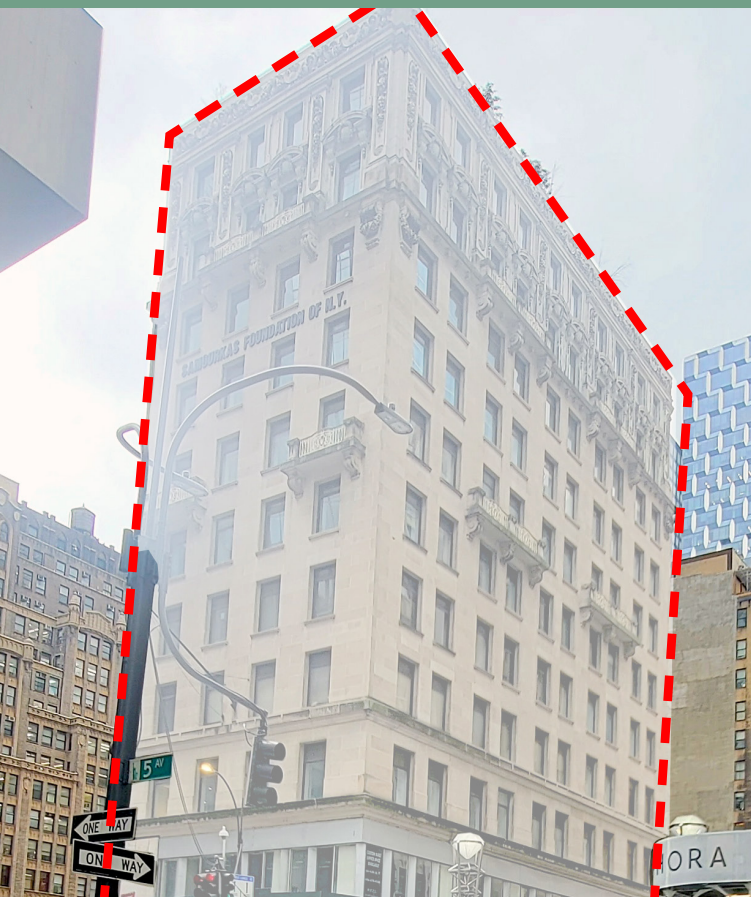


DIAMOND ND

DISTRICT MONTHLY



END OF STORIES

Remember when the famed magician David Copperfield made the Statue of Liberty disappear on live television in the 1980s? If you don't, take a walk to the Fifth Avenue side of the district and try not to rub your eyes. Because you'd swear there was once a 12-story building standing at the southwest corner of the district. All that's left is an imaginary outline drawn on thin air.

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diamonddistrict.org

LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Dear Friend,

And so, another summer came and went. Did anything of consequence happen? Well, I loathe talking about politics, so there will be nothing to report here on that front. I also heard this was the hottest summer on record. But I hear that every summer. The Olympics, thankfully, went off without a hitch unless you're a fan of breakdancing. Blame Australia!

There's a whole lot of construction in the district. But that topic is being reported at length here and elsewhere, so let's give that topic a rest. Oh, there was a massive film shoot in the heart of the district in mid-August. But you can read all about that on page 15.

So why take time here looking back, when we can focus on the future. With that, allow me to wish you a successful fall season and much prosperity and positivity now and always.

Warm regards,

Avi Fertig

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IN THE NEWS

De Beers' Canceled August Sight Signals Challenging Market Conditions



In response to persistent challenges within the diamond industry, De Beers has taken the unusual step of combining its scheduled August sight with the one

planned for October. The merged event will now take place from September 23-27, reducing the number of sights for 2024 to nine instead of the standard ten.

According to a De Beers spokesperson, "Neither sight has been canceled—they have been combined." The decision was made following discussions with sightholders, aimed at helping them manage the current tough trading environment. The revised schedule also avoids a scheduling conflict with a United Nations conference set to be held in Botswana in mid-December.

In addition to merging the sights, De Beers has moved up the dates for its final two sights of the year. The November sight has been rescheduled to November 4-8, while the December sight will now be held from December 2-6. These shifts reflect De Beers' attempt to adapt to the current market, which has already led to the company twice cutting its production targets earlier this year.

Petra Diamonds, another major player in the diamond market, has also postponed its planned August-September auction, pushing it to October. In a statement, Petra CEO Richard Duffy described these changes as "support steps taken by major producers to restrict supply in this weaker demand period." He said that "Our expectation is that supply discipline, together with the expected seasonally stronger demand as we head towards the festive season, will provide some pricing support later in the calendar year."

SOURCE: Rob Bates for JCK Online

Sotheby's Set to Put McQueen's Iconic Le Mans Heuer Monaco Under the Hammer



Steve McQueen Le Mans TAG Heuer. Photo by Sotheby's

A piece of cinematic and horological history is set to be auctioned this December, as Sotheby's prepares to sell one of the Heuer Monaco watches worn by Steve McQueen in the 1971 racing classic "Le Mans." The Ref. 1133B model, which McQueen wore during filming, is expected to fetch between \$500,000 and \$1 million at Sotheby's

"Important Watches" sale on December 11.

The Heuer Monaco, a pioneering automatic chronograph wristwatch with its distinctive square case, was one of six sent to the set by property master Don Nunley. After filming wrapped, a young mechanic on the set named Bevan Weston purchased one of the watches, holding onto it for 40 years before selling it to a private collector in 2010. Now, that collector has decided to part with the timepiece, which Sotheby's describes as the last movie-worn McQueen watch to appear at auction.

