



ESCHEWING THE ICY, white-gloved service of many upscale jewelers in favor of a more laid-back approach, Steven Singer has polarized the jewelry-buying public for three decades. Since opening his doors in 1980, Singer has cultivated an image that is irreverent, lighthearted and sometimes downright cheeky—and his long-standing relationship with shock jock Howard Stern has only further cemented his status as the jeweler guys love to love. From his first risqué advertising campaign, aired in 1998 (ladies sitting in a hot tub questioning whether size matters), to his ubiquitous and ambiguous “I Hate Steven Singer” campaign, Singer’s approach to selling jewelry has helped carve a formidable niche all his own. Here, he tells *Philadelphia Style* what makes him—and his business—tick.

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What’s your approach to selling jewelry?

It never made sense to me that you had to feel stupid or uncomfortable when buying jewelry. Why couldn’t it be fun? Just talk to people like they’re people.

And how do you do that?

If you had guests in your home and you didn’t know them or, even worse, didn’t like them, you would still offer them a seat and something to drink. So when we host guests in our store, one of the first things we do is offer them a cup of coffee or a beer and treat them nice.

What else makes you different?

We’ve hosted sweet 16s, 75th birthday parties, bridal showers, engagements and weddings in our store. There may even have been a divorce one time. The point is, we don’t have trunk shows, and we don’t have product launches. We have engaging, fun events that our clients can participate in.

Tell us about the “I Hate Steven Singer” campaign.

A gentleman purchased a diamond engagement ring to propose to his girlfriend. She loved it, they

married, but she would have to wait two decades and have two grown children before he would surprise her again with a beautiful diamond ring, to celebrate their 20th wedding anniversary. She was so excited by the ring that she gave her husband more than a mere thank you—exactly nine months later, the couple came to the store to tell me about their new baby. The wife proclaimed, “I love Steven Singer!” The man responded, “Here we go again. We’re up all night with feedings and diaper changes. This is all you and your diamond ring’s fault. I HATE STEVEN SINGER!” And there you go.

Do you think you’ve lost clients with your campaigns?

We’ve lost some, not a lot. If you want someone to speak to you in a British accent and wear white gloves, we’re definitely not the store for you. When you try to be all things to all people, you end up being unimportant to everyone.

What do you say to all the naysayers out there?

Well, if you knew me, you’d probably hate me, too.