A Marketing Research Study for Wilson Diamonds

Robin Day
robinsday@hotmail.com

Kristen Jones

Xiaoyu Liu

Brandon Smith

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A MARKETING RESEARCH STUDY
FOR
WILSON DIAMONDS

Prepared for:

Richard Wilson
Owner/Manager
Wilson Diamonds Inc.
Orem, Utah

Prepared by:

THE TABOR GROUP

Robin Day
Kristen Jones
Xiaoyu Liu
Brandon Smith
Jeniffer Tabor
November 14, 2000

Richard Wilson
Owner/Manager
Wilson Diamonds
1300 S. State St. #156
Orem, UT 84097

Dear Mr. Wilson,

We would like to thank you for your input and advice on our study. We are very grateful for the opportunity to use our market research skills on behalf of your company.

We are pleased to present you with a bound copy of our research findings, which includes: objectives, methodologies, findings, conclusions, and recommendations of our study. We hope the content of this report provides new incites about the target market and enables Wilson Diamonds to possibly implement changes that will allow them to better meet the needs of their customers.

Sincerely,

The Tabor Group

Robin Day
Kristen Jones
Xiaoyu Liu
Brandon Smith

Jennifer Tabor
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Tabor Group would like to thank the following individuals, in particular, for their contributions and assistance. Their cooperation and efforts were instrumental in helping complete this project.

Dr. Ray Andrus
Marketing Research Professor
Brigham Young University

Richard Wilson
Owner/Manager
Wilson Diamonds Inc.
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Forward

Utah Valley has a very high concentration of university students. University students in Utah Valley also have the reputation of getting married quickly after starting their university careers. Because of the high number of engagements that take place in Utah Valley there are a large number of jewelry stores located around the valley trying to serve university student preferences and needs. This study will allow Wilson Diamonds to better understand student needs and implement solutions to better serve university students.
Executive Summary
Executive Summary

Introduction

The Tabor Group conducted marketing research for the benefit of Wilson Diamonds. In September 2000, members of The Tabor Group met with Mr. Richard Wilson—Owner/Manager of Wilson Diamonds—to discuss the objectives for the research. Mr. Wilson was interested in knowing if he is losing business because his store is in the mall, and why people buy rings where they do. Upon receiving the research objectives, The Tabor group performed marketing research to determine the following three issues:

- What factors influence the engagement ring buying decisions of university students?
- What are student preferences for diamond merchants and why?
- Does store location influence the purchasing patterns of university students?

Methodology

The Tabor Group used several different data collection methods to obtain the information desired for the study. These methods include the following:

*Exploratory research*—was conducted to help define the problems, and possible courses of action, and to give the Tabor group more information about the jewelry business and the diamond industry.
Secondary Research—conducted by the Tabor Group consisted of searching both academic and recreational Web sites on the Internet as well as reviewing a market research project previously performed for Wilson Diamonds.

Primary Research—was conducted with the following methods:

- Four focus groups—were conducted in order to learn more about the shopping experiences, influential factors, and store preferences involved in the engagement ring shopping process. The information that was learned from these four groups was used to narrow the focus of the study and to build the questionnaire.
- Twenty-five interviews—From the 25 interviews, data regarding consumer behaviors, attitudes, perception, and needs was collected.
- Questionnaires—The Tabor Group visited all of the major buildings on Brigham Young University’s campus and knocked doors to give out questionnaires.

Findings

The Tabor Group found through analyzing the information gathered from the study the following results:

- The average age of all the respondents when they purchased their engagement rings was 22 years old.
- Twenty-nine percent of all women purchased rings at age 20, while 32 percent of all men purchased rings at age 22.
- Seventy-three percent of ring packages cost the respondents under $2,499.00.
- The final purchase decision was made by him 52 percent of the time, by her 6 percent of the time and 42 percent of the time by both.
• The top 4 factors that influenced where people went to shop were *Friends* at 57.3 percent, *University Mall* at 41.7 percent, *Family* at 41.2 percent, and *Store Not in Mall* at 41 percent.

• The following 6 factors most influenced the decision: *Price* at 93.8 percent, *Quality* at 91.5 percent, *Ring Style* at 91.5 percent, *Helpfulness* at 76.1 percent, *Trust* at 74.8 percent, and *Knowledge* at 72.1 percent.

• The most visited store was Sierra-West Jewelers with 48.3 percent, followed by Zales Jewelers at 40 percent, Losee Jewelers at 36 percent, and Wilson Diamonds at 33.7 percent.

• Seventy-five percent of all shoppers did go to the mall to do their diamond/ring shopping

**Conclusions**

• Students are influenced by many factors when they are shopping for engagement rings. Ninety-three percent felt that price was the most influential factor, followed by quality 91.5 percent, and ring style 80.6 percent of respondents.

• The majority of the students purchased their rings outside of Utah County. For those who purchased in Utah County, the vast majority bought from Sierra-West Jewelers.

• Only 37.3 percent of students felt that location was influential in their ring purchases.

• Fifty-eight percent thought that mall jewelers would have higher price

• Price, quality, and ring style were found to be most influential factors in student purchases. Because students view the mall as satisfying two of these three needs, it leaves Wilson Diamonds a great opportunity to increase market share. Consumer's impression of mall jeweler's prices will be an obstacle for Wilson Diamonds to overcome.

• Close behind the price, quality and ring style are the salesperson characteristics of helpfulness, trust, and knowledge. Thus, detailed attention to the sales staff will win additional sales if the product is right.
Recommendations

After analyzing our findings and conclusions, The Tabor Group proposes the following recommendations:

- Maintain location in University Mall
- Maintain competitive pricing
- Offer quality metals and stones
- Offer wide selection of ring styles
- Train Salespeople
- Benchmark against Sierra West and Losee Jewelers
- Focus on effective advertising methods
- Meet student’s expectations for salespeople and selection
Statement of Objectives
Statement of Objectives

In an attempt to answer the concerns confronting Wilson Diamonds, Mr. Wilson has selected The Tabor Group to conduct a marketing study to research the following objectives:

Factors influencing the engagement ring buying decisions of university students

The Tabor Group conducted research to find the controlling factors for engagement ring buying decisions. Information about factors such as selection, salesperson, store, information from, advertisements, and location were collected and analyzed. The information gained will allow Wilson Diamonds to better understand the underlying factors of the main groups of university students who purchase an engagement ring.

Student preferences for diamond merchants and why

After Tabor Group analyzed the factors above; student preferences for diamond merchants were calculated. This information will aid Wilson Diamonds by allowing them to recognize university student preferences, and possibly take action to cater to university student needs.

Influence of store location on the purchasing patterns of university students

The Tabor Group studied if the location of a jewelry store had any influence on the purchasing patterns of the university students. Information collected will aid Wilson Diamonds in determining if their location in the mall is either causing them to gain or lose business.
Exploratory
Research
Exploratory Research

Exploratory research was conducted to help define the problems and possible courses of action to give The Tabor Group more information about the jewelry business and the diamond industry. The Tabor Group began research by examining several local jewelry merchants' websites. They learned about diamond grading, diamond shopping, and the selection available in Utah Valley. Attention was focused on Wilson Diamonds' Web site to learn more about diamonds and to learn more about Wilson Diamonds specifically. The Tabor Group also conducted a brainstorming session about issues surrounding engagement ring purchases. The Tabor Group met with Richard Wilson—owner of Wilson Diamonds—to learn more about his business, his concerns, and his research needs. The exploratory research enabled The Tabor Group to proceed to secondary research, focus groups, and interviews.
Secondary Research
Secondary Research

The secondary research conducted by The Tabor Group consisted of searching both academic and recreational Web sites on the Internet as well as reviewing a market research study previously performed for Wilson Diamonds. The Tabor Group used these resources to learn more about the diamond industry, shopping process, and general resources available to diamond consumers.

As a part of The Tabor Group’s academic search, Web sites such as Fortune.com and CNN.com were searched. Information regarding the economy and the current demand for fine and precious jewelry was found. With a relatively stable economy and reasonable interest rates, consumers are indulging in luxuries such as fine jewelry. CNN.com reported, “Jewelry sales were $42.9 billion in 1999, up 9 percent from the previous year, according to the Jewelry Information Center.” CNN.com commented, “jewelry has become more than a symbol of love in marriage. Jewelry is now so important it’s become as big a statement as clothes,” says David Wolfe, a fashion forecaster with the Donegar Group. “Ladies like jewelry—real jewelry—the kind of stuff that turns heads.” The forecasted growth of the industry and the growing emphasis on jewelry that “turns heads” is all good news for the jewelry business.

Numerous Web sites were found that discussed the recreational and educational aspects of searching for an engagement ring. As an example, a query of “engagement ring shopping” on the search engine Google.com found...
over 23,000 articles that gave advice about where, how, and when to shop for engagement rings. Through another query, countless books and magazines about how to ring shop were also found. These sites provided vast information on a myriad of topics ranging from the history of engagement rings to the technical specifications of a quality diamond, to which types of stores offer the lowest prices.

Another source of secondary information was a market research project performed for Wilson Diamonds in 1986. From this report, The Tabor Group was able to evaluate the different information gathering tools used at that time. The Tabor Group implemented several of those techniques that proved to be useful. The overall state of the diamond industry that was discussed in the report was also valuable to The Tabor Group because it illustrated the consistency and stability in demand for fine and precious jewelry over the years—especially diamond engagement rings.

