



**PRIYANSHU SHAH**  
CEO, A'Star Jewellery

**Have sales been hit due to the escalating price of gold?**

Though the escalating price of gold has played its hand, it is the overall economic slowdown that has affected sales. But this is a temporary hurdle which we are trying to overcome through innovations in design and process. The challenge here is to maintain acceptable price points yet deliver a designer product that asserts value.

**Will you consider cost-effective alternatives such as 9-karat or 14-karat gold or silver?**

The Indian consumers' perception of jewellery is different from that of the global consumer. Jewellery, to a large extent, still remains a precious commodity

and an investment option in India and is yet to be fully perceived as a fashion accessory. Also, most of our collections to be showcased at the IIJS will cater to the upcoming wedding and festive seasons. In keeping with this insight, we will be offering our products in 18-karat gold. Although, 9-karat and 14-karat gold are options we offer on demand.

**Which markets are currently doing well? And are there any new markets that you are looking to tap?**

South and west regions are our prime markets. We are planning to tap tier II and III towns, too, in these markets. Eastern region is another market whose full potential is yet to be explored.

**There is an overall slowdown in the industry. Demand for polished diamonds seems to be dwindling every month. Buying has become limited. Where do you think the diamond industry is heading, and how is it impacting business and sourcing?**

Currently, tight liquidity in both the manufacturing centres and the consumer markets is holding back trading activity. The good news is that the US market is stabilising, though the Far East and Indian markets have been relatively quiet in recent months. There is also recycling of goods happening at the retail level. The global economic slowdown is definitely impacting the diamond industry and doing business in 2012 will be challenging.

**How have you prepared for the show?**

Firstly, our product development team has put together an exciting range of new collections in

keeping with current trends and preferences. As the IIJS is an important platform to reach out to new customers, our marketing team has laid out a media plan which includes emailers, advertisements, in-show promotions and PR to communicate our offerings to these potential customers.

**What special collections will you be launching at the IIJS?**

We will have a versatile product range on display, including four new collections that lay an equal emphasis on classic and fashion styling. Customers will get to see a lot of rose gold and precious stones like rubies, emeralds and sapphires adding another dimension to diamonds.

**Given the current scenario, what are your expectations from the IIJS this year?**

We have meticulously put together a fresh product portfolio keeping in mind market sentiments and consumer preferences. Given the right product, we are hopeful that the market response will be positive.

**Do you expect sales to pick up during wedding and festive seasons?**

Purchasing jewellery for festive occasions and weddings is ingrained in our cultural makeup. And as mentioned earlier, if the right product is presented to spark the consumer's enthusiasm, there is no reason why sales should not reflect a healthy pick up.



**COLIN SHAH**  
Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer,  
Kama Schachter

**Have sales been hit due to the escalating price of gold?**

The cautious approach of wait-and-watch exhibited by the end user in purchasing jewellery on account of the economic slowdown coupled with the rising raw material prices is reflecting on the supply chain as well. The slow movement has resulted in inventory being piling up at the retailers' end and that is affecting the retail purchase cycle. The upside, however, is that the ensuing festive season has brought in buoyancy in the purchasing spree and the initial reluctance owing to increasing gold prices is likely to give way

in SEEPZ to manufacture silver-studded jewellery for the US market since there was a demand for it. However, the Indian jewellery retail has so far been experimenting more with diamond qualities rather than alternative metals to safeguard business against the rising price of raw materials.

We also believe that if offered at accessible price points, Indian customers are still willing to own diamond and gold jewellery as their first choice. And the customer is more likely to wait and watch and will stick to buying gold and diamonds.

**Which markets are currently doing well? And are there any new markets that you are looking to tap?**

In the generic jewellery segment, we are present in the leading jewellers pan India. Recently, we have launched Kama Love, a couple band programme and Kama Platinum, a programme of bestselling designs. We have been focusing on the distribution of these two private label brands. Delhi is doing considerably well in terms of highest number of repeat orders for Kama Love collection, whereas Chennai is leading the charts for Kama Platinum.

**Where do you think the diamond industry is heading, and how is it impacting business and sourcing?**

Owing to unpredictability in the demand cycle and the price fluctuations, bulk buying is not happening to a large extent. Jewellery manufacturers, too, don't want to hold up inventory and are sourcing only what

it through the first phase after the launch, we will be introducing fresh designs under both these brands.

**Given the current scenario, what are your expectations from the IIJS this year?**

With 100+ retailers currently enrolled for the Kama Love and Kama Platinum programmes, we are looking at further strengthening the distribution of these two brands in India. Also the ensuing festive season holds promise for the buying of other jewellery during the show.

**Do you expect sales to pick up during wedding and festive seasons?**

We are expecting the seasonal purchases to continue in the second half of the year as the major jewellery-buying occasions and the wedding season fall during this time of the year.

**IIJS Mobile Apps**



android

