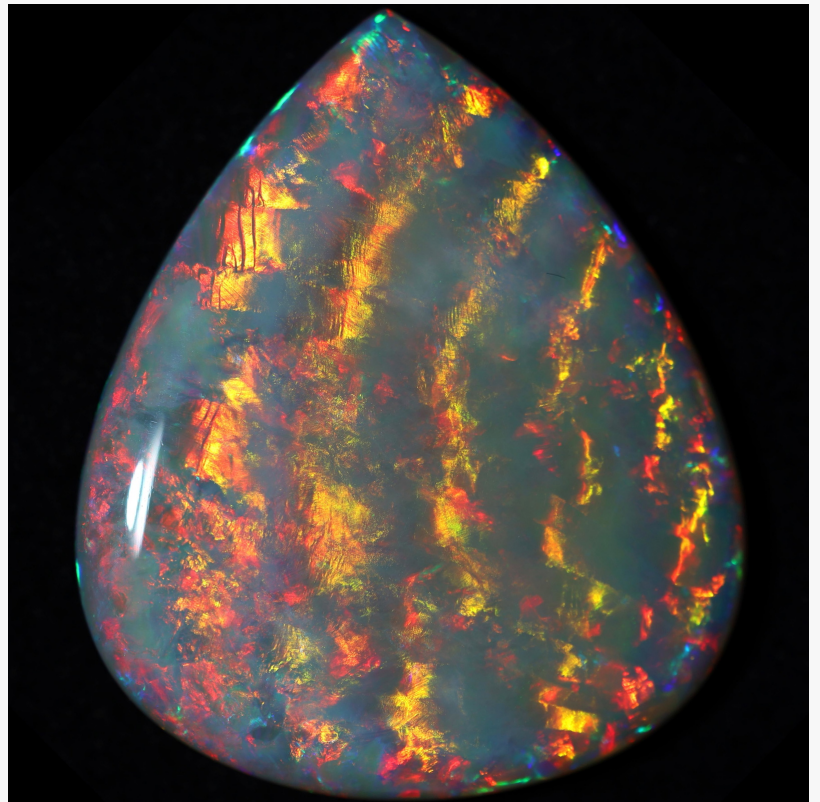


Opal Auctions Approaches 1 Million Opals Sold Online Worldwide

"Online selling is not just about getting the sale," he says. "You have to make the complete buying and shipping experience as pleasant as possible."

GOLD COAST, QLD, AUSTRALIA, September 7, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- An Australian online marketplace that began with a simple idea — giving buyers greater confidence when purchasing opals online — is approaching a remarkable milestone: 1 million opals sold worldwide.

[OpalAuctions](#), founded on the Gold Coast in 2004 by Australian entrepreneur Wayne Sedawie, has sold more than 970,000 opals to buyers in approximately 139 countries and expects to reach the one-million-opal milestone around January 2027.



For Sedawie, the approaching milestone represents far more than a sales figure.

“

He has received several business awards, including a Stevie Award and Gold Coast business awards, but says the greatest reward has been helping create a global market for Australian opal.”

wayne sedawie

"It is about introducing people all over the world to one of Australia's most unique gemstones," says Sedawie. "The greatest satisfaction has been seeing new buyers discover opal and realise what this stone can actually look like."

Today, OpalAuctions has approximately 189 sellers from 20 countries, but its early years were very different.

Sedawie recalls that the first five years were not profitable and that running an online auction marketplace more than

two decades ago presented technical challenges that today's businesses rarely experience.

The website crashed several times, while at one point servers were threatened by flooding in Brisbane and had to be physically moved to a higher floor.

Despite the difficulties, Sedawie continued investing in technology and buyer confidence.

Building Trust Before Online Shopping Was Mainstream

From the beginning, Sedawie recognised that trust would be critical to selling gemstones online.

