

**Buyer reaction:** Buyers seemed happy. Joseph W. Dohar of The Gold Exchange, Youngstown, Ohio, felt prices were more competitive in New York. But he said he found almost everything he came for in Ohio and he liked the gentler, more laid-back pace of this show. "I'll definitely be back next year," he said.

Buyers and exhibitors both had mountains of praise for the Association, saying it was one of the most pleasant, well-organized shows they'd ever attended.

## Larger crowds, fewer exhibitors in Chicago

**Show:** Illinois Jewelers Association—Chicago Show.

**Location:** Exponent/Holiday Inn Mart Plaza, Chicago.

**Date:** Aug. 7-8, 1988.

**Number of exhibitors:** 217, down from 322 in 1987.

**Number of buyers:** 3,429, up from 2,262 in 1987.



Steven Knight, president of The Jewelry Judge, shows his firm's computer appraisal program to a steady stream of retailers at IJA's Chicago show.

**History:** Jewelers of America, preoccupied with its far larger July New York show, was able to pay relatively little attention to the Chicago show

it sponsored two weeks later. Chicago suffered as a result, losing attendance and viability for several years. When JA handed over the show to the Illinois Jewelers Association last year, scores of exhibitors dropped out. The IJA had less than eight months to organize and stage its first version of the Chicago show.

But by show time, it was clear that buyers reacted positively to the change. More than 2,800 pre-registered (compared with only 400 last year) and nearly 630 more registered at the show.

Charles Miller, executive director of the Illinois Jewelers Association, attributed the increase in buyers to a stepped-up promotional campaign to attract people from outside the Illinois/Indiana region. Retailers in at least 10 states were recruited, some from as far away as Florida and Arizona.

**Reaction of exhibitors:** The success of the campaign resulted in more people traversing a smaller show floor. Exhibitors were hoping

## T R A D E S H O W S

to keep up with first-day traffic. "We couldn't sit down," gasped Lori Goldberg, who worked the booth for Teena Creations, Freeport, N.Y. "It's been our best show ever."

Dan Ribacoff of Danley Trading Corp., New York, concurred. "We're definitely getting better-rated buyers than we did last year," he said. The buyers themselves rated Danley's new mounted ring line highly.

Joan Schlesinger and Nancy Kaminsky of Schlesinger & Krauss Inc., East Hanover, N.J., praised the show management, commenting on how "professionally" the event was handled.

George Kalergis, vice president of Designs by the Sea, Charlottesville, Va., invited passers-by to "take a look at something different" in his showcase. By 3 p.m. the first day, he wrote 25 new orders for his firm's hand-carved black onyx pendants, retailing from \$50 to \$600.

Other unusual stylings also generated orders the first day. The Coral-Jade Co., North Haven, Conn., did

very well with its just-released black onyx and gold bead scarf/belt.

Edwine Jewellery Co., New York, created a stir with its panther diamond bracelet.

Global Diamonds Inc., Chicago, generated second glances at its shimmering display of "Sculptaires"—diamonds cut in unusual shapes.

Other crowd-pleasers: a booth backed with a faux oxidized copper painting displaying the name of Gemworks, Los Angeles, and a demonstration of a high-speed computer appraisal program from The Jewelry Judge, Ontario, Canada.

On the second day, traffic dropped considerably, picking up only slightly by noon. But those who came seemed sure of who and what they wanted to see. While fewer perused, more stood listening to salespeople. The hall was noticeably quieter, leading one exhibitor to bemoan the small number of booths at this year's show.

**Seminars:** The first day featured "Conversation with Marshall

Finkelman"; the second day, "Surviving the '90s—Strategies for Success."

Participants in the second seminar were designer Jose Hess, gem expert Campbell Bridges and James Porte, marketing director of Michael Anthony Jewelers, New York.

Before the second seminar, IJA gave JA chairman Michael Roman a letter from Abraham Lincoln's home in appreciation of his support for the show.

Rob Glenn, IJA first vice president, received a plaque for exceptional show service.

## Western Exhibitors adds show, promotes 2

Western Exhibitors Inc., which produces the San Francisco Jewelry Show, announced the promotions of Andrew Toplarski and Debora Gray to show coordinators. They will be responsible for sales and administrative management of exhibitor ser-