



CREATIVE JEWELRY INDUSTRY SOLUTIONS

- Site Home
- About
- Services
- Contact



### Welcome to my Newsletter!

I hope to provide some opinions and insights into our industry that will be relevant to you. I would love to hear your thoughts - please contact me through my website. I also have made some changes, so please check it out!

## Consulting Services Offered

### What Makes a Buyer Great?

I recently read "A Whole New Mind - Why Right Brainers Will Rule the Future" by Daniel H. Pink. To paraphrase him, "The last few decades have belonged to a certain kind of person with a certain kind of mind - computer programmers who could crank code...MBA's who could crunch numbers. The future belongs to a very different kind of person with a very different kind of mind.... These people - artists, designers, big picture thinkers - will now reap society's richest rewards...."

So, I started thinking about the buyers and merchandisers I have worked with, and who have worked for me. What made one person adequate, and one person outstanding? What are the ingredients of a great buyer? *And, if you read my last newsletter, you will know how important having a great buyer and great product is right now - more than ever!*

Every buyer is positioned somewhere in the continuum between creative and analytical, leaning to one side or the other. Chances are if your buyer is outstanding with reports, data, organization and analysis - they are not going to be the most creative, conceptual thinker. Analysis, planning, inventory management can be taught, but creativity cannot. If you have talent (and I hope that you do), do not suffocate them with paperwork. Consider hiring clerical support for the inventory management aspect. Maybe it is time to change the job description. If you think you cannot afford to hire a support person, you are underestimating the impact to your business a great buyer can have.



Jewelry by Rebecca

- Merchandising Strategy
- Assortment Analysis
- Product Development
- Program Development
- Inventory Management
- Brand Message Continuity



Jewelry by Rebecca

A great buyer recognizes that your product offerings communicate to your clients who you are. You know that you are not as inexpensive as Costco or the Internet. You know that you may not be as large as a Jared. But what you can do is provide jewelry with great design. To quote John Heskett, "Design is a combination of utility and significance." This applies beautifully to jewelry, especially bridal. Is your buyer telling a story of emotion and significance with your product, and in your showcases with displays and messaging?

What a talented buyer does need to have - in addition to fashion/product instinct - is business savvy. But don't misunderstand - business savvy is not number crunching, it is an astute feel for the marketplace and their customer. They will recognize the relationship between fashion and the arts, culture and society. Through this lens they will discover or recognize new trends, not just follow or chase them.

A great buyer needs strong interpersonal skills. Some assume that since he or she holds the "power", it does not matter too much. I guarantee you that someone who has the ability to climb into someone else's mind will be more effective in motivating your vendors and negotiating, than someone wielding a big stick. A successful buyer will need be able to effectively collaborate with store personnel and your advertising/marketing department or resources.



Jewelry by Rebecca

There is a tendency in retail to not recognize the huge contribution a great buyer can make. I have been guilty of that in the past. But, in the retail world of today, that mistake can cost you more than you know.

## Next Newsletter - Transparency and the Retail Jeweler