



Buying Group Report

2016

Collective buying power has long been a successful strategy for independent retailers, especially jewellers competing against larger groups and chain stores, but as consumers change and retailing evolves, one wonders whether the business model is just as relevant today.

Is safety in numbers still the name of the game?

Jeweller's 2016 biennial Buying Group Report explores whether the local buying groups, Leading Edge Jewellers, Nationwide Jewellers and Showcase Jewellers, are maintaining their foothold in the market and if so, how?

This special investigation shows that the groups collectively represent a total of 942 stores – 830 in Australia and 112 in New Zealand. Interestingly, while overall store count has had a slight decline since 2014, the number of members has increased in Australia and remained the same in New Zealand. It's arguably a telling result given the current difficult trading conditions.

Our comprehensive 10-page report begins over page.



LIKE ALL BUSINESSES, AUSTRALIA'S THREE JEWELLERY BUYING GROUPS ARE ADAPTING TO A FAST-CHANGING RETAIL ENVIRONMENT. EMILY MOBBS INVESTIGATES HOW THEY'RE WORKING TO REMAIN RELEVANT.

Safety in NUMBERS

The buying group model gained a footing within the Australian jewellery industry in the early 1980s.

It was a concept that coincided with the rise of shopping centres and, in turn, the large chain stores, which had size and therefore purchasing power on their sides when it came to negotiating price.

Independent jewellers turned to groups, determined to increase their purchasing strength via collective buying. For many, it was the key to maintaining competitiveness, and safety in numbers was the name of the game.

As retailing evolves so too do the demands from all levels of the industry. Today's retail sector faces a myriad of challenges – begging the question of whether the buying group concept is just as relevant today as it was in the era of leg warmers and neon-coloured parachute pants.

Russell Zimmerman, executive director of peak retail industry body Australian Retailers Association, is adamant that it is.

"Buying groups for small and medium-sized retailers are as important as they have ever been," he states, explaining that the ability to purchase limited amounts of product at a competitive price remains a major benefit for the independents.

Probably not surprising but surely the buying groups – specifically Leading Edge Jewellers, Nationwide Jewellers and Showcase Jewellers in Australia and New Zealand – aren't resting on their laurels.

Retailers are forever lectured on why they should adjust their business models to keep up with the changing retail landscape so it

would make sense that the buying groups, which collectively represent almost 950 stores, are doing the same.

According to National Retail Association CEO Trevor Evans, the assumption rings true. He explains there is little doubt that the sophisticated branding strategies of chain stores have caused significant challenges for small businesses. Thus, the buying groups have also adapted, concentrating heavily upon retail marketing.

Further to this, Michael Dyer of jewellery software and consulting business Retail Edge Consultants says the reasons why buying groups remain important are as wide as they are varied. He points to additional services, which include everything from marketing resources to staff training and lease negotiation assistance.

Dyer warns, however, that the challenge lies in ensuring these offerings are relevant and current in a marketplace where change is not only constant but also rapid.

Since *Jeweller's* last analysis of buying groups in 2014, a few movements have taken place across Australia and New Zealand. Overall store count has slightly declined in the past two years; however, interestingly, the number of members has increased.

It's a telling result given the difficult trading conditions over the past two years and it suggests buying groups are succeeding in their quest to remain relevant.

Nationwide managing director Colin Pocklington states that marketing resources continue to be a major drawcard for members of his buying group.

"The continued flat trading in the economy has made our various marketing services even more beneficial to independent jewellers," Pocklington explains, adding, "A lot of retailers realise that marketing is the key to success and that groups can provide ideas and resources to increase sales."

Leading Edge general manager Joshua Zarb acknowledges that general retail assistance in areas such as human resources, marketing, business consultancy and stock assistance is now one of the most important reasons retailers join his group, possibly more important than group-purchasing benefits.

"The actual [price] discount, while important, is probably the least of the key deciding factors nowadays," Showcase general manager Carson Webb agrees.

