



PANEL QUESTIONS

Understanding the US Market

- As US is a huge market, should our marketing efforts be focused on regions or even cities? What cities in the USA should we be looking at to sell our kind of jewelry?
- Is there a way that we can globally split the US market into geographical main regions to understand this market and to put our marketing efforts where the clientele is?
- Is there a specific US market for limited editions and one-of-a-kind jewelry?
- What is the economic situation with respect to one of kind jewelry in the US? Is it expanding, stable or regressing?
- Is it possible for an artist to only show his work in US galleries or small boutiques rather than large department stores? Is this a profitable strategy?
- What challenges and opportunities do we face in this type of market?
- What role is the internet playing in retailing in the US?

Putting Together Our Collection

- Developing an entire collection with dozens of different models, all carefully calibrated, cost a lot of time and money that the collection must have a long life to yield profit. Is it possible to determine the life span of a collection?
- How do I select the best pieces in my portfolio when I make a pitch to a gallery, an individual, or a retailer? Are there certain types of jewelry (rings, earrings, etc.) that are most demanded for the publicity of our work?
- What are the most appealing designs in jewelry? Are they guided by fall fashion predictions from Pantone in choosing colored stones?
- What price points sell the best? What is a good way to price our pieces based on these price points?
- What profit margin is good to aim for that won't scare off customers?
- What price points are most likely to sell for Exclusive Rings and for on-of-a -kind jewelry?
- How do we present ourselves as artists, craftspeople or designers, especially when we are all three? Can we attract or scare away possible customers by defining ourselves in a certain way?
- Is it a good idea to develop lower cost derivational products from our high end artistic pieces or does this look cheap? (Post card, jewelry lines, key chains, etc...)

Sales Agents

- Do galleries and retailers prefer to work directly with artists or do they prefer dealing with sales reps?
- How do we recognize a good sales rep? What questions should we be asking him/her and vice-a-versa, what characteristics should we be looking for?
- How do we work with a sales agent? What are the payment structures?
- Besides sales reps, are there other types of organizations (ex. agencies, associations, etc.) or individuals that represent jewelers effectively in the US market?

Contacting Retailers and Galleries

- How do we get into galleries and small boutiques? What is the best way as they must receive a lot of demands from artists from all over the world?
- How should the first contact with a store take place? Should we present ourselves personally, should we e-mail or send letters? Is it a good idea to send retailers press packages to let them know about us? Is sending an artist's file a good way?
- When we contact a store that looks like it could carry our jewelry and they refuse to see us without even viewing our jewelry, is it a good idea to contact them again and if so how much later?
- Should we do trade shows or is there another way to approach stores using new technologies?
- What are the common errors that artists do when they contact retailers or galleries for the first time?

Working with Galleries and Retailers

- What should our selection criteria be for deciding to work with a gallery or retailer?
- What are the main expectations of galleries and retailers towards artists?
- What are the main differences between working with a major retailer such as Saks vs working with small, independent boutiques?
- How does a gallery owner or retailer react, knowing his newest collection has been presented before in another state or to another competitor retailer?
- Does an item have a shelf life in a gallery or retailer? How long will a gallery or retailer keep the item for sale until deleting the piece from the display?
- In the case of a gallery or retailer who likes to rotate stock every two weeks, what type of contract should we agree on?
- What are the common errors that artists do when they start working with galleries and retailers?

Online Retailing

- What are the best sites for online retailing?
- What should we look for when considering working with an online retailer?
- Is the process of working with an online retailer the same as a regular retailer? What are the major differences?
- What are the benefits of working with an online retailer?
- Will working with an online retailer help or hurt our chances to work with regular retailers?

Getting Paid

- Retailers usually want to pay for merchandise as far in the future as possible. We want to be paid as soon as possible. How do we handle this situation so that it is satisfactory and just for both parties?
- During our stay in NY we will be visiting several jewelry stores that we contacted previously. They showed interest in meeting us but only if we are willing to leave our jewelry on consignment. What are your comments on this? If we decide to try them out how can we best protect ourselves?

Marketing, Press and Promotions

- What are the best channels to visibility for micro companies like ours? (maximum visibility with minimal cost)
- Should we do trunk shows? What can we expect from doing trunk shows, what kind of results can we expect visibility speaking?
- Is it important to advertise in the industry magazines, craft art magazines, luxury magazines?
- Which ones are the best for us to be in and why?
- When is it pertinent to advertise and how?
- Should we invest in tradeshow? If so, which ones?
- What is the importance of good photography for our work? Should we have professional photography done?
- How do we select the right pieces for our marketing efforts? Should the pictures we present to retailers be different from the ones we use in advertising or send to press?
- From an editors' perspective, what have you seen in the best public relations firms? What should PR be doing to get your attention?
- How do editors like to receive information about a jewelry designer?
- What should we include in a press package? What is the best information to get your interest?
- How do editors select what they will feature?
- We see some jewelry designers being featured almost monthly. How does one get to that level of repeat recognition?
- There are often a lot of titles at a magazine that apply to the same thing – accessories director, senior accessories editor, accessories editor – who should we contact? And if one doesn't respond or turns down our request, can we go to another person in the magazine?

Getting Help

- Apart from ourselves who should be on our team of professionals to promote our business? (Sales rep, financial advisor, etc...)
- What would be the benefits to hire a counselor, a guide, adviser, master or guru?
- What would be the goals, what can we really expect from them and at what price?
- Where can we find reputable advisers
- Should the adviser have to "understand" and "like" our work, or is it only a business relationship (mercantile)?