For Geoff Hess, Sotheby's global head of watches, this auction represents a career milestone. "The connection between cars and watches is well known, but the Ref. 1133B encapsulates this union in a way unmatched by other timepieces," Hess said. "For enthusiasts of racing, McQueen, or vintage chronographs, this watch represents the ultimate addition to any collection—a true 'end game' piece."

The Heuer Monaco made its debut in 1969 and has since become an iconic part of TAG Heuer's collection, thanks in part to McQueen's endorsement. The watch was on public display in Monterey, California, until August 17, and now at the Sotheby's New York showroom until the December auction.

SOURCE: Sotheby's; Michelle Graff for National Jeweler

Lucara Diamond Corp. Unearths Historic 2,492-Carat Diamond at Karowe Mine



Lucara unearths astounding 2,492-carat rough. Image by Lucara

Lucara Diamond Corp. has announced the discovery of an enormous 2,492-carat diamond at its Karowe mine in Botswana, further solidifying the mine's reputation for producing some of the largest and most valuable diamonds in the world. The

stone was recovered using the company's state-of-the-art X-ray transmission technology, which was installed in 2017 to prevent large diamonds from breaking during the extraction process.

The discovery of this massive gem adds to Lucara's history of remarkable finds, including the 1,758-carat Sewelô and the 1,109-carat Lesedi La Rona. "We are ecstatic about the recovery of this extraordinary 2,492-carat diamond," said Lucara CEO William Lamb. "This find not only showcases the remarkable potential of our Karowe mine but also upholds our strategic investment in cutting-edge XRT technology."

Lucara plans to continue mining from the EM/PK(S) portion of the Karowe mine's south lobe, where this latest diamond was found, as part of its ongoing underground operations. The diamond will likely be sold to HB Antwerp through Lucara's offtake agreement,

which covers all rough stones over 10.8 carats.

The Karowe mine remains a vital part of Botswana's diamond industry, contributing significantly to the nation's economy and providing funding for essential services like healthcare and education.

SOURCE: Lucara Diamond Corp.; Leah Meirovich for Rapaport

Jay-Z First to Buy \$340K Jacob & Co. Bugatti Tourbillon



Jacob & Co. Bugatti Tourbillon. Image from jacobandco.com

Ever the trendsetter, especially in the luxury watch landscape, Jay-Z has become the first person to acquire the coveted Bugatti Tourbillon from Jacob & Co. The music mogul, known for his extensive collection of high-end timepieces from brands like Patek

Philippe, Audemars Piguet, and Richard Mille, debuted his latest acquisition at the 40/40 Club pop-up during Fanatics Fest in New York City in late August.

According to Jacob & Co., Jay-Z is the first to own this exclusive timepiece—an honor reminiscent of when he became the first recipient of the brand's Five Time Zone watch 25 years ago.

The Bugatti Tourbillon was officially unveiled in late June as a tribute to the luxury hypercar of the same name. Just days before the watch's debut, Bugatti had revealed its 1,800 hp Tourbillon hypercar, the most powerful model in the French automaker's history.

Capable of reaching an astounding 276 mph, the vehicle also features a skeletonized instrument cluster that draws inspiration from Swiss horological design, further blending the worlds of luxury cars and watches. Bugatti and Jacob & Co. first teamed up in 2019, and since then, the partnership has yielded a series of watches that exude performance and craftsmanship, including models inspired by the Chiron and Type 57.

What sets this latest collaboration apart is its meticulous attention to automotive detail. The 52 mm black titanium case is designed to resemble the exterior of the Bugatti Tourbillon, featuring a front grille flanked by two cooling inlets. Sapphire crystal windows on the case sides mirror the car's sleek windows, while the retrograde hour and minute displays evoke the look of a tachometer and speedometer. Even the winding crown is designed to mimic the car's control knobs.

The standout feature, however, is the watch's mechanical engine. The V-16 automaton, crafted from a single piece of sapphire, boasts 16 titanium pistons and cylinders powered by a single-axis crankshaft. When the automaton is activated, the crankshaft spins, and the

pistons move up and down in a synchronized motion, mimicking the function of a real engine. The hand-wound Tourbillon, which consists of 557 components, offers a 48-hour power reserve, making it a mechanical marvel as much as a work of art.

The watch is being released in an extremely limited run of 150 pieces, each priced at \$340,000. As for the Bugatti Tourbillon hypercar, production will be capped at 250 units, with prices starting at \$4.08 million. The first of these extraordinary vehicles is expected to roll off the production line at Bugatti's atelier in Molsheim, France, in 2026.

SOURCE: Rachel Cormack for Robb Report

Dresden's Green Vault Restores Stolen Royal Jewels to Public Display



Recovered Green Vault jewelry back on display. Image by State Art Collections Dresden/David Pinzer

Nearly four years after the infamous 2019 heist at the Green Vault Museum in Dresden, Germany, the majority of the stolen royal jewels have been recovered and are now back on display.

The 18th-century treasures, once

belonging to the Saxon royal family, were painstakingly restored by museum experts after being retrieved by German authorities in 2022. However, several pieces, including a jeweled bustle bow and an epaulet set with the "Saxon White" diamond, remain missing.

Marion Ackermann, director general of the Dresden State Art Collections, expressed her appreciation to the Dresden Regional Court for allowing the jewels to be returned to their original home. "We are very grateful to the Dresden Regional Court for approving the relocation of the jewels to their original location," Ackermann said. "However, they will remain secured for judicial appraisal. The reinstallation of the display case now allows the citizens of Saxony and all interested visitors to experience the Green Vault again in almost all its glory."

In May 2023, five members of the Remmo crime family were convicted of carrying out the heist and sentenced to between four and six years in prison. The return of the stolen jewels was a condition of a plea deal negotiated during the trial.

