

similar way that professional graders do. This is a very exciting and revolutionary step, and we are delighted to say that the results so far are very satisfying, and significantly better than manual grading.

How will Sarine build the trust factor for customised AI grading reports at the retail level? Will AI diamond grading slowly replace professional grading labs?

Trust is key, and systematic automated technology can really help to boost consumer confidence. For example, two diamonds may have the same 4Cs grading, yet there is a big difference in price. This is difficult for consumers to understand or accept. Also, AI grading is non-biased as it is not subject to human factors, such as mood or eyesight, for example. You can see the effects already with Cut grading, which used to be very inconsistent. However, since the advent of automated Cut grading in the 1990s, it is now taken for granted that Cut grading is very consistent and the technology is used by everyone across the industry.

What are the primary benefits of AI diamond grading? Will it bring down costs and shorten turnaround times?

The clear and immediate benefits are accurate and consistent grading. This will inevitably lead to increased trust and confidence in diamond trading, the consumer experience in diamond buying as well. In terms of the cost of grading, in the long run it may bring costs down. However, today the technology is still new and developing, so it won't immediately impact the cost or turnaround times.

Does Sarine plan to incorporate blockchain technology to improve diamond traceability?

Indeed, but it is too early to share.

From robots used in mining to machines being used to grade diamonds, and now even polishing them... Do you see the slow but steady elimination of the human element from diamond mining, cutting and polishing?

I don't see elimination of humans in the diamond manufacturing and grading industries. Take for example the automated polishing machines that have been used for decades, yet people still have an important place in the industry. However, I do believe that the role and responsibilities of professional diamond graders will change with time. ■

'Consumer Taste Is Ever Evolving'

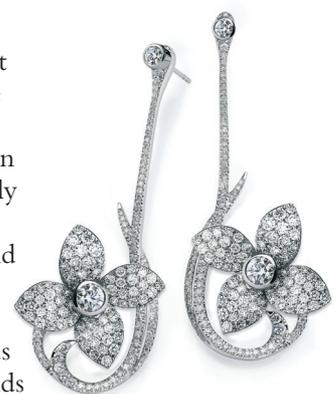
Sachin Jain, Forevermark India's managing director, talks to Solitaire about catering to millennials, design collaborations, and the future of the industry.



Sachin Jain

What are Forevermark's reasons for exhibiting at IJS?

We have participated for the last three consecutive years at the India International Jewellery Show (IJS) which is one of India's most premium jewellery fairs. It is the driving force that has sustained India's position as a global leader in gems and jewellery. Today, the show has become a globally renowned trade fair whose importance is underlined by thousands of domestic and international visitors that attend it each year. Over the years, we have received such an overwhelming response at the IJS that we have decided to continue our association this year as well. Our focus has always been on retaining consumer confidence in diamonds while reinforcing their preference and demand for diamond jewellery in the market. Only 1% of the world's diamonds are eligible to become a Forevermark diamond, and the



Garden of Wonders

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IIJS is the perfect platform for us to showcase our collections and innovations to the industry.

Despite being just a five-year-old brand, what has made Forevermark so successful amidst a sea of competitors?

The diamond industry has reached a point in India where diamonds are no longer the preserve of the privileged but an aspiration for the masses. The most important driver of this market are the women and millennials, who dream of owning a diamond and can now afford to buy these precious stones themselves. Forevermark as a brand is here to fulfil that dream of every woman and millennial by not only giving them what they desire, but also at an affordable price. With diamonds starting from 10 points, Forevermark creates jewellery that can be worn daily.

Apart from this, we also released the Credential Campaign, which addresses the concerns of potential buyers and reassures them that when they purchase a Forevermark diamond, it is the most beautiful, rare and responsibly sourced diamond. We understand that every consumer looks for validation while purchasing diamond jewellery and Forevermark provides this validation, with the brand promise and the unique inscription number on each diamond. With this campaign, we have reinforced consumer confidence and created brand awareness by highlighting the benefits and differentiating



Garden of Wonders

factors of Forevermark, thereby creating trust and loyalty for the brand in the minds of our audience.

Could you share some insights about Forevermark's nine jewellery collections available in India? Do you plan to introduce more affordable lines for millennials?

The Indian millennials today are globally exposed and well aware of the international trends. There is also an increasing awareness in the marketplace for buying good quality diamonds. Solitaires are gaining prominence, and in bigger pieces too. More and more millennials are going for a lighter piece with better quality diamonds, as these can be worn through the year.

Keeping this in mind we recently launched the Twogether collection, which features two sparkling Forevermark diamonds at the heart of each piece. Set in 18-karat yellow, white and rose gold, this exquisite mid-priced range includes rings, pendants and earrings perfect for work or a night out and targets the younger generation. We will also continue creating silhouettes of jewellery that can be divided into multiple pieces; which means it can be used as a large piece of jewellery or can be broken down to multiple smaller pieces of jewellery that can be used for separate occasions. Forevermark sees the needs of the current generation as an opportunity to offer unique products and everyday wear jewellery.

How do you choose designers to collaborate with? Could you describe the working process – from ideation to the finished product?

Consumer preferences are constantly evolving and at Forevermark, we believe that change is the only constant. Forevermark works at several levels to keep pace with this change, of which one is to



Time Capsule

collaborate with some of the best designers. Keeping our brand ethos in mind, we work with designers who share our brand values and who can take our beautiful diamonds and create masterpieces.

We have collaborated with ace couturier Sabyasachi Mukherjee for the Zanyah collection and Bibhu Mohapatra for the Artemis™ collection. These exquisite lines of diamond jewellery fuse their iconic style of unique craftsmanship with the unparalleled beauty of Forevermark diamonds. The Forevermark Design and Innovation Centre is closely involved in the process of working with the designers to fine-tune their vision into jewellery. This usually takes over a year of designing and sampling to formalise the final collection. This is when the manufacturers come in to create the lines and partner retailers bring it to the consumer.

What are the three big changes you envisage in the Indian jewellery industry over the next ten years?

We are already seeing a certain consolidation in the retail and manufacturing side. Regulation and legislation will bring in more transparency in the business. Consumer taste is ever evolving and I see further changes in the course ahead, especially where self-purchase and purchases towards self-worth are concerned. This trend is definitely going to pick up amongst the millennial audience in India. Technology is going to be a big disruptor in the business and building awareness and educating the consumer as well as training the workforce are going to be key drivers of change in the future. ■