"Mainly it comes down to the resources, assistance and tapping into the things that only a major chain or significant franchise could obtain based on numbers.

"If you don't have anything that gives them an advantage or benefit they couldn't normally tap into then, in my opinion, any buying group's days are numbered."

BRAND BATTLE

Jewellers have faced no shortage of challenges in the past two years but maintaining independence while catering to increased demand for branded jewellery is an ongoing struggle at the top of each buying group's agenda.

"Brands used to represent about 10 per cent of sales in a jewellery store," Pocklington says. "In the last 15 years, this has grown to over 50 per cent – in line with international

trends – so it is a major issue."

He explains that increased consumer demand for fashion-based products brings benefits and risks – the benefits include extra sales and good stock-turn; the risks include the potential for stock levels to expand 'uneconomically' as a result of frequent new product releases and stock obsolescence.

"A retailer can still have a strong store brand," Pocklington adds. "Being known as a stockist of the latest and most popular jewellery brands can be a strength. The most important issue is that retailers need to review brand performance more frequently and make changes based on comparative performance."

Webb lists the management of branded product as a serious concern.

"I believe one of the critical issues for retailers and also suppliers is the money taken out of the general 'spend' due to the new releases or stock purchasing expectations from the brands," he states. "The brands will require this but it takes a lot of the general spend for the year out of the market as it becomes already allocated and there's only so much to go around."

Webb says retailers can successfully walk the fine-line of embracing branded merchandise while not forsaking high-end product as long as they have a plan.

"There's no way a store with the general KPIs of a fine jewellery store – rents, wages, security – can afford to only be selling a mash-up of fashion brands based on the generic achieved mark-ups these days," he



BUYING GROUPS FOR SMALL AND MEDIUM-SIZED RETAILERS ARE AS IMPORTANT AS THEY HAVE EVER BEEN

RUSSELL ZIMMERMAN

explains. "Committing to a set brand strategy – quality versus quantity – and doing it better than most, with a strong focus on fine jewellery, is a must for long-term success."

Webb adds that the industry is shrinking, which makes having a point of difference and focus more critical than ever: "We are finding many of our members are actually growing the quality of their business. For example, as a new housing development goes in, they can tap into that early and ride it out while in the infancy stage to then enjoy 'owning' the town – being known as 'the jeweller' again!"

Zarb expands on the notion that jewellers must not lose sight of their own brands, stating, "The biggest strength the independents have is their own brand identity and we go to great lengths to ensure that we do not dilute this for our members in any way."

He uses the fact that his group's marketing packages are store-specific as an example.

"I firmly believe that independent jewellers still have a bright future as long as they accept what is happening in the marketplace around them," Zarb adds.

"First and foremost, independents need to support their number one brand and point of difference – the name on the door. They have the ability to access brands that chain stores can't access and they have the ability to access, sell and promote diamonds that fit the needs of the business."

DIAMOND IN THE ROUGH

Ensuring retailers receive their fair share of the diamond pie continues to be a focus for Nationwide. The group has conducted Antwerp buying trips for 17 years and introduced a specific Antwerp marketing program in 2009 as a way to help members increase market share.

Pocklington says the initiative, including a detailed marketing campaign using materials and procedures supplied by Nationwide, has assisted a large number of members to substantially increase diamond sales – some by more than \$100,000 in a year. In addition, Nationwide has secured exclusive diamond brands Tolkowsky and Astralis, which can be used as unique selling propositions (USPs) by members.

