



Jewelers of America press release

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CONTACT: Peggy Jo Donahue
Director, Public Affairs
pjdonahue@jewelers.org
(646) 658-5802

Lauren Thompson
Public Affairs Coordinator
lthompson@jewelers.org
(646) 658-5817

JA Launches Online Education Program

Members can now access JA education on the Internet, as well as at events and in-store

New York, NY – Jewelers of America’s new educational initiative, J-Biz, launched its online course component at the JA New York Show on January 23. The online courses will enable wider access to JA’s education programs, which until now have been available only at live seminars and in-store.

“We recognize that many JA members have only limited access to our live seminars. Online access makes it possible to provide just-in-time education to members wherever they are,” says JA Director of Education David Peters.

The new online courses will be available to members directly from JA’s website, www.jewelers.org.

“Continued professional training is no longer dictated by one’s ability to travel to an industry event or trade show. Now, JA education is available to anyone with a dial-up Internet connection,” says JA President and CEO Matthew A. Runci. “The new online program provides an opportunity to reach tens of thousands of retail jewelers and their sales associates with direct, narrowly focused courses they can turn to when they want basic information quickly.”

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The J-Biz online program has been tailored to the schedule of a busy retail sales associate. The courses are typically divided into 45-minute modules. The modules are then sub-divided into 15-minute segments, to facilitate even faster learning opportunities. Maximum learning flexibility is the key.

Students can also take the entire training course at once, however, if that's preferable. Completion times will range from three to six hours, with some courses lasting as long as 10-12 hours.

Among the first online courses J-Biz is developing are ones on: communicating color, the basics of selling diamonds, ethical selling and relationship selling. J-Biz will also adapt some of JA's best-known in-print training programs – such as *Counter Intelligence* and *Jewelry 101* – to the web. A Beta launch of the first online courses is scheduled for early February.

Along with original content, J-Biz also plans to offer its members existing, high-quality educational courses through partnerships with a variety of other associations and groups. For example, JA has already partnered with the Jewelers Education Foundation of the American Gem Society to offer JEF's Graduate Sales Associate course online.

To make the J-Biz education program accessible to the widest audience possible, the majority of the new online courses will be available to JA members at a very low cost, estimated to range from \$20-\$50 for most courses. Access is also designed for narrow-bandwidth delivery, meaning courses will work just as well on dial-up connections as on high-speed broadband Internet connections.

For more information on JA's online education training courses, visit www.jewelers.org.

For a high-resolution screenshot of the new online education program, contact Lauren Thompson at lthompson@jewelers.org or (646) 658-5817.