

Photo jewelry can be beautiful and lucrative sales add-ons, and unique signature pieces

## Wear your love

If you're looking for an additional product line to boost sales, check out photo jewelry. In recent years this little side industry has proliferated. Now several companies are incorporating photos with jewelry design. The consensus among professional photographers is that selling photo jewelry doesn't lessen print sales. There's a variety of styles and prices to meet the needs of your target market, from high-end custom made jewelry to mass-produced items of reasonable quality.

Mindy Jose started **CUSTOM PHOTO JEWELRY** in 1993 when she was seeking a way to artfully display photos of her 2-year-old son. She works from home so she can take care of her two children and still make a living doing something she loves. Among the 53 items for sale on her Web site are necklaces, charms, cufflinks, key chains, watches, money clips, earrings, and rings. The company sells a couple of unique watches for \$125 (the watch face flips back to reveal the photo underneath). Sterling silver necklaces range from \$70 to \$175. There is a wholesale program for photographers, and catalog on CD sans prices, so the photographer can set the price himself show the products to clients during the preview session. [www.customphotojewelry.com](http://www.customphotojewelry.com)



If doing it yourself doesn't interest you, there are some great companies that can do it for you. **PLANETJILL DESIGNS**, in Studio City, Calif., was created about five years ago by Jill Schiff. About 100 photographers are selling the company's jewelry, Schiff says, adding "we are known for our quality." Planetjill does sell directly to con-



sumers, but has special resale programs for photographers. One such photographer, Ana Brandt of Tustin, Calif., swears by Planetjill. She's tried other photo jewelry companies, but was dismayed to find that the jewelry fell apart. She has a display of Planetjill Designs jewelry and a catalogue in the boutique area of her studio.

Planetjill offers perhaps the widest range of upscale photo products, including necklaces and bracelets, boxes, handbags, ornaments, menorahs and many others. The jewelry comes in sterling silver, gold, and gold with diamonds. The gold necklaces, although expensive, are quite beautiful. The sterling silver necklaces range in price from \$105 to \$153 retail; gold necklaces from \$190 to \$1,495. If you think diamonds are a girl's best friend, gold necklaces with diamonds range from \$395 to \$2,365. Online ordering is coming soon, which will enable you to upload your images to the Web for fulfillment. [www.planetjill.com](http://www.planetjill.com)

**DRAPER IMAGING GROUP**, owned by Laurie Draper, earned a 2005 Hot<sup>1</sup> Award for add-on items. Draper specializes in artisan jewelry that's handsome even without the photo. All the designs are custom made, and Draper can create a studio signature piece with your colors and specifications. This would make for a wonderful limited edition of jewelry for your studio, much like limited edition

prints. Draper uses a variety of gorgeous gemstones, along with sterling silver, gold, white gold, platinum and vermeil. Draper Imaging will sell directly to the public, but prefers to work with photographers. The company offers dealer discounts and display sets for your business to help you sell its products. Prices fluctuate with the precious metals market. [www.draperimaging.com](http://www.draperimaging.com)



**ROLAND ADVANCED SOLUTIONS DIVISION** sells a machine that makes photo jewelry, along with a built-in business plan, training kit and supplies to get you started. Selling for \$2,995, the **Roland MPX-70 Metaza Impact Printer** permanently imprints your photos into jewelry, key chains, lighters, watches, charms and more. The business start-up kit includes: photo editing software; supplies such as charms, dog tags, pendants and chains in gold, rhodium and nickel plated; a display case with posters, brochures and inserts; a training DVD and 90 days of free telephone tech support. [www.rolandasd.com](http://www.rolandasd.com).



If you want to sell quality photo jewelry in a lower price bracket, try **MY LIFE DESIGNS**, in Colo., started in 1999 by Kimbra Orr. The company offers dealer discounts for photographers, and also supplies a display kit. Necklaces come in sterling silver or suede, retailing for \$42 to \$115. The photos are sealed with a clear, non-yellowing coating that's meant to protect the image from fading. Some of My Life's unique products cater to golfers, including a divot repair tool, ball marker, and 3-iron key chain. The company also sells bracelets, charms, money clips, belt buckles, rings and Christmas ornaments. [www.mylifedesigns.com](http://www.mylifedesigns.com)



*Linsley owns Image Angels, in Lake Tahoe, Calif. She has been photographing weddings and doing portraits for 18 years.*