The information found in the secondary research allowed The Tabor Group to become more familiar with the diamond industry. This information also allowed The Tabor Group to communicate more efficiently with consumers as well as narrow the focus of the study to issues that would actually be of concern to both consumers and to diamond merchants. This secondary information was used to organize focus groups, build questionnaires, and narrow the focus of the study to better solve the research objectives defined by Wilson Diamonds.
Primary Research

With the information gathered, The Tabor Group was able to better define their target population. In preparing for their primary research, The Tabor Group decided their target population would include married or engaged couples that were living in Utah County during their ring shopping experience. For the purposes of The Tabor Group, the entire population was not used for data collection. Instead they conducted a non-probability sample, with the sample frame consisting of Brigham Young University and Utah Valley State College students. The Tabor Group administered 300 questionnaires and conducted 25 personal interviews. Because an efficient sample minimizes costs while achieving maximum benefits, they elected to survey 300 students. "A random sample of 300 - 500 may be expected to give a fairly accurate picture of a larger population" is a rule of thumb The Tabor Group followed in determining sample size. Before the questionnaire parameters could be defined, the interviews and focus groups were held.

Four focus groups were conducted in order to learn more about the shopping experiences, influential factors, and store preferences involved in the engagement ring shopping process. The members of each group represented a portion of the sample frame that represented Wilson Diamond's customer base. Each member of the focus group had been married within the past two years. The members were either students or recent graduates from either Brigham Young University or Utah Valley State College. Their ages ranged
from 19 to 24 years old. The information learned from these four groups was used to narrow the focus of the study and to build the questionnaire. A detailed explanation of each focus group can be found in Appendix C. These explanations are taken from the review of the videotapes taken during each focus group.

Twenty-five interviews were also performed as a means of primary exploratory research. The interviewees were all randomly selected. Each interviewee was married recently and had done their ring shopping here in the Orem/Provo area. These interviews were done on a very informal basis, which allowed for in-depth information. From the 25 interviews, data regarding consumer behaviors, attitudes, perception, and needs was found.

Once the information and ideas from the focus groups and interviews were collected, The Tabor Group spent hours refining their questionnaire in order to maximize its effectiveness. After several drafts as a group, they met with experts to make further revisions. Once The Tabor Group felt they had created a strong questionnaire they pre-tested it to make sure it was easy for members of the sample to understand and complete. For pre-testing to be most effective the questionnaire must be tested in an environment that mirrors the sample environment being used. Due to this fact, The Tabor Group pre-tested their questionnaire on married or engaged students that were part of the target population.
The Tabor Group visited all of the major buildings on Brigham Young University's campus to give out the questionnaires. Each of the questionnaires was hand distributed and collected by members of The Tabor Group. Before the questionnaires were distributed to each individual, a set of screening questions was asked to maintain the accuracy of the results. Students, who did not fit the criteria for the study, did not participate. Students were randomly selected throughout all of the buildings on campus to take the questionnaire and each student received a candy bar for their participation. The Tabor Group also knocked doors in married housing complexes to complete the data collection.

To process all the data that was collected, The Tabor Group used SPSS Technology. SPSS is a software program to help organize and tabulate data. In order to analyze the data, cross tabulations were performed and numbers were examined. The data was scrutinized in search of relationships among variables. After all of this processing, The Tabor Group formed conclusions and recommendations based on the research performed.
Findings
Findings

Demographics

The following contains summary information about the participants surveyed.

Twenty four percent of all the respondents purchased their rings at age 22.

The average age of all the respondents when they purchased their engagement rings was 22 years old. The rest of the ages were normally distributed around age 22.

![Age of Shoppers when they Purchased](image)

**Twenty-nine percent** of all women purchased rings at age 20, while **32 percent** of all men purchased rings at age 22.
Cost of Ring Package

Seventy-three percent of ring packages cost the respondents under $2,499.00.
Who Shopped?

In 53 percent of the cases both he and she did most of the browsing, shopf
and comparing while in 39 percent of the cases only he shopped and 8
percent only she shopped.

Who Purchased

The final purchase decision was made by him 52 percent of the time, by 1
percent of the time and 42 percent of the time by both.
Factors Influencing Decisions

We were interested in finding out what factors influenced a purchasing decision beginning with why they went where they went and ending with what they looked for and wanted when they got there.

First, the factors influencing where they went to shop were broken up into three main categories: Information Source, Advertisements, and Physical Location. The top 4 factors that influenced where people went to shop were 

*Friends at 57.3 percent, University Mall at 41.7 percent, Family at 41.2 percent*, and *Store Not in Mall at 41 percent*. (See also Fig. 1)
The factors that influenced the decision-making process were also separated into three main categories: Selection Factors, Salesperson Factors, and Store Factors. From these categories, the following 6 factors most influenced the decision: *Price* at 93.8 percent, *Quality* at 91.5 percent, *Ring Style* at 91.5 percent, *Helpfulness* at 76.1 percent, *Trust* at 74.8 percent, and *Knowledge* at 72.1 percent. (See also Fig. 2)
Influential Selection Factors

Influential Salesperson Factors
These are a few of the most influential things that were repeated in the respondent’s comments:

- Good price, quality, and service
- Better selection and more modern styles
- Had the diamond we wanted
- Friends recommended
- Got good deals and discount
- Knew the owners
- Friendly salesperson

**Student Preferences for Diamond Merchants**

Figure 3 outlines what merchants the respondents visited during their shopping experience. By far, the most visited store was Sierra-West Jewelers with 48.3 percent of all respondents visiting this store during their shopping experience. Sierra-West was followed by Zales Jewelers at 40 percent, Losee Jewelers at 36 percent, and Wilson Diamonds at 33.7 percent.

Out of those stores visited, 22 percent of the respondents listed Sierra-West as their favorite store. (See Fig. 4) Following Sierra West was Losee Jewelers at 9 percent and Wilson Diamonds at 8.3 percent. The least favorite store was Zales at 9.7 percent. The other least favorite stores were Fred Meyer at 9 percent, and Schubach and Sierra-West at 6.7 percent.

Of these stores, the trends for purchases followed the trends for stores visited and favorite stores. This can be seen in figure 5. Besides the many dealers grouped under the private dealer and other categories, the most diamonds were bought from Sierra-West, Wilson Diamonds and Losee Jewelers.
Location as a Factor

In examining the frequency of mall shopping, we found that 75.3 percent of all shoppers did go to the mall to do their diamond/ring shopping. The majority of respondents (57.8 percent) expected the mall to have above average prices. (Fig. 6) Thirty-seven percent of the shoppers expected the mall to have above average salespeople, while 49.2 percent expected the mall to have an above average selection. (Fig. 7) Sixty-five percent of the mall shopper’s expectations changed. Most of the changes in opinion were negative changes.

Did you Shop for Diamonds/Rings in the Mall?

24.70%

75.30%

☐ Yes
☐ No
Did Your Impressions of the Mall Change During Your Experience?

The majority of the respondent’s changes in opinion can be expressed by the following comments:

- Prices are higher
- They all started looking the same
- Sales people are pushy but are not always knowledgeable or helpful.
Conclusions
Conclusions

Through careful analysis and interpretation of the findings, The Tabor Group has developed conclusions for Wilson Diamonds. These conclusions, in reference to our objectives, are as follows:

What factors influence the engagement ring buying decisions of university students?

Students are influenced by many factors when they are shopping for engagement rings. Our research shows certain factors are more influential than others when it comes to making the final purchase decision. Both the product and the salesperson played important roles in student’s shopping experiences. Of the 300 university students surveyed, 93 percent felt that price was the most influential factor. Price was closely followed by quality, which was important to 91.5 percent of respondents. Ring style was the third most important factor and had great influence on 80.6 percent of respondents. Overall, students were most influenced by factors associated with the ring itself.

Students were affected by influential factors in regards to salespeople. Helpfulness was selected by 76.1 percent of students as being the fourth most influential factor overall, and the number one factor in reference to salespeople. Trust was not far behind with 74.8 percent of students viewing it as influential in their purchase decision. Seventy-two percent of the respondents chose knowledge as being influential.
What are student preferences for diamond merchants and why?

Utah Valley gives students a wide variety of stores to shop when looking for engagement rings. Despite this variety, our research has revealed that there are several stores that have been deemed the favorites by students. The research findings show that 22 percent of students chose Sierra-West as their favorite Jeweler. Losee Jewelers was the favorite of 9 percent of the students. Wilson Diamonds took third, it was chosen by 8.3 percent as their favorite jewelry store.

Among the least favorite stores mentioned by students were Zales (9.7 percent), Fred Meyer (9 percent), and Schubach Jewelers (6.7 percent). Once the most and least favorites were established, it was important to compare the information to where the final purchases were made. The majority of the students purchased their rings outside of Utah County. For those who purchased in Utah County, the vast majority bought from Sierra-West Jewelers. Overall, students shopped from their favorite stores.

Does store location influence the purchasing patterns of university students?

Only 37.3 percent of students felt that location was influential in their ring purchases. Of the 300 students surveyed, 75 percent did some—if not all—of their shopping at the mall. University Mall was shown to influence the decisions of 41 percent of the students and where they shopped. Of the
students surveyed, 58.7 percent thought that mall jewelers would have higher prices. It was found that 37.4 percent of the shoppers expected the mall to have above average salespeople and 49.2 percent expected the mall to have an above average selection. As noted above: price, quality, and selection were found to be most influential factors in student purchases. Because students view the mall as satisfying two of these three needs, it leaves Wilson Diamonds a great opportunity to increase market share. Consumer's impression of mall jeweler's prices will be an obstacle for Wilson Diamonds to overcome.
Recommendations
Recommendations

After analyzing our findings and conclusions, The Tabor Group proposes the following recommendations:

What factors influence the engagement ring buying decisions of university students?