GROUP TOTALS - AUSTRALIA				
TYPE	NATIONWIDE	SHOWCASE	LEADING EDGE	TOTAL
MEMBERS	391	151	136	678
STORES	427	217	186	830

THE THREE BUYING GROUPS REPRESENT 678 MEMBERS FOR 830 STORES ACROSS AUSTRALIA

GROUP TOTALS - NEW ZEALAND			
TYPE	NATIONWIDE	SHOWCASE	TOTAL
MEMBERS	78	26	104
STORES	84	28	112

NEW ZEALAND MEMBERS HAVE REMAINED THE SAME AND STORE COUNT HAS INCREASED IN THE PAST TWO YEARS

TOTAL NUMBER AUSTRALIA & NEW ZEALAND

942 STORES | **782** MEMBERS

LEADING EDGE									
COMPARISON	NSW	VIC	QLD	WA	SA	TAS	ACT	NT	TOTAL
2016 - Members	51	25	27	8	17	4	1	3	136
2014 - Members	40	21	25	3	14	4	1	3	111
Variance	11	4	2	5	3	0	0	0	25
2016 - Stores	64	48	29	8	19	4	2	12	186
2014 - Stores	52	49	30	5	16	4	2	5	163
Variance	12	-1	-1	3	3	0	0	7	23

Showcase is also investing energy into helping retailers leverage branded diamonds and diamond jewellery. The group acquired the well-known Passion8 brand in 2014 after previous owner Miller Diamonds went into liquidation and recently announced a partnership with Rio Tinto to produce the diamond jewellery range called Dreamtime Diamonds.

"We concentrate on resources for our retailers to increase their fine jewellery and diamond focus," Webb explains. "This focus is lacking for various reasons in Australia and New Zealand; it's rare these days to see a wonderfully-marketed independent diamond or fine jewellery store."

Webb says it's a similar story to the De Beers advertisements in the early 1990s, which significantly helped to drive all diamond jewellery sales at the time.

"The brands do a fabulous job of this for retailers but what happens to the fine jewellery category?" he asks. "Fashion comes and goes. It's very fickle indeed, as is electronic gadgetry, but we are still dealing with precious metals with high outgoings and that's a very important thing to remember for our longevity."

Pocklington says another structural change

occurring in the industry is the rise in the number of consumers seeking involvement in the design of their jewellery, a trend no doubt influenced by the increasing use of CAD/CAM.

"We provide an extensive range of marketing material – printed and social media – to help members promote this service, and it is linked with our Antwerp marketing," Pocklington explains of how Nationwide helps members to meet this demand.

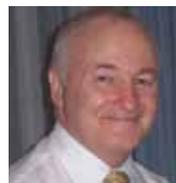
He also indicates that the group is set to introduce additional benefits to help manufacturing jewellers in the design and manufacture of custom orders, the details of which will be announced at the group's annual conference in March.

TACKLING ONGOING CHALLENGES

As previously stated, retailers are faced with a seemingly endless list of challenges and each buying group leader is adamant that these struggles are also their own.

Zarb points to the ongoing plight of retail leasing costs.

"One of the biggest enemies that independent jewellers face is increasing rent and the pressure this places on businesses," he says. "This is something that we need to work



THE CHALLENGE LIES IN ENSURING THESE OFFERINGS ARE RELEVANT AND CURRENT IN A MARKETPLACE WHERE CHANGE IS NOT ONLY CONSTANT BUT ALSO RAPID

MICHAEL DYER

on as an industry. I hate seeing great retailers close because unrealistic rents do not allow for a rent renewal."

Assisting members to embrace the digital world has also been a focus for the groups for a number of years.

"Modern retailing is difficult as you need to have a strong digital footprint as well as offering traditional retail acumen," Zarb explains.

One of the most pressing needs of the buying groups in recent times has been to develop online strategies that cater to the wide-ranging needs of members.

Today all three groups provide sophisticated, customisable offerings.

"We have been extremely fortunate at Leading Edge over the past two years; we have taken on record numbers of new stores during this period and we have had the two best years of trade on record," Zarb says. "We have used this growth to aggressively increase our resources available to all members. As an example, we have invested heavily in digital resourcing and we offer a complete business-to-business (B2B) and business-to-consumer (B2C) digital communications and loyalty program that enables stores to grow and communicate with their database via email, SMS and social media."

