version involves stolen cards being used to buy items that are later returned, but for store credit instead of a refund. The credit can then be resold, and the original merchandise is now long gone.

Red flags that deserve a second look

Fraudsters often follow patterns. Recognizing these early signs could save you from major losses:

- Multiple high-value purchases in a short period, especially if it's a new or unfamiliar customer.
- Mismatch in billing and shipping addresses, particularly when one of them is international or from a high-risk location.
- Customer reluctance to show ID. Legitimate buyers usually don't become concerned about verification, especially for expensive items.
- Use of multiple credit cards for a single transaction. This is a hallmark of someone testing out which cards will work.
- Returns without a receipt or returns based on vague or inconsistent reasons, especially for high-value products.

The best defense against fraud

Preventing fraud isn't about having a single solution, it's about building layers of protection that work together to make your business more fraud-proof. Here's how you can start:

1. Train your team

Your staff are your first line of defense. Train them to recognize suspicious behaviour, follow verification protocols, and understand that rushing a sale at the expense of due diligence can be costly. Make it second nature for team members to politely but firmly question unusual transactions.

2. Work with the right payment partners

Not all payment processors are created equal. Some offer advanced fraud detection tools, including real-time flagging of suspicious transactions and protection against certain types of chargebacks. Choose providers who specialize in high-risk retail environments such as jewellery.

3. Make your policies clear

A well-written return and refund policy isn't just for customer service, it can be a key tool in preventing fraud. Be explicit about what's required for returns, and make sure the policy is posted online, printed on receipts, and/ or communicated by staff. This helps defuse disputes before they escalate to chargebacks.

4. Monitor transactions actively

Pay attention to the data. Are you seeing a sudden spike in chargebacks? Is one staff member processing an unusual number of returns? Use transaction monitoring tools or simple reporting reviews to identify red flags early.

5. Leverage technology for online purchases

Modern fraud prevention software can identify patterns the human eye might miss. These systems look at IP addresses, geolocation, device fingerprinting, and behavioural analysis to flag suspicious activity. While not perfect, they can act as a powerful second layer of defense.

6. Secure your online presence

If you offer ecommerce, invest in cybersecurity. Ensure your website uses a secure payment gateway, has SSL encryption, and stores customer data



responsibly. A breach of your site not only leads to fraud, it can also damage trust and credibility.

7. Have a recovery plan

Even with all precautions, fraud will still occur. Have procedures in place for reporting incidents, documenting losses, and recovering funds.

Every fraudulent transaction has a ripple effect. It erodes trust, strains customer service teams, and can even impact your merchant processing rates. More importantly, it's often avoidable with the right mix of awareness and action. Fraudsters count on speed and surprise. Don't give them either.



Scott Hayes is a security advisor with Jewellers Vigilance Canada and an independent security consultant. He retired with over 28 years of experience in law enforcement, having spent the last 15 years investigating organized crime on a national and international level. He is a Certified Protection

Professional (CPP) with ASIS Int'l and an Associate Business Continuity Professional (ABCP) with DRI Int'l.

Jewellers Vigilance Canada (JVC) is a non-profit subsidiary of the Canadian Jewellers Association with a mandate "to advance loss prevention within the jewellery industry." JVC also works closely with law enforcement agencies in Canada through their Crime Prevention Program. For more information, visit www.jewellerycrimecanada.ca.



By Karen Howard

n the glittering world of jewellery, beauty is only part of the story. Beneath the sparkle lies a complex, thriving industry built on trust, expertise, and the precise valuation of precious pieces. Jewellery appraisal businesses play a critical role in this ecosystem, helping owners, insurers, estate planners, and collectors accurately assess the worth of their treasures.

For entrepreneurs and seasoned appraisers alike, growing a jewellery appraisal business is both an art and a science. It requires sharp technical skills, business acumen, strong client relationships, and—crucially—the wisdom to know when to bring in outside experts.

In this article, we'll explore the key phases of growing a jewellery appraisal business, when and why you should hire experts, and the types of professionals who can help elevate your business to new heights.

The foundation-skills, credentials, and reputation

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At the heart of every successful jewellery appraisal business is the appraiser's personal expertise. Clients entrust you with highly valuable and often deeply sentimental possessions, expecting a reliable, unbiased valuation. To build credibility, an appraiser must invest heavily in:

- Education—Courses in gemmology, appraisal methodology, metallurgy, and market analysis.
- Certification—Credentials from respected organizations like the Gemological Institute of America (GIA), the Canadian Gemmological Association (CGA) or the International Society of Appraisers (ISA).
- Experience—Years of hands-on work with a wide variety of jewellery types, from antique brooches to modern designer pieces.

Without a strong foundation, growth is almost impossible. Word-of-mouth, client loyalty, and professional referrals hinge on an appraiser's technical accuracy and ethical standards.

The growth phase–when expertise in business becomes essential

After the early years of building credibility, many appraisers hit a natural plateau. Referrals come steadily, but scaling beyond a solo operation can feel overwhelming. Common growth challenges include:

- Managing an increasing volume of appraisals
- Handling marketing and business development
- Expanding into new markets (estate appraisal, insurance replacement, auctions, etc.)
- Updating technology and record-keeping systems
- Hiring and training staff

At this juncture, the question becomes not if you should seek expert help, but when and who to hire.

Hiring experts-signs it is time

Here are clear signs that bringing in specialized help is critical for your business's continued growth:

- You're turning down work—If you're declining clients because your schedule is full, it's time to consider hiring or outsourcing help.
- Your administrative tasks are eating into appraisal time—Business operations like invoicing, appointment scheduling, record-keeping, and compliance can be delegated to others.
- You're unsure about new markets or services—Experts in estate law, auctions, insurance underwriting, or antique appraisal can help you expand safely into these niches.
- Your marketing efforts are sporadic or ineffective—If you're relying only on word-of-mouth and feeling invisible online, a marketing professional can turn things around.
- Your growth has stalled—Sometimes an outside perspective is needed to diagnose bottlenecks and suggest scalable solutions.

The experts you might need-and what they do

As your business grows, you might need help from a variety of specialists. Here's a breakdown:

Business consultants

What they do—Business consultants assess your operations, finances, and goals to create a strategic growth plan. They might help restructure your services, pricing, or client outreach methods.

When to hire—If you feel "stuck" or if revenue has plateaued despite steady client work.