Our findings show that the two primary areas influencing a purchase are having “the right product” sold by “the right salesperson.” Based on this information, The Tabor Group recommends that Wilson Diamonds focus on:

- Maintaining competitive pricing
- Offering quality metals and stones. Allow the customer to be educated on the quality as well as view the quality first hand.
- Offer a wide selection of popular ring styles. Follow the trends closely and listen attentively to the needs expressed by consumers.

- The Tabor Group recommends that Wilson Diamonds hire and train their sales force to exemplify helpfulness, trust, and knowledge. Our study has found that these three qualities are very influential on student purchases.

What are student preferences for diamond merchants and why?

- The Tabor Group recommends benchmarking against Sierra West and Losee Jewelers.

Does store location influence the purchasing patterns of university students?

- The Tabor Group recommends that Wilson Diamonds maintain their current location in the University Mall. Because 75 percent of the
students shop the mall, Wilson should take advantage and maximize the foot traffic.

- The Tabor Group recommends that Wilson Diamonds focus on price in order to overcome the mall stereotype of high prices. One recommendation for lowering prices is to cut out the use of the three least effective advertising methods. These methods were movie theater ads, city newspapers, and bus benches.

- In order to maximize the marketing budget, The Tabor Group recommends that Wilson Diamonds focus on their most effective avenues of advertising. Through our research we have found that billboards, phone books, and college newspapers are the most influential on students.

- Because students expect the mall to have above average salespeople and above average selection, The Tabor Group recommends that Wilson Diamonds go above and beyond to meet and beat these expectations. Wilson Diamonds should continue to focus on engagement rings and offer a wide selection. Focusing on training and initial hiring practices will help to meet the student expectations of salespeople.
Limitations
Limitations and Parameters of Study

- The sample used was not a random sample. It is a non-probability, convenience sample. Due to the use of this sample, results cannot be projected for the entire population with foreseeable confidence levels.
- Some bias may exist because different members of The Tabor Group gave out the questionnaires. The same screening questions were used for all participants.
- The number of questionnaires handed out at Brigham Young University was not equal to the number handed out at Utah Valley State College.
- Not all respondents shopped equal amounts. Some shopped many different stores continually comparing, while others visited as few as 1 or 2 stores. These differences could affect the statistical results.
- The research was limited to married or engaged couples that were living in Utah County while conducting their ring search. Richard Wilson set forth this limitation.
- Although the questionnaire was properly pre-tested, some bias may exist due to some respondent’s lack of understanding of the questions.
- Some respondent chose not to answer certain questions. This could bring about some bias in the statistical study.
Appendix A

Graphs
Fig. 1 - Influencial Factors in Where to Shop
Fig. 2 - Influencial Factors in Decision Making
Fig. 3 - Stores Where Students Shopped

Jewelry Stores

Outside Utah Valley
J G Diamonds
Schubach Jewelers
Bullock & Loeser Jewelers
Sierra West Jewelers
Fred Meyer Jewelers
Wilson Diamonds
Private Dealer
Gold Design
Mullet-Hoover Inc.
Morgan Co. Jewelers
Payne Diamonds
J C Keepsake Co.
Pioneer Diamond Co.
Other Jewelers
Fig. 4 - Most Favorite and Least Favorite Store

- No Comment
- Other Jeweler
- Pioneer Diamond Co.
- J C Keepsake
- Payne Diamonds
- Goldsmith Co. Jewelers
- Morgan Jewelers
- Mullett-Hoover Inc.
- Golddesign
- Zales Jewelers
- Private Dealer
- Wilson Diamonds
- Fred Meyer Jewelers
- Dave Hur Jewelers
- Sierra-West Jewelers
- Losee Jewelers
- Bullock & Losee Jewelers
- Schubach Jewelers
- J G Diamonds
- Outside Utah Valley

Legend:
- □ Most Favorite
- ■ Least Favorite

Percent: 0.0% 5.0% 10.0% 15.0% 20.0% 25.0% 30.0% 35.0% 40.0% 45.0%
Fig. 5 - Purchases at each Jewelry Store

- Missing
- Other Jeweler
- Pioneer Diamond Co.
- J C Keepsake
- Payne Diamonds
- Goldsmith Co. Jewelers
- Morgan Jewelers
- Mullett-Hoover Inc.
- Golddesign
- Zales Jewelers
- Private Dealer
- Wilson Diamonds
- Fred Meyer Jewelers
- Dave Hur Jewelers
- Sierra-West Jewelers
- Losee Jewelers
- Bullock & Losee Jewelers
- Schubach Jewelers
- J G Diamonds
- Outside Utah Valley

Legend:
- Bought Diamond
- Bought Engagement Ring
- Bought Men's Band
Fig. 6 - Student's Price Expectation of Mall Jewelers
Fig. 7 - Students Expectations of Mall Jewelers

Student Expectations

- Salespeople
  - Poor: 8.5%
  - Average/poor: 31.1%
  - Average: 32.9%

- Selection
  - Poor: 2.0%
  - Average/poor: 4.5%
  - Average: 33.7%
  - Average/Good
  - Good
Appendix B

Proposal
THE TABOR GROUP

Customer Analysis Research Proposal
For Wilson Diamonds
September 2000

Background

Wilson Diamonds is a competitively priced jeweler that specializes in engagement and wedding rings. Due to its location in the University Mall in Orem, local college students are the main target for sales. Wilson Diamonds is seeking to increase their current market share in this area. An understanding of consumer buying patterns will allow Wilson Diamonds to implement marketing tactics to increase market share.

The Tabor Group is a marketing research team composed of five BYU students. The team members are Robin Day, Kristen Jones, Xiaoyu Liu, Brandon Smith, and Jennifer Tabor. Dr. Ray Andrus, a market research professor at Brigham Young University, will advise the team.

Research Objective

Although Wilson Diamonds is currently very successful, it is interested in increasing its market share among BYU and UVSC students. To accomplish this objective, a research study of the consumer behavior of BYU and UVSC students is proposed. The study will allow Wilson Diamonds to understand why students buy their engagement rings where they do, and whether or not the mall location is causing Wilson Diamonds to lose business.

The proposed study will examine the following three issues:

- What factors influence the engagement ring buying decisions of university students?
- What are student preferences for diamond merchants and why?
- Does store location influence the purchasing patterns of university students?

The study will provide Wilson Diamonds with valuable information concerning market awareness and perceived preferences of the students.
These findings will help Wilson Diamonds know what steps it could take to gain market share in the local university student market.

**Methodology**

The Tabor Group will conduct both background and primary research in order to accomplish their objectives.

**Background Research**

- Brainstorm among our group regarding issues surrounding an engagement ring purchase.
- Meet with Richard Wilson to explore all other significant factors surrounding an engagement ring purchase.
- Learn more about how people choose diamonds from articles found in current magazines or publications as well as the Internet.

**Primary Research**

After the diamond ring market has been defined by the background research, primary research will provide data regarding consumer behaviors, attitudes, perception, and needs. Three basic means will be used to acquire primary data: personal interviews, focus groups, and surveys.

- **Personal Interviews**
  - Personal interviews will also take place on both campuses regarding specific issues addressed in the questionnaires.
    - People who have been married 1 year or less will be chosen and offered a five-dollar compensation to answer an in-depth questionnaire and to probe certain areas of concern.
    - 25 total interviews will be conducted.

- **Focus Groups**
  - Four Focus Groups consisting of eight people each will discuss factors influencing engagement ring purchasing, the implications of store location, and general customer preferences. The findings from these focus groups will be used to formulate the student surveys. All focus group participants will be will be engaged or newly married enrolled students. There will be an even mix of genders and the ages will range from 18-30.
Two focus groups will be held on BYU campus and two will be held on UVSC campus.

Videos of all four focus groups will be made to allow further analysis.

Findings from the focus groups will be used to formulate student questionnaires.

- Campus Surveys:

  Four hundred hand-delivered questionnaires will be completed among 250 students attending BYU and 150 students attending UVSC campuses who purchased a ring in the last year. The questionnaire will be designed to elicit consumer-buying patterns—such as number of jewelry stores visited, price sensitivity, buying experience, perceptions, attitudes, etc.

  Questionnaires will be designed to gain more information to help reach our objectives.

  Survey results will provide more information, which will lead to specific recommendations.

Deliverables:

Upon completion of the project, The Tabor Group will deliver the following to Wilson Diamonds:

  Oral and written presentation of the results obtained about consumer behavior.

  Recommendations concerning location implications and strategies for gaining market share.

  A Bound copy of the research results and analysis.

  The videotapes, comments, and summary of focus groups.
Schedule

September 19  Meet with client and define market research objectives
September 21  Present proposal to the class and begin revision
September 21-26  Revise proposal and receive approval from Professor Andrus
September 28  Present proposal to Wilson Diamonds
September 28  Begin background and secondary research

September 29- October 26  Conduct research and customer surveys

October 26-31  Analyze results and compile research for final report
November 1-3  Complete written report and proofreading
November 3-7  Written report complete and bound
November 7  Begin formatting for presentation
November 14  Presentation for class and Wilson Diamonds

Budget

Focus Group

- Food (pizza and drinks)(32 @ $10 person) $ 320.00
- Video tapes (4 @ $5) $ 20.00

Questionnaires

- Incentives (1000 @ .10) $ 100.00
- Printing (1000 @ $.07) $ 70.00
- Pencils (100 @ $.20) $ 20.00

Personal Interview compensation $ 125.00
Printing and binding reports $ 200.00
Presentation costs (meal & supplies) $ 500.00
Contingency $ 300.00
SUBTOTAL $1655.00

Marriott School Contribution $ 500.00
TOTAL $ 2155.00

- The Tabor Group will stay within this outlined budget for out of pocket costs.
- Any unused funds will be returned to Wilson Diamonds upon completion of the project.
Agreement Statement

The Tabor Group will complete this study and provide a written and oral report Tuesday 14 November 2000.

