

AKRON BEACON JOURNAL

Saturday, June 15, 2013

Sterling Jewelers finds social media goes well with jewelry

Kay Jewelers – the chain operated by Sterling Jewelers Inc. of Akron sure gets a lot of social media love.

Nearly 800,000 people have clicked that they “like” the Kay Jewelers Facebook page.

And to think that Kay Jewelers didn't even have a Facebook page until early last year.

That's how fast things change in the age of social media.

Kim Canary oversees the social-media whirl at Sterling Jewelers, and was promoted this year to vice president of public relations and social media at the company.

“Social media gives us the opportunity to engage with our customers in a very unique way,” Canary said. “It builds those relationships,” that she said can lead to “brand advocacy,” i.e., sales.

Sterling also launched a Facebook page for its Jared Galleria of Jewelry chain last year. It has more than 220,000 “likes.”

Both seek to connect with customers by offering contests and asking for customers' comments/opinions on a variety of noncontroversial topics. Some questions are jewelry-related, and some are not.

Both Kay and Jared also began using Twitter last year to interact with customers.

Here's a recent question on the Jared Galleria Facebook page: “Guys, how long did it take you to figure out how you would propose? Did it go as planned?”

Canary joined Sterling as director of public relations in 2010. She had no prior jewelry experience but had worked in corporate communications for about 10 years.

She oversees a staff of about 10 at Sterling. “I'm very, very fortunate to have a team with experience in public relations and digital and social media,” she said.

Before joining Sterling, she was vice president of communications at Associated Estates Realty, the owner of apartment buildings and a real estate investment trust headquartered in the Cleveland suburb of Richmond Heights.

She also did a stint at National City Bank now part of PNC where she worked in internal communications.



Kim Canary, new vice president of public relations and social media at Sterling Jewelers Inc. in Fairlawn.

In 2003, she got her first job out of graduate school in corporate communications at J.M. Smucker Co. the Orrville food and coffee company.

In her new job at Sterling, Canary succeeds David Bouffard, who became vice president of corporate affairs for Sterling's parent, Signet Jewelers Ltd. Bouffard also works out of the Sterling complex off Ghent Road in Akron.

Canary received her graduate degree, in communications, from Bowling Green State University. Her undergraduate degree, also in communications, is from Baldwin-Wallace University in the Cleveland suburb of Berea.

She's from New London, Ohio, between Norwalk and Ashland.

She says her biggest professional challenge is “I am a perfectionist. ... My best today isn't good enough for tomorrow.”

“I'm always trying to balance what can be realistically done within the hours of a day, with pushing myself to do more, better.”

So does she make time to get on Facebook or Twitter, after the work day is done?

She said she doesn't spend as much time on personal social media as she used to, but stressed, “I think you have to participate personally in order to keep up with the evolving technology.”