

THE PLUMB CLUB FORUM @ FIT 2008

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CARLY FIORINA TO SPEAK AT FIRST PLUMB CLUB FORUM IN MARCH

NEW YORK, Nov. 8 -- Carly Fiorina, former chairman and CEO of Hewlett-Packard, will be among the featured speakers to appear at the first Plumb Club Forum, to be held in New York City on March 2-3, 2008.

Hosted by The Plumb Club, a coalition of 48 leading U.S. jewelry and diamond manufacturers, the by-invitation-only business conference will attract executives and buyers from the largest U.S. retail jewelers, mass merchants, department stores, leading independents, and alternative channels, accounting for over 50% of the \$60 billion jewelry retail business, according to Plumb Club Treasurer, Ofer Azrielant, who is organizing the event.

“The Forum will provide a unique opportunity for jewelry industry leaders to learn from each other and a roster of high-level speakers so that we can better adapt to the rapid technological and business changes we face today,” said Azrielant. “Ultimately it’s about creating a sustainable future in all aspects.”

The conference, entitled The Plumb Club Forum @ FIT 2008, will be held at New York’s prestigious Fashion Institute of Technology, reflecting the academic, inspirational, and forward-thinking aspects of the not-for-profit event.

Managing change in the age of technology will be the focus of Carly Fiorina’s presentation. One of the most high-profile business leaders in the world and the author of her best-selling memoir *Tough Choices*, Fiorina is no stranger to change. Her tenure at HP, from 1999 to 2005, coincided with one of the technology industry’s deepest and most prolonged downturns. She led the company’s successful acquisition of Compaq and oversaw a period of extraordinary innovation that resulted in substantially improved profitability and a doubling of revenues. Prior to joining HP, Fiorina spent 20 years with AT&T and Lucent.

In addition to Fiorina, other speakers and panelists, to be announced, will focus on four important conference issues:

Decoding Web 2.0--You've heard the buzzwords: "communities," "wikis," "consumer-driven content," and "social networking." The Web is fast becoming the center of our universe. Companies are now taking the success of social networking and the lessons of Web 2.0 and bringing them into **every** area of their business. As this shift from a monologue to consumers to a dialogue with consumers continues and communication channels continue to converge, the retail sector will have to find creative ways to keep in step.

The Fashion Connection: How can the jewelry industry take a lesson from the world of fashion about unifying and reinventing itself to create trends and products that will gain a larger share of the luxury market?

Diamonds and Gemstones: Changes in the diamond and gemstone pipelines have created new retail challenges, such as diamond miners who compete with their customers, the possibility of derivative contracts linked to diamonds, and the recent political and gemological hot buttons affecting the colored gemstone industry.

Corporate Social Responsibility: How can the jewelry industry ensure the social and ethical responsibility of jewelry products all along the pipeline, and what are the serious implications of non-action?

The Gemological Institute of America (GIA) will sponsor a "back-to-school" gem track that will include individual panels focused on issues regarding diamond treatments, simulants and synthetics, and sources and treatments for certain colored gemstones.

On March 3, GIA will also offer hands-on classroom sessions called "Under the Microscope" to update attendees with prior gemological knowledge about how to identify new treatments and synthetics.

"The Forum is unique in that it is being hosted by the industry itself, representing leading industry manufacturers with input from an Advisory Board* comprised of VIPs from all sectors of the fine jewelry world," said Azrielant. "This will be an extraordinarily rich educational and networking environment."

In addition to Plumb Club members and their invited guests, leading stakeholders in the industry, from mine executives to gem labs, industry organizations, and financial institutions, will also attend.

The Plumb Club, founded in 1983, is a unique coalition of leading manufacturers spanning all facets of the jewelry and diamond industry with the common denominator of being "best in class." The 48 Plumb Club members account for approximately \$8 billion in wholesale jewelry sales. For more information about the Plumb Club Forum @ FIT 2008 visit www.plumbclub.com or call 201-816-8881.

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***The Plumb Club Forum Advisory Board
(as of November 3)**

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