Wilson Diamonds agrees to have at least one representative present for the oral presentation of the research findings. This oral presentation will be held at 2:00 pm on Tuesday 14 November 2000, at the Olive Garden in Provo, UT.

Wilson Diamonds also agrees to pay all expenses incurred in the research without exceeding the estimated budget of $1530.00. The Tabor Group also agrees not to exceed the estimated budget of $1530.00.

The Tabor Group greatly appreciates the additional $500 donation to be made to the Brigham Young University Marriott School of Management by Wilson Diamonds.

The Tabor Group accepts full responsibility for the research performed and for subsequent recommendations. However, The Tabor Group is not liable for any implementations made by Wilson Diamonds as a result of the research information or recommendations. Neither Brigham Young University nor Dr. Ray Andrus shall be held responsible for the said research study or use of results.

21 September 2000
Wilson Diamonds

Richard Wilson
Owner, Wilson Diamonds

Brandon Smith
The Tabor Group

Jennifer I. Tabor
The Tabor Group

Kristen R. Jones
The Tabor Group

The Tabor Group

Xiaoyu Liu
The Tabor Group

Robin S. Day
The Tabor Group
Group Profile

Brandon Smith
Home: Salt Lake City, UT
Major: Business Management, International Marketing
Status: Senior-graduating April 2001
Hobbies: Mountain biking, snowboarding, and other outdoor recreation activities

Jennifer Tabor
Home: San Diego, CA
Major: Business Management, Marketing
Status: Senior-graduating in December 2000
Hobbies: Running, hiking, reading, plays, museums, scrap-booking, and sports.

Kristen R. Jones
Home: McMinnville, OR
Major: Business Management, International Marketing
Status: Senior-graduating in December 2000
Hobbies: Reading, cooking, volleyball, and other outdoor recreation activities.

Robin S. Day
Home: Twin Falls, ID
Major: Business Management, Marketing
Status: Senior-graduating in April 2001
Hobbies: Guitar, rhyming, weightlifting, and analytical, intriguing conversation.

Xiaoyu Liu
Home: China
Major: Business Management, International Marketing
Status: Senior-graduating in December 2000
Hobbies: Outdoor activities, photography, and dance.
Appendix C

Focus Groups
Focus Group Write-up

Jennifer Tabor—moderator
Jason—non-student (25 years old)
Mary—Biology Teaching
Becca—Business Management
Ryan—Finance
Aaron—International Politics
Allison—Social Work
Natalie—Psychology/Marriage & Family Therapy
John—Physics

The first focus group was held on BYU campus. The members of this focus group were all BYU students or recent graduates from BYU. Four women were present as well as four men. Three members of the group were engaged and the other six had been married within the last year. Several topics were discussed. The findings are as follows:

Where did you hear about the stores you went to?

• Word of mouth was described as being “powerful.”
• Referrals from friends were most common. People are more likely to trust a jeweler that has been good to their friends.
• Newspaper advertisements were noted as being helpful. Unfortunately, many of the store names were not remembered along with the advertisements.
• Billboards were another source of advertisements that were recognized.
What were your impressions, likes, and dislikes of salespeople?

- Helpful salespeople were favored.
- The focus group members liked their own space to actually look around and decide.
- Educated salespeople were preferred. They liked the type of salesperson that would teach about diamonds.
- Pushy salespeople were a deterrent from buying. Some characteristics of a pushy salesperson were: someone who talks about prices on the first visit, someone who makes ring suggestions when the couple is “just looking,” someone who makes pressure sales or gives threats like “this is the last one in stock.”

What were your impressions of the mall? And did you shop there?

- Salesmen are pushy.
- Prices are higher.
- Some people “swore off the mall” and didn’t even go for the reasons mentioned above.
- Many in the group shopped at the mall but they had no intentions of buying. One member said, “I went to the mall to get an idea of the kinds of rings that were out there but I had heard that rings there were really expensive, so I didn’t’ plan on buying there.”
- One member said, ”When I think about mall jewelry I think ‘cheap.’ I don’t think about quality jewelry.”
What stores did you like and why?

- Private dealers were popular with this group.
- Wilson Diamonds. One member said he had planned on shopping back home but went to the mall to look around at different styles. When he went into Wilson Diamonds he was so impressed by their customer service and honest, low pricing that he ended up staying and purchasing from them. He said, “Wilson’s first quoted price was the lowest we had heard for any of the jewelers we had visited.”
- Goldsmith’s Jewelers.

Why do you like private dealers?

- Personalized service.
  - “The jeweler could make any design. I just brought in a picture from a magazine and he matched it perfectly.”
- Lower prices and less pressure.
Focus Group Write-up

Kristen Jones—moderator
Jacob—Architectural Design
Amy—(break from school this semester)
Ryan—International Business
Christy—Elementary Education
Gary—Computer Science
Darius—Sociology

The first focus group was held on BYU campus. The members of this focus group were all BYU students, UVSC students, or recent students at these schools. Two women were present as well as four men. All members of the group were either engaged or had been married within the last year. Several topics were discussed. The findings are as follows:

Where did you hear about the stores you went to?

- Internet.
- Friends and family.

Did you shop at the mall and what did you think of it?

- Every member had been to the mall to browse.
- “The mall was helpful and informative.” (This couple purchased the woman’s set from a private dealer and the men’s band from Wilson Diamonds)
- Educational.
- “We loved the people we talked to at the mall. They were real, down-to-earth people like we were. They didn’t pressure us. They just
answered our questions.” (He purchased from Bullock and Losee Jewelers)

**Where did you purchase?**

- Goldsmiths, Bullock and Losee, Wilson Diamonds, private dealer, private dealer, Sierra West

**Would you go back to the store where you purchased and why?**

- Yes. “The salesperson let me pick out everything I wanted. He even let me design my own ring.”
- Yes. “They remember our names when we went back. They even remembered me when I took my brother in later to get his ring.”
- Yes. The salesperson was honest.
- Yes. They liked that they were able to look at numerous loose diamonds at once. They liked the “hands-on” approach.

**Tell me about the perfect salesperson.**

- “They answer the questions you want answered.”
- They don’t pressure but let you look.
- They don’t pressure you into sales.
- They don’t hard sell on the first visit.
- “They need to invest some time in you to prove that they want your business.”

**What were the most important factors when you purchased your rings?**

- Price
- Location
- Personal touches & personal attention
- Financing
- Honest People
- Selection
- Salespeople. “It isn’t the store—it’s the salespeople that make the experience good or bad.”
Focus Group Write-up

Robin Day—Moderator
Brett—Married April 2000, Twin Falls ID, Electrical Engineering
Sam—New Jersey, Married in Washington D.C over a year ago, Film Major
Bobbi—Married August 2000 in Salt Lake UT, Recreation Management
Justin—Married August 2000 in Salt Lake UT, San Antonio TX, Zoology
Casey—Mapleton, Married for 2 months, Marketing
Todd—Married May in Seattle WA a year ago, Communications Marketing, Northern CA
Jeff—Orem UT, Married a year ago in July, Finance
Natalia—Married 2½ years ago, Business Management, Russia
Brian—Married 1½, Pre-Dental, Murray UT
Erin—Married 1 year ago, MFHD, Monterey CA

Summary (actual dialog can be found in the included tape)—In purchasing rings, they all talked with either friends or family to see where they should go to shop. Friends and family are an important influence on where people shopped.

Question—Think back to when you were dating and thought of getting engaged and what you were going to do next about getting a ring. Tell us a little bit about what factors influenced you in purchasing your ring.

The mall is basically where everybody begins to shop because they know there are a lot of jewelry stores close together, and they don’t have to go driving and searching for the stores in the valley. The mall provides a good location to go and get an idea of what kind of ring you like, but many students felt the mall stores were more forceful and more expensive than other stores.

Customer service is probably the biggest influence. Students are not only looking for the right ring but also for where they feel most comfortable. They do not want to feel pushed or forcing into anything. Students seemed to buy where they felt treated the best, found the ring they liked, and found the best value.
Advertisements only seemed to be effective if the girl liked one of the rings she saw.

Most people didn’t know if they had been to Wilson Diamonds before, but if it was in the mall they think they went there.
Focus Group Write-up

Jeff—Married one year  
Andrea—Married one year  
Ben—Married one year  
Nicole—Engaged  
Ken—Engaged

Summary (actual dialog can be found in the included tape)—There were a couple of influences that led the students to the stores where they began to shop. Billboard advertisements seemed to be effective and also the referral of friends. Students seem to be more apt to shop at a store where they know how they will be treated and if they can say someone referred them. Many times this relationship is started early in the family and the students continue the tradition by shopping through the family friend.

Everyone went to the mall to get a good idea of what they wanted in a ring. They were not really interested in buying from the mall because of the high prices. At first the issue of high prices was only an impression, but after shopping, they still felt the mall was overpriced. Most everybody did feel that the mall stores really wanted to explain and educate you on the details of diamonds. Female sales people seem to be more apt to explain because they have been through the same situation before. Good salespeople that would listen and let you ask questions were very important. No one seemed to feel pressured as long as they felt on equal grounds.