Webb says he is also proud of Showcase's efforts in this area, explaining that the group introduced innovative e-commerce websites, B2B portal integration and digital marketing services that can be tailored to suit individual member needs in 2015.

For Nationwide, the focus lies in finalising its revamped member website.

"We hope to be able to preview some of the new features and resources for members at our March conference," Pocklington says. "Members will have a comprehensive range of information on marketing, products, management, training and much more at their fingertips."

As part of Nationwide's digital offering, Pocklington has also announced the launch of a social media 'library', which provides members with templates, posts and content that can be used across various social media platforms. The library has been designed to

NATIONWIDE									
COMPARISON	NSW	VIC	QLD	WA	SA	TAS	ACT	NT	TOTAL
2016 - Members	121	88	85	35	38	11	11	2	391
2014 - Members	123	75	73	30	35	12	5	2	355
Variance	-2	13	12	5	3	-1	6	0	36
2016 - Stores	137	92	95	36	38	11	16	2	427
2014 - Stores	143	90	95	34	36	12	12	2	424
Variance	-6	2	0	2	2	-1	4	0	3

* ADDITIONAL 1 MEMBER AND 4 STORES IN FIJI

SHOWCASE

COMPARISON	NSW	VIC	QLD	WA	SA	TAS	ACT	NT	TOTAL
2016 - Members	60	30	40	7	5	8	0	1	151
2014 - Members	67	36	56	11	5	9	0	1	185
Variance	-7	-6	-16	-4	0	-1	0	0	-34
2016 - Stores	81	40	68	12	6	9	0	1	217
2014 - Stores	90	51	84	19	7	9	0	1	261
Variance	-9	-11	-16	-7	-1	0	0	0	-44

* ADDITIONAL 1 MEMBER AND 1 STORE IN VANUATU

help members promote business initiatives like in-store VIP events, sales and buying trips.

THE ROAD AHEAD

To reiterate Dyer's point, the current marketplace is one where "change is not only constant but also rapid". There may be a few pundits critical of the buying groups' influence over the industry but there are others who will attest that buying groups have helped independents to remain resilient against the large chains and brand boutiques.

"The message we try to get across to jewellers is, 'We are on your side,'" Pocklington states. "If a member has a problem with products, marketing, insurance, landlords or anything else then Nationwide is here to help."

Zarb explains that his group is committed to expanding to more than 200 stores and is "more motivated than ever to take Leading Edge Group into new areas".

"We have always operated on the idea that members and suppliers are not numbers; they are friends," he says.



THE BUYING GROUPS HAVE ALSO ADAPTED, CONCENTRATING HEAVILY UPON RETAIL MARKETING

TREVOR EVANS

Webb remains both pragmatic and optimistic when looking to the future.

"We [the board and I] acknowledge it would be unprofessional to not recognise the many industry challenges we face and this year will be tough; however, it's certainly not doom and gloom," he says. "In fact, we see it as an amazing opportunity of change and growth to be better and to grow stronger. We have excellent retailers within our group, both in country and metro regions, and together we can overcome anything.

"We're retailers and in retail you're only as good as today's figures, so what are you doing about it?"

It seems safety in numbers remains the name of the game for more reasons than one. *

All figures were correct as at January 31, 2016. Each buying group operates a completely different business model. What are the benefits, and differences of the three groups? To find out, read over pages 30 to 35.



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Joshua Zarb
General Manager

LEADING EDGE GROUP JEWELLERS

ESTABLISHED: 1986

MEMBERS: AUS: 136

STORES: AUS: 186

BOARD MEMBERS: 5

MISSION: The Leading Edge Group aspires to be the champion of independent businesses throughout Australia. We focus on "building valuable business communities" by working closely with our members and preferred supply partners. We do this by increasing sales, increasing margins, lowering costs and reducing isolation for all.

What are the prerequisites for joining?

Initially new members will need to comply with our application process, which consists of standard trade checks and proof of assets. We look to partner with proactive retailers focusing on fine jewellery that are eager to share in the knowledge held within the group. Honesty and ethical trading are fundamental requirements.

