

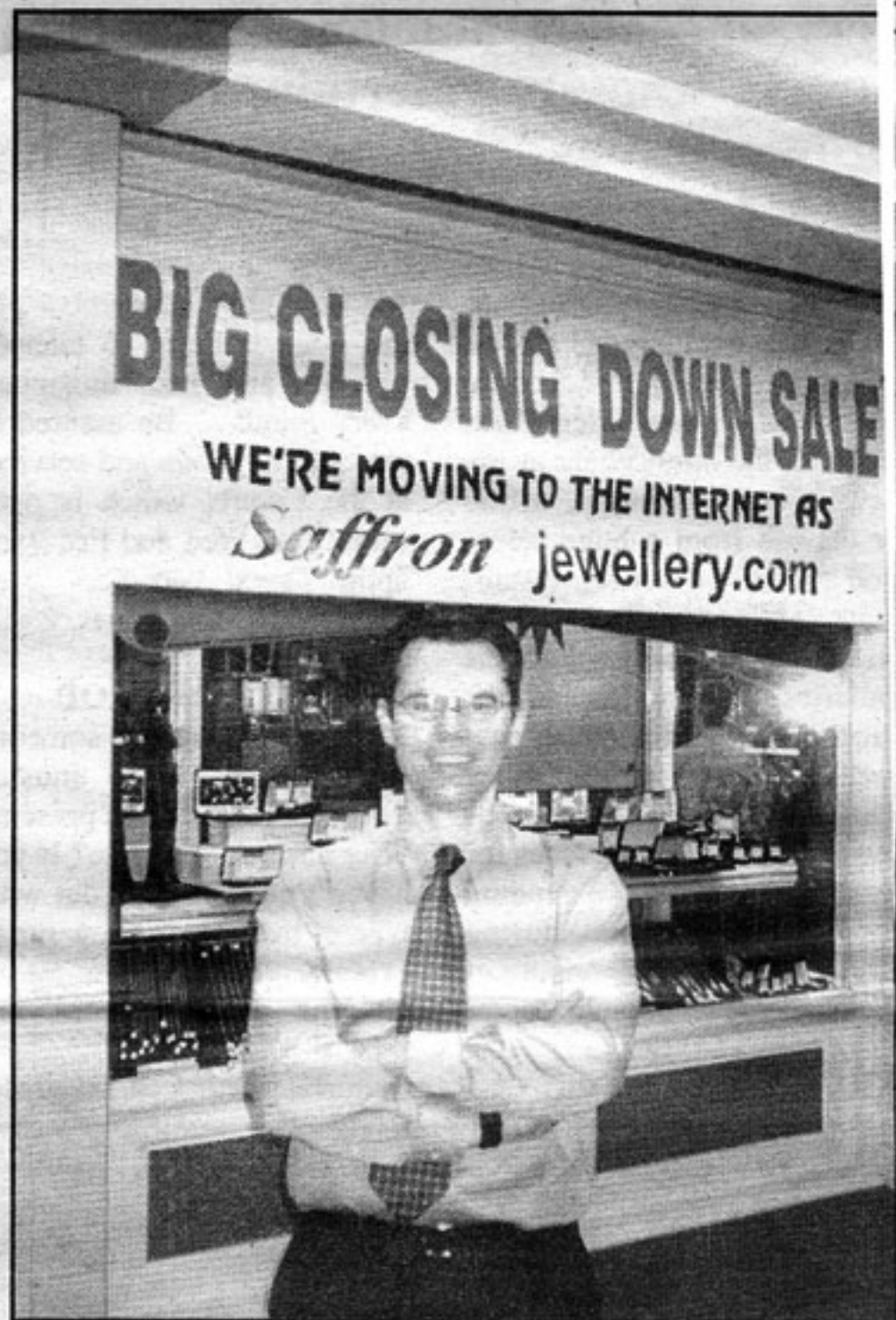
# Dublin Jeweller Takes the Plunge

by Talitha Linehan

A Dublin Jewellery store is about to become the first business in Ireland to close down its premises to relocate in virtual space. Costello Jewellers of Cornelscourt Shopping Centre is moving on-line, to service future clients via the Internet. Net-users will be able to examine products in 3-D format and place orders from their desktops.

The manager, Cllr Eoin Costello admitted that this was "a brave move" but told Lifetimes that he's merely anticipating future shopping trends. He pointed out that retail opening hours are inconvenient for most people. He considers Costello Jewellers ideal for Net trading as their "value, range and customer service can be replicated on a web site". As well as viewing items in detail, on-line shoppers will be able to click on iconised images to zoom in/out and rotate the products. Costello's web site will include 'virtual cloakrooms'. By inputting a physical description of themselves - or whomever the piece is intended for - shoppers will be able to 'try on' jewels before buying. The new business will also allow for a two-week return period. Mr Costello had to "narrow down stock considerably" as

surfers would become "very bored going through two or three thousand pages". The new business will be aimed at the US, UK and Irish market but Mr Costello is expecting to attract the majority of his clients from the US. "E-commerce is very big in the States...European shoppers don't yet seem to trust the Internet" as a shopping medium, said Mr Costello. He added that he had heard of several businesses that were "making a lot of money" from on-line trading. Costello Jewellers has been involved with St. Vincent De Paul for several years, and Mr Costello intends to continue organising the annual National Scrap Gold Week, when people are asked to bring in broken and worn jewellery. All the scrap received is sold to the refiner and the money raised is donated to the charity. Mr Costello said that St



**Eoin Costello stands outside Costello Jewellers, Cornelscourt. The shop is moving on-line to relocate in virtual space.!**

Vincent's de Paul is considering expanding the event to involve businesses nationwide. He said that the future of Costello's staff was an "important consideration" and added that they would be moving to the branch in Bray. The web site will be promoted through on and off-line advertising but Mr Costello hasn't yet decided who's going to design the

site. "I've had about 15 meetings in the past month" to determine this, he said. He plans to do some of the work himself, using software packages "that practically do all the work for you". He expects to be open for Internet business early next year at Saffronjewellery.com. Mr Costello feels certain that other businesses in Ireland will follow his lead on line.