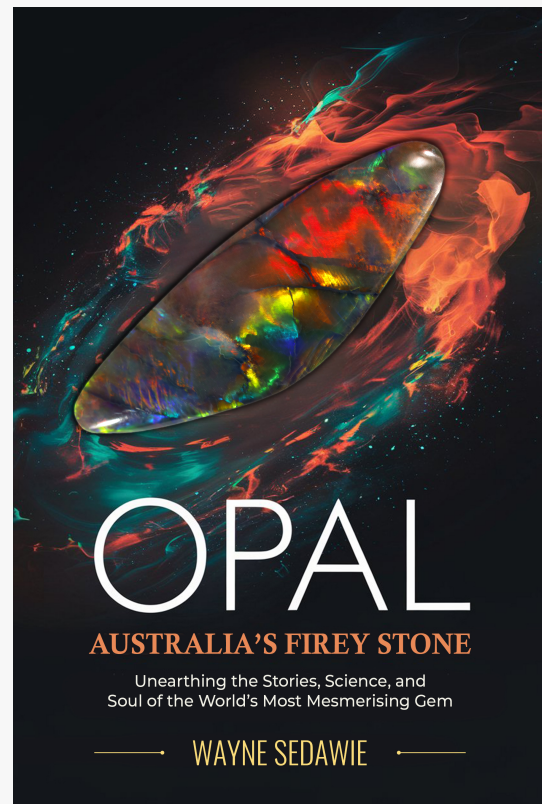
More than 20 years ago, OpalAuctions introduced its Opal Sheriff program, allowing buyers to seek an independent professional opinion about whether an opal's description and photographs accurately represented the stone being offered.

Another innovation was Item Watch, allowing buyers to follow an opal and later see what price it actually sold for.

The system became not only a buying tool but also an educational resource, allowing both newcomers and experienced opal buyers to understand the marketplace.

Last month, approximately 87,000 opals were added to Item Watch. Sedawie believes transparency and continual improvement have been fundamental to the marketplace's survival and growth.

From Older Collectors to a New Generation



From fire within to light without, the opal's mesmerizing play of color.



The demographics of the opal market have also changed significantly.

Sedawie remembers when buyers in their 50s and 60s were the dominant customer group. Today, he says, buyers around 30 are becoming an increasingly important part of the market.

The COVID-19 period was particularly significant in introducing new international buyers to opals, as people spent more time online and explored new interests from home.

One memorable customer was a 90-year-old man who received his first opal during COVID and was amazed by the colours he saw in the gemstone.

Another memorable moment came from a seller in Greece who contacted Sedawie around Christmas to say that the money he had earned selling through the platform was helping put food on his family's table after he had not been paid for his regular employment.

A seller who was a retired opal miner sent Wayne image of a house he just bought. He mentioned sales from opalauctions gave him the funds to buy his first house and he was in his early 60s.

For Sedawie, those personal stories have been more meaningful than awards.

He has received several business awards, including a Stevie Award and Gold Coast business awards, but says the greatest reward has been helping create a global market for Australian opal.

Global Shipping Creates New Challenges

The international nature of the business also creates ongoing challenges.

Changes to tariffs and shipping costs, particularly for shipments to the United States, have affected sales of lower-priced opals. Further tariff changes in Europe could create additional pressure.

Sedawie says the marketplace has to continually consider the entire customer experience, from viewing and purchasing an opal through to receiving it safely.

"Online selling is not just about getting the sale," he says. "You have to make the complete buying and shipping experience as pleasant as possible."

Opals Helped Create the "Bubble Genius" Business Strategy

The OpalAuctions story has also become part of Sedawie's broader business philosophy.

Now 52 years into his business career, Sedawie is the [author of Bubble Genius](#), a business concept based on developing multiple income streams and using opportunities from one

business to create another.

He says opals were one of the foundations of that strategy.

The development of OpalAuctions demonstrated the potential of e-commerce, which subsequently contributed to the creation of other online marketplaces, including [GemRockAuctions](#), as well as opportunities involving property, investments and technology.

Rather than relying on a single source of income, Sedawie describes the strategy as creating interconnected "bubbles" of business activity, where experience, technology and capital from one venture can help create another.

After more than two decades, OpalAuctions remains at the centre of that original business journey — now approaching a milestone that few specialist online marketplaces ever reach.

One million opals sold worldwide.

For Sedawie, the number is important, but the people behind the number are what matter most.

wayne j sedawie

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