



NATIONAL Jeweler

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Retail Profiles

PA retailer dreaming of a white New Year's Eve

December 19, 2013
Johnstown, Pa.--“Let it Snow” has become more than a classic holiday tune to one Pennsylvania jeweler; it’s turned into a mantra for New Year’s Eve specifically.

In an effort to do as much holiday business as possible, Dennis Petimezas, owner of Watchmakers

Diamonds & Jewelry in Johnstown, is offering full refunds on purchases of \$199 and up made from Black Friday to Christmas Eve if it snows six inches or more on Dec. 31 between 6 p.m. and midnight.

While it might seem like the most unlikely time of the year for retailers to want to give customers their money back, this jeweler has it covered, in more ways than one.

For most weather-related promotions, retailers hedge their bets that the rain or snow won’t happen.

Petimezas went the other way: he gambled that it would snow six inches on New Year’s Eve while the insurer for the promotion, Lloyd’s of London, bet that half a foot of the white stuff won’t fall.

While an inch of snow an hour on New Year’s Eve might sound like a lot, it very well could happen, considering the snowy December Pennsylvania has experienced so far. As Petimezas points out, it has snowed six inches or more three times there in the last 10 days.



Retailer Dennis Petimezas, owner of Watchmakers Diamonds & Jewelry, is running this advertisement for his if-it-snows-your-purchase-is-free holiday promotion.

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Regardless of the outcome, which he recognizes lies solely in the hands of Mother Nature, the promotion has been garnering the jeweler a lot of pre-Christmas attention in Johnstown and likely also will result in some post-holiday buzz as well.

Local politicians have told the jeweler, tongue-in-cheek, that if the store "loses" its bet, it will receive keys to the city and a plaque commending its "economic stimulus" to the city of Johnstown.

Petimezas also said people have called him "goofy" in the grocery store for making such a financially dangerous proposition. In addition, he had to make an opt-out form for one customer, and gave them a special credit on their purchase, because their religion does not allow gambling.

"This is a perfect promotion to have something fresh and fun to offer, a value-added offer that makes sense and appeals to the 'rewards' part of the brain ... setting us apart from our competitors and (giving consumers) one more reason to shop us," he said.

Attempting to drum up business by betting purchases against weather or sporting events is nothing new for retailers.

Ahead of last year's Super Bowl, Baltimore-area retailer Saxon's Diamond Center offered refunds to customers if its hometown team, the Ravens, a club known for having a stout defense, shut out the San Francisco 49ers in the big game. The Ravens won but it wasn't a shutout, meaning Saxon's didn't have to pay.

In November, Jewelers of America announced that it was offering a 10 percent discount on promotional insurance to its members with the Weather Insurance Agency.

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