The Green Vault Museum, one of the oldest museums in the world, was founded in 1723 by Augustus the Strong and houses over 4,000 objects, including the famed Dresden Green diamond.

SOURCE: Lenore Fedow for National Jeweler

Section continued on page 8

Rapaport Reviews Top Diamond-Tracking Programs and How They Work

In a recent report for Rapaport Magazine, noted-industry analyst Avi Krawitz tackles the critical issue of diamond traceability, outlining several leading technologies designed to track diamonds from mine to market. These solutions typically fall into three categories: matching the diamond to a digital twin, physically marking or analyzing the diamond, and compiling verified data into blockchain ledgers.



Image generated with AI

Diabot

Innovseed's Diabot has scanned over three million diamonds since its launch, helping track diamonds by recording a unique "fingerprint" based on color, weight, shape, and fluorescence. The machine creates a 3D model using imaging and video, with scanning done at both the mining and manufacturing stages. The responsibility then shifts to manufacturers to track the diamond through the rest of its journey—whether by using third-party solutions or their own. Diabot is working with blockchain programs such as Everledger and De Beers' Tracr, with the updated version now scanning at 3.7 seconds per stone.

Sarine Technologies

Sarine uses its extensive network of diamond-planning and manufacturing equipment to track diamonds throughout their journey from mine to consumer. The rough diamond is scanned at the mining site and again after it is manufactured, with the scans matched based on specific features like shape, size, and fluorescence. Sarine's Diamond Journey program lets retailers share the story of each diamond with customers, verified through the company's traceability system and compatible with blockchain platforms like Tracr.

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Americans Grapple with "Vibecession" as Economic Concerns Linger



Image generated with AI

Although an official recession has not been declared, many Americans are feeling as though the country is already in one. New research from Affirm, a payment network, reveals that three out of five Americans believe the U.S. economy is currently in recession—despite the lack of an official announcement. This perception has given rise to the term "vibecession," describing a downturn in consumer sentiment driven by the feeling that economic conditions are worse than they may appear on paper.

The survey, which included responses from 2,000 Americans, found that inflation and the rising cost of living were the leading reasons behind this pessimism, with 68% of respondents citing these factors as evidence of a recession. In addition, 50% of participants said that hearing complaints from friends and family about money contributed to their belief in an economic downturn.

"With confidence in the U.S. economy at a low point, consumers are urgently seeking ways to feel in control of their finances," said Vishal Kapoor, Senior Vice President of Product at Affirm. "Amidst these levels of uncertainty and doubt, we believe that the antidote to the current 'vibecession' is greater choice and transparency in how people manage their finances."

Respondents reported feeling that the economic challenges began over a year ago, around March 2023, and many don't anticipate a recovery until at least July 2025. This outlook is reflected in their personal finances, with 68% of those surveyed stating that inflation is negatively affecting their future plans, such as saving and making large purchases.

To adapt, nearly 89% of participants said they prioritize having a predictable monthly budget. The desire for transparency in costs was also evident, with 63% of respondents indicating that they prefer to see the total price of a purchase upfront, including any interest charges. Additionally, more than half (54%) said they have used or would consider using "buy now, pay later" options to help manage their spending.

"While conversations around money may contribute to the pessimistic outlook on the economy, it also means that people are discovering smarter ways to pay, including options to pay over time without any late or hidden fees," Kapoor added.

SOURCE: INSTORE; Affirm/Talker Research

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Swiss Watch Exports Show Recovery Despite Challenges in China and Hong Kong



Steve McQueen Le Mans TAG Heuer. Photo by Sotheby's

Swiss watch exports saw a slight recovery in July, spurred by stronger demand in the United States and Japan, despite ongoing weakness in key Asian markets like China and Hong Kong. According to the Federation of the Swiss Watch Industry, total exports for the month increased

by 1.6%, reaching \$2.61 billion. This followed consecutive declines in May and June, with demand in Asian markets continuing to lag.

"Swiss watch exports showed modest growth in July," the federation noted, pointing to consistent gains in markets such as the United States, Japan, France, South Korea, Taiwan, and Saudi Arabia. However, sales to China and Hong Kong remained sluggish, marking six consecutive months of decline.

The United States, leading the global demand, saw a shipment increase of 11%, totaling \$444.8 million. Japan followed closely with a 26% rise in exports, amounting to \$217.7 million.

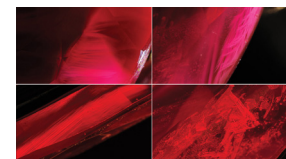
Meanwhile, the traditionally strong Chinese market saw a sharp 33% drop, with shipments falling to \$204.6 million, and Hong Kong also recorded a 19% decline, bringing their total to \$171.4 million. Exports to France grew by 14%, while South Korea, Taiwan, and Saudi Arabia all posted 25% gains.

Watches priced below \$233 showed the strongest growth, surging 14% in July. High-end timepieces valued above \$3,491 also performed well, growing by 5%. However, these gains were counterbalanced by sharp declines in mid-range products, with watches priced between \$233 and \$582 plummeting by 23%, and those in the \$582 to \$3,491 range declining by 13%.

Cumulatively, Swiss watch exports for the year have fallen by 2.4%, totaling \$17.64 billion over the first seven months.

SOURCE: Leah Meirovich for Rapaport

GIA Identifies Synthetic Ruby with Natural-Looking Inclusions



Close-up of the milky clouds in the synthetic ruby. Image by Gemological Institute of America

The Gemological Institute of America (GIA) recently identified a synthetic ruby that presented characteristics typically associated with natural stones. The

2.14-carat ruby was submitted to the GIA's Tokyo laboratory for identification and an origin report. Upon examination, the stone revealed milky cloud inclusions and other features that could easily be mistaken for those of a natural ruby.