Marketing and branding professionals

What they do—Marketing experts build your online presence through websites, SEO, social media, and email campaigns. Branding specialists refine your visual identity and messaging to attract ideal clients.

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800.999.FINE UnitedPMR.com As an appraiser, investing in courses that further education in gemmology, metallurgy, appraisal methodology, and market analysis is crucial to building credibility.



When to hire—If you're getting fewer new client inquiries than you'd like, or if you want to rebrand to target a higher-end market.

Administrative support (virtual assistants or office managers)

What they do—Administrative professionals handle scheduling, client communication, bookkeeping, document preparation, and sometimes even preliminary client intake processes.

When to hire—When you are losing too many productive hours to administrative tasks instead of appraising.

Legal and compliance advisors

What they do—Lawyers familiar with jewellery, insurance, and estate planning ensure that your contracts, reports, and business operations meet necessary legal standards.



When to hire—If you're moving into higher-risk areas like estate appraisal, or if you're hiring employees for the first time. Initially, also at the beginning of your business you should have a lawyer review all documents.

Gemmological and specialty experts

What they do—These are niche experts in areas like antique jewellery, coloured stones, watches, or high-end designer brands. They offer second opinions or perform deep analysis for rare or complicated appraisals.

When to hire—If you're appraising items outside your comfort zone or want to expand your offerings to new categories.

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As an appraiser, years of hands-on experience with a variety of different jewellery types is essential.

Technology and systems consultants

What they do—They help modernize your business with appraisal software, customer relationship management (CRM) systems, secure databases, and online client portals.

When to hire—If you're overwhelmed by paper records or want to offer a tech-savvy experience to clients.

Building a dream team–tips for success

Hiring experts is an investment. To ensure you get a strong return, keep these principles in mind:

- Start small—You don't have to hire a full-time staff overnight. Start with contractors, part-time help, or project-based consultants.
- Choose specialists in jewellery or related industries—Generic business or marketing consultants might not understand the nuances of jewellery appraisal.
- Set clear goals—Know what you want to achieve before bringing someone on, whether that's improving client retention, speeding up turnaround times, or expanding into estate work. This area is also

where a coach may be the answer. They can help you figure out what is the most important thing you want to achieve.

• Monitor and adjust—Regularly assess whether the expert's contributions are moving your business forward. If not, tweak the relationship or explore new resources.

Case study-a growth story example

Consider the case of "Carter Appraisals," a mid-sized jewellery appraisal business in London. After five years of steady word-of-mouth referrals, owner Lauren Carter faced a bottleneck: she was booked six months in advance, was working 60-plus hour weeks, and had no online marketing presence.

Rather than continuing to push harder, Lauren decided to hire a business consultant specializing in luxury services. Together, they revamped her pricing structure, hired a part-time administrative assistant, launched a polished website, and introduced a referral program for estate attorneys.

Within two years, her revenue doubled. She transitioned from working alone to managing a small team and even began teaching appraisal workshops. Most importantly, she reclaimed her work-life balance.

Carter's experience underscores an important truth: growth isn't just about getting more clients—it's about building a system that sustains quality, efficiency, and personal well-being.

Conclusion-scaling with intention and expertise

The growth of a jewellery appraisal business is not just a matter of increasing volume—it's about building a sustainable, reputable practice that delivers consistent value to clients. While technical proficiency lays the groundwork, it's the strategic addition of experts that enables long-term success. Whether you're overwhelmed by administrative tasks, ready to expand your services, or aiming to reach a higher-end clientele, surrounding yourself with the right professionals can transform your business.

Growth doesn't mean going it alone. It means recognizing when specialized skills, fresh perspectives, and targeted support can elevate your business to the next level. By investing in the right people at the right time, you ensure not only the longevity of your practice but also the freedom to focus on what you do best—delivering precise, trusted jewellery appraisals.



Karen Howard, FCGmA, RMV, IMJVA, is a veteran gemmologist and former appraisal business owner with over 30 years in the jewellery trade. Through her platform, Jewellery Appraisers Coach, she now coaches new appraisers overcome the challenges of their first year in business—covering everything from

client communication to ethical practices. Her work has been featured by over 20 media outlets, including Yahoo Finance, Fox4, NBC, and WGN Chicago, highlighting her contributions to professional standards and training in the appraisal industry.



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Discover the Sparkle at By Sarah Bauder JCK 2025 CK 2025 CK 2025 CK 2025, held at The Venetian and The Venetian Expo in Las Vegas, reignited the global jewellery industry with

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strong attendance, active buying, and a renewed sense of optimism. With a "Decades" theme celebrating jewellery's imeless appeal and future trends, the event welcomed over 1,800 xhibitors and 30,000 industry professionals, including over 17,000 buyers and decision-makers.¹ JCK proved to be a dynamic hub for

20

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networking, innovation, and growth, reinforcing its status as the premier destination for advancing the jewellery trade and shaping its future worldwide. Sarin Bachmann, RX Jewellery Group senior vice-president, says, "JCK continues to provide unmatched opportunities to connect, learn from experts and each other, innovate, reinvigorate the industry, and take businesses to the next level."²

The show opened with high energy as Daymond John, FUBU founder and *Shark Tank* investor, headlined the JCK Talks keynote session. Speaking to a full house, John shared his "5 Shark Points to Success," offering a blend of personal stories, actionable tips, and motivational advice. His talk emphasized the importance of mindset, resilience, and adaptability—core principles for thriving in any business. Sponsored by De Beers Group, the keynote set a bold tone for the event.

Another major highlight was the debut of the Kering Generation Award X Jewelry [AWK]., spotlighting sustainability and innovation. In collaboration with CIBJO and POLI.Design, the initiative featured 22 startups and students from 10 global institutions. Top honours went to lanyan and Lee Min Seo, both celebrated for creative reuse of unconventional materials, marking a forward-thinking step for the industry.

Notable design trends at the show included winged creatures such as butterflies and dragonflies, in addition to cuff bracelets and bangles.³

The 2025 show delivered unforgettable highlights, including electrifying performances by Snoop Dogg and Jason Derulo at JCK Rocks. In addition, JCK Talks remained a must-attend destination for retailers and brands eager to elevate their business acumen.⁴

Looking ahead to next year, JCK is slated to return to The Venetian and The Venetian Expo from May 29 to June 1, 2026.

