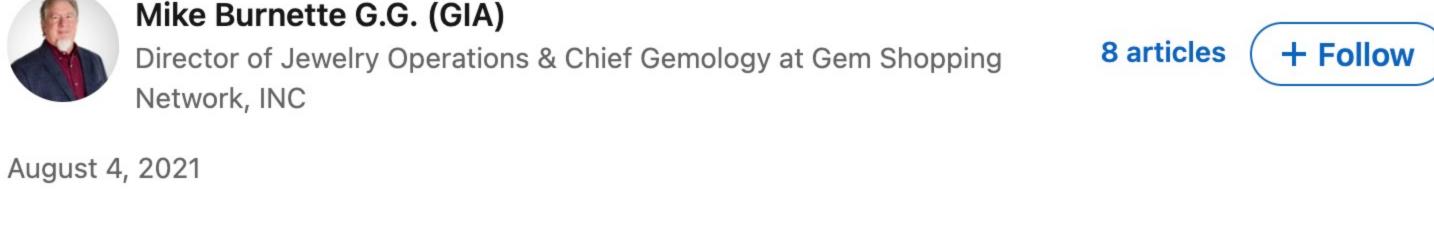


## Gem Shopping Network Took a Bet on Orange and Created Its Own Market



Open Immersive Reader

many changes in consumer tastes.

conundrum: Which comes first, supply from retailers or demand from customers?

Often jewelry retailers are faced with the classic chicken-or-egg

In other words, should stores sell unpopular stones in the hope of

Working as a gemologist for the last 35 plus years, I've had a front-row seat to the

building demand, or should customers request gems they want retailers to carry? At Gem Shopping Network, the answer is easy. We teach our community about gemstones they've never seen before and, in doing so, build ourselves a market and an engaged customer base for rare gems. According to a recent survey by The Plumb Club, 33% of consumers name retailer websites as the primary influence on their purchases, and 31% ranked

quality as the most important element when purchasing new jewelry. I'm not surprised. I've seen firsthand the power expert vendors and high-quality inventory have to change consumer tastes. When GSN began broadcasting on TV in 1997, jewelry collectors and

retailers alike were almost exclusively focused on diamonds and the "big three" gemstones (emeralds, sapphires and rubies). That is, until we offered shoppers a rare garnet in a shocking color: orange. GSN was one of the first jewelry marketplaces to offer mandarin garnet, an electric orange variety of spessartite, to its audience. Though many wouldn't

believe it now, two decades ago, the gem's vibrant orange was considered radical and, frankly, unfashionable. In part, this was because most shoppers only encountered brownish red garnets, if any, at their local jewelry stores, which gave them little appetite for the gem's rainbow of hues. But as our team of gemologists, vendors and hosts continued educating our

customers on this unexpected shade, jewelry collectors and enthusiasts came to realize the beauty of the vibrant, rare gem. And with that realization came sales. Today, you can ask any GSN regular about mandarin garnets and they would be

able to identify the gem—and show you their own orange jewelry. By taking a risk

on exciting, exotic gems, the network drew in countless new jewelry enthusiasts, building in guaranteed demand that smaller retailers can't match. Our GSN community has come to expect the unexpected, which is a boon and a challenge for vendors. As Director of Vendor Operations and Gemology, I sit at the intersection of beauty