What are the benefits of joining?

We are part of Australia's largest buying group, supporting more than 1,100 independent retailers worldwide across 14 industries, offering specialist-retailing resources. Membership benefits include:

- Australia's most cost effective buying group
- Extensive shared resources, more value, more support for less cost
- We supply what we believe are the best prices in the industry
- Completely flexible with our user-pays marketing program, and access to a market leading digital marketing platform
- The most comprehensive range of additional member rewards, designed to reduce business expenses.

What unique benefits are offered?

Members can join Leading Edge Group and retain their existing business name, model and brand. We are unique in the marketplace in that members may also choose to utilise the Leading Edge Jewellers brand to enhance their business by gaining access to our robust business model that provides a comprehensive marketing platform and access to a specialist stock mix. In addition, we offer retail assistance at the store level and our entire management team has personally managed multi-million dollar jewellery retail businesses. Because of our strength in numbers across multiple business units, we offer the most extensive range of additional member benefits in the industry.

What have been Leading Edge's major achievements in the past two years?

We have been very fortunate to have had two record years of growth in both new members and sales. We have used this growth to better refine and add resources to assist members and supply partners. We have invested heavily in digital marketing and are proud to offer members what we believe is the most comprehensive traditional and digital marketing support package in the industry.

Has your traditional marketing changed in the past two years?

Traditional marketing services have not changed at all – in the sense that we still offer catalogues, TV, radio, print and local advertising support. What has changed is the amount of flexibility now offered. For example, we provide several catalogue options to cater for the numerous brands in our marketplace. We also offer fully customised front and back pages on catalogues to allow stores to promote their web, database/loyalty and e-commerce offerings as they see fit.

How have you improved your B2C online and social media marketing strategy?

We were the first group to offer a complete B2C e-commerce solution for all members, and have now refined this based on member feedback and requirements. Considerable time has been spent ensuring that members can access all of our supply partners' stock feeds and yet remain independent by selling directly from their own stores without a head office intervention. We have also developed a sales app that is store-specific and used to complement our B2C e-commerce offering.

WE HAVE BEEN VERY FORTUNATE TO HAVE HAD TWO RECORD YEARS OF GROWTH IN BOTH NEW MEMBERS AND SALES. WE HAVE USED THIS GROWTH TO BETTER REFINE AND ADD RESOURCES TO ASSIST MEMBERS AND SUPPLY PARTNERS

What B2B and internal digital technology have you recently implemented?

We have refined our B2B solution for members – which essentially provides a one-stop shop between our supply partners and members. We are unique in that our B2B solution seamlessly integrates with our B2C offering and store-specific sales app. We have also improved the B2B platform to better cater for multiple store vs single store solutions. Most pleasingly, B2B sales orders have exceeded our initial forecasting by 200 per cent.

What other kind of promotional support do you offer members?

Numerous store-specific promotions are offered, including sales campaigns, interest-free payment campaigns, remake/remodeling campaigns, diamond marketing and an array of direct marketing offers that support the target demographic of member stores.

How do you support local designers/manufacturers?

We focus on being "hands on" with supply partners by tailoring offers specific to members. We use our conferences to work with industry professionals and share new opportunities. Examples include hosting Q&A sessions with designers and manufacturers to share advances in traditional design and CAD. We also sponsor many industry awards and events.

What is the cost of membership?

There are no joining fees, exit fees or any lock-in contracts. We have a \$50 per month membership fee (first six months are free).

How have you improved your training and education in the past two years?

The prime focus of our buying group model is to provide hands-on training to members from our head office management team. In the past two years we have formalised our store management-training package and have continued to build on our exhaustive member benefits tool kit. In addition, we have partnered with The Friedman Group to provide a permanent staff sales and management training package that is available online 24/7 free of charge.

LEADING EDGE GROUP
Jewellers

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We offer the most extensive retail support in the industry, with a young & dynamic head office team, with over 50 years combined Jewellery industry experience.

