

# The Jewelry Selling Answer Book

Expert Answers to  
the Most Popular  
Questions Jewelry  
Makers Have  
About Selling

by Dr. David Weiman

Marketing Director, *Lapidary Journal*  
& *Step by Step Beads*



# The Jewelry Selling Answer Book

*Expert Answers to the Most Popular  
Questions Jewelry Makers Have About Selling*

by Dr. David Weiman

Marketing Director, *Lapidary Journal* and *Step by Step Beads*

Cover Design by [Robin Hayes](#)

**NOTICE:** Duplication or distribution via e-mail, floppy disk, network, printout or other means to a person other than the original person who downloaded this eBook is a violation of international copyright law.

© Copyright 2005, David A. Weiman, Psy.D., PC, Weiman Consulting. All rights reserved. No part of this eBook may be reproduced in any form, by any means (including electronic, photocopying, recording or otherwise) without the prior written permission of the publisher.

**Published by:**

David A. Weiman, Psy.D., PC  
Weiman Consulting  
333 E. Lancaster Avenue, Suite 202  
Wynnewood, PA 19096-1929  
(610) 642-3040  
david@marketingjewelry.com

# Contents

<a href="#"><u>Introduction</u></a> .....	4
<a href="#"><u>How to Use This eBook</u></a> .....	6
<a href="#"><u>Acknowledgements</u></a> .....	9
<a href="#"><u>Answers for Beginners</u></a> .....	10
<a href="#"><u>Finding the Right Marketing Channels</u></a> .....	29
<a href="#"><u>Pricing</u></a> .....	46
Discounts and “Sales” .....	67
Selling at Shows .....	70
Dealing with Competition .....	85
Consignment, Galleries & Wholesaling.....	89
The Internet & Websites .....	104
Publicity, Mailing Lists and Newsletters .....	112
Handling Criticism .....	125
Motivation & Creative Block .....	129
Commissioned Work .....	145
About the Author .....	149
Selling Tools & Services.....	150

# Introduction

Thank you for buying *The Jewelry Selling Answer Book*!

This eBook was created based on the hundreds of questions I've fielded on jewelry selling over the years as the marketing director of [Lapidary Journal](#) and as a leader of seminars on the topic of marketing and selling jewelry.

I've noticed over the years that despite the level of experience of the artisan jeweler, or the location around the country of the artist, there are common themes around how to market and sell jewelry.

The purpose of this book is to organize the answers to those questions in one ready reference that jewelry makers of all levels can make use of.

For confidentiality reasons, the names of the people who asked these questions have not been included, but they represent a cross-section of artisans.

Some of these answers originally appeared in an interview with the outstanding [Jewelry Making](#) site at Bloglander. Follow the link to read the full text.

When possible I've tried to give sources for additional information. However, the fund of information that we have about both jewelry and selling is changing all the time and you the reader are encouraged to continually learn about the fields of jewelry technique, marketing and selling.

Sometimes, topics covered in the marketing and selling of jewelry shade into other areas, such as law or accounting. In those situations I suggest that you consult with appropriate professionals. That's because the most competent person to handle those questions is a business attorney or accountant.

Finally, and related to the point above, this book is not a substitute for legal, accounting or business advice for your specific situation.

If you want to consult with me directly on a selling or marketing question, check out the [Selling Tools & Services](#) on page 150.

[Back to Table of Contents](#) ↑

## How to Use This E-Book

The material in this eBook is arranged by subject starting with those topics which people are usually most concerned with at the beginning stages of their jewelry making business, followed by those subjects that tend to come up as one becomes more established.

There are many related subjects. An example of this is how to price your jewelry. This could lead to a very straightforward discussion about how to determine a price. But it also has to do with establishing a good fit between the market and your jewelry. It also relates to how to answer questions from buyers at your show booth, what shows to attend, and other issues.

For that reason, you will notice that the answers to many questions contain similar elements. This will help cement those concepts as you read through the book, and also ensure that you will see how inter-connected many of the concepts are.

I don't assume that you are going to read this like a novel from front to back. Therefore, it's important to make sure

that certain key pieces of information are contained in the answers to related questions. Use the links provided to go right to the sections that interest you the most, or use the search function to find where key topics are covered.

If you do read it from front to back you'll see some conscious repetition in the answers, and even some slight variations.

Not every question that comes up in the marketing and selling of jewelry has a very clear answer. The result is that on some issues, the correct choice to make will depend on the experience and preferences of the reader.

Marketing and selling jewelry should be fun! Take opportunities to experiment, and see what works best for you!

I'm thinking of each one of you as an individual who is at a different stage of selling jewelry. Regardless of where you are in your development in the field, I tried to phrase the answers in a way that will make sense to beginners through advanced sellers so that everyone benefits regardless of where they are on that continuum.

Because this is an eBook, you will be able to do a search to find specific terms you are interested in. In addition,

wherever possible, I have linked key words to other related answers in the book. That way you can easily click and be connected to related information that will be of value to you.

Some of the items I've mentioned in the text are no longer available in print, but you can use [Amazon.com](http://Amazon.com) or [Ebay](http://Ebay) to find the item mentioned.

**Finally, here's a tip for making this easy to read:** I buy a fair number of eBooks, and I've discovered a simple way to making them easy to read: Print them out! I buy the paper they sell at [Staples](http://Staples) that is pre-punched for a three-ring binder, which I also buy.

Then, just print out the eBook on the pre-drilled paper, pop it into the binder and you have an easy to read book!

