With the Reopening of their Small Jewelry Boutique on Long Island and a Successful Website
Fortunoff Fine Jewelry is Well Positioned for Growth

Interview with Esther Fortunoff-Greene, President, Fortunoff Fine Jewelry
www.fortunoffjewelry.com | Phone: (516) 765-6910 | Email: efortunoff@fortunoff.com
Interview conducted by: Lynn Fosse, Senior Editor, CEOCFO Magazine

CEOCFO: Ms. Fortunoff-Greene, what is the focus of Fortunoff Fine Jewelry today?
Ms. Fortunoff-Greene: The focus is bring to our customers the same quality, selection and service that has been the hallmark of Fortunoff for almost 100 years. Two years ago, I opened Fortunoff Jewelry, a quality jewelry boutique on Long Island. That store is a brick-and-mortar complement to the fortunoffjewelry.com website that launched in 2010, after the stores were closed in 2009. So this boutique is a revival and new chapter in Fortunoff history.

CEOCFO: Why the decision to do so?
Ms. Fortunoff-Greene: Popular demand! We were receiving emails and phone calls all the time from customers wanting to try on the jewelry, touch the jewelry and see how it fits. Opening a beautiful boutique was the natural response to that demand. There is a need in the marketplace for well-priced, quality non-branded jewelry, and the Fortunoff business has been well-loved by generations of customers.
**CEOCFO:** More and more high-quality jewelry is being sold online. What are you finding and how do you stand out among companies that are doing online sales?

**Ms. Fortunoff-Greene:** Fortunoff built its reputation based on trust—in the quality of what we sell, in our friendly expert staff, in our no-hassle return policy—so that trust remains our advantage with online sales. Jewelry websites are a very mixed bag: it’s hard to know what you’re buying sometimes. When people call us, they are comforted knowing they are dealing with a real person on the phone and a company with a long and distinguished history.

**CEOCFO:** Looking at your site, you seem to have a tremendous variety and also seem to make it very easy for someone to hone in on what they are looking for. Did you understand that in the beginning or did you learn over time what people are looking for and how to provide a user friendly experience?

**Ms. Fortunoff-Greene:** Variety is something our customers expect from us. With so much variety we knew we had to create a website that would be easy to understand and really simple to use. Visitors to our site find necklaces, bracelets, earrings, everything by category, and then can narrow down their search to the type of earring they want. We also put together collections so that if you want to shop by mood, let us say “vintage-style,” or by a particular color, color of the season, or by items under $500—it’s all there.

**CEOCFO:** Do you need to maintain a large inventory for the online or are you able to access the different items as needed?

**Ms. Fortunoff-Greene:** We have a very large inventory. The reason is that I do not believe in using my suppliers to drop ship to customers, which is what most internet jewelry companies do. We prefer to have our jewelry experts look at everything for quality assurance, and that sets us apart.
CEOCFO: *Tell us a little bit about the retail shop for people who may not know the geography and about the people who come to the store. Why it is a good location and a good potential customer base?*

Ms. Fortunoff-Greene: We chose a location near our former Westbury flagship store so that anyone who hears the name Fortunoff Jewelry will have a geographic reference. We stock things anyone will feel comfortable buying, in a broad selection of price points and styles. Our customers include teachers, doctors, office workers, firefighters—a real cross-section of the population.

CEOCFO: *Do you do much advertising? How do you attract customers that may not realize you are there?*

Ms. Fortunoff-Greene: Fortunoff has a loyal following—four generations of friends who are excited to know we are back. I do a lot of advertising for my size business, and we have the advantage of a large customer base who already know and trust us for their shopping needs. I use social media, of course. We have a Facebook page and we do Twitter and Instagram, but we’re proud of knowing our customers personally. As a company, Fortunoff Jewelry has always been very civic minded. For instance, I sit on numerous boards of local charities and am constantly networking with business owners.

CEOCFO: *Would you tell us about your recent recognition in the Brava Awards?*

Ms. Fortunoff-Greene: The Brava Awards recognize women in business who were both in the non-for-profit and some in the for-profit sectors, and who also give back in some way. It was an exciting event and very crowded. I am hosting a cocktail reception at my store where the recipients will meet and get to know one another.
CEOCFO: How do you know what jewelry people will want? What goes into your decision about what to carry?

Ms. Fortunoff-Greene: What goes into my purchasing decisions is the three decades of experience I had in the previous Fortunoff business. My mother started the jewelry part of Fortunoff nearly 60 years ago. We have always had a team of female buyers who understand the shopping needs of different age groups and tastes. I also try to support women designers. I try to have a bit of an edge, a fashion-forward outlook, always with value in mind because there is a lot of interesting, edgy jewelry that is really crazily overpriced, and I would not advise anyone to buy it. I try to stick with my own view of common sense, and I do not go after fads.

CEOCFO: What surprises you as Fortunoff Jewelry is evolving, growing, and gaining interest and attention?

Ms. Fortunoff-Greene: One thing that surprises me is how often people want to talk about their fond memories of shopping at the store over the last 60 years. It is very heartwarming. Another surprise is how many customers do not care about trends, who know what they like. That has been an education about what kinds of things they find comfort in, and what kinds of things they see as having lasting value.