The GIA's analysis confirmed that the stone was a Ramaura flux-grown synthetic ruby. Despite its natural appearance, the ruby showed tell-tale signs of being synthetic, including lower concentrations of magnesium and gallium and higher levels of lanthanum, platinum, and lead. These chemical anomalies, along with the absence of vanadium, pointed to the stone being lab-grown rather than a naturally formed gemstone.

"Surprisingly, such milky clouds and flux inclusions could be confused with heated natural ruby and might cause misidentification," the GIA noted in its report. This case underscores the importance of combining careful visual observation with chemical analysis to avoid misidentifying synthetic stones as natural.

SOURCE: GIA; Suzanne Watkin for Rapaport

Titan Report Reveals Indian Consumers Prefer Natural Diamonds Over Lab-grown



Titan Company, a major player in India's jewelry market, has reported that domestic customers are less interested in lab-grown diamonds compared to their overseas counterparts, particularly in the

United States. Titan Managing Director C.K. Venkataraman noted that Indian consumers are more concerned with verifying the authenticity of the diamonds they purchase, rather than seeking out synthetic alternatives.

"We've been trying to track the inquiries on a continuous basis across all the stores, Tanishq, CaratLane, Mia, and Zoya, and so far we have not seen material inquiries for [customers wanting lab-grown diamonds]," Venkataraman said during a recent analyst call. "What we do hear about, what our customers are more curious about, they want to be assured that what we are selling is natural, and [doesn't have any lab-grown in it]."

Indian customers have increasingly requested proof of the natural origin of their diamonds, prompting Titan to ramp up testing. The company now subjects all incoming diamonds to rigorous testing procedures—conducted at least three to four times before sale—to ensure authenticity. Most of Titan's diamonds are sourced through De Beers sightholders, who provide stringent assurances regarding the stones' natural origin.

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Holiday Shoppers Could Face "Marketing Fatigue" This Season



With the holiday season fast approaching, many consumers are bracing for what has become an increasingly common issue—"marketing fatigue." According to a recent survey conducted by customer-led marketing platform Optimove, 67% of shoppers anticipate feeling overwhelmed by marketing messages by November 1st. This fatigue can lead to a significant drop in consumer engagement as people grow tired of constant brand communications.

"The bottom line is that customers have high expectations that a brand knows them and interacts with them accordingly," said Pini Yakuel, CEO of Optimove.

"It will be critical that brands engage with consumers to enhance their relationships—not alienate or overwhelm consumers with irrelevant impersonal messages."

While marketing fatigue looms large, the survey revealed some positive signs for the holiday shopping season. Consumer confidence has seen a significant uptick, with 50% of respondents expressing optimism about the economy, a sharp rise from 26% in 2023. This renewed confidence could translate into higher spending, as 61% of those surveyed plan to increase their holiday budgets compared to last year.

Optimove's findings are based on a survey of 280 U.S. citizens aged 21 and older, with household incomes of \$75,000 or more. As brands prepare for the upcoming season, the key takeaway from the survey is that personalized, relevant communication will be crucial in maintaining consumer engagement and avoiding marketing fatigue.

SOURCE: INSTORE Staff

Will Natural Diamonds Ever Dazzle Again?



The diamond industry is facing one of its steepest declines as consumers increasingly opt for lab-grown diamonds due to their plummeting prices. However, some experts believe that the natural diamond market could be poised for a rebound as profitability for synthetic stones continues to shrink.

Industry analysts forecast that as the prices for lab-grown diamonds fall too low, it could trigger a financial squeeze for retailers. This, in turn, may drive them to push natural diamonds more heavily. "We are getting to a pivot point where the profitability of retailers selling lab-grown is a lot less than it was in the previous three to five years," said independent industry analyst Paul Zimnisky. "This could be a catalyst to returning to natural diamonds. Retailers aren't loyal to lab-grown or natural diamonds, they're loyal to making money."

De Beers, the world's largest diamond producer, agrees with this outlook. Recently, the company suggested that the market share of lab-grown diamonds could decrease by \$3 billion by 2030, shrinking from \$13 billion to \$10 billion. The shift is expected to happen as consumers start viewing lab-grown stones as affordable fashion accessories rather than enduring symbols of value.

The impact of falling lab-grown diamond prices has already rippled through the market. Currently, a one-carat lab-grown diamond sells for \$1,015—just a fraction of what it cost in 2016, according to Zimnisky's analysis. Meanwhile, the price of natural diamonds has dropped nearly 30% since early 2022, with one-carat stones now fetching around \$5,000. Despite this decline, natural diamonds still dominate 84% of the overall jewelry market, though they are expected to shrink by 5% this year to \$69.9 billion.

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END OF STORIES

With the last piece gone, the stage is set for massive redevelopment on the Fifth Avenue side of the Diamond District



576 Fifth Avenue—Now you see it...

Remember when the famed magician David Copperfield made the Statue of Liberty disappear on live television in the 1980s? If you don't, take a walk to the Fifth Avenue side of the district and try not to rub your eyes. Because you'd swear there was once a 12-story building standing at the southwest corner of the district. All that's left is an imaginary outline drawn on thin air.

It's no illusion. As recently as June, this iconic example of early-20th-century commercial architecture dwarfed the left, twin diamond pylon standing sentry at the Fifth Avenue entrance to the Diamond District. Alas, the ornate Beaux-Arts stonework and early Art Deco façade is a new



576 Fifth Avenue—Now You Don't

memory. In its place—bare earth. That and a suddenly visible diamond pole towering above the sidewalk; a standing monument to the disappearance of another diamond district landmark.