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- Ask us about our *FREE* Staff Training Programs
- Enjoy the *Best Prices* in the Industry
- Is your *Current Buying Group* offering you the *One on One* assistance that you Deserve?

Leading Edge Group - Australia's largest & most cost effective buying group.

No cost to join & everything to gain!

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Jewellers

building valuable business communities

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P 02 9497 4000 E zarbj@leadingedgegroup.com.au

www.leadingedgegroup.com.au



Colin Pocklington
Managing Director

NATIONWIDE JEWELLERS

ESTABLISHED: 1991

MEMBERS: AUS: 391, NZ: 78

STORES: AUS: 427, NZ: 84

BOARD MEMBERS: 2

MISSION: To assist independent jewellery stores to increase their market share and profits.

What are the prerequisites for joining?

Members must operate a retail jewellery store and have satisfactory credit references. Most new stores are recommended to us by suppliers or existing Nationwide members.

What are the benefits of joining?

- We are the largest network with more than 500 jewellery stores delivering team support and significant buying power
- Guaranteed most profitable discount structure in the industry
- The support of experienced staff on call
- Exclusive branded collections, including Talkowsky and Astralis Diamonds
- Overseas travel and free conferences
- Education and training courses
- An extensive range of professional marketing material and promotions
- Nothing is compulsory – retailers maintain their complete independence.

What unique benefits are offered?

- The buying power of more than 500 stores combined with a sophisticated finance model enables Nationwide to deliver what we believe to be the most profitable discount structure in the industry. In fact, we give a written guarantee that jewellers – even if you were previously in another group – will be more profitable with Nationwide
- We offer up to \$150,000 per year interest free finance to each retailer
- Our Antwerp marketing program has increased diamond sales by more than

\$100,000 per year for many members

- Free annual conference for all retailers earning reward status
- We recognise the importance of marketing to your strength – your independence – which is why all of our services are designed to assist jewellers to not only maintain their independence but to maximise the benefits of being an independent jeweller. Members select only what works for them.

What have been Nationwide's major achievements in the past two years?

- In March 2015 we took a third group of members on our Diamond Safari trip, visiting the Jwaneng diamond mine, the De Beers Group's rough sorting facility and a large cutting factory in Gaborone, Botswana. The group also travelled to Antwerp to complete the journey of the diamond
- Giving more than 30 members an Antwerp Diamond Marketing award for pre-sales of \$50,000 or more on a diamond buying trip
- Producing our upmarket 'Dreams' collection booklet – featuring high-end jewellery
- Introducing the Jewellers Guardian online 24/7 benchmarking system that compares all of the critical data for jewellery stores.

Has your traditional marketing changed in the past two years? We still produce

Christmas catalogues as well as POS material for other promotions. Our graphic artists create various marketing material for members to use in print and/or social media. An increasing number of members are utilising our design services to more effectively promote via social media, which has prompted us to create our recently announced social media library.

How have you improved your B2C online and social media marketing strategy?

We have loaded additional stock items to our online store and updated the layout of member websites. We can provide members with an e-commerce website for only \$2,900, charged over 12 months. All online purchases are transacted via Nationwide's head office. The retail margin is credited to the relevant member with no work required by store staff.

What B2B and internal digital technology have you recently implemented?

Our weekly enews broadcasts keep our retailers updated on the latest trends and industry news and events. More importantly,

**OUR ANTWERP
MARKETING
PROGRAM HAS
INCREASED
DIAMOND SALES
BY MORE THAN
\$100,000 PER
YEAR FOR MANY
MEMBERS**

it includes the hottest deals from our preferred suppliers, while our online forum, 'In The Loupe', has been a remarkable success. It has two main areas: 1. Product search: enables retailers to network and help each other source discontinued, out of stock and hard to find products; 2. Discussion topics: members utilise this platform to exchange ideas on topics of mutual interest.