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1. STEELX gold IP turquoise and crystal star medallion necklace with adjustable slider 20". MSRP \$100



2. Charles Garnier "New Mesh" genuine lapis lazuli and cubic zirconia cuff bangle 6.75 in. with gold plated two-tone sterling silver. MSRP \$380

3. M by Monte Luna Created sapphire and lab-grown diamond birthstone cable chain necklace in Sterling silver with rhodium plating. MSRP \$179

> 4. Dark matter interchangeable orange set. MSRP \$2175

5. Veloria's stainless steel and motherof-pearl inlay clover stud earrings. MSRP \$75

 6. Italgem Steel's black and stainless steel cross pendant necklace. MSRP \$99



7. A sleek, bulletshaped cremation pendant designed by A.R.Z STEEL to hold ashes, featuring a bold matte gold finish contrasted with polished stainless steel for a modern, meaningful tribute. MSRP \$100

8. ETHOS "Chisel" genuine black agate and black oil intaglio ring in rhodium-plated

sterling silver rhodium-plated high polish sculpted cuff bangle 6.75 in. MSRP \$379

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By Chris Ploof

he jewellery industry has long had a love/hate relationship with so-called "alternative metals." Some stores sell them very well, while others will not even consider them. However, the modern man is seeking innovative ways to embrace tradition (a wedding band, for example) while keeping it contemporary and expressing something about their unique identity. Luxury is demanding alternatives, but not just any alternative will do.

At the manufacturing level, some creators who use alternative materials produce rings that cannot be sized, are made from conflict materials, or are made out of material with little to no intrinsic value. Such examples are not a good fit for luxury today. The very word "alternative" can be defined as "a choice that differs from what is usual or expected, offering a different possibility or course of action." Some people embrace the idea of newness, but others may find this is exactly why they do not want to stock jewellery made from alternative materials.

PHOTOS COURTESY CHRIS PLOOF DESIGNS

Chris Ploof hand-forged Damascus steel belt buckle on black leather belt.

METALS FOR THE MODERN MAN Not just another alternative

Chris Ploof "Precious Damascus" rings in hand-forged Damascus steel and 18K yellow gold or 14K red gold, available with or without diamonds.

I view this through an entirely different lens. One of my product categories is non-traditional materials. I am lucky enough to have attended many bridal events and trunk shows at some fabulous retail jewellery stores and to have spoken with the end wearer of these rings. It is in our human DNA to want something different and unique, especially in this rapidly changing world. The customers who embrace alternative materials say that they love the idea of wearing something that other people will not or do not have. These are normal people, from all over, who want a modern ring made out of modern materials. This is not a fad. Modern metals are here to stay. So, here I will explore, with the aim of educating, the modern metals that retailers should be stocking to fill the demand.

Modern metals (or "alternative" if you must) are not only increasingly appealing, but some of them are also traditional, meaning that their use in luxury jewellery is not necessarily modern. For example, the Vikings commonly used bronze to create jewellery—gold was reserved for highstatus individuals. Stainless steel was officially invented in 1913 but cut steel jewellery was being produced as far back as the 16th century and became quite popular in the 1800s to 1930s.

Modern metal jewellery offers some key selling points that should not be overlooked, but there are also some facts to be very cautious about. Education is key. So, here is what your selling staff needs to know and understand about these new luxury materials.

Damascus steel

Damascus is a patterned metal that offers the benefit of a distinctive look. Originally used by Viking swordsmiths, this material was typically reserved for blades and was quite legendary. Many examples of Viking pattern laminated blades exist in museums around the world. Syrian swordsmiths made their own version of this material. Reports from the infamous crusades speak of knights using these fearsome swords that Chris Ploof rings in carbon fiber and precious metals (18K yellow gold, 14K red gold, 18K palladium white gold).

were so sharp they could cut through a silk scarf as it fluttered to the ground. More modern applications of Damascus steel include use in making collectible, beautiful shotguns during the late 1800s to 1900s. Contemporary applications are beautiful knife blades for heat-treatable Damascus steel, and the use of a more modern material—a three-series stainless steel Damascus with patterns developed for jewellery use. This is comprised of the same series of stainless steel called "surgical grade" or "marine grade" that, when properly prepared, is hypoallergenic and cannot corrode.

Damascus steel in luxury jewellery lends a very distinctive esthetic. One attractive benefit is that every piece is one of a kind. We can recreate the patterns or designs, but the exact pattern on your piece of jewellery is yours alone. I call it the art of the snowflake or fingerprint. This is especially alluring for bridal customers. Many of my clients opt for both bride and groom Damascus steel wedding bands, often with 18K gold accents, with or without diamonds, as a way to correlate (they choose the same pattern or design) and yet retain individuality.

For bridal customers, it is important to note that well-made Damascus steel bands can be sized if needed over the lifespan. Be sure to ask your supplier in advance if their Damascus steel rings can be sized.



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MOUNTINGS

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COLOUR STONES

FINDINGS

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Chris Ploof hand-forged Damascus steel dogtag pendant with crocodile leather inlay and an 18K gold bail.

> Rings made out of Damascus stainless steel are an artisanal product; however, due to little or no use of gold, they give the look of a substantial hand-crafted piece of jewellery for much lower costs than a traditional gold ring, especially at today's ever-increasing gold prices. Additionally, Damascus steel is a modern metal that can be paired with platinum, gold, silver, or diamonds to create an even more enhanced look for the discerning consumer who desires something precious and uniquely theirs.

> Damascus steel is also very durable, unlike rings made with plastic inlays, with crushed gems or wood, or other embedded materials. Those other alternative materials will not last as long as an all-metal ring, and they can be virtually impossible to size. Be aware that there are makers out there simply laser-engraving a pattern on cheap rings imported from wherever and falsely claiming that it is a true, handmade, patterned metal. This is a great look, but since it is a surface treatment only, it will not last.

Mokume gane

Mokume gane is another patterned metal, a blend of all precious metals that is made to look like wood grain. In fact, the term mokume gane translates to "wood eye metal" meaning that the laminated metal appears to the eye as wood grain. The demanding production process produces a lot of scrap material in creating these unique, one-of-a-kind patterns, so it still retains a luxury price, much greater than the sum of its parts.

