



Embracing the tall poppy: Overcoming tradition in customer jewellery design preference

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EMBRACING THE TALL POPPY

Overcoming Tradition In Customer Jewellery Design Preference

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K. Amani Fine Jeweller



ROLE OF TRADITION

Tradition plays a significant role in customers' purchase decisions for jewellery

In NZ, most jewellers are retailers supplied by mass-manufacturers

Mass-manufacturers are hesitant to invest in “unproven” designs

Customers become accustomed to the understated look of this jewellery - “safe” choices



TALL POPPY SYNDROME

High achievers or people who have conspicuous signs of wealth, status, or success are subject to criticism, rebuke, and/or sabotage among their peers and friends

TPS is ingrained in New Zealand culture

Many Kiwi women fear being identified as a tall poppy due to the risk of social exclusion, outright derision, or reputation-demeaning gossip



ACHIEVEMENT

CAN SOMETIMES COST YOU

DEMOGRAPHICS

Auckland, New Zealand is extensively multicultural

46% Asian and Pacific cultures, including Maori

56% Pakeha (primarily European-origin)

Many Asian and Pacific cultures form interdependent relationships, whereas Pakeha culture embraces independent cultural attitudes



INDEPENDENCE vs INTERDEPENDENCE



Independent cultures glorify the accomplishments of the individual person. This affects the way a person reacts to the achievements of others.



Interdependent cultures value collective effort, solidarity, harmony, and adherence to group norms. An individual who stands out risks condemnation.

EFFECT OF TPS ON JEWELLERY PREFERENCE

The successful Kiwi woman often downplays both her success and her fashion to avoid the risk of being perceived as a tall poppy

In the case of jewellery, she often seeks out traditional jewellery styles - wishes to avoid designs that are “too flash,” “too blingy,” or “loud”

This style of jewellery is widely available from the large name-brand jewellery retailers

The ubiquity of such styles influences consumers' minds about what an engagement ring “should” look like



K. AMANI FINE JEWELLER

The company's eponymous jeweller, Khay Amani, is herself a tall poppy

Because of this, and as a result of her mixed-heritage background of interdependent and independent cultures, her personal jewellery aesthetic is both non-traditional and highly personalized



K. AMANI FINE JEWELLER

KAFJ is located in the Queens Arcade along Auckland's lower Queen Street

City's high-end designer fashion hub

Numerous specialty fashion options and a high number of jewellers

Queens Arcade caters to professional urbanites who are interested in quality, niche goods

Shoppers are mainly city office workers and international tourists



K. AMANI FINE JEWELLER

KAFJ is a manufacturing jeweller, whereas other nearby jewellery stores are just retailers

Jeweller's workbenches, tools, and self-designed jewellery stock provide evidence of KAFJ's abilities

Traditional and modern manufacturing techniques

On-site repair and remodelling services

Coloured gemstone focus

TARGET AUDIENCES

The main jewellery retailers seek to target the largest possible market of customers, but this does not encapsulate everyone

However, these retailers cater to an audience that is especially susceptible to TPS

TARGET AUDIENCES

KAFJ's choice to be an innovative and design-focused jeweller doesn't fit the typical audience affected by TPS

As a result, KAFJ's marketing targets

1. highly competent achievers who value personal expression
2. people raised outside of New Zealand in Western cultures

Both cases rely on an independent construal of self that believes tall poppies should be rewarded for their achievements



TARGET AUDIENCES

Still, there are many more people who visit KAFJ who are NZ-raised and less confident in expressing their personal uniqueness

How to convert such people into customers?

Most customers think that only what they see is what they can get

If a customer wants a safe, traditional design, KAFJ can offer ways to personalize that jewellery into a one-of-a-kind piece

Personalizing a piece of jewellery creates a stronger emotional bond

PERSONALIZATION

Such personalizations are generally inconspicuous and ride below the TPS radar

- Minor changes to design facets (thickness, width, profile curves)

- Type of metal (changing white to rose gold, or combining colours)

- Swapping diamonds for other gemstones

- Cultural motifs

- Custom engraving

- Shadow bands



CONCLUSION

In order to combat fears of TPS while still positioning itself as a custom design specialist, KAFJ empowers tradition-minded customers to add discreet personalization facets to traditional jewellery designs

Such personalizations escape general notice, but they help identify the piece as one-of-a-kind to the customer

As soon as a customer knows that the piece they are buying is unique, they form a much stronger attachment to it, see it as better value for money, and are more likely to complete the purchase