Now we get ready for a whole new story. The plot is fairly common: A tall tale of Extell Development plans for a massive, mixed use structure consisting of a hotel, business offices, and retail space that includes an underground and street level IKEA mini-superstore. One unknown is when the story will begin, and if the recently vacant corner parcel is part of the project. As of now, it isn't. But these stories are never without their twists and turns. Better grab some popcorn!

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"The investor presentations by the mining companies show the upward curve of demand and decline of supply, but the truth is with lab-grown [stones] taking a chunk of the market, it has changed the economics of diamond mining," said Avi Krawitz, a diamond sector analyst.

The downturn has especially affected mining giants like De Beers, which announced in May that it would reduce production by 15% amid difficult market conditions. Russia's Alrosa has also been impacted, leading the company to diversify its assets by acquiring a gold mine.

The market disruption isn't limited to natural diamond producers. The surge in lab-grown diamond manufacturing has resulted in overproduction, causing financial strain on companies in countries like India, where much of the world's diamond cutting and polishing is done. Bhavesh Tank, vice president of the Diamond Workers Union Gujarat, said that oversupply is wreaking havoc on the industry. "Diamonds once sold at \$500 per carat. Today nobody is ready to buy them at \$40 per carat."

To counteract these challenges, De Beers has launched a marketing campaign with major retailers like Chow Tai Fook and Signet. The campaign includes labeling lab-grown diamonds with warnings that they will depreciate in value once purchased. Additionally, De Beers plans to sell \$10,000 machines to retailers that can identify whether a diamond is natural or lab-grown. "Our challenge in the natural diamond space is to drive marketing around what differentiates us from lab-grown diamonds, which is that our products are rare, billions of years old, and enduring," said Richard Duffy, CEO of Petra Diamonds.

Still, there are skeptics who doubt the ability of the natural diamond market to fully recover. Alexander Lacik, CEO of Pandora, which exclusively sells lab-grown diamonds, questioned whether retailers can truly influence consumer preferences when the price difference is so significant. "This is an incredibly internal view that all of a sudden the retail industry could impose a product choice on consumers," Lacik said. "Ultimately, the consumer will vote with their wallet."

SOURCE: The Financial Times

UK Retailers See Boost As Workers Return to the Office



New research from the Virgin Media O2 Business Movers Index reveals that in-store shopping is on the rise as more employees return to their offices. With 89% of UK workers commuting at least once a week, spending habits have shifted, benefiting local retailers, particularly around lunch breaks and after-work hours.

The study found that Fridays have become the most popular day for post-work shopping, with 38% of millennials and Gen Z workers spending more at stores near their workplaces than they did three months ago. This resurgence in foot traffic has been a welcome boost for businesses, especially as in-office attendance has increased throughout the summer.

Retailers are also seeing a notable uptick in spending around payday, with 40% of UK workers reporting that they spend more near their offices when

they receive their paychecks. In total, this spending is estimated to contribute an additional £822 million to the British economy.

Jo Bertram, Managing Director of Virgin Media O2 Business, commented on the findings: "Our latest Virgin Media O2 Business Movers Index shows Brits increasingly choosing to shop in-person and spend more to support local business. This coincides with rising office attendance, leading to a boost in lunch and post-work spending in towns and cities."

In response to this trend, retailers have adapted by offering targeted promotions, with 50% of respondents noting that they've seen lunch deals, 28% spotting mid-week retail promotions, and 32% noticing happy hour specials.

SOURCE: INSTORE

IN MEMORIAM:

MANNY WINICK

February 27, 1929 - July 5, 2024



Manny Winick was a longtime presence in the 47th Street Diamond district

The Diamond District lost a precious gem this past summer with the passing of Emanuel "Manny" Winick on July 5, 2024, at the age of 95. Born on February 27, 1929, in Brooklyn to Jacob and Gussie Winick of Minsk, Russia, Manny spent his final days in Southampton, New York, passing peacefully with his beloved daughter Ivy by his side.

Manny was a well-known and respected figure on 47th Street, where his thriving jewelry business became a fixture in New York City. He founded his business in 1954 in Lower Manhattan before relocating it uptown to 47th Street, later expanding to Montauk. This year, the Winick family celebrates the 70th anniversary of the business, which continues under the leadership of his son, Richard.

In his younger years, Manny enjoyed an active lifestyle, playing paddleball, tennis, swimming, and skiing. He also had a deep appreciation for fine dining, wines, and travel, and was known for his love of beautiful automobiles.

Manny will be fondly remembered for his vibrant spirit and his lifelong contributions to the Diamond District.

Section continued on page 15

ROANOKE

ATA carnet

The world is your display case with ATA Carnet as your jewelry's passport!

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Section continued from page 8

Venkataraman attributed the difference in demand for synthetic diamonds between India and the U.S. to cultural influences. He noted that Hollywood's longstanding focus on large, impressive diamonds has driven American consumers to prioritize size, sometimes at the expense of natural origin. "If you go back to maybe even two decades ago, with American movies, where a male proposes to a bride, or the bride is showing off what she got from her fiancé, it's all about the size of the rock, the solitaire," Venkataraman explained. "That the guy thought so much of you he bought such a big rock."

However, in India, the media has not driven such consumer behavior to the same extent. Indian women, according to Venkataraman, are less likely to prioritize the size of a diamond, focusing instead on its authenticity and other traditional attributes. As a result, there has been little interest in synthetic diamonds in the Indian market.

Separately, De Beers recently met with the Gem and Jewellery Export Promotion Council (GJEPC) in Mumbai to discuss strategies for strengthening the natural-diamond market in India. The discussions highlight India's increasing prominence within the global diamond industry, both as a consumer and as a center for diamond cutting and trading.