Mokume gane was invented by Japanese swordsmiths in the late 1700s. The inventor, Denbei Shoami, was a maker of sword furniture for samurai swords, a master craftsperson. Over the years, it has evolved into a material for making luxury jewellery. Many metals can be used in mokume gane, but be aware that for rings, copper and copper-based alloys such as shibuichi and shakudo should always be avoided due to galvanic corrosion issues. Gold and silver, or gold and palladium, however, make beautiful wood-grained patterned material, and the

Chris Ploof hand-forged Mokume Gane rings in mixed precious metals (18K yellow gold, 18K palladium white gold, precious silver, and palladium) with one-of-a-kind patterns and two stainless steel rings, one with ruby accents and one with an 18K gold accent pattern cut on an antique rose engine.



metals are not cast, or mass produced. This is an artisanal, true master goldsmithing process. Several makers use all recycled metals for their mokume gane, and since this is a small-scale artisan product, these makers also have interesting stories you can use to excite your customer about owning their own, one-of-a-kind piece of art.

It is important to note that mokume gane rings can also be sized. Be sure to ask your supplier if they can size their rings.

Carbon fibre

Carbon fibre is made from the same element as a diamond—it is carbon, but in a very different format. It consists of thin, strong crystalline filaments of carbon, essentially carbon atoms bonded together in long chains. These fibres join together to create a strong and light source material that is used in aerospace, automobile manufacturing, and bicycle parts. It can also be used in the formation of fine jewellery.

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Across Canada | 1-888-955-1069 office@silvermancanada.com www.silvermancanada.com Chris Ploof hand-forged Damascus steel cuff bracelets with Inversa Leathers inlay from invasive species, including dragonfin, lionfish, and python.

Chris Ploof hand-forged Damascus steel cuff bracelet with a one-of-a-kind pattern.

The fibres are used as threads (called tow) or can be used as fabric woven from the tow. Additionally, carbon fibre tow can be chopped and used as a filler material. While extremely strong, carbon fibre needs to be placed in a matrix to hold its shape, and this is usually some form of epoxy resin, which is cured. The dark colour, coupled with the unique sheen, creates a very luxurious look. It also has a cool vibe of high performance, given its use in spaceships, which appeals strongly to masculine consumers. It is also a very long-lasting material.

Given its strength and endurance, carbon fibre is being used a lot in the formation of gender neutral wedding bands, often with the addition of precious metal. Not all carbon fibre bands can be sized, though, so be sure to ask the manufacturer if the ring can be sized , especially when selling a wedding band which is meant to be worn for life.

Conclusion

Modern metals, such as those listed above, offer a distinctive style of great beauty and artistry, a real eye-catching look. Customers for these materials are everywhere, and these metals can help sales associates to engage their customers, especially the men, because of their beautiful and captivating stories, which can be shared at the counter.

Be sure to work with trusted, reputable suppliers of modern metal jewellery. Ask if the rings can be sized. Some manufacturers cannot service their products or size the actual ring a customer was married in. Instead, they offer to trade the ring for new or refurbished stock they have on hand. Personally, I am really attached to my wedding ring and would find this unacceptable, but at the end of the day, it all comes down to communication. If you know all the facts, you can educate your customer accordingly.

Know the materials. Understand which last and which do not, so that you can honestly discuss the pros and cons with your customers. Not all modern metals are equal. Some (like tungsten carbide) can be very difficult to

remove in an emergency, for example. Also, some manufacturers offer conflict metals. It is fairly easy to do the research and look up metals online. Avoid the embarrassment of carrying a tantalum ring, for example, and then after the sale, your excited customer goes home and looks up the material and discovers it is a conflict metal. (True story—tantalum looks nice and dark, which is what some customers want, but it is a conflict metal. Transparency is key.)

Hopefully, the facts will allay any fears about these beautiful, modern alternatives for today's jewellery customer, especially the men. Modern metals give them choices, especially when they are looking for something special and unique, durable, and long-lasting.



Chris Ploof, an award-winning jewellery designer and metalsmith, founded Chris Ploof Designs in 2004. A specialist in modern metals, Ploof is a renowned expert in Damascus steel and mokume gane. His hand-forged metal jewellery designs are crafted in his solar-powered studio in Massachusetts. Ploof's work has

led to consulting projects all over the world, as well as multiple awards from the Santa Fe Symposium for his research and discoveries. In addition, Ploof has received numerous mentions in global trade publications.



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s the first heat wave of summer fades away, temperatures rise, signalling a beautiful season ahead. In Canada, we still marvel at the 9 p.m. sunsets; the days are long and vibrant, and the warm nights of the season are perfect for gathering with loved ones who may be scattered but are never forgotten. This gentle and unusual weather typically marks the beginning of the wedding season.

Canadian Jewellers Association

For our industry, the wedding season often coincides with the first significant jewellery purchase for many. Before making that purchase, it is customary to conduct in-person visits to various stores and engage in thorough online research. This approach allows buyers to curate the perfect jewellery piece that reflects their loved ones' tastes or their own. Consequently, finding a trusted jeweller is an essential step—not only in terms of price or quality but also in finding someone you can rely on for purchasing, repairing, and maintaining your jewellery pieces.

This is why, at the CJA, we encourage you to visit our website and utilize the directory feature to find your next trusted CJA jeweller. Our jewellers adhere to a strict code of ethics that protects consumers and is committed to providing the highest quality of goods and services at all times.

I am also thrilled to extend an invitation to our Expo Prestige show, taking place from **August 24 to August 26** at the Grand Quay in Montreal. This event will provide an excellent opportunity for buyers and vendors to network and collaborate in beautiful old Montreal. It will also be a chance for us at the CJA to officially launch our presence in Quebec, where many of our members and friends are excited about our plans to become fully bilingual.

Furthermore, we are pleased to announce that our JETS program will soon be available in French, allowing all jewellery lovers and aspiring professionals to access our jewellery training program in both French and English. This step will enable our members to introduce their staff to the essential ABCs of jewellery in the language they are most comfortable with. This natural progression is part of our efforts to become a fully bilingual organization representing all jewellery professionals and enthusiasts in Canada.

I also want to remind all our esteemed members to update their business profile pictures on Membee. For many, our directory is the first step in their search for a trusted jeweller, skilled

appraiser, or repair specialist. In a world that is increasingly visual, your picture in the directory sets you apart and creates a memorable first impression, so please be sure to update it soon.

