

All About Family

**An Interview with Sasson Basha,
President, Aaron Basha**

EDITORS' NOTE *The son of Aaron Basha, who established the brand that bears his name, Sasson Basha knew from a young age that he would go into the family business. Particularly effective in the realm of marketing and public relations, he provides the inspiration for many of the company's charitable initiatives.*



Sasson Basha

COMPANY BRIEF *Established in 1906 as a pearl dealership, family-owned and operated jeweler Aaron Basha (www.aaronbasha.com) was housed on London's prestigious Berkley Square until 1990, when the company moved to its flagship store on Manhattan's Madison Avenue. Among Aaron Basha's innovative products, which are also available in high-end department stores such as Neiman Marcus, Saks Fifth Avenue, Harrods in London, and other fine jewelers worldwide, are the popular baby shoes pendants and charms, and featured pieces made from 18-karat gold, platinum, fine enamel, and diamonds and other precious gems.*

What is your forecast for growth in 2008?

In 2007, we grew tremendously in both our national and our international distribution, so we are extremely happy. We are looking forward to continuing our growth as we launch our third boutique in the Ukraine. It is a beautiful new boutique in the finest location in Kiev. We expanded our business in Japan by launching a retail boutique in midtown Tokyo, and we expanded our shop-within-a-shop approach. We are expanding our business through eight more shop-in-shops in the Japanese market through the finest department stores.

Is the U.S. market still going strong?

Yes. We believe so. Our brand has a very strong spiritual and personal message.

Do you plan to further extend your

product offerings going forward?

I'd say it's a process that we are definitely maturing into. We are growing our lifestyle product niche, which applies to many more people who understand our philosophy and love to wear our very special products.

Who is the typical Basha customer? Do you target a broad market?

Our range of products is translated for all ages, including children in some cases. Our products really are for the fashionable and mature women and men celebrating their lifestyles. Our jewelry line is targeted at women, but we have added a very strong collection of cuff links for mature, secure, and luxury-minded gentlemen. We are broadening the depths of our collection when it comes to other categories; however, we are exercising caution.

How do you decide between boutiques as opposed to a shop-within-a-shop? Does it depend on the market and what will fit?

Yes, it does depend on the market and what will fit. It also depends on whether a lot of them are in the emerging mar-

kets that are experiencing tremendous growth in luxury products. And brand representation – proper brand presentation – is very important.

The name Aaron Basha is synonymous with history, tradition, creativity, passion, and luxury.

Well, luxury is a term that can be used in



many different ways. Luxury for us is a lifestyle, and consumers who have the means to represent their lifestyle and celebration of life with our products own that luxury.

Does technology play a major role in how your products are produced?

We use the finest technology to produce our products. But without the human touch and the craftsmanship – that specialized craftsman attention – none of our items would look the way they do. This is why we produce products in the most expensive place on earth.

How important is customer service to your business?

We are a third-generation family-run, family-operated business. We are probably one of the only retailers on Madison Avenue where you can actually meet the designer and shop with full personal attention.

You are known for your sense of responsibility in the community.

We feel very fortunate to have gained incredible attention and success. Since we are all about family, we support various organizations like UNICEF and other children's and women's organizations, directly and indirectly throughout all our retailers.

How do you define your role?

It has changed: I travel more than ever. Globe-trotting is difficult.

It is a challenge maintaining a family and globetrotting around the world. ●

Jewelry on display at Aaron Basha's boutique in midtown Manhattan