

FEATURED SESSION

Buying Over the Counter: Precious Metals Testing Tips

This hands-on session covers techniques and testing tools for over-the-counter buying. From acid testing to XRF and everything in between, Rafael reviews processes to help pawnbrokers test jewellery, coins, and bars, protect their businesses, and improve returns.



RAFAEL AMADOR

United Precious Metals Refining

Rafael Amador has more than 20 years of experience in the precious metals industry. Starting as a gold buyer in 2004, he advanced to management, overseeing 86 employees across multiple locations and more than \$2 million in daily purchases.

He joined United Precious Metals Refining in 2010 and oversees sales and refining operations in Mexico, Latin America, the Caribbean, and the southeastern United States. In 2024 he authored "Tips for Buying Gold and Silver – Mastering the Art of Purchasing Precious Metals," a practical training guide adopted by pawnshops. He has also presented at pawn industry conventions on gold buying and testing.

FEATURED SESSION

Jewellery Crime: Staying Safe in an Unsafe World

Drawing on his experience as a jewellers block insurance agent, Simon examines safety and security practices for pawn shops. The session covers alarm failures, successful break-ins, Wi-Fi and cellular jamming, hostage robberies and other emerging risks.



SIMON THOMAS

CJB Insurance Services

Simon is a tenured agent with CJB Insurance Services, one of the largest jewellers block insurance agencies in Canada. He has presented for Jewellers Vigilance Canada, and is active in crime reduction and robbery prevention education.

PANEL DISCUSSION

Expert Panel

Ask experienced pawnbrokers how they run their stores, prosper, and make decisions. The panel compares distinct operating models, from high-volume pawnbroking to chain operations and retail-focused stores.



SAM SHOCKET

King's Jewelry and Loan

Sam has 56 years of experience in pawn and owns King's Jewelry and Loan, the largest pawn shop in California and one of the largest in the U.S. His store handles hundreds of transactions daily and has more than 50,000 active tickets. He served on the boards of the California Pawn Association and U.S. National Pawn Association.



BEN FOSTER

Cash Canada Pawn

Ben has more than 20 years in pawn as an operator, advisor and owner. He is president of Cash Canada Pawn, a Western Canadian chain, and a founding member of the Canadian Pawnbrokers Association. He previously served on the National Pawnbrokers Association Government Relations Committee and was EVP and CFO of Smart Financial Operations. He advised on North American pawn mergers and acquisitions with aggregate transaction values exceeding \$1 billion.



TREVOR RIVETT

Evergreen Traders

Trevor owns Evergreen Traders, a group of four pawn shops in the Maritimes. His stores focus on a high-turn retail model with new and vendor goods. He has presented at the Midwest Pawn Convention and Pawn Expo in Las Vegas.

FEATURED SESSION

Business by the Numbers: Improving Profits With Better Inventory Management

This session connects retail performance with a stronger pawn balance. It will cover inventory management principles that improve cash flow, profitability, and product turnover. Your ability to turn forfeited items back into cash ultimately increases the amount you can pay for new pawn transactions.



MARTIN STRASSER

Premier Pawn and Jewellery

Martin Strasser entered the pawn industry in 1995 as a founding partner of Premier Pawn and Jewellery in British Columbia. He is a founding member and current president of the Canadian Pawn Association and has been a member of the National Pawn Association for more than 20 years.

Martin helped design, implement and analyze the 2020 N.P.A. Pawn Industry Survey. This was a financial, operational and demographic analysis of the U.S. pawn sector. He is a frequent presenter at industry conventions including the Midwest Pawn Convention, Pacific Northwest Pawn Convention, and the NPA Pawn Expo in Las Vegas.