One individual shopped alone and surprised his wife after she had showed him some pictures of rings in magazines. The other students didn’t
think that was weird and that there are many people who don't include their wife in the purchase of the ring.

The **benefits** the jeweler would offer after the purchase of the ring were a key issue in where to purchase the ring. Students want a relationship and not just a point of sale purchase.

Most everybody had heard of **Wilson Diamonds** but had no idea where they are located.
Appendix D

Interview Findings
Interview Findings

Jason Hadley (24)—Construction Management (Orem, UT)

Goldsmith Jewelers was the only store he went to because the Bishop of his Ward is the owner and promised him a really good deal. His wife did do some looking around with her sister, but she also only went to Goldsmith jewelers because she knew that was where her husband was going to buy it. The price of the ring was really not an issue because he wanted to get her whatever she wanted. His impression of the mall is that they are really overpriced and expensive. He has heard of Wilson Diamonds but doesn’t know where they are located.

Ryan Moffitt (25)—Business Marketing (Huntington Beach, CA)

Ward Allen (22)—Business Marketing (Calgary, Canada)

Joint interview—They both made their purchases at Losee Jewelers. One of them had a friend that worked there. They both had their wives choose what style of ring they liked and then purchased the ring when the wives were not present. They used the mall to find the style that they liked and then went to Losee to purchase the ring. They were both price sensitive and were looking for where they could get the best deals. They did a lot of price comparison and found that Losee was the best. Before they shopped, friends told them the mall stores were more expensive. They really didn’t want to deal with the mall salespeople either. One of the biggest factors for both purchasers was the large selection that Losee offers. The mall stores didn’t seem to come close.
Advice they give to jewelers is to let you try on anything you want, and throw in some free stuff.

**Jacob Loudon (23)—Interior Design (San Diego, CA)**

He went to every store in this area. At each store, he asked more questions and became educated in the four C’s. He was not pleased with the grading of diamonds in most stores. He felt that the mall prices were marked up just so they could mark the price down. And he felt the mall prices were really high for what you get. He never had any problems with any salespeople. He decided to go to Sierra West because a friend of his in California is a friend with the owner. Jacob created a relationship with the owner and was very pleased with Sierra West service. The main thing that he was looking for in a diamond was quality. Sierra West was able to give him that quality and no other store was able to match it. His wife was not involved at all in the engagement ring process.

**Jason McDonald (21)—Design (Orem, UT)**

He went to the mall because he knew that he could visit a lot of stores in one stop. He and his wife shopped together every time and then he purchased the ring after his wife had picked out a few styles and diamonds for him to choose between. He never shopped outside of the mall, although after purchasing the ring from the mall he wishes he would have. He bought from Wilson Diamonds and felt that salesperson to be nicer and trustworthier then the other
salespeople in the mall. But kind of felt he was nice just because he knew they were going to by a ring. After buying and talking with friends and other people, he found out that the mall is more expensive and he felt cheated. If he were to buy jewelry again today, he would go to a store outside the mall. He explained his foolishness to be from being engaged and not thinking straight.

**Tierney Beck—Female**

She did the initial shopping. Her concerns were price, style, quality, and shops with good selections. She told her boyfriend what she wanted in the engagement set according to her shopping experience. Her boyfriend and her mother went to make the purchase. The mother’s experience was incorporated into the purchase decision. Diamond quality over size, knowledgeable, friendly, and not pushy salespersons, and good after purchase service were final purchase criteria. They didn’t know of Wilson’s Diamonds and perceived the mall as expensive. They credit the mother with their savings due to her knowledge of diamonds.

**Bryan Lundell—Male**

After shopping around and asking friends, he went to a private dealer. He felt the dealer had a larger selection in range of prices and style. The dealer also offered more freedom of choice with no pressure due to the private dealer’s set prices. He also liked that the dealer did not try to sell service and insurance. Bryan intended this purchase to be a special sentimental, surprise
Interview Findings

gift. They are both happy with the choice. At that time, they had heard about Wilson Diamonds but had little knowledge of the store, and simply viewed Wilson Diamonds as another retailer.

**Jared Barlow—Male**

Initially, this couple bought an engagement ring of her choice on an economical basis. After a week he returned the ring to the store because he thought their first choice was not a good choice. Jared said value was when "you get what you pay for." Jared did some shopping around town and on the Internet but did not know about Wilson’s Diamonds. Finally, he had the engagement ring custom designed and made in Turgeon Raine. He feels Turgeon Raine was very honest, was knowledgeable, had good service, and helped him to get the best value for what he paid. The store also sent him a "thank you" note after his purchase. He perceives shopping malls as having poor customer service, high mark up, low quality, and less knowledgeable salespersons who are pushy.

**Ryan Linnerneyer—Male**

This couple shopped together in the Provo malls and other jewelry stores in town for their wedding rings. They compared price, selection, and styles and found Wilson Diamonds to be the best store in the area for knowledgeable salespeople and product prices. However, after two weeks of shopping, they decided to go back to their hometown of Los Angeles to buy their rings. The
Interview Findings

reasons being; more selection, family in the area with diamond knowledge to help them select and pay for the rings, and a friend there who is very knowledgeable about jewelry. Ryan says, “price is most important,” followed by quality and the size of the diamond. He values relatively larger sizes with fair prices and fair quality. After they were married, the wife bought his ring at Wilson Diamonds.

Randy Wardle—Male

When this couple decided to be engaged, they shopped together to find what she wanted for her rings. They went to Wilson Diamonds and other stores to compare price and selections. In his opinion, Wilson Diamonds gave them the best-experienced salespeople compared with other stores. Other salespeople were very pushy and wanted them to buy the rings there, even though Randy told them that they were just looking, not buying. Wilson Diamonds was friendly, informative, and not pushy. However, the salesperson at Wilson’s Diamonds didn’t talk about Wilson’s quality of diamonds. The prospective wife liked Losee Jewelers better because the Losee salesperson was more willing to talk to her and educated her. It appeared Wilson Diamonds thought the man was the one to decide the purchase and gave more attention to him. Price and quality were both import. He wanted high quality diamonds but those that were not very expensive because of his budget. High diamond quality to him was not seeing any problems with the naked eye and having good color and clarity. Eventually, the couple decided to buy from Randy’s
uncle who is a diamond dealer. They believe they got the best price and quality from the uncle. Randy perceives mall prices as higher than other stores. He is also aware of Wilson Diamonds’ ads in the Daily Universe.

Nicole—Marketing (Senior)

In order to shop around, Nicole and her fiancé went to several stores that their friends had referred to them. They also went to a couple of stores that they saw while driving around town. They shopped at the mall to see the selection available and to compare prices. Nicole assumed that prices were higher there, so she didn’t intend to buy. She was not satisfied with the customer service at the mall. She enjoyed the smaller shops outside of the mall. She said, “I felt special there. It was more personal.” She likes stores with a no-pressure atmosphere. She didn’t like salespeople that stood too closely, never left her and her fiancé alone, and talked about finances right at the beginning. She did like salespeople who educated her and her fiancé, had the power to answer questions and give them “deals,” and were respectful of the couple’s desire to speak by themselves alone. For her, the store hours were a big factor since she only had late evenings available. She thought the ring setting (selection) was most important. The price and financing available were also very important. She also commented on the discounts and packages available. Her ring came with a free man’s band, engagement photo, and honeymoon package.
Jessica Hiatt—Elementary Education (Senior)

Her friends and family referred Jessica to Pioneer diamonds, Sierra West, and Schuback jewelers. Jessica didn’t like “pushy” salespeople. She felt like many of them were trying to “make a deal.” She felt like the stores inflated the prices so they were able to make those deals. Although Jessica had heard that the mall prices were high, she purchased her ring there anyway (Schubach). Jessica’s priority was finding a high quality diamond. Her husband’s was price. She thought salespeople and good customer service were important. She liked the stores that had quality rings instead of a large quantity of rings. A store with “room to breath” was also important.

Melissa House—Nursing (Junior)

Melissa had a specific designer in mind when she went shopping. She called around from the phone book to find stores that carried Scott Kay designs. To her, the designer and the ring style were most important. She went to Losee, Sierra West, and Goldsmith Co. She said that price really wasn’t an issue because it was a once in a lifetime purchase. She valued friendly and knowledgeable salespeople that could tell them all of the options as well as the pros and cons for each option. She encountered some salespeople that had knowledge but were not “personable.” She purchased from Goldsmith’s because the salesperson remembered her name from a year before. “He was so nice and so helpful; he compelled me to buy! I guess that’s what salespeople are suppose to do.” Melissa also liked that the salesperson
"worked with them" on financing. Melissa didn’t go to the mall, but she said she thought those stores had high prices, pushy salespeople, and a small selection. She recommends setting rings with CZ’s to aid in decision-making. She also prefers stores that sell mostly engagement rings instead of other jewelry.

Swen Gunderson—Latin American Studies (Senior)
Swen went to the mall to get ideas about rings and to check prices. His wife wanted a “filigree” style ring. No one in the mall carried that variety—they hadn’t even heard of it. He thought the mall jewelers were uneducated and consequently, she didn’t go back. He searched the Internet for stores that carried the variety he liked. He searched other jeweler’s catalogs as well. Two stores carried the ring he wanted. He made his final decision based on price and the package he was offered. He also chose the store that “worked the hardest for my business.” To Swen, the ring selection was most important and then the price.