What other kind of promotional support do you offer members? Our in-house

marketing team develops exclusive marketing tools linked to key promotional periods. Individualised marketing calendars can be created on request and POS material is continually produced to highlight current best-selling product. Members also have access to an online marketing and promotional library from which they can select promotions and ideas. Our graphic design service is free and staff constantly work to fine-tune concepts and create exclusive promotions for individual stores.

How do you support local designers/manufacturers? Over the past eight years we

have given apprentices more than \$100,000 in tool vouchers. We conduct an annual skill-based contest for apprentices, with the winner receiving our Apprentice of the Year award. In 2015 we also introduced a design contest for our manufacturing jewellers. Winners receive PR material to promote their success to customers.

What is the cost of membership?

Absolutely nothing – and there are no agency fees or security deposits.

How have you improved your training and education in the past two years?

Our Diamond Grading Workshops conducted at the annual Sydney International Jewellery Fair continue to be a success. Last year we added a session on man-made and synthetic diamonds. In addition, our *Your Money* booklets, which offer guidance on best practice in areas like mark-ups and pricing, financial operations and benchmarking, have been updated and refreshed.



Buying Group Benefits Checklist

DISCOUNTS/REBATES/FEES

- NO** agency fees
- NO** joining fees
- NO** security desposits
- Best discounts (net of fees) from 100+ suppliers (written Guarantee)
- Annual rebate 1% - 3% from 25 suppliers
- Annual reward scheme
- Free annual conference
- Jewellery at overseas factory prices, with local support

MARKETING SUPPORT

- Antwerp marketing programme that delivers \$50 - \$120k in pre trip diamond sales
- 20 other diamond initiatives
- Highly successful Christmas catalogues
- Upmarket diamond catalogue
- Repair Price Book
- Websites with online shopping

EXCLUSIVE MERCHANDISE

- Tolkowsky diamond jewellery - officially the #1 brand in the world
- Astralis diamonds - from Gabi Tolkowsky

SUPPORT TEAM

- 18+ experienced staff on call to assist you in all aspects of jewellery retailing
- 24/7 online benchmarking - Jewellers Guardian
- Education and training

FINANCE

- Up to \$100k in shopfit finance
- Discounts on mortgage rates from a major bank
- Up to \$150k annually in 6 months interest free finance to spend at fairs

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Carson Webb
General Manager

SHOWCASE JEWELLERS

ESTABLISHED: 1981

MEMBERS: AUS: 151, NZ: 26

STORES: AUS: 217, NZ: 28

BOARD MEMBERS: 5

MISSION: JIMACO (Showcase Jewellers) provides members with programs, systems, resources, tools and professional services to enable them to maximise their business objectives.

What are the prerequisites for joining?

Integrity is probably one of the greatest qualities we look for in a member. We invest too heavily in promoting our independent members under the Showcase umbrella to become complacent. Operating a fine jewellery store with high standards in presentation and service is also a prerequisite.

What are the benefits of joining?

- No on-going management fees
- Maximum supplier discount given to the retailer
- A world leading customisable e-commerce platform as well as utilising Retail Edge Consultants' POS systems
- In-house product photography and videos for all digital platforms
- Access to exclusive diamond brands, including certified Argyle white diamonds
- World-class e-learning, complete with videos and certified courses
- Jewellery apps, incorporating social media integration and a focus on driving sales
- Professional and customisable marketing material to suit the retailer
- Yearly returns on trading loans and cash-back for our retailers
- Free internal retailing, diamond and digital experts to assist our retailers in every step of their retail journey
- Plus many more...

Compare the actual benefits of what's important to you as a retailer when looking for the strength of a group. Our focus is to return benefits and profits to retailers – it's not a generic corporate structure, so we encourage you to compare those costs and benefits. We also provide exclusive products as well as core ranges.

What unique benefits are offered?

JIMACO is a member-owned and operated buying group that exists for Showcase retailers. As previously stated, JIMACO is quite different to other buying groups with all profits going back to members.

