

# Inbox

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Our readers share their thoughts

## KEEP THE EXCITEMENT

Let's not participate in the news-reported recession. Let's continue to be excited about the wonderful industry we are in and how we get to be a part of the special moments in our customers' lives. Birthdays still happen, anniversaries still happen, people are still getting married. Keep the jewelry industry the exciting place to go.  
**DEBBIE GREENE HELM'S JEWELRY, COLUMBIA, TN**

## A HARD LOOK

I'm tired of people complaining about the economy and the state of our industry. We are about to finish a record first quarter and we are 50 miles from Detroit; which most experts say is perhaps the most sluggish region in the country, economically speaking. Jewelers need to take a hard look at themselves and realize how much business their competitors are doing. I read the engagement section in every Sunday paper and honestly if I don't recognize the name I think, "What could I have done better to get them in our store?" That's how successful stores continue to grow. Deliver better service and value, and you will win every time. The jewelers who are discounting because they are afraid they might lose the sale or don't properly train their staff won't be around in 2009.

**MAXWELL OHNEZEIT**  
**DAVID FAIRCLOUGH JEWELERS, TOLEDO, OH**

We are facing unusual times. Now is the time to regroup, rethink, and renew the skills that we have to prosper in the future. Think back to your roots, go full circle, and relive what makes you crazy about jewelry! Thanks for such an upbeat magazine and new and creative thinking!

**SUSAN EISEN**  
**SUSAN EISEN FINE JEWELRY AND WATCHES, EL PASO, TX**

I believe that we have been hit with a double whammy. With increased metal prices we are forced to charge more when consumers have less to spend. Everyone will adapt, but we are in the transition period where sticker shock is everywhere.

**ELVA VALENTINE**  
**VALENTINE'S, DALLAS, PA**

I think that we are in times that bring out the best in us. Consumers seem to be on edge and it is up to us to bring out the best in them with new and exciting products, new perks and the best of customer service. It is still important to keep advertising just like things are great and by doing so they probably will be.

**KEITH LEWIS**  
**LEWIS AND CO. JEWELERS, CRESTVIEW, FL**

Many of us have too much inventory for the sales we have. Now is a good time to tailor that inventory and learn to work with an inventory that is made up of fast sellers and not stock pieces that sit and sit. We need to be smarter and treat our inventory for what it is, our largest asset. Not our largest liability.

**MIKE DOLAND**  
**DOLAND JEWELERS, DUBUQUE, IA**

So many right now are dragging emotionally and in spirit. We cannot control the economic environment, but we can move decisively, enthusiastically and with energy in all we do to improve our own situation.

**LEO ANGLO**  
**VINCENTS JEWELERS, CREVE COUER, MO**

## JUST DON'T GET IT

Maybe I'm slow but I just don't get your article *One Week in the Business Life* about a stay-at-home jeweler (**INSTORE**, April 2008). I guess the rest of us brick-and-mortar jewelers should do the same and not carry the selection of merchandise we do and just use catalogs. Why invest our money and put it at risk when we don't have to? Mr. Meis's return on investment is much better than ours. I also find fault with the manufacturers who sell to people like this.

**STUART TAMRES**  
**TALLES JEWELERS, BEL AIR, MD**

## A LOT OF GOOD IDEAS

We're a mom-and-pop store in a small town of about 14,000. Pioneer Jewelers in Juneau, AK, is a Cool Store (**INSTORE**, March 2008) I can relate to. The other stores with million-dollar renovations are out of my price range, but Pioneer gave me a lot of good ideas.

**JIMMY BLUE**  
**JEWEL BOX, SMITHFIELD, NC**

**COURTESY, PLEASE!**

We are so overwhelmed by cold calls from diamond dealers each day that I waste about a half an hour a day telling them "No thanks." When I'm in the middle of my lunch or working at my bench and I get a cold call from a diamond dealer, it just frustrates me no end. The typical dealer is usually talking way too fast and tries to snowball me into a diamond that is an "unbelievable 50-60 off Rap" and then wants to send me some stones just for my inspection to show me his great deals. Argh! I can't stomach that high intensity sales pitch, so please do all of us retailers a favor and try to earn our business. All I'm asking is for a little courtesy.

**TRAVIS PIPER**  
**JEWEL CRAFT JEWELERS, VINCENNES, IN**

**CONNECT, COMMUNICATE**

Independent jewelers are not competing with box stores. People walk through your front door expecting to pay a little more, and that's OK. They want an experience they can brag about. Connect and communicate. Stop thinking of jewelry as a commodity.

**NICHOLAS LICATA**  
**LICATA JEWELERS, TOLEDO, OH**