

Richard D. Marks

38 Alderman Court
Timonium, MD 21093

Phone: 443-465-1265 E-Mail: taramarks@verizon.net

QUALIFICATION SUMMARY

A Jewelry executive with 40 years of experience in a wide range of fine jewelry environments, including department stores, guild jewelry stores, the catalog showroom, and mail order operations. Demonstrated expertise in:

- Trend Identification and Development
- Team Building
- Vendor Relations Trend Optimization
- Strategic Planning
- Diverse Marketing Strategies
- International Market Knowledge

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

SMYTH JEWELERS – Timonium, MD

1999-Present

Senior Merchandise Manager (2006-Present)

Responsible for developing the merchandising of jewelry and tabletop products. Appointed to the committee created to select merchandise for catalog and website.

- Developed relationships with international manufacturers to produce merchandise, resulting in higher profit margins
- Supervised and organized gold buys in multiple locations representing \$8 million in sales in 2008
- Oversaw buying department of thirteen employees responsible for \$40 million in sales volume

Merchandise Manager (2001-2006)

Responsible for all aspects of merchandising for the 2nd largest single store jeweler in America. Oversaw the buying, advertising, marketing strategies and vendor negotiations. Built partnerships and negotiated with vendors to increase profits. Eliminated duplication in product and introduced key vendor (Rolex, Hearts on Fire, Pandora). Partnered with vendors to maximize potential in volume and profits. Developed marketing and advertising strategies for magazines, catalogs and newspapers. Implemented reorder program which resulted in consistent inventory and increased sales,

- Increased volume from \$35 million in 2001 to \$43.5 million in 2006
- Raised gross margin from 41% to 43%
- Improved merchandise turn from 1.5 to 1.9

Direct Marketing Manager (1999-2001)

Oversaw retail call center specializing in fine jewelry and gifts. Analyzed sales trends to develop national marketing strategies. Supervised corporate gift department and approved merchandise for catalog and website.

- Increased sales by 34%
- Raised upsell transactions
- Strengthened selling skills of personnel
- Ensured superior levels of customer service

JEWELRY CONSULTANT - Coral Springs, FL 1996 - 1999

Provide specialized marketing, buying and merchandising consulting services to clients ranging from independent jewelers to large, multi-store operations.

- Clients have included: Mayors Jewelers, Coral Gables, FL; Fingerhut Companies, Minneapolis, MN; and Witmark Inc., Grand Rapids, MI.
- Consulting assignments have ranged from marketing strategy development, to vendor intensification programs, to product development

FINGERHUT COMPANIES - Minneapolis, MN 1994 – 1996
Vice President - Jewelry Merchandising

A \$2 billion direct-marketing firm selling a broad range of products and services to consumers via catalogs, telemarketing and other media. Responsible for all areas of Jewelry Merchandising for the largest direct marketer of jewelry in the United States (\$160 million). Directed the merchandising through channels of distribution including solo mailings, multi-mailers, specialty jewelry catalogs, general merchandise catalogs and other specialty media.

- Introduced new items and trends in the two primary holiday books increasing the sales volume in the second half of 1995 by 10%, exceeding the 8% growth of the total company.
- Exceeded goals in both gross margin and turn in 1995.
- Introduced new and exciting promotional concepts
- Developed a core vendor strategy to strengthen relationships and communication with the ultimate goal of improving profitability. The strategy has become a company-wide project implemented in 1996.

LURIA & SONS - Miami Lakes, FL 1993 – 1994
Vice President - Jewelry Merchandising

Regional catalog showroom chain of 52 stores with \$250 million in annual sales.

Hired to improve the profitability of the fine jewelry and watch areas. Responsible for all aspects of merchandising.

- Redefined and redirected the \$100 million jewelry area, which represented the majority of the profits of the company.
- Reintroduced buying trips to Europe and the Far East for new product sourcing and trend identification.
- Re-established a strong merchandising organization, adding two experienced Senior Buyers and two new Associate Buyers, rounding out the staff to implement the new strategy.
- Established strict quality control standards to build an assortment of better products.
- Developed relations with national and international jewelry organizations improving customer confidence.
- Introduced a holiday fashion book showcasing the redefined jewelry area.

ROSS-SIMONS JEWELERS - Warwick, RI 1990- 1993
Vice President - Jewelry Merchandising

A \$150 million retail jeweler and specialty cataloger which markets unique jewelry products and fine brand name crystal china, flatware and watches. Responsible for all aspects of jewelry merchandising within the \$115 million catalog division.

- Reevaluated vendor structure, targeted item and category opportunities, selected merchandise, negotiated price, directed page themes and layouts, supervised printing and managed reorders.
- Mailed fifty million catalogs to prospective customers in 1993.
- Increased jewelry sales from \$21 million in 1990 to \$38 million in 1993, an 81% growth versus a 62% growth for other areas of the catalogs.

MAYORS JEWELERS - Miami, FL

1988 – 1990

Watch Buyer

Largest guild jeweler in the Southeastern United states. Responsible for all facets of buying and merchandising watches.

- Increased sales from \$22 million in 1987 to \$32 million in three years.
- Introduced many new and successful watch brands.

BURDINES - Miami, FL

1968 - 1988

Group Buyer - Fine Jewelry

A division of Federated Department Stores. Promoted in 1973 to establish and operate a store-run Fine Jewelry Department, after five years in other positions within the firm.

- Opened Fine Jewelry and Watch Departments in nine stores and expanded to 27 stores, with five departments each. Expanded buying staff to two Buyers, two Associates and 12 office staff.
- Increased annual sales from \$2 million to \$18 million during the period.
- Consistently maintained Burdines as one of the fastest turning and most profitable divisions of all Federated Department Stores.
- Initiated direct travel to European, Mid East and Far East markets to improve profitability and uniqueness of assortments.

JEWELRY ORGANIZATIONS

Retail Advisory Board of Luxury by JCK

Retail Advisory Board of Centurion Show, Tucson, AZ

EDUCATION/CONTINUING DEVELOPMENT

Numerous symposia, seminars, lectures and courses sponsored by
The Gemological Institute of America, The World Gold Council and
The Diamond Promotion Service.

1973 - Present

Certificate - Diamond Appraisal and Grading, Gemological Institute of America, New York, NY 1974

B S, Marketing major, Mathematics minor, Ohio State University, Columbus, OH

1967