What have been Showcase's major achievements in the past two years?

- Member management fees were abolished in 2015
- Members received a fully-franked dividend this past financial year
- Members also received a return on their trading loan this past financial year
- World-class member websites were launched in 2015
- Roll-out of diamond brand Passion8
- Partnership with Rio Tinto (Dreamtime).

Has your traditional marketing changed in the past two years? Traditional media still plays an important role – albeit digital is a growing focus. Our belief is that no one media channel will be effective on its own. It's about identifying what media types work in a given area and going out with a consistent message across all channels. Recent projects include a campaign that ran across council buses and our *Shine* magazine that can be customised by selecting from a range of pre-written articles to suit the retailer.

How have you improved your B2C online and social media marketing strategy?

The organic growth and engagement of our own social media sites is testament of the focus in this area. Many of our members are also performing strong in this sector. Members can now fully integrate their social media platforms with their websites and their Retail Edge Consultants POS system can also be digitally integrated for use – this will be a game changer.

What B2B and internal digital technology have you recently implemented?

In 2015 we delivered innovative e-commerce websites, B2B portal integration and tailored

WE KNOW EACH STORE HAS UNIQUE ATTRIBUTES, WHICH IS WHY OUR DIGITAL SPECIALISTS WORK WITH MEMBERS TO DEFINE THEIR BRAND IDENTITY AND DIGITAL STRATEGY

digital marketing services. We know each store has unique attributes, which is why our digital specialists work with members to define their brand identity, digital strategy, creative design, data integration, roll-out and maintenance plan. We also have the Diamond app and the Sale Driver App.

What other kind of promotional support do you offer members?

Our marketing team, along with external creative agency partners, is committed to tailoring marketing solutions for members. This is in addition to our core marketing program that caters to major selling periods. Resources available extend to social media, EDMs, billboards, cinema advertising, television commercials, catalogues, radio and newspaper.

How do you support local designers/manufacturers?

The Showcase Jewellers Design Awards are a biennial event created to encourage the craftsmanship and creativity of member jewellers. We also continue to sponsor one of the JAA Australasian Jewellery Awards and work closely with local manufacturers to assist members with Passion8 designs.

What is the cost of membership?

There's no start-up membership fee. However, Showcase operates under a shareholder structure, meaning new members are required to make an initial investment – which is refundable. At Showcase you become far more than 'just a member'. You become a shareholder helping to steer your destiny while sharing in all the benefits. Potential new members have other options that may suit their business, so it's really adaptable to being a perfect partnership.

How have you improved your training and education in the past two years?

We have a massive online retail staff induction facility. The tool is customisable and guides new employees through policies and procedures, courses with video instruction and questionnaires. We have been able to create relevant online courses in collaboration with external certified training bodies.



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DISCOVER BENEFITS — THAT ARE A — CUT ABOVE THE REST



(much like our diamonds)

- Established over 30 years ago by Jewellers just like you, the Showcase Group offers a world of benefits to its members. And right now, we're offering you the opportunity to join our retail buying and marketing group with over 250 stores in Australia and New Zealand combined.
- Because we're 100% member-owned we are proud to say that all profits are returned to members. There are no on-going management fees and all supplier discounts are passed on to members.***
- We continually invest in new technology like the exclusive Showcase jewellers app, online training academy and customisable catalogues and magazines.
- We offer exclusive brands including Passion8, Canadian Fire and Dreamtime Australian Diamonds as well as access to our internal diamond specialist to help maximise your profits.
- You'll also enjoy a world class online retail training and assistance programme and the latest retail and wholesale statistics. All without losing your independence (did we mention the Showcase designer awards for celebrating individuality?).

To hear more about these and the other benefits of becoming a Showcase Jeweller contact us at tellmore@showcasejewellers.com.au today

PASSION8™
DIAMONDS PERFECT FOREVER

dreamtime™
AUSTRALIAN DIAMONDS

CANADIANFIRE®
A Diamond True to its Origin