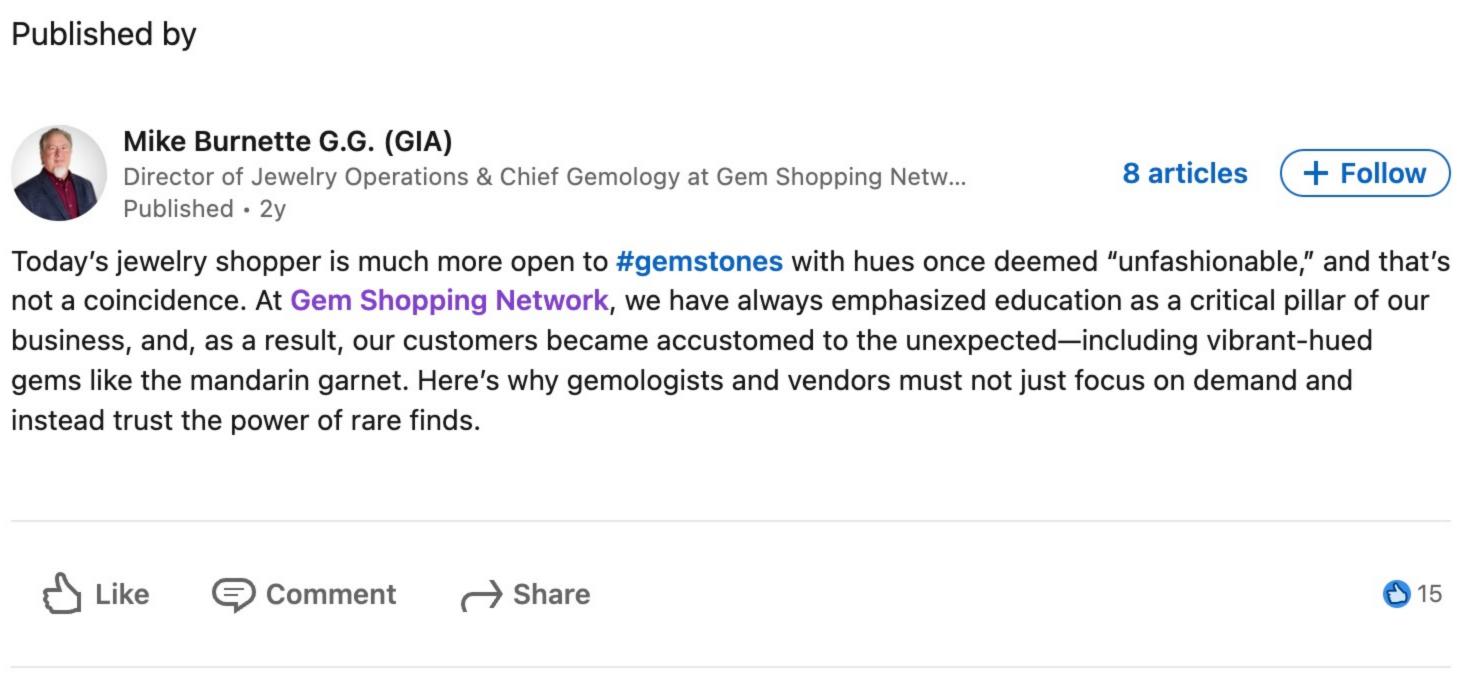
have never heard of before. I'll never forget when last year, one of our vendors was able to immediately sell another orange gem, triplite, in a major private sale. And we were able to bring clinohumite, a gemstone unknown even to me at the time, on our show with the confidence that the one-of-a-kind find would find a buyer.

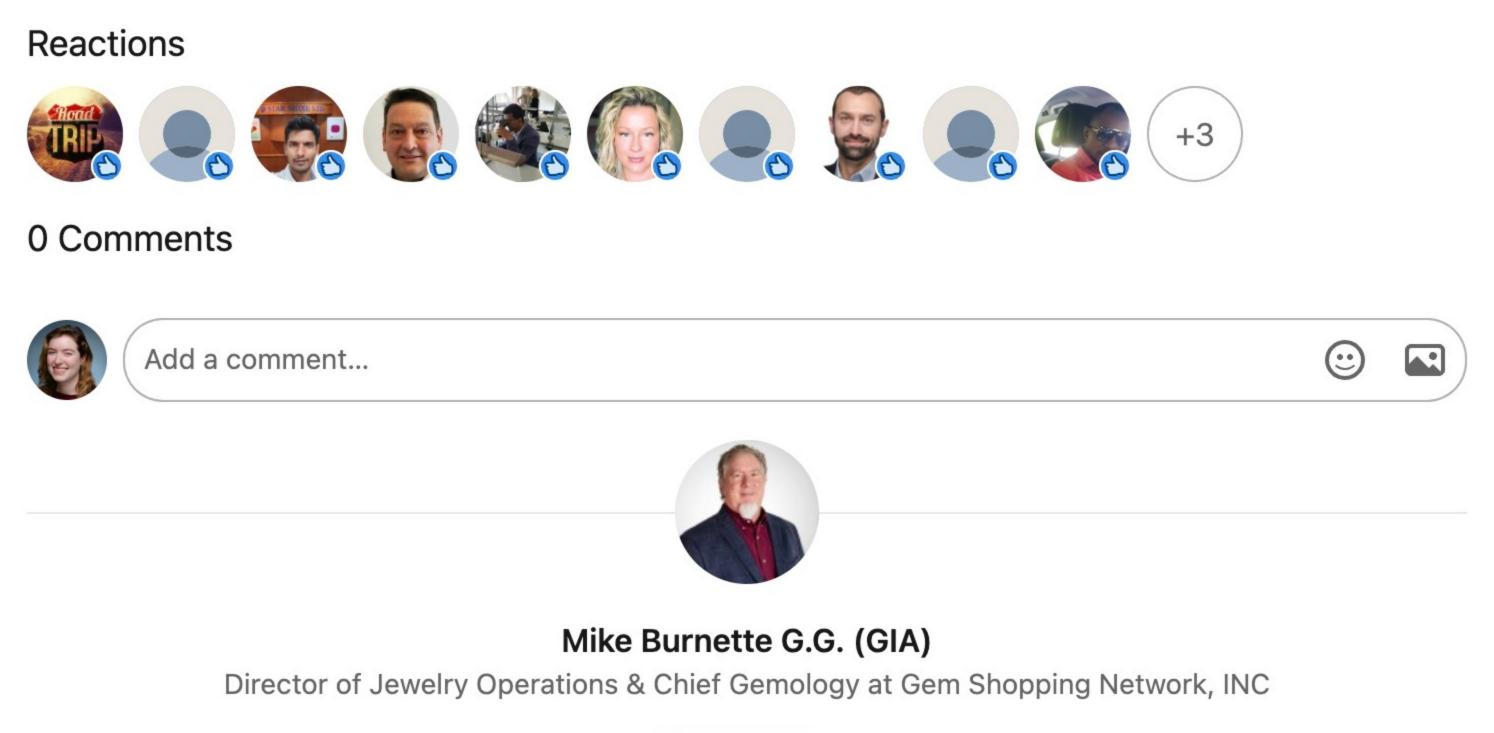
I'm lucky to be able to challenge my team and our vendors to surprise our