As the hot season concludes and the first leaves begin to turn, it will be time for our annual Industry Summit, which gathers our friends, members, and allies from across the industry for an unforgettable day. This year, we will meet at the beautiful Omni King Edward Hotel in Toronto. This annual gathering features renowned speakers, golden networking opportunities, and many other surprises.

Make sure to register on our website to participate in our Industry Summit 2025 on **Monday, October 27, 2025**!

Looking forward to seeing you soon in Montreal,

Sara Belyazid

Communication project manager Canadian Jewellers Association sara@canadianjewellers.com

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Reframing Lacition

Ammolite and the rise of colour in men's jewellery

By Amarjeet Grewal

From KORITE's Lunar Collection, these sterling silver pieces balance sculptural form with Ammolite's iridescent energy designed to reflect fluid identity and personal expression.

KORITE's Midnight designs pair bold geometry with matte black titanium, allowing Ammolite's natural complexity to take centre stage. A statement in quiet strength.

en's jewellery is experiencing a bold and timely evolution one that embraces colour, fluidity, and personal meaning. While colour has always had a place in fine jewellery, recent years have seen a resurgence in coloured gemstones for men, fueled by changing views on gender identity, material culture, and individual style. This movement is carving space for Ammolite, one of the world's rarest and most vibrant gemstones, to take centre stage.

A gemstone reclaimed

A uniquely Canadian gemstone, Ammolite is formed from fossilized Ammonite shells that date back over 70 million years, found exclusively in the Bearpaw Formation of southern Alberta. Its captivating play of colour evokes a natural connection to the earth's ancient history. Yet, beyond its geological wonder, Ammolite offers something else: a powerful, natural way for men to wear colour with confidence.





Clean lines and a matte titanium finish define these KORITE cufflinks—bringing a refined, gender-fluid edge to formalwear while showcasing Ammolite's vibrant fire.



A showcase of rarity and natural beauty, this AA-grade freeform Ammolite pendant from KORITE reveals the gem's full colour range—capturing emotion, energy, and ancient light. A squared bezel and brushed titanium finish give this KORITE ring its modern silhouette. A refined setting for a gem that speaks in colour and movement.



Choosing gemstones from reputable sources ensures the integrity of the piece, connecting wearers not only to beauty but to responsible practices, honouring the land and its legacy.

For much of history, coloured gemstones were symbols of status and power worn by men; from the regalia of kings to the signet rings of nobility. In many cultures, gemstones were prized by rulers and warriors, their colours representing divine favour, courage, and wisdom. Only in more recent decades Western men's jewellery has become defined by minimalism, favouring leather, precious metals, and neutral tones. The idea of vibrant gemstones came to be seen by some as ornamental or feminine. Today, that outdated framework is dissolving. A new generation of collectors and designers are reclaiming colour and embracing sapphires, spinels, tourmalines, and unique gemstones like Ammolite that carry deep cultural and natural significance.

Ammolite's colour spectrum—from fiery reds and electric greens to deep blues and rare purples—naturally aligns with this moment of expressive jewellery. No two gemstones are alike, making each piece deeply personal and distinct. Its organic, kaleidoscopic patterns give designers the freedom to create pieces that are both artistic and masculine.

Beyond its visual impact, Ammolite carries powerful cultural significance. In Indigenous Blackfoot tradition, it is revered as "Iniskim" or Buffalo stone, a symbol of prosperity and guidance. This spiritual heritage adds a deeper layer of meaning, inviting wearers to connect not only with style, but with story and intention. This cultural depth complements its esthetic appeal, grounding the gemstone in both tradition and intention.

Designing for the modern man

The resurgence of coloured gemstones in men's jewellery is also closely linked to the evolution of metals. Traditionally dominated by yellow, gold or silver, today's men's designs are increasingly experimental. Rose gold, titanium, black rhodium, oxidized silver, platinum, and mixed metal settings are offering new canvases for colour. These materials not only modernize silhouettes but shift the narrative around who jewellery is for.

Designers explore texture and tone with greater freedom. Matte finishes, brushed metals, and bold architectural settings create a strong, masculine foundation to showcase vibrant stones. The result is jewellery that feels assertive yet thoughtful, powerful but not performative.

There is also a move toward unisex and fluid design. This trend creates an opening for coloured gemstones to appear in pieces defying traditional gender codes: stacked rings, signet styles, pendant necklaces, and cuff bracelets that blur boundaries. Ammolite, with its broad colour palette and organic patterns, adapts beautifully to this format. It can be set in minimalist designs for a refined edge or paired with rugged textures for something more primal.

Jewellery has always been a marker of status, identity, and memory. For men, that language is expanding. Ammolite is part of this shift, serving as a statement of authenticity, heritage and personal power qualities resonating on both emotional and esthetic level.

Colour as language, identity, and emotion

The psychology of colour is another driving factor. Red evokes energy and strength. Green is connected to prosperity and balance. Blue suggests wisdom and calm. With Ammolite, wearers can express a range of emotions and intentions through a single stone. Colour becomes language, an extension of identity.

As the industry continues to diversify and modernize, there is a growing call for gemstones that reflect the richness of individual experience. Ammolite's untamed colour, deep roots, and Canadian origin make it more than a trend. It is a future-forward gemstone for men who choose jewellery with meaning.

What's next: transparent supply chains and cultural collaboration

Retailers and designers are paying attention. At international trade shows and buying events, there's a noticeable uptick in demand for Canadian coloured gemstones and for designs that break away from the expected. Ammolite resonates across domestic and global markets—not only for its colour, but for its narrative.

In a market still dominated by familiar stones like sapphire and ruby, Ammolite offers distinction. It tells a story rooted in place and heritage. While it is mined exclusively in Canada, not all Ammolite is sourced under the same ethical or environmental standards. As consumers become more conscious, the importance of transparency and mineto-market sourcing is growing. Choosing gemstones from reputable sources ensures the integrity of the piece, connecting wearers not only to beauty but to responsible practices, honouring the land and its legacy.

Looking ahead, the opportunity for collaboration between gemstone suppliers and designers is significant. As the world continues to embrace both local and global talent, the integration of Indigenous and Canadian designers will be key in telling deeper, more meaningful stories through jewellery. These collaborations, which may bring together ethically sourced Ammolite with reclaimed materials such as titanium, will reflect the growing demand for both innovative design and cultural connections. It is a step forward for the industry, one that celebrates Canadian roots while pushing boundaries and honouring traditions.

