

## **Jewellery New Asia**

US-based manufacturer WR Cobb and Company recently announced the development of a breakthrough white gold, Precise® White Gold. This new patented alloy is unheralded as this white gold does not require rhodium plating. According to Cobb, this technology innovation was more than a decade in the making for the 127-year-old jewelry manufacturer.

“White gold jewelry is increasingly popular today, and our new process for production creates a metal that has superior benefits to both the consumer and the jewelry industry,” said David Skuza, Vice President of Global Marketing Executive at W.R. Cobb.

In the 1920’s white gold was introduced to the world jewelry market. Although white gold’s popularity has grown for decades, its performance has often been limited as the rhodium plating often wears off and causes significant consumer disappointment.

“White gold’s popularity has fueled an effort by the industry to find a solution for the traditional limitations of rhodium plated white gold. Our team at W.R. Cobb has been working towards a white gold solution for many years. Precise® White Gold is the culmination of this effort, and one that we believe will transform both our company and the industry. Fundamentally, this is the biggest change in white gold jewelry since the 1920’s,” said Skuza.

According to Cobb, Precise® White Gold offers advantages over existing forms of white gold, including:

- Precise® White Gold does not need to be rhodium plated. Rhodium is commonly used on all white gold to cover the natural yellowish color of gold to a more pleasing white color. Rhodium plating usually adds approximately \$5 to \$15 to the retail price of a typical ring.
- This patented white gold retains its shine and luster with no special treatment because there is no rhodium plating to wear off revealing a less pleasant color. As a result customers are more satisfied with their purchase.
- Precise® White Gold lowers manufacturing costs significantly because there is no special handling or plating costs. The finished jewelry is simply polished like any other gold product.
- This innovative gold lowers the cost of customer service as there are no problems with a plated rhodium finish wearing off, and repaired jewelry no longer requires special handling or rhodium replating.

- Precise® White Gold has been developed with the consumer in mind since some people who enjoy the high fashion look of white also have a sensitivity to the nickel in white gold. Precise® White Gold has been evaluated by a leading independent testing laboratory and meets the highest quality standards of European Union Nickel Release Test EN1810 and EN1811.
- Precise® White Gold was also developed with the jeweler in mind. Not only can it be polished and finished as easily as yellow gold, it is not brittle like some other white gold alloys, having the ductility and ease of use for diamond setting and hand fabrication.

“Our new Precise® White Gold provides a shot in the arm to the industry. This solution to the Rhodium issue is a benefit that satisfies both the retailer and the consumer,” said Skuza. This new white gold is likely to change the dynamics in the white gold supply chain. Precise® White Gold will be introduced to the industry at the JCK show in Las Vegas. The gold is scheduled to be available in the summer of 2004.