

Tool Time: Retailers Get High-Tech

V-By and By



Virtual sales tool V-By is described by its developer as “Skype on steroids” (\$4,995; v-by.com). Speaking of sales clinchers, a new virtual selling tool officially introduced at [JCK Las Vegas](#) gives retailers focusing on e-commerce a potentially game-changing advantage in the marketplace.

V-By was developed by Deborah Hecht and her husband, Tim Rhodes, longtime sales reps who sold jewelry up and down the West Coast from their RV for 11 years until escalating costs encouraged them to explore a safer, more affordable option. The patent-pending, advanced videoconferencing technology enables live real-time jewelry presentations on video, with visuals crisp enough to close big-ticket sales.

“It’s like Skype on steroids,” Hecht tells JCK via phone and V-By, drawing attention during a demo to tiny details such as makers’ marks on shanks and a minuscule bug encapsulated in amber. Ideal for jewelry makers and retailers who sell online—the pair already count 15 of the former and two of the latter as clients—the product has been available to the industry for two years.



Greg Stopka

“What interests me most about this technology is its ability to give better customer service using the Internet in ways that the consumer will appreciate because of their familiarity with videoconferencing at their jobs,” says Stopka. Retailers who viewed a V-By demonstration at the company’s booth in Vegas showed interest in not only the inherent selling features, but also V-By’s marketing potential—as well as the possibilities for customer and employee education. You can use V-By for product training sessions with your sales staff or even invite customers to ‘meet with the designer’ for an educational program,” says Hecht. “It’s all about showing today’s customer that you are available to them where they are—on the Internet.”