Now is the time to redefine what fine jewellery means for men. Designers and retailers are encouraged to embrace bold colour, champion Canadian gemstones, and create designs with purpose. By doing so, they not only celebrate the rich heritage of Canadian craftsmanship but also contribute to a new era of jewellery that is personal, meaningful, and forward-thinking. The future of men's jewellery is here— rooted in both tradition and innovation.



Amarjeet Grewal is the president and Co-Owner of KORITE, a producer of Ammolite gemstones and jewellery. With over 34 years of experience in the gemstone industry, Grewal is committed to advancing the global recognition of Ammolite while upholding ethical sourcing, sustainability, and

Indigenous collaboration. A strong advocate for responsible practices, she brings this perspective to her leadership at KORITE, helping guide the company's continued growth with integrity and purpose.

Design the Future of Jewellery

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– **Zach Montagnese** Graduate 2025 & 2024

Isabela Novaes Pessoa Jewellery Arts graduate 2025 18k yellow gold, 18k palladium white gold, natural blue sapphire



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Iron and steel

By Renée Newman

ould you donate gold jewellery to the government in exchange for iron jewellery? In the early 1800s, many Prussians did that to help raise money to fight Napoleon. After Napoleon was defeated in 1815, iron jewellery became so popular that several iron foundries were established in Berlin to meet demand for iron jewellery like the Berlin iron bracelet in Figure 1 from Three Graces Antique Jewellery. A matte black lacquer finish helped prevent rust. Even though Berlin iron jewellery eventually went out of style, the antique pieces are prized by collectors today.



Iron versus steel and stainless steel

Iron is a natural metal element with the chemical symbol "Fe" and the atomic number 26. It is magnetic and attracts other ferromagnetic metals.

Steel is an alloy made by mixing iron and carbon together. Given its carbon content, it is stronger and harder than iron.

Stainless steel is steel alloyed with at least 10–13 per cent chromium for corrosion resistance (sources differ on the percentage of chromium required). Nickel may also be added to increase corrosion resistance. Stainless steel jewellery is sometimes identified with the stamp INOX, another adjective used to identify stainless steel; it's from the French *inoxydable* for "rustproof."

Stainless steel grades used for jewellery

Steel's properties vary depending on its composition and structure. Grades 304, 316, and 316L are the most common types used for jewellery because they have a high corrosion resistance and can be polished to a high luster.

Grade 304 is the lowest priced of the three grades because it has less chromium and is therefore not as resistant to corrosion as the 316 grades, especially at very high temperatures.

Grade 316L is similar to grade 316 but has a lower carbon content, so it has even better corrosion resistance than 316. In addition, 316L does not require post-weld annealing. A.R.Z. Steel in Montreal says on its



Interior of Marty Logan ring by Dallas Prince.





website that they only use 316L stainless steel because of its exceptional durability, corrosion resistance, and hypoallergenic properties. Figure 2 shows two examples of 316L stainless steel bracelets by A.R.Z. Steel.

Surgical steel jewellery

Surgical steel is a stainless steel that is designed for biomedical applications but is sometimes used for jewellery. It costs more than standard stainless steel, but surgical steel has the following benefits:

- Greater resistance to rust and corrosion because it has higher levels of chromium (18 per cent- 20 per cent)
- Lower carbon content, which reduces the risk of adverse reactions to medical implants
- Stricter manufacturing standards
- A higher melting point and thermal stability, which allow it to withstand repeated sterilization cycles at high temperatures without degrading.

Zoltan David uses innovative colouring techniques for his surgical steel jewellery. The blue-green and purple colours on his "Under the Sea" necklace (Figure 3) were created with a physical deposition process using various combinations of metallic atoms in a gaseous state that are then diffused and bonded into the surface of the receiving substrate of steel. David says, "The various formulations of metallic atoms determine the colour. This type of coloured steel is far more durable than an oxide treatment and will last indefinitely with reasonably proper care."

David's proprietary black steel has an intense black and mirrorlike surface and is scratch—and wear-resistant. He has trademarked it as Knightsteel. The "Waltz" black diamond ring in Figure 4 shows Knightsteel combined with platinum inlay using a technique involving cold connection, hand engraving, and shaping of the platinum.

"Setting gemstones in steel is more demanding than setting gems in precious metals, which are far softer than steel. Precious metal has a high degree of malleability with an ability to slightly conform to the footprint of a gem when placed into it, whereas steel is far less malleable and will not slightly conform to the gem's footprint. Therefore, the receiving seat for the gem must be exactly configured pre-gem setting," says David.

Damascus steel

Historically, Damascus steel was a type of high-carbon steel used in swordmaking from about 300 BC to around 1800 AD. It had distinctive patterns, and much of it was made into high-quality swords in Damascus, Syria.

Today, however, "Damascus steel" usually refers to an exotic patternwelded steel, created by welding together from around 50 to 1,000 layers of different alloy steels and etching it in acid. The acid etches the different alloys at different rates, thus creating a wood-grain type pattern. The alternating layers of different steel alloys create a kind of microscopic, serrated edge that contributes to Damascus steel blades being superior cutting tools. In addition, the properties of the correct steel alloys make the Damascus steel capable of being hardened and



Damascus steel and 18K yellow or 14K red gold rings by Chris Ploof.

tempered for a very strong, sharp, and durable edge.

High-carbon steel is often used for Damascus blades, but it can rust. Master jeweller Chris Ploof prefers to use high-grade stainless steel for his Damascus steel jewellery because it resists corrosion and is durable and hypoallergenic. Ploof sometimes accents Damascus steel with other metals. His one-of-a-kind rings in Figure 5 have a combination of Damascus steel and 14K red gold or I8K yellow gold.

Caring for steel jewellery

High-quality steel is durable and harder than gold and platinum, but it can be scratched and damaged. To ensure that steel jewellery remains in good condition:

- Clean it regularly with a soft cloth and mild liquid detergent instead of with brushes or scouring pads, which can scratch the metal.
- Avoid exposure to harsh chemicals such as chlorine, acetone, and strong cleaning agents.
- Store jewellery pieces separately to avoid scratches. Cloth jewellery pouches and rolls or mini plastic Ziploc bags offer protection.
- If a ring needs resizing, have it done by a skilled jeweller experienced in handling steel. Given its hardness, resizing requires specialized techniques such as laser cutting and welding or stretching. However,

these techniques require precision to avoid damaging the piece. Steel rings can be sized up or down.

