

JEWELRY

Tiffany transparency heralds new era of jewelry strategy

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Tiffany and Co. puts sustainability under a magnifying glass

By BRIELLE JAEKEL

U.S. jeweler Tiffany and Co.'s heightened push to be transparent with diamond sourcing exhibits just how important ethical gem origin is today, and why brands need to let customers know where their jewelry comes from.

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Tiffany is taking a large step in revealing where its diamonds come from in an effort to be more transparent with its customers and better serve the ethical-focused consumer of today. Through social media and greater product details in addition to more ethical services rolling out in the future, Tiffany is hoping to solidify confidence for customers when purchasing with its brand.

"We in the luxury industry are seeing a new generation of buyers one that cares about the environment and society more than ever, and that translate those beliefs into brand loyalty," said Anisa Kamadoli Costa, chairman and president of the Tiffany & Co. Foundation and chief sustainability officer at **Tiffany & Co.**, New York. "Our clients deserve to know where their most valuable, most cherished diamond jewelry is from, and how it came to be.

"For nearly 20 years, diamond transparency has been core to our business as the best means to ensure social and environmental responsibility," she said. "Our vertical integration and traceability allow us to better address human rights, labor practices and the environment throughout the entire journey of a Tiffany diamond."

Sustainable sourcing

Tiffany & Co. is taking its commitment to sustainable sourcing a step further by disclosing the origins of its newly sourced diamonds to customers.

Tiffany's Diamond Source Initiative will let customers know the country where their stones were mined, with plans to allow consumers to trace the production journey of the diamonds from mine to retail by 2020. While Tiffany has long been committed to conflict-free diamonds, this effort is aimed at providing greater transparency around its practices ([see story](#)).

The jeweler has even shared a quote from its CEO, along with a short video to help promote the initiative and bring awareness to more of its followers.

Keeping on brand, the short film showcases its iconic Tiffany blue with various animations as CEO Alessandro Bogliolo discusses the new initiative.

Mr. Bogliolo explains that even in the luxury space, jewelry supply chains can be unknown to consumers, with most having no idea where their pieces come from.

While Tiffany has continued to look to sustainable and responsible resources for its products, the company is now letting customers in on its process.

The animated short shows a playful trip that tracks a diamond's origin from mine into the hand of a jeweler, who examines it with a magnifying glass.

Announcing our Diamond Source Initiative. "Tiffany & Co. will begin sharing with our customers the provenancemeaning region or countries of originof our newly sourced, individually registered diamondsa significant step for diamond transparency." Alessandro Bogliolo, CEO.
pic.twitter.com/GNBvIV9BKW

Tiffany & Co. (@TiffanyAndCo) [January 9, 2019](#)

"For consumers, knowing the provenance and ultimately the craftsmanship journey allows them to understand the positive impacts that are being made along the supply chain," Ms. Kamadoli said. "This critical piece of information enables an informed purchase decision.

"For Tiffany, this move reflects another step forward in line with our long-held principle of transparency," she said.

Transparency throughout the industry

Tiffany is not the only jeweler who is looking to shine a light on its product sources.

On social media, De Beers recently spotlighted an initiative in which the company provided crafting skills in a mining town.

The jeweler partnered with African Art Centre to help provide citizens of mining towns the skills to make a living from crafts.

Experts arrived in seven communities to share a variety of creative techniques including beadwork and wire basket making as well as showing trainees how to check the quality of their products.

De Beers has used its social clout to bring awareness to the initiative, which was commissioned by its team at the flagship Jwaneng mine in Botswana.

We're proud to announce that Debswana's [#Jwaneng](#) mine team has partnered with the [#AfricanArtCentre](#) to help teach new creative skills to mining communities.

<https://t.co/0exsnlz3Cp> [#BuildingForever](#) pic.twitter.com/abE7FGo7xj

De Beers Group (@debeersgroup) [January 8, 2019](#)

The British diamond company has also entered the lab-grown diamond market with the launch of Lightbox Jewelry.

De Beers' new brand focuses on creating sustainable diamonds at a more affordable price than their mined counterparts. The brand's products begin at around \$800 per carat, significantly less than De Beers mined diamonds ([see story](#)).

Bario Neal is another luxury jeweler focused on sustainability, sourcing gems from conflict-free areas such as Australia and Canada. While its product start at \$2,500 and range beyond \$10,000, many of its proceeds help support marriage equality and sustainability.

Tiffany's new initiative is the latest large move from a major jeweler to highlight sustainability. The jeweler says it is the first company in the industry that is sharing the country of origin of stones in this manner.

"By providing provenance, we are giving an assurance of responsible sourcing backed by real information specific

to the stone, inspiring further confidence in our customers," said Andy Hart, senior vice president of diamond and jewelry supply at Tiffany and Co. "Unlike other jewelers, we source the majority of our diamonds as rough stones from known suppliers and mines, which we've done for nearly a decade.

"We then cut and polish most of this rough ourselves to craft exceptional diamonds," he said. "We exceed industry standards in labor practices and working conditions at our diamond and jewelry workshops.

"We proudly hire locally, pay a living wage, develop skilled artisans, and invest in our communities. The best means of ensuring a diamond was responsibly sourced is knowing where it came from."

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