and business. I get to see and sell things that most customers and even jewelers

our shows exceptional and our business stronger. In return, our jewelry partners know we'll deliver a sale. When it comes to the question of which came first, my answer is orange garnet.

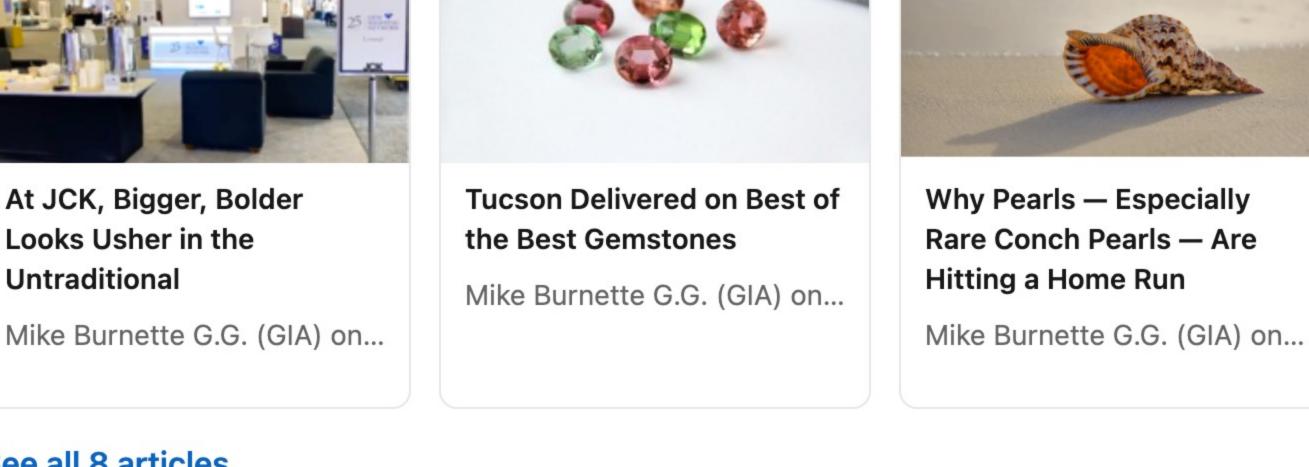
customers. It's this friendly competition to be first to share a new find that makes





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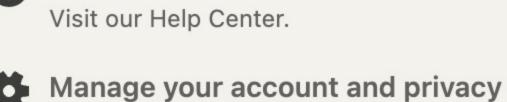
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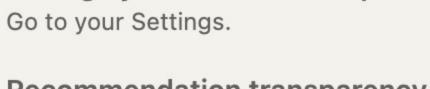
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