Danielle Neuffer—Masters of Accounting (Senior)
Danielle purchased her diamond from her uncle in Ohio. She did her ring shopping at University mall. She wanted a simple design but was disappointed by the small selection she found. She purchased from Wilson’s because the salespeople were very attentive and helpful but were not pushy. Her only complaint was that they did not call when the ring was completed.
like they said they would. The ring was also a few days late being finished. To Danielle, price and then service were the most important factors that influenced her purchase. She recommends that jewelry salespeople not be paid on commission. This makes them less likely to be pushy.

**Aaron Tribe—International Politics (Ogden, UT)**

Aaron was given a picture from a magazine of the ring his future fiancé had chosen. So when he decided to buy he was very concerned about price. He wanted to get the best diamonds for his dollar. Aaron chose to bypass the mall all together and went straight to a family friend in Ogden to make his purchase. He felt that there he was getting the best deal on excellent diamonds. Also this jeweler in Ogden was able to custom make the ring to look exactly like the picture Aaron had been given. Aaron was very concerned with quality when purchasing the ring.

**Shiloh Chacon—Business Marketing (Idaho Falls, ID)**

Shiloh did a fair amount of shopping around. Her husband went out and shopped on his own to quite a few stores and then narrowed down the list before he took Shiloh. They purchased the ring at Fred Meyer in the mall because they felt like they were getting the best value there. Shiloh and her fiancé did shop stores in the mall, and made the purchase there as well. Shiloh felt as though some of the salespeople in the mall were pushy and that was a turn off. She really appreciated knowledgeable salespeople who helped
to educate her on her diamond purchase, and then sat back and let her make
the decision on her own. Shiloh went to Payne Diamonds to buy the men’s
band and did not like the service she received, although she was happy with
her purchase and service at Fred Meyer.

Trevor Pettingill—Pre-Physical Therapy (Boise, ID)
Trevor did not want to deal with the hassle of shopping around for the
engagement ring. A roommate of his finance Rochelle gave him a magazine
cutout of the ring Rochelle wanted. Two of Trevor’s roommates were
currently engaged when he decided to become engaged himself. To avoid the
bother of visiting a lot of stores he went to the private dealer that both of his
roommates had gone to for their ring purchases. No comparing was involved.
He went solely on the word of his roommates. He was happy with his
purchase and all went well.

Nicole Anderson—Nursing (Cedar City, UT)
Nicole did the majority of shopping around on her own, without her fiancé.
She did a lot of browsing and comparisons at many different stores. Nicole
looked at just about all of the stores in both The University Mall and Provo
Town Center. She also looked quite a bit in her hometown of Cedar City
because it is so close and she visits there often. Nicole felt as though some of
the salespeople in the mall did not treat her very well because they assumed
she was not seriously looking. She said some people were very helpful, while
others were constantly making her wait. After she had chosen a few styles that she preferred, she took her fiancé to show him the stores and rings she liked best. They decided to buy a cubic Zirconium and then buy a diamond on their trip to Israel this summer. They purchased the setting from a jeweler in Cedar City.

Kelly Furgeson—Information Systems (Alpine, UT)
Kelly felt that ring style was very important when he was shopping for his wife's engagement ring. He knew the general style that she wanted and he was unable to find anything like it in the mall. He felt the stores in the mall did not have good selections of style. From friends he heard that because of rental costs, the stores in the mall would be more expensive. Not only did he think they were expensive, he felt the salespeople there were pushy. He heard from friends that Sierra West was a good place to go. Some of the other stores he visited he had noticed previously while driving by.

John McDonald
John went around to various places and bought at various places. He said he considered the mall a place to get general ideas, not to purchase. Sales people drive him nuts. His sister shipped him the wholesale Diamond he wanted from California. He bought the wedding band at JC Keepsake because he "liked it." He heard from his mother that Goldesign could do anything. He went there and liked it especially because they were able to make the ring
from a picture he drew. They remembered his name after the second visit and
gave especially good service. He enjoyed watching the workers, and he had
confidence that they were skilled at what they did. Goldesign had the ring
ready a day before they said they would.

Seth and Tiffany Washburn

Number 1 concern was price, and then making sure it was what she wanted.
They heard the Shane Company radio ads and went there first. Next, they
shopped the Provo Towne Center to get a feel for the prices because there are
lots of stores in a small area. They liked the large selections that were easy to
see. He bought her ring at Schubachs and got diamond from her mother. He
felt high pressure from most of the jewelers and had a real trust problem
because of it. Schubachs made him feel the most comfortable, and they had
the cheapest price he found. After that, he went to Fred Meyers for the
wedding band because it was the least expensive. He has seen Wilson
Diamond ads around town but did not shop at the University Mall.

Anonymous female

She went to the mall first to get an idea—to look, not buy. She said the mall
was not impressive. She said it had overpriced, bad diamonds. Then she went
to Sierra-West and thought they were awful. They put tons of pressure on her
fiancée and cornered him. Two different salesmen gave him two different
stories on financing. She told many others how bad it was. She heard from
family that Losee Jewelers was good, and she bought her ring and diamond there. She was looking for a specific kind of diamond, and they had it at a low price. The salespeople were not pushy, and they stayed in price range. They were also knowledgeable on the subject. She went to Wilson Diamonds. She considered it to be on the higher end of the mall spectrum. She said Wilson Diamonds did not have as good of a selection, and the salesmen didn’t give as much time personally to her. There were not many people there to help her. But she did say they had the best diamonds in the mall. She would suggest hiring someone who is engaged or married so they have an idea of what the people shopping are going through.

Shelly Wood and Jacob Koch (engaged)

First of all, they were looking for the best price. JC Keepsake in the University mall had good prices. They also had good salespeople, except for one that kept trying to up sell them. Jacob and Shelly went to Goldsmith Jewelers because her sister’s friend works there. He decided to buy the ring at Goldsmiths because they said they would make the same ring he found at JC Keepsake for a 10 percentage cheaper price. He was impressed with the salesmanship. Most of all, they felt like the environment was pleasant. They could trust the people because they weren’t trying to give them some “Great deal today” or “Just for you,” as though there were a reason to give them a special deal. “They didn’t know us, but we were treated like best friends.”
Alan Cleaver

Alan shopped many places, including the mall. Alan “hated the mall” for various reasons. He didn’t like the salespeople trying to grab him and the way it felt cheap like buying for a girlfriend. He didn’t like Sierra-West either. He said that they charged much higher prices on comparable rings. Proximity to the mall became a real turn off. He found a store he really liked at Goldesign. He went there because it was close to his home, and others had said good things about it. He said it was just different from the shops in the mall. He enjoyed the personal atmosphere and the people there. He didn’t buy his ring there because he had a friend in Colorado who would give him any ring he wanted at a cheaper price (He found that it really wasn’t that much cheaper in the end). Nevertheless, he later went to Goldesign to have an adjustment made on the ring. Overall, he felt that the mall is filled with stereotypical “salesmen”—no “jewelers.” They can’t customize like other places, only there to sell. Without the “jeweler” title, there just isn’t the same amount of confidence.
Appendix E

Questionnaires
Questionnaire for People Who Recently Purchased Diamonds While Living in Utah County

We are marketing students conducting a survey of students' perceptions of local jewelry stores. Since you have recently shopped for a diamond and/or engagement ring, your input will greatly help us. Thanks for your help.

Which stores did you visit to shop for a diamond and/or engagement ring? Check all that apply.

- Outside of Orem/Provo
- JG Diamonds
- Schubach Jewelers
- Bullock & Losee Jewelers
- Losee Jewelers
- Sierra-West Jewelers
- Dave Hur Jewelers
- Pioneer Diamond Co
- Wilson Diamonds
- Private Dealer
- Zales Jewelers
- Goldesign
- Mullett-Hoover Inc.
- Fred Meyer Jewelers
- Goldsmith Co Jewelers
- Payne Diamonds
- JC Keepsake
- Morgan Jewelers
- Other

Of the stores listed above, please CIRCLE your FAVORITE store.

Of the stores listed above, please CROSS OUT your LEAST FAVORITE store.

Please write the name of the jeweler where you purchased your:

Diamond
Engagement Ring
Man's Band

Why did you purchase from this (these) jeweler(s)?

Please check ALL factors that were important in your purchasing decision.

Selection Factors
- Quality
- Price
- Selection
- Ring Style
- Other

Salesperson Factors
- Trust
- Personality
- Knowledge
- Gender
- Helpfulness
- Age
- Attitude
- Other

Store Factors
- Atmosphere
- Services
- Location
- Size
- Store Hours
- Reputation
- Discounts
- Financing
- Guarantees
- Other

Did you shop for diamonds and/or engagement rings at the Mall?
- No (Skip next TWO questions)
- Yes

What were your expectations of jewelry stores in the mall?

- 5: Good Selection
- 4: Good Salespeople
- 3: Low Prices
- 2: Poor Selection
- 1: Poor Salespeople
- 0: High Prices
- Other

What is your hometown zip code?

Thank You!
Student Comments Written in on Questionnaires

Why Did You Purchase From This (these) Jeweler(s)?