SOURCE: Leah Meirovich for Rapaport

Divers Retrieve Lost \$80K Patek Philippe After a Year in the Drink



Patek Philippe Aquanaut retrieved by divers after a year underwater. Image by Mallorca Detecting

In a remarkable story of persistence and skill, divers off the coast of Mallorca, Spain, has recovered a lost Patek Philippe Aquanaut watch from the depths of the Mediterranean Sea. The watch, valued at \$80,000 on the pre-owned market, was retrieved after spending an entire year underwater during which time it remarkably remained in working condition.

The watch's owner had lost it during a boating trip the previous year and had been attempting to recover it ever since. Enter Mallorca Detecting, a specialized company that focuses on recovering lost items from the sea. Founded by professional divers Caro and Giorgio, the company employed metal detection equipment and extensive diving expertise to locate the high-end timepiece.

According to a report by Supercar Blondie, the Patek Philippe Aquanaut is the most valuable item the team has recovered to date, surpassing even a Rolex that was previously found by a surfer in Australia. The Aquanaut Travel Time 5164A model is renowned for its durability, including a water resistance of up to 100 meters—an attribute that contributed to its survival during its prolonged exposure to the elements.

SOURCE: Alessandro Renesis for Supercar Blondie; The Centurion

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RABBITS, DOGS, AND DIAMONDS, OH, MY!



Do you know this man?
HINT: He's a famous Hollywood Star.

The Diamond District isn't expanding its range to include small furry animals. However, with the number of film productions happening here lately, one couldn't be faulted for wondering if Hollywood had established an East Coast outpost on West 47th Street. The latest in a string of movie shoots causing a stir in the heart of the district was an upcoming Netflix thriller titled *Black Rabbit*, operating under its cryptic production name, *Gary, The Dog*.

The two-day shoot originated with a film permit filed through the Mayor's Office of Media Entertainment (MOME). Filming was fortunately scheduled just after the dog days of summer, coinciding with the pleasant weather on August 20th and 21st. The closed-set shoot took place indoors at 23 West, with most of the action beginning in the late afternoon and continuing overnight, resulting in fewer disruptions than past productions.

Those who stuck around late enough to gawk may have been rewarded with the chance of catching a glimpse of the series' star, Jason Bateman—though it's questionable if many of them recognized him when they did.

In his *Black Rabbit* role as the ne'er-do-well brother of a successful nightclub owner, Bateman camouflaged his star power behind a scruffy beard, stringy long hair, and sloppy attire. Channeling his inner street-dweller worked wonders to conceal his identity. Too well, perhaps, as two police officers protecting the closed set moved to bar entry to Bateman. Aides quickly plucked the startled star away from the scrutinous duo, and the show went on. *Black Rabbit* is scheduled to stream on Netflix in mid-2025.



Black Rabbit film crew hard at work behind the getaway Ferrari (foreground).

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Tracr

Developed by De Beers, Tracr aims to function as an independent industry platform, tracking millions of diamonds through the supply chain. Tracr creates a digital twin of each diamond by scanning it at the mining stage, then matching the scan with subsequent data from the factory. As the diamond is polished and sold, each transaction is added to the blockchain, with third-party audits ensuring the integrity of the goods. Tracr's partnerships with Sarine and the Gemological Institute of America (GIA) further enhance its traceability efforts.

Authentia

Using nano-marking technology, Authentia applies a microscopic identifier to rough diamonds that remain intact through the cutting and polishing processes. The diamond's data, including legal documents attesting to its origin, is then uploaded to the blockchain. Additional nano-marking at the polished stage ensures that the diamond can be identified throughout its journey. Authentia is working with miners and diamond producers in South Africa to expand its platform and expects millions of carats to be on its blockchain by year-end.

GIA (Gemological Institute of America)

GIA's Diamond Origin program uses scientific analysis to match rough diamonds with their polished counterparts, confirming the stone's origin. Participants send rough diamonds to GIA labs, where they are analyzed and assigned identifying numbers. Once polished, the diamond returns to the GIA for grading, and the lab issues a Diamond Origin Report verifying the stone's country of origin. GIA also offers its Source Verification Service, where third-party auditors validate the manufacturer's processes and claims of traceability.

Opsydia

Born from Oxford University research, Opsydia's nano-scale inscriptions serve as physical markers within polished diamonds, without affecting their clarity. These unremovable identifiers link to grading reports, blockchain records, or

branded jewelry origins, providing a physical link that supports other traceability systems. Opsydia is in discussions with several traceability providers to integrate its technology into their platforms, aiming to expand the visibility of these markings to jewelers and consumers alike.

Provenance Proof

Provenance Proof, known for its work with emeralds, uses a nanoparticle solution to tag diamonds with an invisible mark at the cutting stage. These markers are linked to blockchain records, ensuring the diamond can be traced back to the cutting facility. Though originally focused on emeralds, Provenance Proof has adapted its methods to accommodate diamonds, providing physical traceability throughout the remaining supply chain.

Everledger

Everledger's blockchain solution creates an immutable digital ledger that tracks diamonds through the supply chain. The company uses artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning to match rough diamonds to polished ones and supports integration with other providers' systems. Everledger's chain-of-custody solution tracks diamonds via transaction data, mining records, and import-export documents, promoting transparency and sustainability in the diamond industry.

iTraceiT

iTraceiT focuses on providing traceability for all diamonds, including melee goods. The system uses QR codes to track diamonds from the rough stage through to the retailer, with data being uploaded to the blockchain at various stages. iTraceiT connects to other traceability platforms, facilitating seamless data transfers and offering third-party legal verification to ensure the information is accurate.

