

## Jewelry Fashion Reports

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### W.R. Cobb acquires B.A. Ballou

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Cranston, R.I.—W.R. Cobb Co. has acquired jewelry findings manufacturer B.A. Ballou, according to a media release issued on Tuesday.

The acquisition includes all of B.A. Ballou's intellectual property, equipment, tooling and their management team, and spells the end of the 140-year-old company functioning as an independent entity.

East Providence, R.I.-based B.A. Ballou, which was placed into court-ordered receivership due to financial problems and then had its assets sold off at auction, now will operate as a new division under the corporate structure of W.R. Cobb, Cobb/Ballou Findings.

WRC Management, an affiliate of W.R. Cobb, submitted the winning bid in the B.A. Ballou auction held in late April, but it was not made clear at the time what its plans were for B.A. Ballou.

Roderick Lichtenfels, chief executive officer of W.R. Cobb, said the acquisition was a major strategic opportunity for his company.

"For the past 130 years, W.R. Cobb has competed with the 140-year-old B.A. Ballou. The two companies have been the leaders in manufacturing high-quality jewelry findings, and the combined company creates a powerful global manufacturer," he said.

Cobb/Ballou Findings will focus its manufacturing at the company's facilities in Rhode Island, but also will operate offices in England, Hong Kong, India, Ireland, Thailand and Vietnam, as well as other locations.

In addition, according to the release, the company is taking steps to add all of Ballou's products onto W.R. Cobb's business-to-business Web site, WRCobb.com.



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