• Avoid wearing jewellery while participating in contact sports, working out at the gym, or doing rough work. If you want to wear a ring for sentimental reasons, wear protective gloves.

Steel jewellery has many advantages; It's durable, attractive, sizeable, recyclable, and affordable. With proper care, it can provide a lifetime of enjoyment and wear.



Renée Newman, GG, is a gemmologist and the author of Gold, Platinum, Palladium, Silver & Other Jewelry Metals and 14 other books on jewellery and gems.



She became interested in jewellery metals while overseeing jewellery quality control at the Josam

Diamond Corporation in downtown Los Angeles. For more information about Newman and her books, visit ReneeNewman.com.







retrospective:

By Marika Gabriel

all it writers' bias (or even a cliché), but I believe the most precious gems are often found between the lines.

In the debut issue of *Jewellery Business*, and several that followed, the magazine featured a column called *Readers' Forum*, described by its first editor, Carol Besler, as "representing an opinion, beef, business tip or analysis from anyone in the industry." In that August 2005 issue, two pieces dove into an emerging trend—and is now ubiquitous: internet retail. Both were compelling, but what stood out to me was the conversation about competing with—or simply understanding—the internet. A timely discussion back then, it signaled a new era, much like the launch of the magazine itself.

The *Forum* offered sharp takes on everything from jewellery taxation to the role of the Canadian Jewellers Association.

As *Jewellery Business* celebrates its 20th anniversary, I took a walk through the archives—unearthing stories that still shimmer with insight, charm, and relevance. Choosing just a few favourites was nearly impossible—each issue sparkled in its own way. But these features caught my eye for how they reflect the shifting heart of the jewellery world, through evolving tastes, technologies, and traditions. Here are a few of those highlights.

Wild women: June 2006

"The wonders of high watchmaking" by Carol Besler includes a striking subsection titled "Cartier's tribute to wild women." Naturally, I had to know what counted as a "wild woman" in 2006. The answer? Delightfully unexpected. The reference is to María Félix, a 1940s Mexican film star known for her *femme fatale* roles. She once commissioned a necklace in the shape of her beloved pet... a baby crocodile. Years after her death at age 88, Cartier honoured her legacy by launching the La Doña watch collection in Geneva at the Salon International de la Haute Horlogerie in her name. While the other timepieces in the collection are also stunning, this one stands out—not just for its design, but for its backstory.

Going green, early: December 2008

In her publisher's note, "The new green: Maybe Kermit was wrong" (huge props for that headline), Ellen Kral tackled a topic that proves sustainability has always been in style. "Perhaps the biggest question of all is: what does it mean to be green?" she wrote. "I have seen many jewellers tout their products using terms such as 'fair trade jewellery,' or 'eco jewellery.' Do they mean anything? Not really, given there are no real standards governing the use of such terminology. The question as to

whether this is right or wrong is best saved for another time." In other words, just because it's stamped "eco" doesn't mean it's guilt-free.

Greenwashing wasn't born yesterday, and in jewellery, the sparkle can sometimes outshine the substance. Turns out, as much as I may like that headline, Kermit perhaps was onto something: it's not easy being green.

Nature-inspired jewels: June 2009

She returned to the theme in June 2009, referencing Earth Day and quoting consumer trend firm "Trendwatching.com: The future has never looked greener... mainly because creating a more sustainable economy is not an option, but a necessity." Kral saw this as an opportunity for the jewellery industry to claim a stake in the eco-conscious marketplace. She asked the same question many still do: Is this trend here to stay?

At the time, sustainability was more than a buzzword. Perhaps, even a challenge knocking at the industry's door. Have things changed since then? And if so, how much? The industry is different today—but it's

always worth reflecting on how we got here, who pushed for standards, and where we go next.

That same issue also included "Wild things: Jewellery takes its lead from Mother Nature," a beautiful feature by Deborah Yonick about reconnecting with nature. "Our desire to return to natural elements is encouraged by our fast-paced, techno-savvy lifestyles that have us more connected to digital devices than the people and environments around us," she wrote. A prescient point consider how much more digital we've become since. The jewellery showcased—bug rings, butterfly brooches, turtle pendants—was both whimsical and grounding. "I love the juxtaposition of gems and insects. You just don't think of them together," said London designer Stephen Webster.

The charm of choice: 2012

Jacquie De Almeida captured the height of the bead-andcharm craze in "Beading a path to your door." Whether collected for beauty or gifted for symbolism, charms were versatile and personal. This piece was an early nod to the emotional storytelling consumers would increasingly crave—jewellery not just worn but *lived with*.

Title: Beading a path to your door: Beads and charms still hot sellers among consumers

Gemstone crushes: 2013

In "Playing favourites," the magazine asked jewellers to name their favourite gemstones—and the answers were telling. Spinel, pearls, and everything in between reflected not just esthetic preferences but emotional connections. "Asking a jeweller to pick a favourite gemstone is like asking a parent to choose a favourite child... Impossible!" said one. A male jeweller added: "Although I love working with all gemstones, pearls have to top my list. They offer variety, complexity, and a mystery I find completely compelling.





Given the proliferation of pearl farming around the world in recent years, we are no longer limited to the little white Akoya strand worn by Sweet 16s in sweater sets. Today, there is a pearl to suit every woman and even a few fashion-conscious men."

This piece shines in its intimacy, capturing how personal and poetic gemstone selection can be in an industry often focused on price tags and clarity grades.

Title: Playing favourites: Movers and shakers talk gemstones they fancy

Rings from the stars: 2014

Llyn L. Strelau wrote "Future perfect," which follows how a Canadian designer brought a client's fantastical sketch to life as an interstellarinspired engagement ring. Think dragons, robots, and retro-futurism—

all rolled into a deeply personal sculpture. A brilliant reminder of what jewellery can become when imagination leads—a love story, a personal mythology.

Title: 'Future perfect': Love takes an interstellar journey

The science of sparkle: 2015

In "Point of differentiation," Hemdeep Patel sounded the alarm on synthetic diamonds. Citing a 2011 *Jewellery Business* article about a discovery by IGI Antwerp of 600 fakes in a parcel of 1,000 stones, the article explained how to identify lab-grown stones—and why it matters. Years before synthetics became a mainstream concern, *Jewellery Business* was already on the case.