No matter how you read it, I hope you get a lot out of *The Jewelry Selling Answer Book*. I put a lot into it!

[Back to Table of Contents](#) ↑

# Acknowledgements

I want to thank all the wonderful, talented, and creative and inspiring jewelry makers who contributed questions that I've answered in this book.

My agreement with those who contributed was that I would use their questions without attribution. Because the book is about the most common questions that jewelry makers have about selling, who submitted the question is less important than the theme the question represents.

Also, I would like to thank Joseph Breck, the publisher of [\*Lapidary Journal\*](#), [\*Step-by-Step Beads\*](#), [\*Step-by-Step Wire Jewelry\*](#), [\*Colored Stone\*](#), [\*The Tucson Show Guide\*](#), their associated websites, and the creator of [Bead Fest](#), [The Jewelry Arts Expo](#), and [Wire Jewelry Fest](#). Joe encouraged me to convert years of experience into the seminar "How to Market and Sell Jewelry", the platform for the popular audio CD and workbook seminar [Introduction to Marketing and Selling Jewelry](#) and this eBook.

Finally, a special thanks to Anna Hiatt, my Special Projects Coordinator, who organized and transcribed this eBook.

[Back to Table of Contents](#) ↑

# Answers for Beginners

**Q: For someone who is just starting out to try and sell their jewelry, where does one begin?**

A: Ask three jewelry makers how they got started in business, and you'll get three different, and very creative, answers!

The best place to begin any new business is with a plan. This is also the kind of activity that a lot of jewelry makers avoid, because you are more attracted to creative pursuits than business activities.

---

**Creative people often view business planning as a very "un-creative" process.**

---

It actually does take a lot of creativity but it's also a task that requires a lot of linear and sequential thinking.

The truth is that most people start a jewelry business because (a) they're inspired to create jewelry and (b) people have indicated interest in it.

Does this sound like you: You love making jewelry, and you start wearing some of the pieces you created. Your friends or co-workers see the jewelry and they like it a lot. In fact, they ask if you would make a similar piece for them. Or they want to buy the one you're wearing! Before you know it, you've sold the pair of earrings you're wearing, and you're a "real" jeweler!

**Order the eBook to read the rest of this chapter, and the full text of *The Jewelry Selling Answer Book*! Just click the "Back" button on your browser for ordering instructions.**

**Another sample chapter is on the next page.**

## Finding the Right Marketing Channels

**Q: I have a full-time job and I make jewelry as a hobby. My friends and family suggest I should sell my work. I don't have enough time, though, to do shows, flea-markets, or street fairs (and I'm not comfortable selling face-to-face anyway). I also don't see myself going from store to store to show my work. Where should I start? Should I find a sales person to sell my jewelry? I'm much more comfortable just selling through my website.**

**A:** This question has a lot of different facets to it. I'd like to address a fundamental of selling artisan jewelry. This is the power of the personal sell.

There are very few products that are as important to sell face-to-face as artisan jewelry. The reason is that much of the story behind the jewelry is the artist's vision, why they chose the materials they did, what inspired the piece, that make the piece special.

You can certainly tell that story through written material and put your descriptions on a website, but it's much more powerful to tell that in person.

The story behind a piece of jewelry is so important, in fact, that one participant at my jewelry-selling seminar said that she was selling a piece of estate jewelry at her booth, and didn't know how it came into the estate from which she bought it.

A prospective customer wanted a "story" about the piece so much, that when the customer heard there was no story to tell, the buyer said, "Just make one up."

---

**It's not just that the story you tell about your jewelry is important, it's that the buyer wants to retell that story.**

---

**Order the eBook to read the rest of this chapter, and the full text of *The Jewelry Selling Answer Book*! Just click the "Back" button on your browser for ordering instructions.**

**Another sample chapter is on the next page.**

# Pricing

**Q: I often struggle with “how much to charge” for my jewelry. Is there a basic formula that is reasonable to use when trying to put a price on things one makes? I do handmade beads (polymer clay caning, mostly) and silver metal clay pendants, pins and earrings.**

A: Questions about pricing are among the most common at my seminars and in my marketing Q&A column for [\*Lapidary Journal\*](#) and [\*Step by Step Beads\*](#).

Some jewelry business instructors recommend a formula for pricing jewelry. The most typical formula is one which you calculate the cost of your materials, assign yourself an hourly rate, mark up the components perhaps two or three times, and add your hourly rate. I think this is a big mistake.

There really is no way to account for the “cost” of an artist’s talent. Consider the television show [\*Iron Chef\*](#), on the TV Food Network. In this television program, several competent chefs are given a specific period of time within which to make dishes from the exact same ingredients.

Let's transfer this concept to the jewelry world. If you gave two good jewelry designers the same components and the same period of time to design something, chances are they would come up with two very different designs.

However, if you use the formula approach to pricing them, the only thing that would vary is the "hourly rate". But let's say they each chose the same hourly rate because they consider themselves similarly talented.

This still wouldn't account for the fact that one may be significantly more creative than the other. Or that, in the eyes of a specific buyer, one piece may be more appealing than the other.

---

**In other words, there is no simple way to apply a formula that will accurately reflect the value of a piece of jewelry.**

---

That leads to another issue, which is the "value" of the piece.

**Order the eBook to read the rest of this chapter, and the full text of *The Jewelry Selling Answer Book*! Just click the "Back" button on your browser for ordering instructions.**