To read the entire in-depth report, make sure to visit: <https://rapaport.com/magazine-article/the-top-diamond-tracking-programs-and-how-they-work/>

SOURCE: Avi Krawitz for Rapaport

THE DIAMOND DISTRICT PARTNERSHIP NEEDS PARTNERS LIKE YOU!

Become a Diamond District Partnership Member TODAY!



Now is the best time to sign up to become a member of the Diamond District Partnership / 47th Street Business Improvement District (BID). Becoming a member is absolutely free and takes minutes to apply.

As a member, you are contributing to the vitality and success of the Diamond District and gaining the power to shape its future. Membership allows you to vote on key decisions, from approving budgets to electing board members, and even serving on the Board of Directors.

Eligibility: If you own a business or property or reside on West 47th Street between 5th and 6th Avenues (excluding 580 Fifth Avenue), you are eligible to join. Take a moment to make your voice heard and influence the issues that matter in the Diamond District.

How to Join: Fill out the membership application on the back page or apply online by visiting www.diamonddistrict.org and click the link at the top of our homepage.

Act Now! Join today and be part of a community that cares. Remember, our BID is YOUR BID, and together, we can achieve more!

Show your support and join today!
Remember, our BID is YOUR BID.



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Diamond District: Manhattan DA Announces Diamond Heist Indictment



Diamond District arrest

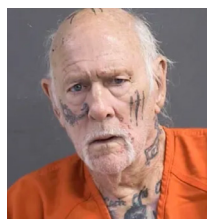
Manhattan District Attorney Alvin L. Bragg Jr. announced charges against 41-year-old Manashe Sezanayev of Queens, following an elaborate diamond-swapping scheme. Sezanayev, operating through his business, Rachel's Diamonds in Manhattan's famed Diamond District, is accused of duping two separate merchants by covertly swapping their genuine diamonds with lab-grown stones. These replica stones, although crafted to resemble the originals, were worth significantly less than the natural diamonds they replaced.

According to the charges, Sezanayev's fraudulent actions took place in early 2024. On February 5, 2024, a merchant visited Sezanayev with two diamonds valued at \$185,000 and \$75,000, hoping to sell them. Sezanayev allegedly inspected the stones but, while weighing them on his scale, secretly replaced them with lab-grown counterparts. In a similar incident on March 27, 2024, another merchant brought a \$200,000 diamond for Sezanayev to inspect. Once again, Sezanayev swapped the real diamond for a fake one, cut to imitate the original and marked with a forged Gemological Institute of America (GIA) inscription.

"Diamonds are forever, but this alleged scheme was short-lived. As alleged, Manashe Sezanayev took advantage of diamond merchants by stealing their diamonds and replacing them with fake stones," said DA Bragg. "Merchants are expected to conduct business in a fair and honest manner. Those who take advantage of consumers will be held accountable."

Sezanayev is charged with two counts of grand larceny in the second degree, one count of scheme to defraud in the first degree, and three counts of criminal possession of a forged instrument. The case is being prosecuted by Assistant DA Ben Rose of the Financial Frauds Bureau, with oversight from Bureau Chief Kofi Sansculotte and Chief of the Investigation Division Jodie Kane. NYPD Detective Joseph Metsopoulos of the Major Case Squad was credited for his role in the investigation, along with the GIA for their forensic analysis of the diamonds involved.

SOURCE: Manhattan District Attorney



Ghazi Michel Gus Osta. Image from Volusia County Branch Jail

Florida Jeweler's Murder Suspect Indicted on Multiple Charges

The Daytona Beach community continues to grapple with the tragic death of Ghazi "Gus" Michel Osta, the owner of Volusia Gold & Diamond, who was shot and killed in

July 2024. The suspect, 83-year-old John Willard Craiger, has been indicted on charges of first-degree murder and attempted first-degree murder, following a harrowing series of events that led to Osta's death.

On July 19, 2024, Craiger, a frequent customer at Osta's jewelry store, entered the premises just before 1 p.m. and approached the counter where Osta was working. After what police described as a brief verbal altercation, Craiger allegedly pulled a revolver from his pants pocket and shot Osta in the head. Osta was rushed to the hospital but tragically succumbed to his injuries.

As the situation unfolded, Osta's son, David, who was also present at the store, exchanged gunfire with Craiger in an attempt to defend his father. Meanwhile, another employee, acting quickly, struck Craiger on the head with a small statue, and when Craiger fell, the employee hit him again with a brass-colored vase. Despite sustaining gunshot wounds to his legs and a head injury, Craiger survived and was arrested after receiving medical treatment.

A Volusia County grand jury indicted Craiger in early August on the charges of first-degree murder and attempted first-degree murder. Osta's family remembered him as "a loving father, brother, and friend to so many. He had the soul of a lion and always wore his heart on his sleeve."

Ghazi Osta, a Lebanese immigrant who had made his home in Daytona Beach, opened Volusia Gold & Diamond 38 years ago with his wife, Leigh Osta. Together, they raised four children and built a business that became a cornerstone of their community. Osta's family expressed their grief, stating, "His energy, generosity, and passion for life could be felt by all those who came into contact with him. Our dad was always striving to help those around him. He loved his community, and they loved him back. He will be deeply missed."

SOURCE: Lenore Fedow for National Jeweler

Schaumburg Jewelry Heist: \$1.5 Million Stolen in Complex, Coordinated Burglary



Displays emptied by thieves. Image from ABC7-Chicago news footage.png

A complex burglary at Schaumburg's Woodfield Mall resulted in the theft of \$1.5 million worth of merchandise from Marquise Jewelry. The burglars orchestrated a well-planned break-in by cutting through the walls of

multiple neighboring businesses to gain access to the jewelry store, a technique that allowed them to bypass security systems and patrolling guards unnoticed.

