



# GEMVARA

HANDCRAFTED IN NYC

**Request For Proposal (RFP) for Public Relations Firm  
for Gemvara**

**Due Date: July 29, 2014**

[Gemvara.com](http://Gemvara.com), the most trusted North American provider of customizable fine gemstone jewelry online, seeks a PR firm to develop and execute a public relations strategy in support of Gemvara's brand initiatives and objectives. The firm must have extensive experience working with jewelry, fashion, and beauty brands.

## **I. COMPANY OVERVIEW**

[Gemvara](http://Gemvara.com) is the revolutionary leader of customizable fine jewelry shopping online. Gemvara offers 29 different gemstones, 9 precious metals, and hundreds of styles, designed to be uniquely and fully customizable to create a one-of-a-kind piece that captures a personal story or unique inspiration. Each piece is handcrafted by artisans in the Gemvara New York workshop. Gemvara combines the values of traditional jewelry creation with modern technology to truly provide shoppers with fine jewelry exactly the way they want it, always. Gemvara is headquartered at One Financial Center, Boston, MA 02111 and has offices in New York City.

## **II. COMPANY HISTORY**

Gemvara Founder and Chairman of the Board Matt Lauzon started Gemvara as an undergraduate at Babson College and officially launched the company in 2010.

While earning his B.S. in Business Management at Babson College, Matt and a fellow classmate co-founded Paragon Lake in 2006, a platform developed to streamline the manufacturing process for independent retail jewelry stores across the country. The company installed computer kiosks inside jewelry retailers so customers could virtually create tailored pieces otherwise not kept in stock by the retailer. The idea won him \$500,000 in seed capital from Highland Capital Partners.

After discovering that customers were much more excited about the experience of customizing from home, Matt reworked his business plan to focus exclusively on online customization, a direct-to-consumer model. Then in 2010, Matt transformed Paragon Lake into what Gemvara is today, a direct-to-consumer, online retailer of customizable fine jewelry. Today, Gemvara has 80 employees.

## **III. COMPANY KEY DIFFERENTIATORS**

- Gemvara was founded on the belief that buying jewelry should be different than buying anything else
- Gemvara has built the first-of-its-kind, made-to-order fine jewelry platform

- The company carries no inventory as every piece is custom built piece for each customer. (This also means we do not have readily available samples for media)
- Gemvara delivers the largest jewelry selection in the world, billions of possible jewelry combinations
- Delivers high-quality, fine jewelry, styled by you, crafted in NYC in less than 2 weeks
- 24/7 customer care, a 101-day return policy, free shipping, free engraving, and free ring sizing
- Every piece of Gemvara jewelry has a story behind it
- One of the only disruptive jewelry models in the \$150 billion jewelry industry

#### **IV. SCOPE OF ASSIGNMENT**

The Scope of Assignment will be the development and execution of a strategic PR plan to increase awareness of the Gemvara brand and its unique offerings. Gemvara desires to develop a comprehensive range of PR initiatives to be used through various channels to reach its consumers. It desires the PR program to work in conjunction with marketing objectives and to maximize the return on the PR investment. The selected firm must create the PR plan and timetable for launching the initiatives. The selected firm must be skilled in media relations, integrating traditional and social media channels, strategic PR planning, consumer engagement, message development, content creation (blogs, bylines, case studies, releases), product launches, thought leadership campaigns, brand management and other means in communicating with the consumers.

#### **V. PROPOSAL CONTENT**

Proposals must be concise and in outline format. Pertinent supplemental information should be referenced and included as attachments.

- Introduction of the company and explain why your firm would be the best choice for raising awareness of a brand in the ecommerce fashion space.
- Provide a client list, only include clients within the last 5 years.
- List three companies your firm has worked with that best reflect your work and relevancy to this project. Briefly list the role your firm played in each project. Press clips and coverage reports should be submitted.

- Provide current reference information for three current or former clients with projects of similar scope.
- Briefly describe your firms' organizational capacity (i.e. staff, location, etc.).
- Propose a team for this project and provide brief bios for each member.
- Briefly describe your firm's client management process. (i.e. reporting, meetings, evaluations, etc.).
- Describes your firm's approach in response to The Scope of Assignment in this RFP. Include methodology and procedures to bring the Gemvara brand to the next level.
- Provide a cost proposal to accomplish the scope outlined in the proposal. Your firm should identify the method for payment and payment schedule.
- The name, address, telephone number and email address of the person to be contacted along with others who are authorized to represent the company in dealing with this RFP.

## **VI. PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS**

- This is an open and competitive process.
- The proposal must contain the signature of a duly authorized officer of the company submitting the proposal.
- The price you quote should break out to a monthly fee. If your price excludes certain fees or charges, you must provide a detailed list of excluded fees with a completed explanation of those fees.
- If the execution of the work to be performed by your company requires the hiring of subcontractors, you must clearly state this in your proposal.
- The lowest bidder will not necessarily be awarded the contract.

## **VII. SELECTION CRITERIA**

Proposals will be evaluated based with the following criteria:

- Expertise 30%  
Expertise in creating and executing consumer, fashion focused PR programs and the skills mentioned in The Scope of Assignment.
- Experience 20%  
The firm has successfully completed similar engagements.

- Suitability of the Proposal 10%

The proposed initiatives meet the needs and criteria described in the RFP.

- Innovation and Creativity 10%

Prior work demonstrates innovative ideas that have engaged the media. Proposed work exhibits creative thinking.

- Price 10%
- Staffing 10%
- Presentation 10%

### **VIII. PROPOSAL FORMAT AND TIMELINE**

The review process will occur in two steps. First, all interested firms will submit a proposal that outlines their firm's and individuals' qualifications as well as their approach for this account. These proposals will be evaluated based on the above criteria.

In the second step, those firms with the best overall scores will be invited to formally present their concept of proposed activities for Gemvara. All costs for materials and travel for the presentation will be the firm's responsibility.

Format:

- Cover Letter: Signed by the person or persons authorized to engage services on behalf of the firm
- Proposal: Provide responses to those items outlined in "Proposal Content"
- Budget & Fees: List budgets and additional fees as requested above

Deadline:

Firms must email their proposal no later than **5:00 P.M. on Tuesday, July 29, 2014** to Carrie Callahan: [ccallahan@gemvara.com](mailto:ccallahan@gemvara.com). Questions may be directed to Carrie via email or by phone – 617-413-4589.

Those selected for final presentations/interviews will be notified by August 11, 2014. All firms submitting proposals will be notified in writing of the selection results.