This is an example of trade journalism doing what it does best: informing, alerting, and staying one step ahead.

Title: Point of differentiation: How certain clues can help weed out synthetics from natural diamonds

Design meets discipline: 2016

Strelau returned with "You can't always get what you want," a case study and a cautionary tale in design failure and ethical responsibility. A poorly built eternity band led to a lost stone, a strained client relationship, and a broader conversation about the importance of craftsmanship and communication. Jewellery is emotional—but its integrity must be structural.

Title: You can't always get what you want: The importance of structure in jewellery design

Gold and glamour in Vicenza: 2018

VicenzaOro 2018 wasn't just a trade show—it was a window into the evolving identity of global jewellery.







Captured and curated by Carly Midgley, the event featured more than 20,000 visitors from 117 countries, mixing tradition with bold design experimentation. The message at the trade show was clear: jewellery was becoming more conceptual, expressive, and cross-cultural.

This dispatch stood out for placing design trends within a broader social context, tracing how societal shifts shape the jewellery we wear.

VicenzaOro: The jewellery revolution

Ethics and exclusion: 2020

The journey of jewellery, like all fashion, is often cyclical. And so we circle back to the December 2020

issue, where group publisher Erik Tolles reflected on how the online world was reshaping the industry—particularly the synchronization of digital and physical experiences. And yes, both he and the issue discussed sustainability and sustainable packaging. So here we are, years later, still asking many of the same questions.

I'll leave it to the experts to assess how far we've come. I can't claim to know. But I do believe this: the conversation matters. And *Jewellery Business* has helped keep that conversation alive.

One of my favourite articles from that same issue dives into the ethics of sourcing. Written by Marc Choyt and Kyle Abram Bi, it examines the systemic racism and structural barriers that Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour (BIPOC) face in the jewellery industry. "I didn't even know Black people could design jewellery," one award-winning designer was told—an experience that reveals just how deep these issues run.

While the ethical jewellery movement—sparked in part by the 2006 film *Blood Diamond*—has led to significant progress in responsible sourcing, the authors argue that BIPOC communities, who supply much of the industry's raw materials, remain underrepresented. Their critical question: after all this time and effort, *what has been the impact on the ground*?

Title: "Where Black lives don't matter to jewellers" **By** Marc Choyt and Kyle Abram Bi

The illusion of responsibility: August 2022

In "Sourcing 'responsible' diamonds: Where morality meets storytelling," Choyt and Bi return to the subject this time peeling back the layers of "responsible sourcing" to show how the label often shields corporate interests. They highlight the controversial role of Alrosa, expose loopholes in industry standards, and call out oversight failures by bodies like the Responsible Jewellery Council.

A pearl's new purpose: 2024

Once typecast as matronly, pearls have re-entered the style conversation with flair. Gemmologist Olga Shevchenko traced their evolution from prim to punk—baroque, colourful, and often gender-fluid. Worn with denim or layered with chains,



pearls today challenge conventions while staying rooted in elegance.

This story captures a cultural turning point, paving the way for the pearl to become a canvas for individuality in an age yearning for authenticity.

Title: Changing perceptions: Is pearl jewellery still relevant?

Too much of a good thing?: 2025

Jewellery veteran Peggy Grosz warns that the pearl's rapid resurgence risks backfiring without proper consumer education. Misunderstandings around freshwater versus

saltwater pearls, grading standards, and origin stories can undermine trust at the sales counter. Her plea: better transparency from suppliers and retailers alike.

This is the counterpoint to trend stories—reminding us that style without substance risks spoiling the magic we're celebrating.

Title: The rise (and potential fall) of pearls





Marika Gabriel is an editor and communications professional whose career spans two continents. She is the editor of Sign Media Canada, a sister publication at Kenilworth Media Inc.

A quiet favourite from two decades of covers

Choosing a single standout from *Jewellery Business*'s 20-year run isn't easy—especially when many covers have made lasting impressions. As a lifelong film enthusiast, I've always appreciated when *Jewellery Business* brings cinematic icons into the fold. Seeing Kate Winslet on the July 2013 issue was a standout—poised, expressive, and unmistakably timeless. Her return in December 2017 only reinforced her resonance as a face of quiet luxury. The July 2015 cover featuring George Clooney offered a different elegance—understated and effortlessly refined. And in July 2016, Simon Baker delivered a similar calm magnetism. Another winner? February 2012 with Regina King.

As a former competitive swimmer, the July 2018 cover with Michael Phelps struck a deeper chord—less about glamour, more about grit. Fast forward to July 2024, and Allyson Felix brought that same athletic grace and personal strength to the frame—visually powerful, emotionally grounded.

And then there was Aishwarya Rai in June 2010. Seeing an Indian icon front and centre—not exoticized, not explained, just there—wasn't just exciting. It was overdue. Representation, after all, isn't a favour. Representation is a responsibility.

What *Jewellery Business* has consistently done well is frame its covers not as standalone fashion portraits, but as dialogues between subject and adornment. The celebrity ambassadors aren't simply modelling—they're in conversation with the jewellery they wear. It's a reminder that jewellery, at its best, reflects belonging.

But the one that's stayed with me most is May 2018.

It was a bridal issue. Elegant, minimal, and deeply intentional. If you've read this far, you've probably figured it out—I'm a pearl girl through and through. So when that issue gave us a simple dress, a single strand, and soft black-and-white photography, I was sold. The jewellery didn't scream for attention. It whispered meaning.

Of course, the bridal issue is always a standout—for any jewellery magazine and the industry. It speaks to a significant market and some of life's most meaningful moments. That quiet feeling when jewellery doesn't demand attention but instead frames a moment.

Could that be because I spent all of last year planning my own wedding? I don't know. Maybe. But this cover stayed with me.

Here's to the next 20 years.

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hese unique cufflinks are a bold statement of sophistication, certain to be a conversation starter. Designed by Lauriane Lognay of Rippana, Inc., a Montréal-based company that offers coloured gemstone, lapidary, and jewellery services, these pieces were crafted from two cabochon-cut natural Kyanite gemstones, 18 mm rounds, and set in 14K white gold. Overall, they are an elegant and eye-catching pair of cufflinks, sure to bring a touch of refinement for those special nights out.



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