- Connections
- He was a relative of a friend, so we were hoping for a good deal
- Because of the service we received. The same ring was at another store, but we didn’t like the service
- Willing to match prices, good service, good warrantee
- Had the diamond I wanted
- David Payne was very personable and very knowledgeable
- Recommendations from friends
- Friends of the owner of the store
- I knew the owner
- Product, price, quality
- Best price, least pressure, but friendly and prompt
- Selection
- Good price, good service
- Best service, good price allowed for customized band
- They had the one she wanted
- We like the ring and the price
- Brother recommended it and I liked it the most
- A friend of ours is the manager
- Good price, loved the ring
- It was the first we looked at, and we liked what we saw
- They actually took us seriously and took time to help
- Best price
- Connections, trust, cost
- He is the brother-in-law and we got the rings half off
- They had what we wanted, style of band/right diamond
- The diamond was great quality and the guy was nice
- Husband’s dad knew the private dealer
- Referral from friend
- Great price, accommodating to needs, worked with us
- Great rates, excellent diamonds, great service, helpful, really cared about us
- We knew the owner
- Best price and good diamonds
- Gave us discount on invitations and ring, had the engagement ring custom made in Denver
- Saturation advertising by the Shane Co., Losee Jeweler had the exact style ring we wanted
- Price, comfort friends with Carl Thalman and J.C. Penny was cheap
Student Comments

- Cheaper, we found the band at Losee and went to the private dealer to order it
- A referral, private dealer offered lower price on the same exact ring from the same manufacturer
- Relatives in both places shopped
- Family connections
- Price and quality
- Because we liked what we saw
- Best price for style we liked
- Least expensive and we got to design my ring and his
- Liked the ring, salesperson was cool, cheapest ring for basically the same ring we liked at every store
- They were the only ones who had the rings we liked the most
- Quality, price, custom design
- Best selection and price
- Quality, price, and service
- Best deal
- Cheap
- They had what was wanted
- High quality, low cost
- Better selection and more modern styles
- Price and availability (selection)
- Like the originality of the ring
- Fair price, helpful sales woman
- Had what we were looking for
- Price and quality with friendly service
- Price was good and the quality too. The sales person was very friendly and helpful
- Because of their accreditation in store lab, and goldsmith had good price and good customer service
- Got 15 percent discount on man’s band because bought ring there
- Good quality for low price
- Don’t like Zales, reasonable prices, friendly people and it’s a nice place to be
- They gave us the most information and the best price and good service
- Good price, had what I wanted, sister-in-law also bought her ring there
- Good price and the ring I wanted. My sister told me about it
- Friendly, best value
- Only store that had the one I wanted, better price selection and service
- Price, service
- Wholesaler and uncle of my wife’s, ability to make the ring I wanted
- He was the most trustworthy
- They custom made it for us
- Good price, good quality, recommended by a relative
• Had the ring I wanted
• We were very impressed with them when we went there and felt very comfortable there
• Good selection, nice atmosphere, price
• He had the best deal by far, he gave me the real diamond for two thousand dollars less than everyone else
• Good prices, selected exactly what we wanted
• Trusted friend, worked there, private owner, not a franchise
• A friend who used to work there recommended it to us
• They had the style and diamond that I wanted on sale and gave me a discount on the man's band
• Excellent customer support, honest, same product with lower price
• Bishop of the ward we met was/is the vice president of Sierra-West and we knew we would get a good deal
• Great deal, great service
• Price and acquaintance
• They were friendly and their prices were reasonable
• Bishop worked there, good prices
• I know him, he is nice and not a crook
• Nice rings for good sales price
• They had the ring I liked best
• Good website, kind and helpful, selection
• They were helpful and informative without being pushy
• Most professional, nicest environment, knew what they were talking about
• Best price for the best diamond
• Family discount and had the band we wanted
• Good rings and service, good price for the man's band
• Price and service
• Great selection of great looking rings
• Internet shopped, inexpensive, went to J.C. Keepsake, had what we wanted, good service
• Price and quality
• Best price for the best deal, had the right setting, could talk to them, showed under microscope in back lab
• Best quality for the best price
• He had connection with the owner
• Liked the people and the approach, not pushy
• A friend worked there
• Low cost, good selection
• Quality, price, friendly service. Friend of friends/friendly
• We could afford their prices, and the quality was pretty good
• I hate shopping and priced one as quick as I could
• Friendly sales people
• They had the best price/service
• Friendly, non-pushy sales staff, seemed honest, appreciated quality of rings/diamonds
• Price
• They had what we wanted
• Cheaper, good quality
• Had the best price for high quality and was easy to talk to, had a lot of experience
• Price on diamond and band, quality ring
• Best price and most friendly service
• Best service, courteous, least pushy not matched my best price anywhere else, private dealer
• Had the ring I liked at good prices and had really nice customer service
• They are the best value
• My old Bishop is the vice president, so we got a really good deal
• He is friendly, and we got a really good deal
• Dealt directly with the owner, very nice and helpful, trustworthy and great price
• It was the best diamond at the best price
• Friendly and took time to explain and answer questions
• Proximity to campus
• Willing to negotiate price and give us a substantial discount
• Customer service, price, value
• Good service, cheaper
• Mostly because of good prices
• Personal friend contact connections for great price
• Really inexpensive
• Style was unique and price was right
• Good customer service, no sales pressure, good prices and warranteen
• My husband know a jeweler in New York, and his parents used the same jeweler
• They had the style of rings we liked
• Loved service and selection, found the one I wanted, good customer service
• They has the rings we liked at good prices
• Competitive prices, great customer service
• They offered the best quality and were able to make the rings we wanted
• Very helpful and honest, gave us many options, not as expensive, friendly
• They had what I wanted and they had good discounts
• I liked the ring I found there
• Cheaper prices, great quality, wholesale dealer
- Best prices and least annoying sales reps.
- They're wholesale and no one could beat their price even by half and they're not pushy, any style
- Price
- Husband liked them, could pick your own diamond in any setting
- Best deals, easiest to work with
- Personal attention, good explanation, no pressure, small company and great prices
- Good deal (it was custom made)
- Quality, price, had what we wanted
- Fianceé had a friend that worked there and wanted to “hook” us up
- Guarantee and they were cheap
- Best price for best quality
- It was what she wanted
- Least expensive
- Neighbor deals in diamonds as a hobby
- Good deal, half off on the diamond and half off on the man’s band too
- Cheapest, got one half off
- The price was right for the design we wanted, unusually design that the other stores didn’t have
- Lower price, good quality, willing to work with us
- Quality and price
- Private dealer, because better quality and less expensive, could pick out what diamond we wanted
- Husband had an in through a great uncle who used to work there, got a good deal
- Knew a guy who worked there and gave us a great deal
- Friendly, owner is the father of my friend
- Friend recommended it
- Friend worked there
- Had what we wanted, for the price we were looking for
- Knew the owner, cheapest
- They were honest and up front with us
- Great service, good discounts
- Trust, relatives purchased from them and same salesman
- Friend
- They had platinum
- Convenience
- A friend that I trusted
- Honest, decent price
- They are all over the country
- Best price, felt the salesman was honest
- Worked hard to fit our budget, weren’t pushy, very friendly and understanding
• Price, style we were looking for
• Best value
• Good quality and selection
• High quality, low price, no pressure
• Good price, good quality
• Price, had the right ring
• Price and selection
• Knew the people
• Best price, we only saw my ring there, his was half price
• Best customer service and the best prices, in store gemologist
• He’s private and makes his own rings, so I could custom make it, and he doesn’t mark up his rings 300 percent
• Owner is a family friend
• Package deal, had exactly the ring I wanted, didn’t hassle us, willing to negotiate a price and financing
• Price, selection
• Family connection
• Best price
• Best deal custom ring
• Had rings I liked and they worked best with me
• Had the ring I wanted and no other stores exactly had it, didn’t want to pick having it made
• Had what I wanted, quality
• Good quality diamond, nice engagement ring
• A better quality diamond and value
• Price, selection
• Best service, best quality for the best price
• Didn’t have a lot of time to shop around, liked the salesperson
• Unique band and ring
• Know owner personally, price
• Most informative, found rings we liked
• Knew the sales person, had the ring I wanted, selection
• Right ring at right price
• They had what I wanted
• They were easy to work with, well informed and helpful
• Good deal
• Enjoyed the service
• Bishop works for them
• Personal friend of family, designed one of a kind rings, knowledgeable and trustworthy, good design
• Very nice salesperson, honest and helpful
• Price and had the one we wanted
• Low cost, good quality
• Had the right diamond shape and size
- Honest, educated me on diamonds, fair prices
- Family connection
- Had the best price for the quality, had what we wanted and liked the best
- Connection (personal)
- Check (three installments)
- Got a discount through a friend
- Best price, got to choose exactly which diamond we wanted after looking at several
- Reputation, not pushy, sales, service
- Know the owner
- Husband knows a wholesaler, store gave us a good deal on the band
- Best quality, fastest service, lowest price, fun salesperson
- Friendly, cheap, 50 percent bonus
- Good service
- Good price
- Husband’s uncle gave us a good deal on the diamond, bought setting at Wilson’s
- Worked very well with us, gave lots of options, best deal, got wholesale price on diamond
- Best deal and diamonds
- Price and design
- Most selections, most convenient
- Treated us well and knew someone who worked there
- We like what they offered
- Good service, value, trustworthy
- Had the design I wanted, good price, were not overly pushy
- Best selection price
- We knew him
- Friends recommended him and good prices and quality
- Referred by a friend, gave us the best diamond for our money
- Salesperson was not pushy and took time to explain diamonds
- Friend of family
- Good service
- Education provided, deals given, quality, connections
- Quality, variety, originality
- Had more in white gold, selection
- Had the exact rings we wanted
- A friend worked there
- Had the perfect ring
- Helpful and informative
- Price
- Good price, friendly salesperson, willingness to make custom band
- Good Price
• Price/Service
  • Where he found the engagement ring, so we went to same place for
    wedding bands because of promotional discount
  • Friendly salespeople, best price
  • Best deals for the rings we wanted
  • Good deals, very high quality, we trusted him
  • Price reduction
  • Cheapest, high quality, and great personalization
  • Trusted friend, good value
  • Best service from the three stores we visited
  • The customer service was good
  • Low pressure sales reasonable price
  • We liked the ring, they gave us a good deal
  • The spent time with me and explained the diamond evaluation process
  • Knew the owners
  • Because my brother-in-law
  • We custom made it, they were the most willing to work with us
  • I found the ring I loved. My sister-in-law worked there
  • Cost/quality
  • Convenience, service
  • They gave us a great deal and were very helpful
  • Losee had the second best diamond at the right price and the perfect
    ring style. It was very original. My wife went to Sierra West because
    she knew the owners
  • My neighbor/friend works there and gave me a great deal
  • Price, relationships
  • Good warrantee, best looking ring
  • Good service, good price
  • Lower price