"Everything was gone. They did not leave us anything," said store owner Asma Anwar, describing her shock upon discovering that the store had been ransacked overnight. Anwar and her husband, Shazad Malik, had invested 13 years into building their business, only to see it decimated in a

single night by a group of six burglars.

The heist was discovered the following morning by a construction worker who noticed a hole in the drywall of a vacant store adjacent to Marquise Jewelry. Schaumburg police believe the burglars entered the mall after closing hours and took their time tunneling through three separate businesses before reaching their target.

"How was this going on for overnight hours, after mall hours, and security was not notified?" questioned Anwar, frustrated by the apparent security lapse. Despite having their own security measures in place, the store's owners are struggling to understand how such a significant breach could occur without immediate detection.

Schaumburg police are calling the investigation "very active" as they comb through surveillance footage and other evidence to track down the perpetrators. The burglars, who carefully covered one of the store's cameras, are suspected to have executed a highly coordinated plan, taking great care to avoid leaving behind any traceable evidence.

SOURCE: Cate Cauguiran for abc7chicago

Retailers Face Escalating Theft Crisis, New Survey Reveals



A new study commissioned by Avery Dennison reveals that retailers in the U.S. and U.K. are facing unprecedented levels of theft, with many describing the situation as a "crisis." The survey, which gathered insights from 300 senior retail leaders, found that 64% of large retailers see theft as a top concern, forcing them to adopt more sophisticated security measures to combat the problem.

Retailers are deploying a combination of high-tech and low-tech solutions to deter theft, including RFID tags, body-worn cameras, and facial recognition technology. According to the study, the most effective anti-theft measures currently in use are security guards (cited by 27% of respondents), facial recognition technology (23%), and RFID tags (21%). The retailers participating in the survey indicated that they are planning to expand their use of these technologies over the next 24 months, with 76% stating they are either using or planning to implement RFID technology within this period.

In addition to theft, retailers are also grappling with other challenges such as optimizing omnichannel strategies, increasing operating costs, and improving staff efficiency. The report highlights that RFID technology, already widely used by retailers like Macy's, has proven to be a game-changer. Macy's, in particular, has been at the forefront of RFID adoption for more than a decade. Joe Coll, VP of Asset

Protection at Macy's, emphasized the benefits, saying, "RFID has proven a game-changer for us. It has definitely unlocked so much insight and completely changed our visibility into what is happening inside of our stores."

However, theft is only part of the problem for retailers. Shrinkage — which includes not just theft, but also supply chain waste, misplaced inventory, and human error — remains a significant issue. Francisco Melo, President of Avery Dennison's Solutions Group, noted the need for a proactive approach to loss prevention.

"While theft remains a significant concern, shrinkage extends further to include supply chain waste, misplaced inventory, human error and even fraud," Melo said. "The impact is substantial. To protect profits and create improved store environments, it is imperative that retailers take a data-led approach to loss prevention. Leveraging advanced track and trace technologies such as RFID, with real-time analytics, will help to turn loss prevention into a proactive operation rather than a reactive one."

The report concludes that as retailers continue to face increasing pressures from theft and other forms of shrinkage, those that invest in the latest loss-prevention technologies will be better equipped to protect their profits and improve their store environments.

SOURCE: Avery Dennison; INSTORE

Burglars Cut Through Wall to Steal \$1 Million in Jewelry from Chicago Store



In a meticulously executed heist, burglars broke into Marquise Jewelers in Chicago's Woodfield Mall and made off with over \$1 million worth of jewelry. The crime, which took place in the early hours of August 2, 2024, involved the burglars cutting through the dry-wall of a neighboring vacant store to gain access to the jewelry store's vault.

According to Schaumburg police, the burglars were able to evade detection by covering one of the store's surveillance cameras, an action that allowed them to carry out the crime unnoticed. The burglary wasn't discovered until 9:30 a.m. the following morning, when a construction worker at the adjacent store spotted the hole in the wall and alerted the authorities.

The burglars targeted high-value items, including diamonds and other precious stones, leaving the store nearly empty. Schaumburg police have yet to release any details on suspects but continue to investigate the crime. Detectives are currently reviewing surveillance footage from both the jewelry store and neighboring businesses as they work to identify the individuals responsible for the theft.

SOURCE: INSTORE; Sun Times Wire; nbcchicago.com



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www.diamonddistrict.org

2024 MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

The Diamond District Partnership / 47th Street Business Improvement District (BID) is a non-profit organization established to provide important supplemental services to elevate the commercial viability of the Diamond District.

All property owners, commercial tenants, and residents of W. 47th Street between 5th & 6th Ave. (*Excluding 580 Fifth Avenue*) are eligible to become a registered member.

**** PLEASE NOTE: There is no cost or fee to become a Registered Member. ****

Membership entitles you to vote for various issues related to BID operations at our annual meetings, serve on the board, and receive timely information related to the Diamond District, and a special “FIRST LOOK” at our official publication—Diamond District Monthly.

IT'S EASY TO APPLY:

(1) Fill out application (2) Take a picture of it (3) Email to: signup@diamonddistrict.org

Please check one:

- Property Owner (You own property located on 47th Street)
- Commercial Tenant (You own a business, but not property, on 47th Street—excluding 580 Fifth Avenue.)
- Residential Tenant (You reside on 47th Street)

Name: _____ Title: _____

Company (if applicable): _____

Property/properties owned within the 47th Street Diamond District: _____

District Business Address: _____

Mailing Address (if not same): _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____