  • The sales people were all stack up jocks
  • They had very low prices on bands
  • Unimpressed with Shubiasch sales people
  • They were not pushy
  • Not that great a selection but the prices were higher
  • Cheesy salespeople
  • Not very helpful, not as big a selection
  • They were able sell us a diamond for close to wholesale price
  • Terrible shopping experience in the mall
  • Prices were lower
  • The prices were lower than we expected
  • It was weird that the same ring had many different prices
  • Salespersons give different advice and opinions
  • I had no idea how much higher retail was
  • It was more complicated than I thought
Why Did Your Impression of the Mall Change During Your Shopping Experience?

- Some mall stores were cruddy and gross
- Malls were terrible
- The prices were comparable to other locations
- Hard to find someone to custom design
- Research and knowledge
- Good prices, selection, and nice people
- Everyone said they were the best and we didn’t know who to believe
- We just met a really nice salesperson
- Prices are higher
- Mall stores are good
- The more stores I visited, the more I learned
- Awesome service and quality and price
- I met some really terrible people, so I stopped going there for jewelry
- Reasonable prices at Wilson
- It all depended on the salesperson and if they had what I wanted for the price
- Too expensive, shady salespeople
- They were a little rude and had much less selection and very expensive
- All were really unimpressive
- Service bad, except at Wilson’s and JC Keepsake
- Not as good a selection, nor service
- They had less selection than I thought
- They were cheap crap
- Some mall sales folks were excellent
- ZCMI in the mall had good prices
- The sales people were all stuck up jerks
- They had very low prices on bands
- Unimpressed with Schubach sales people
- They were not pushy
- Not that great a selection but the prices were higher
- Cheesy salespeople
- Not very helpful, not as big a selection
- They were able sell us a diamond for close to wholesale price
- Terrible shopping experience in the mall
- Prices were lower
- The prices were lower than we expected
- It was weird that the same ring had many different prices
- Salespersons give different advice and opinions
- I had no idea how much higher retail was
- It was more complicated than I thought
- They all started looking the same
- I won’t shop anymore at the mall store, prices and atmosphere were not good
- Condescending salespeople
- We had a good salesperson help us at Massey’s
- Prices not bad
- Good salespeople
- Only a few stores really had a good selection
- Not as good of a selection
- Selection and salespeople
- A lot of info involved with buying a ring
- The sales person at the mall didn’t know what he was talking about and didn’t own any jewelry
- One place was good
- A little more competitive than I thought
- Prices were lower
- Even if I know the owner, he’ll still run a hard bargain
- I hate the mall
- Didn’t feel really comfortable, prices too high
- Higher prices, salespeople not as good
- Some seemed they were out to get our money and that was it, and weren’t going to give us good quality
- Very helpful and informative
- The malls were worse
- I found good sale price in Wilson’s and salesperson was knowledgeable
- Bad service
- Trouble returning a bad diamond
- Was not impressed with selection, sales people were too pushy, and they were not always knowledgeable
- Salesperson knew little, price was high
- They had virtually nothing original. They were clones
Comments About Buying Diamonds, or Suggestions for Diamond Merchants

- He did it all by himself
- Service is everything
- Very beneficial when they inform you about important factors to consider
- Know your diamonds and don’t lie and embarrass yourself when the purchaser learns the truth
- Wilson’s was very helpful, honest, and patient, we were satisfied
- Find a connection, study the four C’s
- I like the phone book ads to find an idea for style- just casually looking
- Mistakes, broken promises, and outright dishonesty were major deterrents
- For merchants to be honest, sincere, don’t rip down other stores, don’t make us feel stupid for not knowing
- About diamonds and don’t be so up tight about a sale
- Get cuter styles
- Have better selections of bands
- Diamonds last forever
- Much as they say not, lots of salespeople are snotty, you wouldn’t expect this in cheap second rate stores, but it’s quite prevalent
- We were looking for a simple setting for a small (1/3 karat) diamond. We literally had to ask salespeople to pull out their cardboard box under the counter to find the ring we were looking for. They only kept big gaudy settings on display.
- Quit selling high priced yellow diamonds with charcoal in them. High pressure very annoying.
- Know what you are looking for
- Tell Tom Shane to stop doing radio commercials
- Be more honest. Give specific karat sizes, no more 1/2 karat
- Be knowledgeable before you go in and look
- Have genuine people to help just for purpose of helping. I know commission is involved, just don’t be obvious
- Salespeople offend me by making personal comments about my age, just let them know it’s not their job
- Information about different diamonds, shapes and quality is helpful
- Lifelong friends as salespeople
- Your sales people need to help everyone
- Don’t settle, keep looking
- They told us mall jewelers were not very good and honest
- Diamond dealers that wholesale the diamonds to the stores in the first place are the cheapest and most reputable. I have visited major stores and am very good at judging diamond quality. Some of the stores are ripping people off big time, especially in the mall.
• We found much better prices with a private salesperson because they don't have to pay for advertisements, rent
• Merchants need to relax and not try to make decisions for customers. Also pay attention to what they want to purchase
• I thought it was good to look at the diamonds through a microscope and the special red light thing
• Make sure you love it, it is one of the few things worth paying more than what you're totally comfortable with-as long as it doesn't break you
• Sales people are annoying. Sit in your until someone asks for you help. Tom Shane needs to get off the air if he wants business
• I bought her ring from Schubach, but poor service gave me a huge run around, for people selling rings they sure didn’t seem eager to sell
• Keep it cheap and practical
• Don't be too pushy, let us see your selection and find the rings that we like
• Don't be pushy
• Low pressure is best
• Don’t say "now, that one says I love you"... we weren't impressed
• Don’t be too pushy
• One of the stores had a diamond school-which educated us a little on purchasing diamonds
• Some salespeople were not very nice to us because we were young. We wore street clothes. We are college kids so they would say things like “I think that's a little out of your range” which greatly insulted me.
• Pioneer does an excellent job w/combining services-photos, invites, ring, cleaning, sizing, etc. Losee seems high quality, but gaudier
• When you're both students, you don’t want to go in debt for a ring. Prices are important
• At Sierra West we saw 4 rings in two hours. At Losee we saw 20 rings in one hour. Spend less time selling and more time trying to find what she really wants
• A nicer store is a good investment. You’ll want to look longer and salespeople must not be pushy
• Buy at Sierra West
• Spend all the money on the diamond and worry about the setting later
• The sales person we bought from was pushy and if it wasn’t for the fact that we really liked the diamond we would have never have bought
• Proximity is the key for college
• The more knowledgeable the merchants are the better. Some merchants could not answer my questions so I did not buy from them
• Do not buy from David, he is dishonest
• Get to know people, find it wholesale
Like insurance, you usually shop seriously where you know someone who works there.

Don’t buy in Utah County. Very overpriced.

I liked how the diamond merchants at Wilson’s helped me surprise my wife. Great client relationships.

Merchants I think should be more concerned and more honest instead of just trying to sell it. I liked the friendly, honest ones that also gave options of other merchants. It showed they wanted the best for you.

Don’t be pushy. Pushy salespeople caused me to walk away from a couple of stores.

I liked the concentration of store in the mall, but they were more money and not as good deals added in (discount on his ring, free replacement, jewelry cleaning, etc.).

I only wanted/bought one ring—not an engagement and band—just a band.

Don’t go to Sierra-West, bad quality, overpriced.

Do research before you buy. Select the diamond yourself, you will get a better deal than a preset diamond.

I didn’t like the Fred Meyer’s selection and its prices were ridiculously high. They didn’t have what I was looking for.

You get the best deals if you go to someone you know.

Arrogance like “Our diamonds are the best” was a major turn-off.

Harry Ogden was an excellent place to buy a ring.

Look for your style.

It’s always good to make sure the girl gets what she wants.

Look at the cut of the diamond. Go to someone you can trust. That’s not easy.

Don’t make people feel bad for wanting to buy a small or inexpensive diamond.

If I did it again, I would have gone to Sierra-West because I’ve heard they have great service/quality.

Check around, wheel and deal, go custom.

Know what you are talking about, a lot of info is involved.

Too much lighting is a turn-off.

Give the bottom line, don’t go around questions.

We went to a reputable word-of-mouth source. He doesn’t advertise but makes beautiful jewelry. Stay away from malls, who have to make up prices to keep their spot.

Get quotes and get dealers to lower prices. It’s like shopping in Mexico.

It’s all about who you know.

Those that explained the diamond classifications were helpful.

DeBeers sucks.

Get what you want now, not later.

Don’t be pushy—let people just browse.